THE TIE THAT BINDS: LEADERSHIP AND LIBERAL ARTS INSTITUTIONS’ CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COMMITMENT IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

by

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Hunter Phillips Goodman

4/22/2014

April 22, 2014
Dedication

For my parents, Patsy Taylor and William Hunter Phillips, who through their lives and legacies inspired me to go farther, dream bigger, and always believe in the transformative power of education.
Acknowledgement

To use two phrases quoted to me throughout my time in the doctoral program at the University of Central Arkansas, the process of writing a dissertation truly is a ‘journey not a destination’ and ‘it takes a village’ to successfully complete the process.

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of scholarly inquiry. In addition to my committee members, thank you to Dr. Amy Hawkins for engaging me in interdisciplinary teaching and research through our shared research interest in civic engagement and community nonprofit organizations.

As part of the first cohort of UCA’s Interdisciplinary PhD in Leadership Studies (LEAD), my fellow cohort members inspire and challenge me to see perspectives beyond my own. Together, we create, engage, and envision innovative solutions to complex challenges facing our society and world. I am proud to travel this path alongside you. To the faculty of LEAD, thank you for your time, talent, and expertise. I am inspired by your passion for the success of the program and willingness to lend your knowledge to the journey. The doctoral program is a gem for our institution, state, and region. I appreciate UCA’s commitment to education and leadership through interdisciplinary research.

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Though a dissertation is a solo endeavor, it is not a solitary journey because of those closest to me. Thank you to my husband, Mark, for walking alongside me every step of the path. You have an honorary doctorate in my book! I am forever grateful to
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It is with great humility that I join others who have accepted the mantle of the PhD. May my contributions to academic research and practice strengthen understanding and move our society closer to innovative solutions with community.
Abstract

The *Tie that Binds: Leadership and Liberal Arts Institutions’ Public Service Commitment in Rural Communities* is a qualitative multi-case study of how leaders of rural private liberal arts institutions and their community partners view civic engagement relative to the college’s mission. The purpose of the study is to contribute to the understanding of how university leadership at liberal arts institutions can more deeply integrate civic engagement into institutional priorities. The study examined university leaders and community stakeholders’ perceptions of civic engagement at five liberal arts institutions that are part of the Bonner Scholars Program network. It expanded the conceptual framework, developed from Weerts’ (2005) framework and Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) community boundary spanning literature, for university leaders at liberal arts institutions to embed and develop community engagement into the culture and ethos as part of their institution’s leadership. By using multiple data sources to explore institutional leadership, the study incorporated interviews, strategic documents, and financial documentation to provide a multi-case lens into the factors present in strong community and university leadership at private liberal arts institutions in rural communities.

Three primary finding themes emerged from the data: college leadership for civic engagement; college as community resource; and college leadership for community quality of life. There is a unique tie between the institution and its community that binds them together. This study expands upon the college’s role as boundary spanner and explores why presidents engage in civic engagement within the private liberal arts context in rural communities.
Keywords: University leadership, boundary spanning, transformative leadership, public service, community engagement, rural communities, and private liberal arts colleges
# Table of Contents

Dedication .................................................................................................................. iv
Acknowledgement ...................................................................................................... v
Abstract ...................................................................................................................... viii
List of Tables ............................................................................................................... xv
List of Figures ............................................................................................................. xvii
Chapter 1: Introduction ............................................................................................... 1
  Purpose of the Study .................................................................................................. 1
  Research Questions .................................................................................................. 2
    Procedures. .............................................................................................................. 3
  Significance of the Study ......................................................................................... 3
    Related literature.................................................................................................. 3
    Community and university partnerships ............................................................. 4
    Needs facing nonprofits and communities. ......................................................... 7
    Challenges facing rural communities .................................................................. 8
    Orienting conceptual framework ......................................................................... 10
    Summary ............................................................................................................... 11
  Definition of Terms ................................................................................................... 12
  Conclusion ............................................................................................................... 14
Chapter 2: Literature Review ...................................................................................... 15
  Introduction .............................................................................................................. 15
  Leadership in Higher Education ........................................................................... 16
    University presidents. .......................................................................................... 16
    Leadership through university programs. ............................................................ 17
    Leadership and innovation .................................................................................. 19
    Leadership and change. ....................................................................................... 20
    Summary ............................................................................................................... 21
  American Higher Education’s Public Purpose .................................................... 21
    Charter between higher education and society. .................................................. 22
    Higher education institutions’ roles in their communities. .................................. 24
    Call for American colleges to return to service roots. ......................................... 26
Ways for rural colleges and universities to engage .......................................................... 28
Limited resources. ........................................................................................................... 28
Summary .......................................................................................................................... 29
Challenges for Liberal Arts Institutions ...................................................................... 30
Liberal arts institutions’ unique hallmarks to teaching and learning ......................... 31
Opportunities for private liberal arts colleges .............................................................. 31
Summary .......................................................................................................................... 33
Rural Communities and Nonprofit Organizations ......................................................... 34
Community in rural America ......................................................................................... 34
Economic impact on rural areas .................................................................................... 35
Nonprofit organizations’ capacity building needs in rural communities .................... 35
Summary .......................................................................................................................... 37
Civic Engagement Theories .......................................................................................... 37
Summary .......................................................................................................................... 42
Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 43
Chapter 3: Methodology and Research Approach .......................................................... 44
Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 44
Research Questions ......................................................................................................... 44
Orienting Framework ......................................................................................................... 45
Components used from each theory. ............................................................................. 45
Methods and Procedures ................................................................................................. 47
Setting ............................................................................................................................... 47
Interview and document analysis. .................................................................................... 48
Interviews .......................................................................................................................... 49
Document artifacts ............................................................................................................ 50
Summary .......................................................................................................................... 51
Transcript and Document Analyses .............................................................................. 51
Role and Biases of the Researcher .................................................................................. 53
Limitations and delimitations of the study. .................................................................. 55
Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 55
Chapter 4: Findings and Data Analysis ......................................................................... 56
Introduction .............................................................................................................................56
Research Questions ................................................................................................................57
Overview of Methods ..............................................................................................................58
Institutions and Communities Included in the Multi-Site Case Study ..............................60
  A: college and community ..............................................................................................60
  B: college and community ..............................................................................................61
  C: college and community ..............................................................................................62
  D: college and community ..............................................................................................63
  E: college and community ..............................................................................................64
Data Findings and Analysis .................................................................................................65
  University leaders and community partners’ interviews .............................................65
  Interview procedures and findings ....................................................................................66
College A Findings ................................................................................................................70
  University leaders ............................................................................................................70
    Word frequency in university leaders' interviews .......................................................73
  Community partners .......................................................................................................75
    Word frequency in community partners' interviews ....................................................77
  Strategic plan ....................................................................................................................79
  Financial data ...................................................................................................................80
  Summary ..........................................................................................................................80
College B Findings ................................................................................................................81
  University leaders ............................................................................................................81
    Word frequency in university leaders' interviews .......................................................84
  Community partners .......................................................................................................86
    Word frequency in community partners' interviews ....................................................88
  Strategic plan ....................................................................................................................89
  Financial data ...................................................................................................................90
  Summary ..........................................................................................................................91
College C Findings ................................................................................................................91
  University leaders ............................................................................................................91
    Word frequency in university leaders' interviews .......................................................94
Community partners. ........................................................................................................ 95

Word frequency in community partners' interviews.................................................. 97
Strategic plan. .................................................................................................................. 98
Financial data................................................................................................................ 98
Summary........................................................................................................................ 99
College D Findings......................................................................................................... 99
University leaders......................................................................................................... 99

Word frequency in university leaders' interviews..................................................... 101
Community partners. ..................................................................................................... 103

Word frequency in community partners' interviews............................................... 105
Strategic plan. .................................................................................................................. 106
Financial data................................................................................................................ 107
Summary........................................................................................................................ 107
College E Findings......................................................................................................... 108
University leaders......................................................................................................... 108

Word frequency in university leaders' interviews..................................................... 110
Community partners..................................................................................................... 111

Word frequency in community partners' interviews............................................... 113
Strategic plan. .................................................................................................................. 114
Financial data................................................................................................................ 115
Summary........................................................................................................................ 115
Cross-Institutional Themes from Findings................................................................. 116
College leadership for community engagement....................................................... 120
College as community resource.................................................................................. 125
College leadership for community quality of life....................................................... 131
Summary........................................................................................................................ 133
Conclusion...................................................................................................................... 134
Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings and Implications................................................... 135
Introduction..................................................................................................................... 135
Research Questions and Discussion of Findings....................................................... 136
College leadership for civic engagement.................................................................... 136
College as community resource................................................................. 140
College leadership for community quality of life........................................ 142
Applicability of research questions to findings........................................... 143
  Research question 1.............................................................................143
  Research question 2.............................................................................144
  Research question 3.............................................................................145
  Research question 4.............................................................................146
  Research question 5.............................................................................146
Implications for Future Research.................................................................146
Implications for Practice.............................................................................148
Conclusion.................................................................................................149
References.................................................................................................151
Appendix A: Interview Protocol.................................................................162
Appendix B: IRB Expedited Approval.........................................................164
..................................................................................................................166
Appendix E: Representative Quotations for College A Leaders.................167
Appendix F: Representative Quotations for College A Community Partners....169
Appendix G: Representative Quotations for College B Leaders....................171
Appendix H: Representative Quotations for College B Community Partners ...173
Appendix I: Representative Quotations for College C Leaders.....................175
Appendix J: Representative Quotations for College C Community Partners....177
Appendix K: Representative Quotations for College D Leaders.....................179
Appendix L: Representative Quotations for College D Community Partners....181
Appendix M: Representative Quotations for College E Leaders.....................183
Appendix N: Representative Quotations for College E Community Partners....185
List of Tables

Table 1.1: Summary Table of Weerts’ (2005) Conceptual Framework.................12

Table 2.1: Weerts’ (2005) Micro Variables Relative to Leadership.................38

Table 3.1: Five Forms of Data Sources Relative to Weerts’ (2005) Conceptual Framework.................................................................47

Table 3.2: Profiles of Data Collected from Institutions........................................49

Table 3.3: Five Levels of Questions for Case Study Interviews (Yin, 2009, p. 87)........50

Table 3.4: Method and Research Goal through Data Collection.........................51

Table 3.5: Interpretive Frameworks Adapted from Creswell (2013, p. 36).............53

Table 4.1: Organization Type, Position, and Partnership for Community Partners.....67

Table 4.2: Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions.................69

Table 4.3: Representative Quotations for College A Leaders.............................71

Table 4.4: Frequently Cited Words for College A Leaders................................75

Table 4.5: Representative Quotations for College A Community Partners.............76

Table 4.6: Frequently Cited Words for College A Community Partners...............79

Table 4.7: Representative Quotations for College B Leaders...............................82

Table 4.8: Frequently Cited Words for College B Leaders................................86

Table 4.9: Representative Quotations for College B Community Partners...........87

Table 4.10: Frequently Cited Words for College B Community Partners.............89

Table 4.11: Representative Quotations for College C Leaders............................92

Table 4.12: Frequently Cited Words for College C Leaders...............................95

Table 4.13: Representative Quotations for College C Community Partners..........96

Table 4.14: Frequently Cited Words for College C Community Partners.............98
Table 4.15: Representative Quotations for College D Leaders…………………………100
Table 4.16: Frequently Cited Words for College D Leaders…………………………103
Table 4.17: Representative Quotations for College D Community Partners……………104
Table 4.18: Frequently Cited Words for College D Community Partners……………106
Table 4.19: Representative Quotations for College E Leaders…………………………109
Table 4.20: Frequently Cited Words for College E Leaders…………………………111
Table 4.21: Representative Quotations for College E Community Partners……………112
Table 4.22: Frequently Cited Words for College E Community Partners……………114
List of Figures

**Figure 2.1.** Weerts & Sandmann (2010) Framework Boundary Spanning Roles Associated with University-Community Engagement........................................41

**Figure 3.1.** Modified Conceptual Framework for University Leadership in Civic Engagement...........................................................................................................................................................................46

**Figure 4.1.** Forms of Data Used for Multi-Case Study in Order of Analysis..........58

**Figure 4.2.** Colleges and Positions Included in the Multi-Case Study................66

**Figure 4.3.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College A Leaders........74

**Figure 4.4.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College A Community Partners........................................................................................................................................78

**Figure 4.5.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College B Leaders........85

**Figure 4.6.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College B Community Partners........................................................................................................................................88

**Figure 4.7.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College C Leaders.........94

**Figure 4.8.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College C Community Partners........................................................................................................................................97

**Figure 4.9.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College D Leaders........102

**Figure 4.10.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College D Community Partners.......................................................................................................................................105

**Figure 4.11.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College E Leaders.........110

**Figure 4.12.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College E Community Partners.......................................................................................................................................113

**Figure 4.13.** Three Themes Based on Multi-Case Study Findings.....................117
Chapter 1: Introduction

Historically, higher education institutions have been developed to serve the public good (Kezar, Chambers, & Burkhardt, 2005). The first universities that were supported by their states were “initially designed to educate a small, elite group of men for the workforce and civic life” (Courturier, 2005, p. 85-86). In time, further responsibilities were added to education to include serving the people, providing the broader community with access to expertise, serving society through research, and serving as “a site for debate and critique of pressing societal issues” (Courturier, p. 86). The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) report Stepping Forward as Stewards of Place (2002) provided a good framework for state college and university leaders to lead with civic engagement as a priority. In a survey with college and university presidents in the AASCU membership, “fewer than half believe their institutions are closely linked to their communities and just over one third engage the public in formulating institutional strategic priorities” (p. 14). Ten years later, Saltmarsh and Hartley (2012) captured the thoughts of Derek Barker of the Kettering Foundation that although many institutions have incorporated civic engagement rhetoric, established centers, or implemented projects in most cases the democratic role of higher education is not infused throughout the institution….Individual programs and projects are not enough to generate culture change. (p. 8)

Purpose of the Study

The study’s purpose is to contribute to the understanding of how university leadership at rural, private liberal arts institutions can more deeply integrate civic engagement into institutional priorities and be more responsive to community needs. This multi-case study examines university leaders’ and community partners’ perceptions of civic engagement and
explores institutional commitment as evident through document artifacts and various procedures.

**Research Questions**

The research questions were driven by the five part conceptual framework utilized by Weerts (2005, p. 90) whereby the macro elements of an institution’s commitment to community partners and civic engagement were a) organizational structure and policies, b) leadership, institutional history and culture, c) campus communications, and d) faculty and staff involvement. Each research question, viewed through the lens of leadership, was one piece of Weerts’ framework (see Appendix C).

The research questions were developed to expand the exploration of specific leadership roles of university presidents in Weerts’ study. The expansion of the study looked at the role of university leadership as institutional leaders who set the strategic direction of the institution. Specifically,

1) How does institutional leadership inform community partners’ perceptions about institutional commitment to civic engagement? In turn, how do community partners’ perceptions of needs inform institutional leadership in civic engagement?

2) How does the university’s leadership keep the college involved in its community through civic engagement?

3) How has including civic engagement in the strategic documents helped the institution?

4) How does university leadership utilize civic engagement as a leadership strategy?

5) What motivates university executives to integrate civic engagement into their leadership?
Procedures.

To address the above research questions, interviews were conducted with university leaders and community partners at five rural liberal arts Bonner institutions. Semi-informal interviews were held with three senior administrators in the university and two community institutionally-selected individuals. Overall 25 interviews were conducted. Institutional websites, strategic plans, financial documents, and other items were gathered and analyzed for civic engagement adherence. Generally, one strategic plan and one Form 990 financial document per institution was used for purposes of the study. Then from using NVIVO software and conducting textual analysis of the documents, frequencies and patterns were drawn from transcripts and text. Themes emerged from these patterns. Weerts’ (2005) model was used to inform data collection and analysis.

Significance of the Study

The study was significant because the multiple perspectives of participants provided insight into how university leaders and community partners think about and foster civic engagement. The findings provide an extension to Weerts’ (2005) model. By capturing the perceptions of university and community leaders about civic engagement and the institutionalization of such perspectives, the study captures how rural private liberal arts leaders incorporate civic engagement into their strategic directions.

Related literature.

Service has a two-fold meaning for higher education and its community. For higher education, it is one component of institutions’ three part purpose of teaching, research, and service. Service often means volunteerism whereby students address a specific need through a community-based or nonprofit organization. Students’ time is voluntary and without a requirement, though, some volunteer work may be part of students’ organizational
commitments. According to the Campus Compact website, service learning is more academic in nature and includes integrating “community work into the curriculum, giving students real-world learning experiences that enhance their academic learning while providing a tangible benefit for the community.” Higher education’s role as vital partners of public purpose was deeply rooted in the development of American colleges and universities. Whether called public engagement, civic engagement, community engagement, or experiential learning, all refer to intentional partnerships between universities and their community organizations that strengthens the university’s mission (AASCU, 2002; Bringle & Hatcher, 2009; Sandmann & Plater, 2009).

Community and university partnerships.

Community and university partnerships do not happen accidentally. Rather, they are inspired, fueled, and sustained by leadership within and among the university and community. To look at the role of university leadership in community partnerships and engagement, university leaders might ask, “What are universities good for” (Harcavy, 2006, p. 6), especially to local communities. According to Shapiro (2005), public and private universities “serve society as a responsive servant and a thoughtful critic” (p. 4). From John Dewey to Ernest Boyer, scholars have debated this question in many ways. First, Dewey (1969) argued that “in conception, at least, democracy approaches most nearly the ideal of all social organization; that in which the individual and the society are organic to each other” (pp. 237-238). Later, Boyer (1990) challenged leaders to think that “the aim of education is not only to prepare students for productive careers, but also to enable them to live lives of dignity and purpose; not only to generate new knowledge, but to channel that knowledge to humane ends; not merely to study government, but to help shape a citizenry that can promote the public good” (Boyer, 1990, pp. 77-78). Boyer and Dewey give us two perspectives on the symbiotic
tie between higher education and its community. Dewey drew on the organic nature and connection between the university and its surrounding community whereas Boyer spoke to the purpose of education as greater than producing graduates but developing leaders who can address public needs. The concept of integration between civic engagement and higher education’s purpose is not limited to scholars. It is also implemented by academic leaders.

Boyer (1996) challenged leaders that “what’s . . . needed is not just more programs, but a larger purpose, a larger sense of mission, a larger clarity of direction in the Nation’s life …creating a special climate in which academic and civic cultures communicate more continuously and creatively with each other” (pp. 32–33). Community-based organizations, whether nonprofit, government, or citizen driven, address the civic needs of their communities. Academia seeks partnerships with government, nonprofits, and community-based organizations dedicated to addressing issues important to the public good. Herein, civic engagement is defined in the words of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which is a recognized force in civic engagement education:

Civic engagement requires processes in which academics recognize, respect, and value the knowledge, perspectives, and resources of community partners and that are designed to serve a public purpose, building the capacity of individuals, groups, and organizations involved to understand and collaboratively address issues of public concern (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching website).

As noted by the Carnegie Foundation’s definition on their website, university and community partnerships value the capacity of organizations and address issues of public concern.
As leader of a higher education institution, William Rainey Harper (1905), the first President of the University of Chicago, stated that “the university…is the prophetic interpreter of democracy; the prophet of her past, in all of its vicissitudes; the prophet of her present, in all of its complexity; the prophet of her future in all its possibilities” (Harcavy, 2006, pp. 19-20). During his presidency, Harper placed great emphasis on the university’s engagement with social problems for the school systems and working poor. His pragmatic leadership was reinforced by the institution’s commitment and “his theoretical conviction that collaborative, action-oriented real-world problem solving is by far the best strategy to advance knowledge and learning” (pp. 7-8).

Many years later, following the release of its 1987-88 annual report, *Penn and Philadelphia: Common Ground*, the University of Pennsylvania acknowledged the “dynamic, mutually-beneficial interaction that potentially existed” between campus and community (Zlotkowski, 1998, pp. 134-136). The University of Pennsylvania’s president, Dr. Sheldon Hackney wrote that, “the picture [for the community and university] that emerges was one of a relationship in which the university and the city are important to one another. We stand on common ground; our futures are very much intertwined” (p. 135). This can be said of colleges and their surrounding communities.

Civic engagement cannot happen in the absence of partnerships with the university’s surrounding community and nonprofit organizations. The well-being of the college was tied symbiotically to its surrounding community. Colleges and universities that acknowledged this connection had taken steps to strengthen their communities. The University of Pennsylvania’s commitment to service and practice harkened to their historical founder Benjamin Franklin: “faculty generate knowledge that is unconstrained by traditional disciplinary boundaries and
spans the continuum from fundamental to applied” (Ostrander, 2004 as cited in University of Pennsylvania, 2001, para. 2).

**Needs facing nonprofits and communities.**

Civic engagement cannot be accurately examined without looking at the needs facing nonprofits and communities, especially in rural areas. Nonprofits are one vehicle for community to address public needs. Charitable nonprofit organizations are set apart by their unique mission and vision. Their success is not measured by profit but rather by the ability to meet their organizational mission. For Peter Drucker (1990), the purpose of nonprofit organizations is “to bring about a change in individuals and society” (p. 3). Whether providing health care, education, mentoring, arts, community development, or vital human and environmental services, charitable nonprofits and community-based organizations are mission-driven entities whose purpose is to address a need in the community and provide an organizational mechanism for the need to be addressed.

According to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) organizational structure, private liberal arts institutions are considered nonprofit organizations. Structurally, they follow a similar organizational structure with a board of directors (or trustees) as the governing body, a chief executive officer or president to set day to day priorities, and a mission-driven leadership model (Worth, 2012). The organizational structure of each, however, varies in complexity. Nonprofit organizations face extraordinary challenges. Their need for leadership and organizational capacity expands. According to the [U.S.] National Center for Charitable Statistics’ Nonprofit Almanac (2012), there were 945,415 charitable nonprofits, 96,765 private foundations, and 364,640 other types of nonprofit organizations, including chambers of commerce, fraternal organizations and civic leagues registered through the Internal Revenue Service.
One crucial issue impacting the nonprofit sector is sustainability which means the organization is a viable, contributing, strong business that achieves its mission and sustains its operations for continued growth. Like university-based civic engagement programs, nonprofits need human and financial resources to achieve their missions. This need for sustainable human resources creates an opportunity for colleges and universities to partner for meaningful leadership and service.

**Challenges facing rural communities.**

Rural communities in the United States face specific challenges ranging from declining population to changing economies and employment capabilities. Since the late 1980’s rural America had experienced significant population loss to the point that the outmigration is seen as a challenge for rural communities. Outmigration, meaning population loss by relocating to another community, of people in rural areas is most prevalent among younger citizens (Rural Alliance of Service Learning, 2010). There are two basic types of counties experiencing outmigration. Either the communities have poverty rates over 30% or they are prosperous (McGranahan, Cromartie, & Wojan, 2010).

The economies in rural America are changing. Though once associated with farm or agriculture-based economies, jobs in natural resource heavy enterprises, including but not limited to mining, fishing, and farming, have declined since the early twentieth century (McGranahan et al., 2003). Rural economies today are found in three informal avenues: hunting and fishing, household maintenance and food storage, and service occupations (McGranahan, 2003). Some indicators show that rural areas are more likely to experience poverty than urban areas (Flora & Flora, 2008, pp. 99-100; USDA, ERS, 2005) though this is not easily delineated. Rural communities experience poverty though it manifests itself differently than in urban communities. Homeless persons in rural communities are not found
sleeping on benches in public parks or huddled in doorways. Rural poverty is not always visible. Although housing may be available and transportation less expensive, it does not guarantee it is adequate or reliable. Rural poverty exists in families with their own housing and transportation as well as with one or more family members who work full time, as opposed to families in urban communities who live in public housing and take public transportation (Flora & Flora, 2008). The literature on poverty in the United States does not distinguish clearly between generational poverty, temporary poverty, working-class poverty, and situational poverty (Beegle, 2003). Additionally, the definition of a rural community is wide ranging,

"Sometimes population density is the defining concern, in other cases it is geographic isolation. Small population size typically characterizes a rural place, but how small is rural? Population thresholds are used to differentiate rural and urban communities may range from 2,500 up to 50,000 (USDA website)."

By looking at the role of American colleges and universities in informing the public good, building democratic citizenry in a healthy society, and meeting the needs of nonprofits and communities, there emerges a collective opportunity for university leaders, especially those of liberal arts institutions, to lead innovatively, transformationally, and proactively for university engagement in higher education’s public service mission while strengthening its surrounding community. Strong administrative leadership plays a critical role in innovative, transformative change that employs civic engagement as a critical link to higher education’s civic mission. Civic engagement provides an interdisciplinary approach to connecting university resources (specifically students and faculty) with needs. This partnership strengthens the surrounding community and produces graduates with an understanding of their
civically engaged purpose. What opportunities and models exist for successful integration of university leadership and civic mission in liberal arts institutions?

**Orienting conceptual framework.**

Weerts (2005) developed the conceptual framework that guided this study’s description and analysis of university leaders’ efforts to promote engagement (see Appendix C). Through a multi-case study model, he examined the commitment of three land-grant institutions to community outreach and engagement. Weerts (2005) studied how the commitment to outreach and engagement was articulated and demonstrated by campus executives, faculty, and staff in the cases. Additionally, he explored community partner perceptions of institutional commitment to outreach and engagement. Finally, Weerts (2005) analyzed how the rhetoric and behavior of top university leaders informed community perceptions, and the degree to which community-university partnerships were developed on mutual respect, trust, and shared goals.

Weerts (2005) used a “fishbone” illustration to demonstrate cause and effect of the dependent and independent variables both on campuses and in the community affecting civic engagement (p. 89-90). The large bones of the fish illustrated the macro and the small bones the micro variables affecting institutional commitment to “outreach and engagement” (p. 90). Weerts’ diagram was useful herein as it illustrated the corresponding macro components reviewed through the case study methodology. Although leadership was one of the macro elements described in Weerts’ framework, it framed items at the micro-level as well, items such as organizational structure and policies, faculty and staff involvement, campus communications, and institutional history and culture.

Weerts (2005) utilized the open systems theory to interpret higher education’s commitment to community outreach and engagement. The open systems theory emphasized
the “reciprocal tie that binds and relates the organization with those elements that surround
and penetrate it” (Scott, 1992, p. 93; Weerts, 2005, p. 86). Consistent with the theory, Weerts
noted that higher education institutions were organized anarchies made up of complex and
loosely connected coalitions of shifting interest groups capable of autonomous actions
(Weerts, 2005, p. 86). Therefore, there was an interdependent and reciprocal relationship
between higher education and the community. Though Weerts (2005) utilized this theory for
higher education, the same theory can be related to nonprofit organizations and community
partners. Like higher education, the local nonprofit community surrounding higher education
institutions are interconnected coalitions of groups working together toward a common cause
whether hunger, education, or social justice.

Summary.

Weerts’ (2005) five guiding factors for analysis in his multi-site case study:

- institutional history and culture
- leadership
- organizational structure and policies
- faculty and staff involvement
- campus communications

(listed in Table 1) informed this study. Specifically, it drew upon Weerts’ component of leadership. The table below details the variables and descriptors for each finding in his conceptual framework.
Table 1.1. Summary Table of Weerts’ (2005) Conceptual Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Culture and History</strong></td>
<td><strong>Institutional mission: outreach goals aligned with campus identity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Community needs and demographics shape campus culture and engagement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>History of relationship between institution and community</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Campus traditions and rituals</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership</strong></td>
<td><strong>Engagement highlighted in CEO’s speeches, documents, and strategic plans</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CEO provides intellectual and political support for engagement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Funding decisions/priorities include engagement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>“Public face” of engagement (e.g., host events, facilitate connections)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Structure and Policies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Structure of outreach leadership: centralized vs. decentralized, composition of staff devoted to engagement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Structure of community partnership relationships: shared governance, goals, staff</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Organizational supports: rewards, incentives, promotion, hiring practices, professional development, and technical support</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty and Staff Involvement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Engagement was represented as scholarship and incorporated into teaching</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Faculty/staff socialized to lead engagement: create mutually beneficial relationships, trust building within community</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Faculty/staff involve students in engagement efforts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Balance and harmony of faculty/staff roles in engagement activity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Collaboration between academic disciplines to address community issues</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus Communications</strong></td>
<td><strong>Information clearinghouse available for faculty/staff involved with engagement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>External communications provide community with visible</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>“Entry points” to access university partners</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Campus publications that highlight engagement (internal and external audiences)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although Weerts’ model frames this study, there are differences between the two projects. Weerts’ (2005) framework materialized from his study that examined civic engagement and outreach programs through the lens of university leaders and institutional infrastructure. The focus of the present study looks at university engagement and outreach through the lens of both community members and institutional leadership. Weerts’ (2005) framework was developed from research on public- not private liberal arts institutions. One goal of this study is to create civic engagement objectives for leaders of rural private liberal arts institutions to utilize on their campuses and in their communities. Another goal is to provide resources for community partners to better work with their local higher education institutions for shared synergy.

**Definition of Terms**

Throughout the study, the following elements of the orienting framework and research
questions were discussed. Terms relate to engagement both in the community and within campuses.

**Community**: Geographical regions within states linked by common experiences and concerns (Anderson & Jayakumar, as cited in Weerts, 2005).

**Institutional Culture**: Campus traditions, rituals, mission, and identity as they relate to the university’s community and community engagement activities.

**Institutional History**: the College’s development, history, and partnerships as they relate to civic and community engagement.

**Organizational Policies**: A university’s support system for engagement: rewards, incentives, promotion, hiring practices, professional development, technical support, and the formal and informal assessment and evaluation of engagement.

**Organizational Structure**: The way in which the partnership between the university and the community is designed to function (including governance, goal-setting, staffing, and committee work) and the university arrangements to recruit faculty for civic engagement projects, track, coordinate, and communicate its service to the state and local communities (Bringle & Hatcher, as cited in Weerts, 2005).

**Liberal Arts College**: A college or university that is legally controlled by a board which is largely independent of government and is self-perpetuating. As a self-perpetuating board, members “are elected by the board itself or are designated by non-governmental bodies” (Pattillo, 1990, p. 10). It is also distinctive in that “40 percent of its students major in a liberal discipline” (McPherson & Schapiro, 1999, p. 49).

**University’s Leadership**: The president or chief executive officer (CEO) of the university, chancellor, chief academic officer (CAO) or, chief student affairs officer (CSAO) providing a
public face of engagement (e.g. hosting events and facilitating connections); highlighting engagement in speeches, documents, and strategic plans; providing intellectual and political support for engagement; connecting civic engagement to the academic mission; and including engagement in their funding decisions and/or priorities.

Community Partners: Selected external university partners representing government, nonprofit, and other entities collaborating with the university on engagement initiatives (Adapted from Weerts & Sandmann, 2008).

Conclusion

This study focuses on how private liberal arts colleges in rural communities contribute to and address community needs ranging from education, healthcare, and social justice. By incorporating university leaders’ and community partners’ perspectives, the study explores strategic and tangible ways the university propels the surrounding area’s growth. It utilizes Weerts (2005) framework of institutional leadership in community engagement as a guiding conceptual framework for the study.

Chapter one offers an introduction to the focus and background of the study. It provides contextual literature guiding the framework of the research and addressing needs in rural communities. Additionally, chapter one gives context to the epistemology utilized and definitions referenced throughout the document. Chapter two explores the relevant literature of leadership and change; history of civic engagement, and the role of both rural communities and their economies. Chapter three discusses the collection and analysis of data through the use of a multi-case study design. Chapter four focuses on the five institutions studied and corresponding textual analysis while chapter five explores the theoretical implications of the data and analysis studied herein.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter highlights the literature in higher education, civic engagement, leadership, and nonprofit studies. Similar to inclusion of community partner and university leaders’ perspectives in this study, research impacting higher education and nonprofit leadership is included so as to gain a better understanding of the role of university leadership in civic engagement and with community. Together, the cited literature illustrates elements impacting institutional leadership and commitment for civic engagement in private liberal arts institutions.

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to contribute to the understanding of how university leadership at rural, private liberal arts institutions can more deeply integrate civic engagement into institutional priorities and be more responsive to community needs. The literature is grouped under five broad headings:

1) Literature within the scope of leadership in higher education with a particular focus on the role of university executives in promoting engagement and community change;

2) American higher education’s public purpose tracing the historical basis for the emphasis on service within higher education’s mission and focus;

3) Leadership challenges facing private liberal arts institutions;

4) The needs of community and nonprofit organizations with a focus on the operational needs of rural communities and nonprofits for sustainability and growth; and

5) The evolution of existing qualitative research on the role of institutional leadership and civic engagement including Weerts’ (2005).
Leadership in Higher Education

Presidential and administrative leadership from the institution are crucial to effective change and successful integration of civic engagement into an institution’s practices (Kezar, 2011; Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Maurrasse, 2001; Sandmann & Plater, 2009; Walshok, 1999; Ward, 1996; Zlotkowski, 1998). Though Perrakis, Galloway, Hayes, and Robinson-Galdo’s (2011) study of two- and four-year institutions did not focus on civic engagement specifically, it revealed a strong connection between presidential satisfaction and engagement with the community as a whole. A strong factor in satisfaction was the perception of what was versus what should be for the campus relative to institutional discord. Similar to Kezar and Eckel’s (2002) findings of transformational leadership, buy-in from the institution’s constituencies (faculty, staff, and students) was critical to successful leadership.

University presidents.

University presidents play a key role in community engagement’s integration into the civic engagement mission versus existence of a program alone. Sandmann and Plater’s (2009) study of university presidents who were involved in civic engagement as a component of their leadership revealed two key ways for presidents to foster civic leadership. The leader’s role in civic engagement was defined as first understanding the leader’s role through executive leadership and personal mission. Second, the role was leadership to advance civic engagement through messages of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chief Academic Officer (CAO), setting institutional direction, and organizing campus structure to support civic engagement.

Strong university leadership has produced interesting success stories for study and exploration. At Providence College, President Rev. John F. Cunningham played a pivotal role in the creation of a service learning and civic engagement center. In 1993, he gathered faculty
and university leaders together to develop a plan and advise him in a grant application for $5 million. From the faculty and administrators who were a part of the gathering, a subcommittee formed that drafted the proposal. Providence College received the grant funding and was able to form the Feinstein Institute for Public Service which created an endowment for the institute, an academic major, and a building to house the program (Battistoni, 1998). Through the president’s leadership of both acquiring resources and connecting people, the college developed its first service learning and civic engagement initiative that developed into a vital, strong program affecting students and the community. Models of university leadership in civic engagement provide that “college and university presidents are essential to the continuation, expansion, and enhancement of community partnerships” (Maurrasse, 2001, p. 7). This is an interesting transition in today’s environment of process-driven and team direction: “leadership studies have started to view people who do not hold positions of authority or power as being part of the leadership process” (Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006, p. 23). Similar to the traditional presidential role, university leaders in administrative leadership positions also have an important part to play in civic engagement on their campuses.

**Leadership through university programs.**

Zlotkowski (1998) explored multiple service learning programs and universities using a case study design. Service learning programming was included here as one academic component of civic engagement on a college campus. The University of Pennsylvania’s leadership and approach was one example of civic engagement for economic and community development. Zlotkowski (pp. 140-142) emphasized the importance of leadership’s position in the success of the project.
During her time as CEO of the University of Pennsylvania, President Judith Rodin was a significant force in the university’s role to revitalize and strengthen West Philadelphia. Built on steps set in motion by her predecessor, Dr. Sheldon Hackney, and the historical roots of the institution, Rodin envisioned possibilities for partnerships that would benefit and strengthen both the university’s reach and the community’s economic strength (Ostrander, 2004, p. 82). Rodin’s leadership was built on the university’s commitment to the surrounding West Philadelphia community. With efforts spanning $200 million to develop new businesses, expand income-generating opportunities for residents, and improve housing, the university had a tremendous impact on the economic development of its surrounding community. The university was part of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Outreach Partnership Program that provided grant funds for urban campuses to engage with their surrounding communities through local housing, infrastructure, economic development, neighborhood revitalization, health care, crime, or planning (HUD COPC, 2013). All efforts were coordinated out of the executive vice president’s office with the support of the president. The partnership with the West Philadelphia community created 140 new jobs for residents. Additionally, the university made an effort to hire local contractors therefore supporting the community. The work led to a job-training program to foster local employment in hotels and the service industry (Maurasse, 2001, pp. 36-39).

The programs between the university and its partnerships were built on a principle of “mutual gain” where the University of Pennsylvania “ultimately calls the shots” (Maurasse, 2001, p. 37). Given the number of people the university employed, its location in the community, and customer base provided by students, it had a significant amount of power in the partnership. Still, the university remained cognizant that academic institutions are economic
engines. In President Judith Rodin’s words, “Decades of experience and the wisdom of community partners and advisors have convinced us that a piecemeal response to today’s urban realities is no response at all. Our approach must be multi-faceted, our resolve stronger than ever” (Maurasse, 2001, p. 34). As president, Rodin provided leadership and served as a champion for campus community partnerships. The University of Pennsylvania continued its commitment to empowering and strengthening its surrounding community under its current President, Dr. Amy Guttmann. The University’s commitment to its public purpose is not contingent on the president’s leadership alone. Rather, it has been built through a long-term university commitment.

**Leadership and innovation.**

Higher education leaders face a number of challenges and opportunities that either force or challenge innovation. As noted in Goldstein, Hazy and Lichtenstein (2010), the most innovative practices occur at the point of criticalization or crucial periods for organizations. This can be leadership transition, economic hardship, or a shift in the organizational realities. According to Dew (2012), higher education leaders face change from an economic perspective through a reduction in funding with increasing cost demands, reductions in research funding, increasing athletic costs, and increasing student debt. Times of fiscal reduction are typically not times for expansion of services for most institutions.

Kezar (2011) argued that there are effective ways to facilitate change and improve practices in higher education within the face of challenging times. In fact, challenging times lead to the greatest amount of innovations. She discussed that the way to affect change in higher education is through fostering deliberation and discussion, networks, and external supports and incentives. She highlighted the service learning and civic engagement network for their
leadership and grassroots approach to building a movement of change within higher education. Kezar (2011) noted, “Service learning leaders focus on local networks, recognizing that innovation needs buy-in and motivation within the local community and it should be designed from the bottom up” (p. 245). By building national and regional networks that span beyond the internal institutional connections, the Campus Compact and service learning movements developed with increasing strength. Kezar’s research challenged leaders to look at innovative change through fostering professional dialogue, changing systems for innovative practice, and providing seed money to support innovative growth.

**Leadership and change.**

Change takes many forms in higher education. Transformational change is far-reaching and affects an institution holistically. Kezar and Eckel’s (2002) multiple-site case study of institutions over a four year period revealed that institutions with successful transformational change had a willing president or strong administrative leadership; pervasive and effective communication; rewards and incentives; and developing support structures. Inherent in these findings, though not stated, was that effective change required time alongside the key features. Repeatedly, leadership, systems, and resources were crucial for effective change. In the literature, both land grant institutions and metropolitan research universities were studied. In regards to innovation and change in the existing studies, liberal arts institutions were not included. Brinkhurst, Rose, Maurice, and Ackerman (2011) provided a good example of transformational change in the context of environmentally sustainable changes for higher education. Their findings supported the need for leadership at the top administrative levels to the student grass-roots level with a healthy infusion of staff and faculty leadership. Innovative
change in higher education does not occur in isolation but rather occurs in partnership with its internal and external stakeholders.

**Summary.**

The leadership literature indicates that strong presidential leadership impacts the role of civic engagement within an institution. It provides both data and documented stories of the difference strong presidential leadership makes on civic engagement’s institutional effectiveness. Leadership in civic engagement is present both through individual campus programs and through institution-wide strategic integration within the college’s mission. Leadership in civic engagement is innovative. Service learning and civic engagement are examples of innovative, creative leadership within higher education at a time when private colleges seek to redefine their unique brand. Civic engagement and leadership have the power to transform a community and an institution.

**American Higher Education’s Public Purpose**

Higher education institutions have always been built on the vision of creating “a better society and are essential to a healthy deliberative democracy” (Kezar, Chambers, & Burkhardt, 2005, p. xiii). The public purpose in American higher education originated from a charter between higher education and society. In return for what society provides, such as “tangible resources, political support, raw materials, and a guiding influence,” colleges and universities are committed to “developing research to improve society, training leaders for public service, educating citizens to serve the democracy, increasing economic development, and critiquing public policy” (Kezar et al., 2005, p. xiii). This charter is sometimes referred to as a compact, agreement, or covenant. It is the foundation of the higher education system today.
**Charter between higher education and society.**

According to the National Center for Postsecondary Improvement (2002), the charter between higher education and society affirms the role of colleges and universities in ensuring national economic strength and competitiveness. Colleges and universities produce skilled workers. Yet, they also serve the public interest through creating an educated citizenry, preserving and advancing knowledge in all fields, and opening the doors of higher education to any student who exhibits a desire and commitment to learn. Similarly, Guttmann (as cited in Couturier, 2005, p. 87) posited that colleges and universities today have the responsibility to serve their local communities by increasing access, integrating knowledge, and engaging locally and globally. American higher education institutions are built on a commitment to foster education of significance and values that are based on leadership, access and excellence, as well as the enhancement of community engagement. The mission statements of many colleges and universities in the United States are evidence of the same ideal by emphasizing the critical connection between higher education and the public good (Kezar, Chambers, & Burkhardt, 2005). As Ramaley (2007) put it, “Institutions of higher education have always believed that the world outside the campus deserves their attention in ways ranging from detached observation to direct involvement in partnerships” (p. 5).

Universities cannot look at their role as scholarship and teaching alone. Rather, the “universities’ intellectual independence comes with responsibilities not only to the world of scholarship, but also to the cultural and social aspirations we have for ourselves and our descendants” (Shapiro, 2005, p. 38). Shapiro argued that human beings’ uniqueness draws from “not simply their desire to know, understand, and give shape to their place and time on this planet, but also their complementary desire to give their efforts greater meaning” (Shapiro,
2005, p. 38). How then can the desire to find greater meaning and serve community through higher education be implemented?

Through the foundational lens of John Dewey and Ernest Boyer, there was a call for a return to community as a means to foster democratic engagement (Checkoway, 2001; National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, 2012.) Checkoway (2001) presented a multi-university strategy for a university moving from a research-first culture to a community-first culture. He argued that a civically engaged campus was more than an institution that utilized service learning as pedagogy. It was an institution that looked at its leadership through the context of its civic mission. Ostrander (2004) notes that “one of the appeals of university civic engagement is that it seems to reach across (or over)...contested and contradictory roles of higher education in our society” (p. 76). Civic engagement emphasizes practical, applicable skills that respond to economic and community growth while also producing new, relevant scholarship. Kezar’s (2011) literature called for scaling up education for greater capacity to build a stronger democratic citizenry. However, Kezar was not the only voice calling for a re-envisioning of higher education through the lens of John Dewey and Ernest Boyer. In 2012, the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement released its report and recommendations of integrating civic mission with community need. Through its five key recommendations, researchers and practitioners alike call for higher education to

1) Reclaim and reinvest in the fundamental civic and democratic mission of schools and of all sectors within higher education;

2) Enlarge the current national narrative that erases civic aims and civic literacy as educational priorities;
3) Advance a contemporary, comprehensive framework for civic learning;
4) Capitalize upon the interdependent responsibilities of K-12 and higher education; and
5) Expand the number of robust, generative civic partnerships and alliances, locally, nationally and globally to address common problems, empower people to act, strengthen communities, and nations, and generate new frontiers of knowledge (vi).

The debate over the appropriate role for higher education within the context of civic education is ongoing from campus to campus.

**Higher education institutions’ roles in their communities.**

Institutions of higher education have long been engaged in their communities. “World and national events as well as changes in educational theories, student and faculty expectations, and the level of support available from government agencies and private foundations” have affected the changing role and engagement of colleges and universities (Ross, 2002, p. 1). The give and take relationship that always existed between universities and society was the driving force behind an awakening interest, or renewal, of higher education’s responsibility to the outside world (Shapiro, 2005; Trani, 2008). Barber (1992) asserted that it was unclear in the 1990s whether “the university had a civic mission” or whether it had “any discernable mission at all” (p. 195). Barber (1992) called for the centrality of community to education. The publication of Ernest Boyer’s *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (1990) drew national attention to faculty roles and responsibilities in helping universities, become more responsive to the needs of community. Boyer’s new paradigm in education called for balancing discovery, integration of knowledge, teaching and service as general areas of scholarship. Reconsidering faculty teaching, the service components of their work, and the
evaluation of their scholarship became integral to the movement towards American higher education resurgence and reform. Civic engagement today “contests the conduct of research without the active involvement of people outside the academy who may be knowledgeable about the issues and affected by the outcome of the research” (Ostrander, 2004, p. 77).

Through a multi-site case study methodology of campuses who had integrated civic engagement into their institutions for an extended period of time, Ostrander (2004) found that the institutions placed a “high priority on recognizing and understanding local factors both on campus and in the surrounding community” (p. 89). When there was not a driving need either internal to the institution or external to the community, the institution had a “fully articulated, intellectual, educational rationale or theory of change” (p. 89). Intellectually, civic engagement drew on theories of “pedagogy, personal transformation, self-development, and individual change” (p. 89). Civic engagement and its broader umbrella of experiential education was articulated through a theory of change based on “moral development” (p. 89). Civic engagement was also described through theories of citizenship and democracy. They were rooted in maintaining a strong democracy by educating students who carry out their citizenship in “everyday life at work and in their neighborhoods” (p. 90). Most relevant to the study herein, civic engagement was also rooted in institutional and social change theories that were drawn on the “application of knowledge generated in partnership with local communities” (p. 90).

The scholarship of engagement was funded by additional private associations, such as the Pew Charitable trusts, Ford Foundation, and Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, to name a few. The Ford and Carnegie Foundations were highly interested in promoting public scholarship and civic responsibility in colleges and universities (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; Ford Foundation, as cited in Ross, 2002). Ross
(2002) asserted that academic support came through a growing body of literature on engagement and university-community partnerships in higher education. The renewed focus on civic engagement examines the shift of institutions of higher educational culture into more “integral, active, and long-term participant[s]” in their communities (Ross, 2002, p. 16).

**Call for American colleges to return to service roots.**

The call for American colleges and universities to “return to their roots” by building partnerships with their communities in order to address their needs in collaborative ways had support from faculty, students, private corporations and foundations, and national and professional organizations across the country. Federal support launched in the 1990s provided seed money to connect campuses and communities and renewed the role of colleges and universities as agents of democracy (O'Connor, 2006). The term ‘Scholarship of Engagement’ coined by Boyer (1990), spurred private foundation investment. In the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Boyer (1994) discussed his vision for the creation of the new American college; one that was committed to excellence in teaching and research, which also connects thought to action, and theory to practice (Boyer, 1994). As a result, the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) and the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC), an association of more than 500 colleges and universities, responded to Boyer’s call to promote the scholarship of engagement. In an effort to advance engagement capacity in private colleges and universities, the CIC and its grant unit, the Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education (CAPHE), used the Engaging Communities and Campuses grant program to advance engagement capacity through attending to faculty skills and knowledge, institutional infrastructure, academic culture, and partner relationships (Pasque, Hendricks, & Bowman, 2005). Additional higher education associations responded to Boyer’s (1994) call by creating
and sponsoring initiatives, programs, workshops, and conferences to promote and implement the same concept of engagement.

Public universities were called upon to help enrich students’ educational experience by working on the issues that plagued their local communities. In 1996, the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities was created to redefine the future agenda of public universities and to recommend strategies. Supported by the Kellogg foundation, the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges published *Returning to our Roots* which called on all state and land-grant colleges and universities to return to their original public missions of responding to society’s needs (Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, 1999). In 2001, the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-grant Universities provided five strategies to guide the advancement of the new engagement agenda: (a) transform institutional thinking about service so that engagement becomes a priority and part of the university’s mission; (b) develop an engagement plan; (c) encourage interdisciplinary research, teaching, and learning opportunities; (d) provide defined incentives to encourage and support faculty involvement in engagement activities; and (e) ensure stable and secure funding in order to support and sustain the engagement agenda (Ross, 2002).

Marullo and Edwards (2000) claimed that civically engaged pedagogy and institutional strategy lead to a better society and community. Due to “market forces that have so vastly altered the urban landscape” (p. 747), it had left “institutions of higher education stuck in communities that have been economically disinvested in and politically disempowered, giving the universities self-interest to find ways to improve the surrounding neighborhood” (p. 747). It
has become mutually and strategically beneficial for campus and community to work together to strengthen community and institutional investments.

**Ways for rural colleges and universities to engage.**

The Rural Alliance for Service Learning identified five ways for rural colleges and universities to engage with their communities (2011). First, there was the leader model, where the university served as a leader in the community, sought to improve the community through its knowledge, research ability, political power, and resources. The university approached its leadership in partnership with the community or by pushing it through the change process. Second, the institution served as a facilitator. It convened mentors, organized, and developed initiatives that strengthened the surrounding community. Colleges were the glue that binds the community together to make substantive and systemic changes. They drew upon their research resources, links with influential board members, and other resources to improve the community. Third, a college acted collaboratively. By seeing the community as an equal partner, it sought to find ways to combine knowledge, expertise, and resources for mutual benefit. This model existed without political pressure or academically imposed priorities. Fourth, a college saw its role as following the lead of the community. The community accessed the institution’s resources by asking for them. There was not an assumption that the university’s expertise or resources are needed. Fifth, the college ignored the local community and surrounding districts. The college was an isolated entity in the community. This model is the impetus for the “ivory tower” and “town-gown” symbols (Rural Alliance for Service Learning, 2011).

**Limited resources.**

Not all university presidents place a strong emphasis on a comprehensive approach to community engagement. Although civic engagement took the form of specific programs on
campus to strong partnerships with nonprofit and community partners (Holland, 2009; McNall, Reed, Brown, & Allen, 2009; Thomson, Smith-Tolkein, Naidoo, & Bringle, 2011), civic engagement has not become a sustainable part of every college’s work. Holland (2009) explored infrastructure within campuses that gives the best opportunity for successful implementation and long-lasting sustainability. Institutional impacts of engagement existed ranging from strong leadership, coordinating infrastructure, internal and external funding and fundraising, approaches to and uses of assessment and monitoring, engagement definition and plans, professional development, community voice, reward and recognition of engagement, curricular engagement, student voice, scholarship from curricular engagement, and outreach and partnership. McNall, Reed, Brown, and Allen (2009) found that community partners who worked with university campuses through civic engagement partnerships needed similar resources and benchmarks to those stated by Holland (2009) for sustainable student learning relationships.

**Summary.**

The history of civic engagement within the higher education landscape describes colleges’ unique role to produce a skilled workforce that is dedicated to improving society. Both Boyer and Dewey’s literature speaks to the power of education to strengthen community and support a democratically engaged population. Education is not about skills alone but about leaving the community, broadly defined, stronger. Civic engagement experienced resurgence in American higher education in the 1990s to the present with additional mission-based emphasis and development of both national and foundation funding resources. Yet, there are not enough systemic, sustainable resources on college campuses for civic engagement. The continued development of civic engagement is resource dependent within the institution. Hence, the role
of the university’s leadership to fuel resources and support is critical and does make a positive impact on the institution.

**Challenges for Liberal Arts Institutions**

Private liberal arts institutions face interesting challenges in the higher education marketplace unique from public universities. DiConti (2004) noted that “in the twenty-first century, the quest for institutions of higher education then became one of finding the golden mean between the preparation of careers and the cultivation of values” (p. 181). This spoke to a larger debate in higher education of attracting and retaining students as well as marketing higher education to the college consumer. However, for liberal arts institutions it poses an interesting set of challenges. According to McPherson and Schapiro (1999), public and private institutions “shifted their commitments…toward undergraduate professional programs (p. 49). With the development of the Carnegie Classification system, the definition of liberal arts institutions narrowed to specify schools with “at least 40 percent of its students ‘majoring’ in a liberal arts discipline” (p. 49). Today, the Carnegie Foundation does not have a classification for liberal arts colleges but rather for baccalaureate institutions (Carnegie Foundation, 2013).

The challenge for liberal arts institutions is to find the “golden mean” between surviving and thriving for “all those involved must take note of a school’s culture which is shaped by many factors” (DiConti, 2004, p. 181). “Liberal arts colleges are, with rather few exceptions, part of the private nonprofit sector in American higher education” (McPherson & Schapiro, 1999, p. 50). As such, liberal arts institutions’ business models are based on revenue from tuition and “income on endowment” (p. 51). This causes a particular challenge for the “less affluent and less selective among private institutions” because each liberal arts college is unique to its particular community (p. 60). This poses opportunity for partnership for the college and
its surrounding area. After all, the role of education, especially liberal education, means “cultivating the ability for independent thought, for expanding the capacity to cope with new ideas and new outlooks” (p. 69).

**Liberal arts institutions’ unique hallmarks to teaching and learning.**

Liberal arts institutions have three unique hallmarks in their approach to teaching and learning: “critical thinking, moral and civic character, and using knowledge to improve the world” (Chopp, 2014, p.13). Through critical thinking, students refine the capability to synthesize, analyze, and critique data while developing rich, thoughtful explanation. The critical thinking dimension of the liberal arts focuses on preparing students for a lifetime of work, regardless of profession, and contribution to society. Residential liberal arts colleges “cultivate a moral and civic character in individual choices and contribution to the common good” (p. 14). Whether through residential living, leadership programs, athletics, or other campus based programs; students develop responsible expression of individual freedom along with contribution to the public good. The ability to “use knowledge and virtue to improve the world” is a hallmark of liberal arts institutions (p. 14). It supports the moral cultivation of the self toward contribution to the world and making it a better place to live. This engaged society is a hallmark of a liberal arts education (pp. 14-15).

**Opportunities for private liberal arts colleges.**

Small private liberal arts colleges faced unique economic challenges in 2008, 2009, and 2010 with uncertainty around international economic and banking systems. “Tuition, fees, and room and board generally account for two-thirds or more of the revenue at small private colleges” yet, uncertain economic times lead to concerns about tuition and enrollment numbers (Chabotar, 2010, p. 7). The financial crisis from 2008-2010 impacted small, private universities
through an increase in financial aid, decrease in fundraising dollars, increased debt, and budget and staff reductions (Chabotar, 2010, p. 9). As a result, “colleges pondered and sometimes implemented fundamental changes in mission, programs, and services…[and] added to their classic liberal arts curricula more active student engagement to the outside world” (Chabotar, 2010, p. 9).

Though stated many years before, T.H. Bell (1975) noted that “the small private college that rolls with the times will survive…. [those] that do not will not survive” (p. 351). Chabotar (2010) noted that liberal arts colleges must be “open and transparent about their fiscal situation” on campus by thinking differently about fundraising by replenishing or even increasing scholarship funds; reconsidering endowment-spending policies; utilizing financial aid strategically; focusing greater attention on retention of existing students; and making strategic budget reductions through reduced payroll rather than elimination of staff and faculty altogether (p. 9-11). Trostle and Hersh (2003) described Trinity College, a small private liberal arts institution in Hartford, Connecticut, as a college with a civic engagement “imperative of ‘enlightened necessity’ that began to transform both…the neighborhood and campus” (p. 16). The institution is located within a city that is a “stark example of an unequal America” with issues of low education rates, high unemployment, and high owner turn-over. The institution in this study, as do many liberal arts institutions, faced the question, “what should the role of a liberal arts institution be in such circumstances” (p. 16)? Trinity answered this question in many ways through its institutional focus, programs, and connections with the community. It realized that the community saw one institution but in reality it was both “academic and corporate” (p. 17). Therefore the institution developed a strategy that was corporate, curricular, and co-curricular. It was corporate in the manner that the institution operated as both an employer and
economic anchor in the community. The institution was curricular as the college examined what academic and civic engagement coursework was needed. Lastly, the college redefined students’ co-curricular work in the community and opportunities for student organizations to address specific community needs (p. 18). Private liberal arts institutions have a role to play in their communities. “We can’t ignore Main Street,” said President Joseph E. Gilmour of Wilkes University (Fischer, 2008, p. 1).

“Most liberal arts colleges are relative newcomers to” revitalizing their communities for they may “not have the wealth to make investments or to absorb the risk” involved. Therefore, “money spent on community projects must also benefit the campus” (Fischer, 2008, p. 2). Since faculty members have “high teaching loads” and “lack the administrative structure to support the efforts” the most successful “revitalization efforts have some combination of government, foundation, and business support.” Presidents included in the article note that they “take care not to undertake development projects that deviate too far from their core educational missions even if the projects would be good for the community” (Fischer, 2008, p. 4). President Stephen C. Ainlay of Union College in Schenectady, New York, noted that institutions must remember “you’re not a real-estate developer; you’re not the chamber of commerce; you’re not a social service agency….you’re an academic institution” (Fischer, 2008, p. 4). The college worked collaboratively with its surrounding neighborhood to bring new life to the city.

**Summary.**

Private liberal arts institutions’ charge differs from public and research institution’s purpose in three unique ways. Through their approach to teaching and learning, private liberal arts institutions emphasize critical thinking, moral and civic character, and knowledge to improve the world. These core elements present opportunities for a unique mission and brand.
As private liberal arts institutions have experienced financial challenges along with declining recruitment and retention numbers, civic engagement presents a unique opportunity to accomplish their defining approach to teaching and learning while making a difference in the surrounding community and attracting students who want to make a difference with their degree.

**Rural Communities and Nonprofit Organizations**

Higher education institutions in rural communities have a unique role as a collaborative partner. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2013), rural communities encompass all population, housing, and territory not included within an area of more than 50,000 people or not within an urban cluster of between 2,500 to 50,000 people.

**Community in rural America.**

Rural areas are not always agricultural, comprised of networks of kinship, and removed from the happenings of urban society (Brown & Swanson, 2003). Rural areas are decreasingly reliant on farm incomes and agricultural economies, have social relationships that are very similar to their urban counterparts, and are increasingly connected through the Internet and satellite television (Brown & Swanson, 2003). Less than ten percent of rural Americans live on farms (Whitener & Parker, 2007), but the stereotype of all rural areas as farming communities belied the more complex nature of rural life. Each rural community in America is uniquely different. As of the U. S. 2000 Census, there were over fifty-six million people living in the rural areas of the United States (Johnson, 2003). The U.S. Census Bureau defined settlements with a population of 2,500 persons or less or open country with a population density of less than 1,000 people per square mile as “rural farm” or “rural nonfarm” communities. The U.S.
Department of Agriculture describes “nonmetro” America as 75% of the land, but only 17% of the population.

**Economic impact on rural areas.**

Rural areas were negatively affected by the 2008-2009 recession. The poverty rate in nonmetro (rural) areas grew to 16.6% from 15.1%. Metro areas saw an increase of 1% whereas nonmetro areas experienced a 1.5% increase (USDA, 2011). Poverty in rural areas translated to high levels of unemployment. According to the USDA’s *Rural America at a Glance* annual report (2011), approximately 1.9 million people were unemployed in rural, nonmetro areas versus 12 million in metro areas during 2011. Unemployment in male-dominated industries ranging from construction to manufacturing increased between 2007-2011. However, employment in health care and education increased. These trends remained consistent with the five geographic areas studied.

**Nonprofit organizations’ capacity building needs in rural communities.**

Local governments, business associations, and nonprofit organizations, are legally incorporated entities that hold legitimate decision-making authority in the community. Community-based organizations, whether government or nonprofit, across rural communities can be as diverse as their economies (Lapping, 1999). Their organizational and leadership capacity are critical factors to success in local communities. Drucker (1990) stressed the connection between an organization's mission and the performance of the organization in meeting the goals that arise from the mission. He commented that, "The nonprofit organization exists to bring about a change in individuals and society" (p. 3). Mission and performance are interchangeable. In the nonprofit sector, performance of an organization is often correlated with its capacity to meet its mission and fulfill the goals of the organization. Connolly and Lukas
(2002, p.7) defined capacity building as "...the process of strengthening an organization in order to improve its performance and impact." The literature revealed many different aspects of capacity building. Its effectiveness has multiple definitions within the nonprofit sector. Each definition is depicted below by various researchers. Though each of the four definitions differ, each one points to a common characteristic of strengthening and addressing the core operational functions of an organization.

Paul Light (2004), in his research on capacity building, divided capacity building activities into four groups: those designed to improve external relations, those designed to improve internal structure, those designed to improve leadership, and those designed to improve the management systems. Nonprofit capacity has been divided into five categories by Nye and Glickman (1998). In their research they interviewed 50 community development corporations and 40 community development partners. They organized the findings around five categories of capacity: (1) resource capacity; (2) organizational capacity; (3) network capacity; (4) programmatic capacity; and (5) political capacity. Blumenthal (2003) divided capacity building activities into four categories based on “aspects of performance”: (1) organization stability, (2) financial stability, (3) program quality, and (4) program growth. Nonprofits engaged in capacity building activities for improved performance with the goal to enhance one or more of these four aspects.

Doherty and Mayer (2003) had "twelve building blocks" to assess their work with nonprofit organizations. The twelve areas were in four domains:

1) Organizational development- board functioning, staff functioning, administrative policies and procedures;
2) Asset development- fundraising, communications, balance between short and long term asset development;

3) Community linkages- leadership roles, external stakeholder relationships, community support;

4) Program and activities- program design, strategic activities, and learning from practice.

In their book, *High Performance Nonprofit Organizations*, Letts and her colleagues Letts, Ryan, & Grossman (1999) described three capacities of program delivery capacity, program expansion capacity, and adaptive capacity to varying degrees in the nonprofits studied. Nonprofit organizations engaged in capacity building activities to improve their levels of one or more of these basic capacities.

**Summary.**

The nature of rural America is changing. Rural communities are decreasingly reliant on agricultural industries and more interconnected through access to technology and social media. However, they do experience high numbers of poverty due to changing economic industries and lack of employment opportunities. Nonprofit organizations provide vehicles for local communities to address critical needs associated with high economic need.

**Civic Engagement Theories**

Weerts’ (2005) multi-case study along with Sandmann and Weerts (2008) as well as Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) qualitative studies of community boundary spanning roles provided context to this study and advanced the conceptual framework utilized to describe the role of higher education institutions in communities. Though their research focused on land-grant and urban research institutions, it provided a good framework and context for further discovery within private liberal arts institutions in rural communities.
Weerts’ (2005) case study of land-grant institutions explored how university executives, faculty, and staff articulated their commitment to civic and community engagement. He put particular emphasis on community partners’ perceptions of the universities’ actions and messages. The purpose of Weerts’ (2005) study was to illustrate ways for university leadership, faculty, and staff to better align their institution for integration of civic engagement. His research produced micro variables within each category. Within leadership, Weerts cited four visible actions that illustrated the university’s commitment to civic engagement. Table 2.1 lists each variable in relation to leadership.

Table 2.1. Weerts’ (2005) Micro Variables Relative to Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Engagement highlighted in CEO’s speeches, documents, and strategic plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CEO provides intellectual and political support for engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funding decisions/priorities include engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Public face” of engagement (e.g., host events, facilitate connections)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The micro variables listed are specific actions taken by university leaders to advance civic engagement. Weerts acknowledged that funding decisions and priorities relative to engagement were a critical part of university leaders’ role.

The study produced a conceptual framework into a fishbone configuration of the five macro variables (see Appendix C) affecting an institution’s leadership commitment: leadership, organizational structure and policies; faculty and staff involvement; campus communications; and institutional history and culture. Weerts (2005, October) described the five macro variables relative to existing findings and research:

1) Leadership: Institutional leadership was a key factor affecting civic engagement on college campuses. Multiple studies supported this factor (Maurrasse, 2001; Walshok, 1999; Ward, 1996; Votruba, 1996; Zlotkowski, 1998).
2) Organizational structure: The placement of civic engagement within the institution’s structure impacted its effectiveness. Multiple research studies suggested that institutionally centralized community outreach structures were more effective than decentralized systems. Their placement supported the research universities’ ability to track, coordinate, and communicate its service to the state and local communities (Weerts, 2002; Weiwel & Lieber, 1998). Externally, community partners needed ways to connect and collaborate with the institution. They wanted points of contact and systems to access the university’s resources (Lynton & Elman, 1987). It was also important for community partners to have a way to engage in leadership roles within civic engagement on campus and with students (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000).

3) Faculty and staff involvement: Zlotkowski (1998) emphasized the important role faculty and staff played in institutionalizing service and civic engagement values in the classroom. Faculty and staff participation was supported by institutional structures including tenure and promotion that enable time spent on civic engagement and service-learning work.

4) Institutional culture: Faculty, staff, and university perceptions of civic engagement and service-learning as ‘real’ pedagogy affected the ability of outreach to thrive at institutions (Dickson, Gallacher, Longden & Bartlett, 1985).

5) Internal and external communication: Strong centralized communication systems aided in institutionalization of civic engagement on college campuses (Mankin, 2000). Campus publications that targeted community partners and articulated the service outreach aspects of their universities can also serve to advance the institution’s public relations and marketing efforts (Holland, 1997).
Sandmann and Weerts (2008) utilized a case study methodology to look at two public research institutions: one land grant institution and one metropolitan, urban institution. They focused on how the two institutions used a public engagement agenda in their leadership. The study focused on the change in institutional boundaries to accommodate and implement public engagement. The researchers used the Carnegie Foundation’s definition of engagement to look at the institution’s role in their civic commitment through the lens of their history, mission, and location. Sandmann and Weerts (2008) utilized the conceptual framework provided by Levine (1980) for they focused on higher education institutions as complex organizations. Through this lens, Sandmann and Weerts researched the role of innovation and institutionalization in the public research university. Levine’s (1980) conceptual framework of boundary spanning and boundary contradiction provided a strong grounding for institutions’ implementation of civic engagement. In his analysis, organizational boundary spanning took place when the organization saw the difference between its current structure and innovation and still decided to implement change toward innovation. If the change did not meet organizational norms, the institution’s boundaries contracted and ended the move toward innovative practice. Sandmann and Weerts’ (2008) study found that innovation through the lens of the public research agenda and civic engagement did not occur in the institutions studied unless the “combined forces for change are greater than the forces preserving the status quo” (p. 193). They acknowledged that larger public research institutions were sometimes motivated by their historical commitment to engagement where younger urban research institutions saw civic engagement as an innovative practice that sets the university apart from its competitors. The study explored Levine’s (1980) framework on boundary spanning and led to an institutional framework guided by both community partner and university leaders’ perceptions.
More recently, Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) research on the role of community engagement and boundary spanning and research institutions narrowed the findings further from the public research agenda to the specific exploration of civic engagement. Their study looked at how research institutions build bridges with community partners and grow their organizational capacity for engagement. Boundary spanning theory served as the framework for the exploration. Weerts and Sandmann asked specific questions regarding how boundary spanning roles were defined through the lens of community engagement; who served as boundary spanners for the university; and how the boundary spanners strengthened or reduced the role of civic engagement within the institution. Their research produced a conceptual framework of the role of boundary spanning through the engagement lens at research institutions displayed as figure 2.1. below.

**Figure 2.1.** Weerts & Sandmann (2010) Framework for Boundary Spanning Roles Associated with University-Community Engagement
Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) research produced four distinct roles of boundary spanners. They explored their practices and challenges while also expanding existing research on boundary spanning. Their framework added to existing research by incorporating community partners’ perceptions of individuals within public research institutions who play critical leadership roles for civic engagement. The x and y axis configuration of the framework presents boundary spanning roles on a continuum based on specific leadership roles within the institution. The x-axis looks at roles through “task orientatations; from technical, practical tasks to socio-emotional or leadership tasks” (p. 720). In comparison, the y-axis explores the social relationship between the community and the leader. As such, “spanners may be more integrated with the community or institution based on a number of factors including professional or personal background, experience, disciplinary expertise, and position or overall role in the organization” (p. 720). Weerts and Sandmann acknowledge that the four quadrants of the framework are not static. Leaders may fall on various levels of the spectrum and their position in the model is not static. For effective leadership in an institution’s civic engagement, all boundary spanners must work collaboratively. They cannot serve as siloed individuals. Rather, they are collaborative partners for civic engagement. The boundary spanning roles are not always in congruence with their role in the organization. They acknowledge that “community based problem solvers-those who are community integrated but employed by the university-may face difficulties in remaining neutral while negotiating needs of the community and university” (p. 722).

**Summary.**

Weerts (2005), Sandmann and Weerts (2008) with Levine’s (1980) framework, and Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) research cannot be siloed. Individually, each study looks at the
role of public institutions in engagement. Collectively, they illustrate the evolution of civic engagement within higher education. In the short five year span covered by their research, engagement transitioned from an institution’s outreach to the community to its integration within it through engagement. The first model identified in Weerts (2005) articulated the campus and community partnership as a one way street from campus to community. In the second model, Sandmann and Weerts (2008) incorporate community partners’ viewpoints through the lens of an institution’s public engagement agenda. By the third model, Weerts and Sandmann (2010) look at community boundary spanning roles through the perspective of both community partners and university leaders with an emphasis of a two-way reciprocal street for institutional engagement with community.

Conclusion

Chapter two reviews literature detailing leadership in higher education from a university-wide and presidential perspective. It explores the challenges and opportunities leaders face in the higher education landscape. The chapter also explores the history of civic engagement within higher education. It looks at the challenges liberal arts institutions and their leadership face in the current educational landscape. Lastly, it reviews challenges faced by rural communities and opportunities for leadership by their surrounding institutions. Chapter two includes a discussion of the evolution of Weerts (2005) research through Sandmann and Weerts (2008) as well as Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) study of community boundary spanning in civic engagement.
Chapter 3: Methodology and Research Approach

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to contribute to the understanding of how university leadership influenced the institution’s civic engagement. This study focused on five rural private liberal arts institutions. I, the researcher, used a qualitative approach to allow for an in-depth qualitative exploration of professional and personal experiences relative to civic engagement at these institutions. I used a multi-site case study design to conduct interviews, gather field notes, and utilize a document analysis to provide an exploration of university leadership relative to civic engagement.

Research Questions

The primary research questions in this study focused on relationships, resources, and strategic vision relative to rural private liberal arts university leadership:

1) How does institutional leadership inform community partners’ perceptions about institutional commitment to civic engagement? In turn, how do the community partners’ perceptions of community needs inform institutional leadership in civic engagement?

2) How does the university’s leadership keep the college involved through civic engagement?

3) How has including community engagement in the strategic documents helped the institution?

4) How does university leadership utilize community engagement as a leadership strategy?
5) What motivates university leaders to integrate civic engagement into their leadership?

Orienting Framework

Weerts’ (2005) provided the initial conceptual framework for the study. I utilized the leadership macro variable articulated in the fishbone frame (see Appendix C) to focus on civic engagement and institutional leadership roles. I also incorporated Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) framework of community boundary spanning roles into this study (see Appendix D). The two frameworks presented five years apart provide positioning for additional conceptual findings herein. Weerts’ (2005) model provides historical grounding of the evolution of civic engagement within higher education. With the inclusion of community boundary spanning literature, Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) framework (see figure 2.2.) became an additional conceptual basis for this study. The further along I got in the research process, the more I understood that the research questions could not integrate into Weerts’ (2005) framework alone. Rather, the research and findings reflect the presence of community boundary spanning theory, found in the Weerts and Sandmann (2010) model, within the relationship between rural communities and their surrounding college campuses.

Components used from each theory.

Weerts’ (2005) framework was designed to measure institutional commitment to outreach and engagement. I explored the leadership macro elements that supported influential university leadership in civic engagement. Since leadership was one of the elements outlined in Weerts as supporting institutional commitment, it was noted in the revised framework developed herein (see figure 3.1.) as the component upon which all macro elements depended upon for successful university leadership in civic engagement. Leadership attributes were the
THE TIE THAT BINDS

lens through which institutional engagement and university commitment to civic engagement were explored. Additionally, community partners’ investment was added as a critical macro element given the focus of this study on both university leadership and community perceptions of leadership relative to community engagement. Unlike Weerts’ (2005) “fishbone” diagram that outlined macro and micro variables in the form of the fish bones. The diagram (see figure 3.1.1) depicted an interconnected circular structure since each macro element was dependent on others. Each macro variable must be present in concert with each other though one does not lead to the other.

![Modified Conceptual Framework for University Leadership in Civic Engagement](image)

**Figure 3.1.** Modified Conceptual Framework for University Leadership in Civic Engagement

From the blended models of Weerts (2005) and Weerts and Sandmann (2010), I identified how potential forms of data could address the various components (see Table 3.1).
Table 3.1. Five Forms of Data Sources Relative to Weerts’ (2005) Conceptual Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Data Source 1</th>
<th>Data Source 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Interview university leaders</td>
<td>Interview community partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Structure</td>
<td>Financial allocation</td>
<td>Mission, vision, and strategic plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty/Staff Involvement</td>
<td>Interview university leaders</td>
<td>Interview community partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Communications</td>
<td>Interview university leaders</td>
<td>Strategic plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History/Culture</td>
<td>Interview university leaders</td>
<td>Interview community partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methods and Procedures

The study was a qualitative study that explored university leaders’ and community stakeholders’ perceptions of civic engagement at five liberal arts institutions in rural communities. For the study, the Bonner Foundation network was utilized to identify potential participating institutions. From those consenting institutions, I interviewed university leaders and their community partners. I also conducted a document analysis of various institutional reports.

Setting.

Qualitative case study research explored a “bounded system” involving multiple forms of content (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). In this study, the Bonner Foundation network of schools provided a bounded system of private liberal arts institutions that expressed a commitment to civic engagement through support of the Bonner Scholars or Bonner Leaders Programs, both student leadership models supported through the Foundation.

The Bonner Foundation network was selected because these colleges and universities had a willingness and capacity to implement community engagement and a civically driven leadership development model on their campus to be a part of the program. As described on the Bonner Foundation website, “The Bonner Program is designed to transform not only the students who are directly supported by the program, but also the campus and community in which they serve and learn.” The program’s goals are centered on students, community,
campus, and higher education. For student recipients, the program provides students with high financial need a college education, creates a supportive environment on campus for service and civic engagement, and gives students a chance to give back while in college. For the community, the program focuses the work of faculty, students, and staff within local communities for greater cooperation and collaboration. For the college or university, the program builds a culture of service that translates the mission of the university into community outreach and engagement. In higher education at large, the Bonner Program provides a model for colleges and universities wanting to integrate a community service scholarship program as part of their engagement strategy. It also provides a consortium of colleges that both share the common commitment to service and a track record in existing implementation of civic engagement.

Campuses in the Bonner Foundation network were selected by first looking at all private liberal arts institutions in rural areas given the scope of the study. The President of the Bonner Foundation assisted in reaching out to presidents of institutions with the scope of the study. Once the college presidents and directors of the campus-based Bonner Scholars programs agreed to the scope of the study, I contacted each one directly for scheduling and follow-up.

**Interview and document analysis.**

To explore how Bonner university leaders and their community partners perceive civic engagement and how institutional artifacts relate to such perceptions, I conducted interviews and analyzed various university documents. From each of the five universities, I interviewed three leaders at each institution (n=15) and two of each institution’s community partners (n=10), were interviewed for a total of 25 interviews. To gain a deeper understanding of the leaders’ perception of civic engagement, I analyzed the strategic plan, mission, vision, and
financial documents of their institutions. This use of multiple sources in the case study enabled triangulation and further validity of the data explored (Yin, 2009, pp. 40-42). More than one form of qualitative method was used to triangulate and study leadership in civic engagement.

Table 3.2. below describes the data utilized in the case study along with a brief description of each institution and its mission. The mission was highlighted here because of the emphasis on it as a driving force in the university’s leadership in the focus of the study.

**Table 3.2. Profiles of Data Collected from Institutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Case 1: A</th>
<th>Case 2: B</th>
<th>Case 3: C</th>
<th>Case 4: D</th>
<th>Case 5: E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Mission</td>
<td>The college’s foundation dates to the 1800s when it was established by the Presbyterian Church as an institution providing education for teachers and clergy in the region. The college has a student population of 1,300.</td>
<td>Founded in the 1800s as the first interracial, coeducational institution, the college has a student population of 1,600 students.</td>
<td>Affiliated with the Methodist Church, the college is a regional institution with a student population of 2,267.</td>
<td>The college is an independent, residential, nationally recognized liberal arts institution shaped by its roots in the Religious Society of Friends tradition. It has a student population of 1,192.</td>
<td>Founded by the Methodist Church, the college is home to both a college of liberal arts and school of music. It has a student population of 2,396.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Population</td>
<td>28,658</td>
<td>13,763</td>
<td>18,732</td>
<td>46,879</td>
<td>10,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Interviews</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material Reviewed</td>
<td>Interviews, strategic plan, Form 990</td>
<td>Interviews, strategic plan, Form 990</td>
<td>Interviews, strategic plan, Form 990</td>
<td>Interviews, strategic plan, Form 990</td>
<td>Interviews, strategic plan, Form 990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interviews.**

The semi-structured interviews provided guided conversations with university leaders and community partners to inform the case study analysis. The interviews were the most fundamental source of data, for they explored the information provided in the strategic documents and financials in more detail. Though a list of questions was pursued in each interview, the conversation was more fluid than rigid (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). As described by Table 3.3., the interview questions were structured around five levels of case study questions (Yin, 2009, p. 87).
Table 3.3. Five Levels of Questions for Case Study Interviews (Yin, 2009, p. 87)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Questions emphasized specific questions for interviewees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Questions asked of the specific case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Questions looked for the pattern of findings across multiple cases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Questions asked of an entire study. They referred to literature or published data reviewed that informed the specific case study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Questions asked about policy recommendations and conclusions. They look beyond the specific scope of the case study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each type of question asked in the case study herein had a differing purpose. The majority of the questions were level 1 and 2 questions. For example, “what motivates you to integrate community engagement into the university” was a level 1 question, for it focused on the interviewee specifically and how his/her leadership was influenced by personal experience. However, “describe how the community, students, faculty, and staff experience the college’s vision” was a level 2 question for it focused on the university’s approach to integration of community engagement on campus. Both types of questions were asked of the community partners and university leaders because it was important to look at the use of community engagement by the university as well as the particular needs and influences facing the leaders and community partners. The interviews used a focused interview approach since persons were engaged for a short period of time (Merton, Fiske, & Kendall, 1990). The interviews were open-ended with a conversational style and all questions were drawn from the interview protocol. The information gained in the interviews was explored further by a transcript analysis of strategic documents (mission, vision, and business model) and financial budgets.

**Document artifacts.**

I identified needed documents for analysis through online research and personal interviews. First, I explored the websites for each institution. Then, I looked at the mission
statements, vision statements, and available strategic plans. During each one-on-one conversation, I asked each president about their strategic plans and documents that should be reviewed. Each president provided a copy of their strategic plan or other strategic documents for textual analysis. Additionally, I asked each president for the institution’s civic engagement budget. The institutions were hesitant to give the civic engagement budget since they described parts of the civic engagement mission throughout the institution. Therefore, the Form 990 was used, which is public information, as well as information by request from the college leadership as needed for information not available online. The Form 990 was publically available through the National Center for Charitable Statistics’ website.

**Summary.**

I conducted all interviews and gathered the above documents. Table 3.4. lists the type method and the research goal I identified for each component. These goals would inform my analysis of each.

**Table 3.4. Method and Research Goal for Data Collection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Research Goal</th>
<th>Theoretical Resource</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Focused Interview</td>
<td>Probing</td>
<td>Yin (2009); Creswell (1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Leader 2</td>
<td>Focused Interview</td>
<td>Probing</td>
<td>Yin (2009); Creswell (1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Leader 3</td>
<td>Focused Interview</td>
<td>Probing</td>
<td>Yin (2009); Creswell (1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Leader 1</td>
<td>Focused Interview</td>
<td>Probing</td>
<td>Yin (2009); Denzin &amp; Lincoln (2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Leader 2</td>
<td>Focused Interview</td>
<td>Probing</td>
<td>Yin (2009); Denzin &amp; Lincoln (2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Plan</td>
<td>Textual Analysis</td>
<td>Analyzing</td>
<td>Yin (2009); Gee (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financials</td>
<td>Textual Analysis</td>
<td>Analyzing</td>
<td>Yin (2009); Gee (2011)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Transcript and Document Analyses**

After completing interviews and gathering documents, I began analyzing the data. Textual analysis was used for each, for the analysis is an examination of the “study of language in use” (Gee, 2011, p. 8). The analysis helped “illuminate and gain evidence” of leadership in civic engagement on the campuses studied and contributed "in terms of understanding…to
important issues and problems” (p. 12). For the textual analysis of the transcripts and the institutional documents, I put in place a procedure for the review.

For the transcript analysis, I used a step-by-step process: first, by reading and re-reading the documents for analysis as well as the interview transcripts to determine common themes and meanings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013, pp. 278-279); and second, by utilizing NVIVO qualitative research software to code the interview transcripts and create a visual map of common verbiage utilized to describe civic engagement both individually among interviewees and collectively for the university. I coded the interviews looking for key words and themes that reflected crucial questions impacting civic engagement and higher education along with identified research questions. I used manual coding following by utilization of NVIVO software to identify key words (i.e. civic engagement, service, students, and leadership). From these key words, passages were identified by the software. I took these passages and grouped them into categories, for each institution, first, and then across all institutions as a synthesized approach. From synthesized categories, patterns and themes emerged.

For the institutional documents, I was able to gain a deeper context for further analysis of information both probed and explored through the in-person interviews. When looking at the strategic plans, I purposefully sought out passages or excerpts that addressed civic engagement at the institution. I identified specific ways the university was meeting its mission through civic engagement and service to the surrounding communities. The plans complemented the interviews to reveal organizational emphasis and prioritization of civic engagement relative to discussions with leaders. As further triangulation of the data, I examined the financial investment in civic engagement relative to the strategic emphasis. By asking for the specific
financial civic engagement budgets at each institution, the study analyzed the focus on civic engagement by mission versus investment through institution and human resources.

**Role and Biases of the Researcher**

As noted by Denzin and Lincoln (2003), I approached this research with a “set of ideas and framework that specified a certain set of questions for analysis” (p. 32). I am an alumna of the Bonner Scholar program and of a liberal arts institution. Professionally, I served as coordinator of a Bonner Scholars program and worked in both community engagement and service learning programs at multiple colleges and universities. Additionally, I served as the first executive director of a nonprofit organization and as a nonprofit management instructor. This gave me first-hand experience as a community partner and service learning staff member.

Researchers bring certain philosophical assumptions to their research practice. Three particular assumptions related to the current study. Creswell (2013) described interpretive frameworks and associated philosophical beliefs (see Table 3.5.). Social constructivism most applied to this study. As noted in the chart below, social constructivism is described in more detail.

**Table 3.5. Interpretive Frameworks Adapted from Creswell (2013, p. 36)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpretive framework</th>
<th>Ontological beliefs (the nature of reality)</th>
<th>Epistemological beliefs (how reality is known)</th>
<th>Axiological beliefs (the role of values)</th>
<th>Methodological beliefs (approach to inquiry)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Constructivism</td>
<td>Multiple realities are constructed through our lived experiences and interactions with others</td>
<td>Reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the researched and shaped by individual experiences</td>
<td>Individual values are honored, and we are negotiated among individuals</td>
<td>More of a literary style of writing is used. Use of an inductive method (through consensus) obtained through methods such as observing and analysis of texts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First, the constructivist approach affected my relationship with the subject researched. I experienced multiple realities of civic engagement on the college campuses where I have worked and studied. I acknowledged the potential bias of seeing the data through the lens of an alumna,
professional, and student of the Bonner program as well as community partner (Creswell, 2013, pp. 36-37). Second, my professional experience did influence my assumptions of the value of service as key part of higher education’s mission (Bringle & Hatcher, 2009; Sandmann & Plater, 2009). My personal experience as a student volunteer in the Memphis community shaped my interest in higher education as a career path. Personally and professionally, I experienced the power of civic engagement for students who sought a connection between their academic pursuits, personal interests, and desire to make a difference in the world. The reality of civic engagement was based on my lived experience and the particular culture of engagement at each of the five institutions studied. Each institution was unique. Therefore, the individual values of each institution and community were valued and respected through the research and presentation of data. Third, I approached the research process inductively by allowing the key themes present in the data to emerge from the analysis and research process. Throughout the document, a literary style of data presentation was used. The quotes, data, and findings were presented in descriptive form. The goal of this study was to discover how university leadership at liberal arts institutions was involved in community engagement development. One potential use of this study was to affect change in the development of civic engagement at liberal arts institutions, leaders in higher education, and on other schools within the Bonner network. It was critical to ensure accurate representation of participants’ perspectives in the study (Stake, 1995). To aid in trustworthiness of the study and research techniques, I utilized pseudonyms and triangulated data while focusing on the importance of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability in the research.
**Limitations and delimitations of the study.**

This study used schools in the Bonner Foundation network as the sample for the research. It created a connection of institutions that had components of civic engagement on their campuses and were regionally diverse. The sample provided campuses in rural areas that had existing partnerships with community organizations. It did not capture schools outside of the Bonner network. This absence provided opportunity for replication in different civic engagement networks. Since the president of the Bonner Foundation aided in my initial outreach and introduction to each college president, there was the potential of bias. Also known as the halo effect, presidents and university leaders may have provided answers that they felt I wanted to hear in the study. Similarly, the civic engagement director who worked directly with community partners provided initial introduction of the researcher and project. This also presented the possibility of bias. I emphasized neutrality and confronted these potential biases in communication with each person interviewed. Additionally, textual analysis was used on documents provided by persons (strategic plan, civic engagement specific budgets) interviewed and documents available to the public via the internet and Form 990.

**Conclusion**

Through use of the multi-case study and qualitative methodology herein, the methods allow for exploration of what university leaders say and what they do within their institutions. The triangulation of interviews with the financial information and strategic documents allow for evidence of civic engagement’s institutionalization as part of the mission or deeper through programmatic emphasis.
Chapter 4: Findings and Data Analysis

Introduction

Can colleges and their surrounding communities exist without the other? The five university presidents, along with data in their strategic plans, acknowledged the 2008 financial recession’s impact on endowment and financial resources. Though all institutions put an emphasis on the quality of teaching through its faculty and access to financial resources through its tuition and endowment, they each addressed the need to acknowledge the uniqueness of the liberal arts experience in higher education. The liberal arts institutions must clearly define their own brand of education that prepares students to be responsible, successful citizens in a larger education landscape that emphasizes career-driven education. The change in the financial landscape has also led to a need for innovative leadership, planning, and action.

The purpose of this research study is to look at the role of university leadership in civic engagement building on Weerts (2005) and Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) conceptual frameworks. Similar to both studies in 2005 and 2010 respectively, this research explores community partners and university leaders’ perspectives on the role of the institution in its surrounding area. Unlike the other two studies, this one focuses on rural communities with private liberal arts institutions. Chapter four presents the key findings obtained from 25 in-depth interviews as well as five strategic plans and five Form 990 financial documents.

The chapter presents the findings in five sections:

1) Summary of research questions and methods;

2) Description of the colleges and their communities;
3) Findings by institution with an examination of the interviews, strategic plans, and financial documents; and

4) Cross institutional analysis and findings by theme.

First, there is a summary of the research questions and methods used to determine the findings. It reviews the qualitative multi-case study approach used to explore the five private liberal arts colleges and their rural communities. Second, since the research is a bounded case study focusing on five specific institutions, a description of each college and corresponding insights gained from keeping a research journal are included. Third, there is a description of the findings by institution with a synthesis of interviews and word frequency count of both university leaders and community partners respectively. The institution’s strategic plan and overall financial numbers are summarized to show the triangulation of all three forms of data. Fourth, I summarize data collectively for all five institutions and their communities relative to key themes. This section explores the intersection of all forms of data relative to the study’s conceptual framework.

Research Questions

The primary research questions focused on relationships, resources, and strategic vision relative to university leadership and civic engagement in the private liberal arts and rural context:

1) How does institutional leadership inform community partners’ perceptions about institutional commitment to civic engagement? In turn, how do community partners’ perceptions of needs inform institutional leadership in civic engagement?

2) How does the university’s leadership keep the college involved in its community through civic engagement?
3) How has including civic engagement in the strategic documents helped the institution?

4) How does university leadership utilize civic engagement as a leadership strategy?

5) What motivates university executives to integrate civic engagement into their leadership?

**Overview of Methods**

To answer the questions, I followed four steps outlined in the Figure 4.1. utilizing the mission of vision of each institution followed by interviews, strategic plans, and financial documents.

![Figure 4.1. Forms of Data Used for Multi-Case Study in Order of Analysis](image)

First, I reviewed the mission and vision of each institution as posted on their websites. With the help of the president of the Bonner Foundation, I contacted each president and director of the campus-based Bonner Scholars program. Each president recommended two administrative leaders involved in civic engagement. The Bonner directors provided names of two community partners who worked with the college and its students through civic engagement. Interviews with all participants were completed over a four week period. Then, I reviewed all strategic plans and documents. Document analysis was used to study the plans relative to the institution’s
commitment to civic engagement. During the presidential interviews, I asked each president to provide the strategic documents appropriate for the study if beyond the latest strategic plan. Lastly, the Form 990s were reviewed for each institution to understand the financial resources allocated for civic engagement relative to other line items. I looked for specific amounts allocated to civic engagement relative to programmatic support and relevancy to the mission. Through the financial analysis, I sought to understand the dollars invested in the capacity of civic engagement on campus and in the community. Specifically, I looked for clear articulation of the civic engagement priorities articulated in the interviews, confirmed or negated by the strategic plans, and emphasized by financial investment in human and organizational resources.

To determine the findings, individual case analysis and cross-case syntheses were used to analyze the data; open and axial coding were employed to generate codes, themes, and the findings. I first coded all documents manually utilizing open and axial coding. Through NVIVO software, all documents were coded again putting specific emphasis on the interviews and strategic plans. Given the numeric focus of the Form 990 documents, they did not lend themselves to word-based coding through the NVIVO program. I manually coded all financial information for the dollars invested in civic engagement relative to the overall institution’s budget. Open codes resulted in approximately 25 individual codes which were synthesized and clustered into code groupings. The Form 990s were utilized for a reference to civic engagement in the overall budgets. Two institutions provided individual programmatic budgets for their civic engagement initiatives. However, the other three emphasized that it was difficult to pinpoint all components of their civic engagement work in one particular programmatic budget. I then reviewed the organizational structure for civic engagement per institution looking at human resources and programmatic infrastructure.
Institutions and Communities Included in the Multi-Site Case Study

To protect the identity of the colleges and communities studied, the names of both were altered with pseudonyms. Below is a description of each institution and its surrounding community based on its institutional history, community founding, and my personal observations. The purpose is to paint a verbal picture of each institution and its surrounding community so as to best articulate the unique relationship between the two entities.

A: college and community.

College A was a nationally ranked liberal arts college committed to “engaged, experiential education for its students.” The college’s foundation dated to the 1800s when it was established by the Presbyterian Church as an institution providing education for teachers and clergy in the region. The college had a student population of 1300. The institution’s president served College A since 1998 for a total of 14 years. During that time, he instituted a strategic planning process said to set a new standard for liberal arts colleges. The institution was home to a nationally recognized arts center located on the campus. Community A was located in a small rural community, population of 29,013 (U.S. Census, 2013), in the central part of a southeastern state. As the first state capital in the state and county seat for the area, Community A was a location of both city government and local commerce. The county was home to 56 charitable nonprofit organizations and eight charitable foundations registered with the Internal Revenue Service (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2012). Medium household income for the county was $41,037 between 2008-2012. Of the adult population over 25 years old, 84.8% had a high school degree, and 23.7% had a bachelor’s degree from 2008-2012 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2013).
When I drove on campus, I was amazed at the quick transition from community to college. First, I entered Main Street with local businesses anchoring its storefronts. Second, I noticed the college bookstore next door to a coffee shop nestled within the downtown shops. Third, the Main Street flowed seamlessly into campus buildings. Before realizing it, I found myself surrounded by a campus with brick buildings and great lawns. Before turning off the main road and entering the campus, I crossed the railroad tracks into another part of the town.

**B: college and community.**

College B, founded in the 1800s as the first interracial, coeducational institution in the south, had a unique educational model. It did not charge tuition to its students and primarily served students in its region of limited financial resources and high academic potential. Rather, all students worked for the institution 10 hours per week. This contributed to the institution’s motto of learning, labor, and service. The college, founded on Christian principles, was not tied to a specific denomination or religious tradition. The institution, guided by “eight great commitments,” provided the bedrock for its mission and guiding principles. Service was infused throughout the curricular and co-curricular experience for College B students. The institution’s president served there for two years. Community B was located in a rural community, population of 14,374 (US Census, 2013). There were 78 charitable nonprofits and 12 charitable foundations registered with the Internal Revenue Service (National Center for Charitable Nonprofits, 2012). The median household income was $40,061 between 2008-2012. Of the population over 25 years old, 83.0% have a high school diploma, and 26.7% had a bachelor’s degree (US Census, 2013).

As I turned off the interstate toward the community and school, there was first a Wal-Mart and other chain restaurants. Once on the road into town, however, there was a clear influence of the college. The college’s red brick buildings quickly appeared on either side of the
street with signs directing visitors to local artisans and crafts. There was a row of businesses ranging from art galleries and restaurants to a coffee shop and college book store directly across the street from the campus. Otherwise, the campus buildings and infrastructure were clearly evident throughout the town center. Across from the back entrance of campus was a local school for elementary and middle school students. The school campus was surrounded by signs of the college campus and presence. The home for a local farmer’s market stood nearby.

**C: college and community.**

College C was a private liberal arts college, affiliated with the United Methodist Church, committed to the principles of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. It was a regional college, student population of 2,267, with the majority of its emphasis and students from the surrounding region. It was committed to its mission of serving the educational needs of students through a living and learning environment committed to its faith-based values and student potential. The president served the institution for 31 years as an employee and 16 years as president. College C was located on a hilltop of a small rural town, population 18,732 in the county (U. S. Census, 2013), in the south central part of a southeastern state. The town was home to seven charitable nonprofits including the college. There were no charitable foundations registered with the IRS (National Center for Charitable Nonprofits, 2012). In the county, the medium household income was $30,931. Of adults over 25 years old, 72.3% had a high school diploma, and 15.1% had a bachelor’s degree or more (U. S. Census, 2013).

As I turned off the interstate exit onto the road to the community, it quickly transitioned from fast food restaurants to character of a small community. There was a downtown square surrounding the courthouse in the middle. Though some businesses existed in the square, there were mostly open store fronts, a bank, or insurance company. I turned right up the hill to the
campus. Red brick homes marked the streets as college buildings lined the road to the top of the hill. At the top, the college spread out over the hilltop with brick buildings. I wandered the campus early in preparation for my first meeting. The attendant at the cafeteria welcomed me and offered a complimentary cup of coffee. I clearly did not blend in to the morning student crowd in my black business suit. Looking around the large open room, I quickly noticed several community members using the cafeteria as well.

**D: college and community.**

College D was an independent, residential, nationally recognized liberal arts institution shaped by its roots in the Religious Society of Friends tradition. The mission of the institution was guided by a concern for the world and desire to improve human society. It was home to 1,192 students recruited nationally and internationally. The president of the institution recently entered his second year in the position. Community D has a population of 36,345 (U. S. Census, 2013) historically home to industry though plagued with economic challenges due to the absence of it today. There were 84 charitable nonprofits and 20 foundations registered through the Internal Revenue Service (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2012). The median household income was $32,863. For adults over 25, 79.5% had a high school diploma, and 17.2% had a bachelor’s degree (U. S. Census, 2013).

The community showed signs of past industry. There were factories and manufacturing businesses along the road as I entered the town. This town was bigger than other ones included in the study. It was the largest community on the eastern side of the state past the state capital yet still considered rural by the U. S. Census Bureau standards. The college was surrounded by older homes that appeared distinctively different from the smaller ones at the town’s entry. The college had an entryway greeted by a traffic light with a left turn into campus and brick sign welcoming
students and guests. To the right of the campus were shopping centers and businesses while to the left were sidewalks leading to the downtown and revitalized business district.

**E: college and community.**

College E was home to 2,396 students recruited nationally and internationally. The institution’s mission was committed to helping students think critically about their role in the surrounding society and world. The university, founded by the United Methodist Church, was home to both a college of liberal arts and school of music. The current president served the institution for five years. Community E had a population of 10,310 (U. S. Census, 2013), approximately an hour from the state capitol. There were 37 charitable nonprofits and one foundation registered through the Internal Revenue Service (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2012). The median income was $40,820. Of adults over 25 years old, 87.1% graduated high school, and 27.2% had a bachelor’s degree (US Census, 2013).

As I turned off the interstate toward the university and college, I followed a rural road for several miles. I passed the hospital. The school was at a four way stop with a manufacturing plant across the road. Then, I entered the town. There were local businesses and restaurants along either side of the street. The asphalt street changed to brick paving stones and the entry way to the university appeared to my left. Past the entrance to the university, the road veered left into the downtown square. Businesses surrounded the courthouse in the center. Some storefronts were empty. Others had local restaurants, shops, and nonprofits. The university bookstore was on one corner with a Starbucks coffee shop next door to it. Two doors down from the Starbucks was a local barber shop with a multi-colored barber’s wheel out front.
Data Findings and Analysis

University leaders and community partners’ interviews.

For each institution, the president participated in an individual interview and provided names of two administrative leaders engaged in civic engagement leadership at their institution. The leadership positions interviewed, aside from the president, varied by institution. In total, administrative interviews comprised five presidents, two vice-presidents for advancement and community relations, one senior assistant to the president, one vice-president for student affairs, three provosts, one associate vice-president for academic affairs, one vice-president for communications, and one director of civic engagement (see Figure 4.2.).
**Interview procedures and findings.**

In each interview, the president referenced the religious founding of the institution as grounding for the mission. Each person was interviewed in their office on the campus which made for a conversational nature shaped by the semi-structured question format for the study. One phone interview was used for the director of civic engagement due to scheduling.

Additionally, the Bonner director at each institution recommended two community partners involved with service and outreach of the college. In total, community partner organizations comprised three local schools ranging from elementary to middle school age range; one county health department; three child-care focused nonprofits ranging from the Boys and Girls Club to special needs care; one environmental education nonprofit, one senior center providing programming, daily meals, and a community food pantry; and one community focused
fundraising nonprofit. Each person was interviewed either in his or her office, in a coffee shop, or by telephone. This made for a conversational nature shaped by the semi-structured question format for the study. For all interviews, I traveled to the locations personally. This allowed for in-person interviews and site visits with all university leaders except one and all community partners except three. The school counselor at College E, school civic engagement director, and volunteer coordinator at College C were interviewed by phone due to scheduling. Table 4.1. below lists the organization type, position, and type of partnership included for each campus.

**Table 4.1. Organization Type, Position, and Partnership for Community Partners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Organization type</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Type of Partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College A</td>
<td>Community Nonprofit</td>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>Volunteers, service-learning, academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College A</td>
<td>Special Needs Childcare</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College B</td>
<td>Elementary and middle School</td>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>Volunteers, service-learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College B</td>
<td>Health Department</td>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>Volunteers, research, nursing students-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College C</td>
<td>School Engagement</td>
<td>Development Director</td>
<td>Volunteers, program development,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College C</td>
<td>Children with illness</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Interns, volunteers, potential hires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College D</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>Volunteer Coordinator</td>
<td>Volunteers, camp counselors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College E</td>
<td>Environmental education</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Mentors, after-school, service-learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College E</td>
<td>Elementary and middle school</td>
<td>School counselor</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College E</td>
<td>Senior Center</td>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The regional and state economies surrounding the institutions were once highly dependent on mining, forestry, agriculture, or chemical industries. At the time of the study, they included both manufacturing and service industries. All community partners interviewed noted healthcare with specific reference to the changes in the Affordable Care Act, education related to strength of education systems, and economics related to changing job opportunities as three primary challenges faced in their communities and the region. Additional analysis included review of the strategic plan documents from four of the five institutions. College D did not have a strategic plan in the traditional sense held by the other four institutions. For all institutions, I
reviewed the mission statements, Form 990 documents filed with the IRS, and other financial budgets provided by the institutions.

University leaders were asked ten questions in a semi-structured interview format. Each interview question was designed to answer the five research questions. The study focused on perceptions of university leaders and community members as well as their impact on leadership and civic engagement at five private liberal arts universities in rural communities. Therefore, the five research questions approached leadership and civic engagement from a 30,000 foot high view. The questions were high level in respect to the institutions’ purpose, mission, and intentionality of civic engagement. The interview questions, however, focused on the 10,000 foot view which university leaders and community partners experienced on a daily basis. Table 4.2. below describes the interview questions that supported each research question. Questions for university leaders and community partners are intermingled in Table 4.2. The supporting questions are grouped by the corresponding research questions whether asked of a community partner or university leader.
Table 4.2. Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Supporting questions, community partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How does institutional leadership inform community partners’ perceptions about institutional commitment to civic engagement? How do community partners’ perceptions of needs inform institutional leadership in civic engagement?</td>
<td>What images come to mind when you think about the college? Tell me about the college's role in the community. What are the primary challenges in your community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the university’s leadership keep the college involved in its community through civic engagement?</td>
<td>Describe how your organization is involved with the college? Describe your organization's relationship with the college from the beginning to the present time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How has including civic engagement in the strategic documents helped the institution?</td>
<td>What does a civically engaged campus look like to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does university leadership utilize civic engagement as a leadership strategy?</td>
<td>Give me an example of how you know your organization's work is important to the college. Name the leaders in community engagement at the college. Describe their leadership and how it affects your organization's work with the college.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What motivates university executives to integrate civic engagement into their leadership?</td>
<td>What motivates you to integrate your organization's work with the college? Describe the first time you were partnered with the college for the work of your organization.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The research and interview questions focused on eight key aspects of civic engagement:

1) An emphasis on the institutional mission and vision;

2) Campus and community relationship by exploring how the campus and community relationship is experienced through civic engagement;

3) Perception of community needs as viewed through the lens of university leaders;

4) How the institution is meeting the identified community needs;

5) How institutional leaders operationalize the college’s vision;

6) Ways civic engagement has developed;

7) Personal motivation for civic engagement;

8) Leaders’ first experience in service.

The questions were conversational and semi-structured allowing for more in-depth discussion if the leader wanted to elaborate on a particular issue herein. The findings for each college are
presented with quotes from university leaders followed by a synthesis of the interviews with all three university leaders, and word frequency in the interviews. The same format follows for community partners with quotes, synthesis, and word frequency quotes. The macro components of Weerts’ (2005) Conceptual Framework are used to explore each data source.

**College A Findings**

**University leaders.**

At College A, I conducted interviews with three university leaders and two community partners. Interviews at College A were held with the president, vice president for community relations, and special assistant to the president. Key aspects of each research question are highlighted in the chart below with corresponding interpretations and quotes from College A university leaders. The interpretations are from my review of the materials with a summary of the findings in succinct phrases so as to synthesize the information for the reader.
### Table 4.3. Representative Quotations for College A Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision</strong></td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service</td>
<td>&quot;You have a responsibility to care about your town, your city, your people, and to participate in that greater experience, which is civic engagement.&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;We want to prepare our students for lives of learning, leadership, and service. Given the three legs of that mission, I think that there is significant institutional emphasis on all three pieces. The community sees that acted out by placing emphasis on students doing service.&quot; (Special Assistant to the President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus and community relationship</strong></td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>&quot;Traffic flow, traffic management...We've had a problem in town with pedestrians being ahead of crosswalks...but we've all got a stake in that.&quot; (VP of College Relations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;We try to address the educational issues, we've started an after-school program on campus. This was an initiative started by students, but then supported by the administration subsequently.&quot; (Special Assistant to the President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community needs</strong></td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>&quot;Some of the wealthiest people I've ever known about live here, and some of the poorest. The needs are great just in terms of basic needs. Things like food...Certainly, education is not a given. There's entry points there, the basic needs for our students and for people to be involved in. At the higher level...you up the ante in terms of civic engagement, there's lots of opportunities here for that too. Our students have found them, or the opportunities found our students.&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Trying to make sure that all of our students in the area have an equal playing field. We have some very high need areas in our community in terms of socioeconomic status. All of our schools are Title I schools...Being a rather rural town, it's not as apparent that we have a poverty problem... We don't have folks who are homeless sleeping in the doorways downtown like you might see in a more urban environment, but homelessness and poverty are still a pretty big issue.&quot; (Special Assistant to the President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressing community needs</strong></td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;From a collegiate level or an institutional level, I think one of the ways we [engage] is we try and encourage all of our employees to donate to the United Way...We give employees four hours off when they request it to go engage in volunteer service activities so they don't have to count that as paid time off or anything like that.&quot; (Special Assistant to the President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;There are just any number of people here who are involved in community organizations and agencies, and of course, so many of these agencies and organizations, of course, provide internship opportunities for our students. There are also selfish reasons or self-interested reasons...to encourage this.&quot; (VP Community Relations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investment</strong></td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
<td>&quot;We employ 330 people, and in a community that has large nonprofits being the hospital and the college, payroll taxes are important here. The college invests in that way. We have a policy of not making charitable contributions because we are [a] 501(C)(3) that has to raise its own money...we help maintain the look of the community. We're blessed here in having a really nice performing arts center, and of course, the community is invited to nearly everything at the art center.&quot; (VP Community Relations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operationalizing the vision</strong></td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;Our faculty and our staff here feel encouraged to get involved in our town, whether it's to be on a chamber board or a special committee or even one of the festivals we have in town. You can find campus and college people involved in those activities. Schools, school boards, school committees. I think you got to—a lot of things in life are about showing up, and you've got to show up. I think the college's reputation now is that we show up.&quot; (VP Community Relations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Civic engagement development</strong></td>
<td>Created systems for engagement</td>
<td>&quot;We’ve encouraged [students], supported them, and created some sustainability vehicles.” (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Engaging with the community so that hopefully the college isn’t just an isolated entity over here on its campus.&quot; (VP of College Relations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;It's been a long instilled value of the college. I think you could go all the way back to the founding. I think it was a big part of the effort of our founders, was to create civic-minded individuals.” (Special Assistant to the President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal motivation</strong></td>
<td>Belief in the purpose of education</td>
<td>&quot;My own sense of what should happen in a good college or university is that a young woman or man is prepared to go out and be a citizen leader.&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First experience in service</strong></td>
<td>Childhood influences</td>
<td>&quot;I can never remember not being...I grew up with a dad who was a big city school superintendent. Mom was a nurse. It was always about giving...always about helping...always about leading.&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At College A, the institution’s commitment to civic engagement was powered by the president’s belief that service to others is a crucial component to a liberal arts education and strongly influenced by the college’s historical commitment to service.

The president articulated the mission and vision of the institution in the community by living it through his own involvement in community by his actions first. We talked about ‘why’ university leaders invest in civic engagement amidst many other institutional priorities. In a time when liberal arts institutions make strategic decisions about use of their resources and the brand of the educational experience, the ‘why’ question is both strategic and intentional for leaders. The president described opportunities for students’ engagement in the community as ‘the right thing to do’ and predicated on his own experience growing up. As a child of two parents dedicated to service professions, he saw service as a vocation and way of life. The president’s passion for leadership in a liberal arts institution was born from a belief in developing citizen leaders. He closely aligned with the words of Boyer (1990) in our discussion that students do not simply learn for education’s sake but rather apply their knowledge to improve the world around them. Though students’ engaged learning in the community was clearly personal for the president, he emphasized its strategic value for the institution by describing the college’s investment in experiential learning through its new strategic plan.

All three leaders emphasized the reciprocal leadership tie between the campus and its community. The president described a symbiotic relationship between the two. This is not to say the relationship was perfect. He admitted there was always room for growth in town and gown relationships. However, he acknowledged that both succeed when they work together. For all three it was important that students saw through the college’s investment of time that its community was an important voice and local partner. The commitment was described through
the annual student service day by one leader. Students are introduced to community leaders at the same time as their new faculty and university leaders. For another, service was articulated through the administrative staff’s commitment to local board service and leadership within the town’s economic and city-level development.

The president acknowledged the challenge I would face finding the exact budget for service and civic engagement on campuses. We discussed the importance of financial investment in civic engagement and yet the challenge of isolating it to a particular budget number. He acknowledged that civic engagement and volunteerism showed itself in many ways on campus though the exact staff for service learning and volunteerism was small. The ethos of the university embodied civic engagement.

The historical commitment to service was emphasized in the other two interviews with college leadership though both gave the president credit for growth of service on campus and emphasized his emphasis on engaging the campus with the nearby community. For one, service and engagement was a critical part of the mission through student volunteerism, academic service-learning, and partnerships with local nonprofits. For the other, civic engagement and leadership through community boards of directors and economic development was critical.

Word frequency in university leaders’ interviews.

By looking at the top fifty words that appear in all interviews, I was able to isolate words that were emphasized. As illustrated below in Figure 4.3., community, students, school, and engagement were utilized most often. The words used most frequently appear larger in the graphic. This visual confirmed the emphasis on engagement through a focus on community, institution, and its students. The three were also described in the interviews as noted above in the synthesis of findings.
Though the word cloud was helpful to cluster the top fifty words, I further explored the word usage by narrowing the search to the top 15 words. The excel spreadsheet below (Table 4.4.) provided another view. It illustrated how many times words were used in relation to civic engagement in the three administrative interviews. Similar to the word cloud, the words used most frequently were community, students, school, and engagement. For community, it appeared 132 times in the three interviews. The word students appeared 103 times. School was referenced 93 times and engagement was used in 76 places.
As shown above, words emphasizing commitment were also used. Time, service, civic, intentional, people, and place also indicate the human side of the institution’s investment in the community. Though there was an emphasis on the college’s investment in its community in the interviews, the word did not appear in specific word analysis. Other words noted were consistent with the leaders’ interviews.

**Community partners.**

Additionally, I interviewed two community partners who worked with the college by hosting and supporting students, faculty, and staff in their nonprofit organizations. Community partners were asked twelve questions in a semi-structured interview format. Each interview question was designed to answer the five research questions in this study. The chart below includes the key aspect, interpretation, and representative quotations for community partners in their interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>communicate, communicating, communications, communities, community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>students, students’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>school, schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engagement</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>engage, engaged, engagement, engaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>programs</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>program, programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>college</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>college, colleges</td>
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<tr>
<td>people</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>civic</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>civic, civically</td>
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<tr>
<td>service</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>service, services</td>
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<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>time, times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>campus</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>campus</td>
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<tr>
<td>learning</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>learn, learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>issue</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>issue, issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>intentional</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>intentional, intentionality, intentionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>place</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>place, places, placing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.5. Representative Quotations for College A Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations for Community Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision</strong></td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service</td>
<td>&quot;I also think of privilege, to be honest. I think that a lot of—to come to some place—I know there’s a lot of financial aid available, but it’s very expensive. You have to have [scored] very well academically to get in, things like that...I also think of achievement.&quot; (Community partner 1) &quot;I think their vision is not only to provide an incredible education in the classroom at College A but also classrooms globally.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus and community relationship</strong></td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>&quot;They’re very—with the service work they’ve done—they’ve done a food drive, and they did a book drive last year. They’re very well regarded, I would say, just from those efforts.&quot; (Community partner 1) &quot;One of the reasons I moved to Community A was the fact that we did have a liberal arts college. I think any time you live in that kind of community you have more access to resources like art and music, just educational opportunities.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community needs</strong></td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>&quot;There’s still some kind of separation, even though all this great stuff I just talked about, there’s still some kind of I guess intimidation might be the right word for folks to come on the campus. If there was a great speaker, I would probably go and hear it, but I don’t know how many other community members would come and hear it, particularly people with fewer resources, even if they were free.&quot; (Community partner 1) &quot;When I came to—this program started here. There was some real resistance from—part of it was a volunteer committee that were helping me get going. They didn’t want to necessarily involve College A. They felt like it would be better to just focus on community based volunteers.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressing community needs</strong></td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;[They ask] what do you need us to do? To me that means everything. I’m so used to in a nonprofit knocking on people’s doors and asking for help. To me imagine what that’s like to have someone actually call you to say tell us what you need.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investment</strong></td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
<td>&quot;They’ll do service projects or service works at different places like that. For example, if you’re looking at the big picture, as far as sustainable income, for example, students take a lot of pride in this after-school program that they have developed for Spanish speaking students. It’s homework help. They kind of even mentor these families a little bit...I think there’s a lot of different initiatives like that.&quot; (Community partner 1) &quot;They really are trying to pull people together. I think that that’s helped offset some of those dynamics of territory and ‘oh we own this community, you’re in that community.’ I don’t know if that’s something that they’ve done intentionally.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operationalizing the vision</strong></td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;I would say that integration. The community, the school knew what was going on in the community, and the community knew what was going on with the school. If there was a meeting, a community meeting of some kind, that there’d be some kind of student, faculty, or staff or all three present, and vice-versa.&quot; (Community partner 1) &quot;They put up soccer goals. A number of things that I’m ashamed that some of our community members didn’t recognize.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Civic engagement development</strong></td>
<td>Created systems for engagement</td>
<td>&quot;There’s still some kind of separation, even though all this great staff I just talked about, there’s still some kind of I guess intimidation might be the right word for folks to come on the campus. If there was a great speaker, I would probably go and hear it, but I don’t know how many other community members would come and hear it, particularly people with fewer resources, even if they were free.&quot; (Community partner 1) &quot;When I came to—this program started here. There was some real resistance from—part of it was a volunteer committee that were helping me get going. They didn’t want to necessarily involve College A. They felt like it would be better to just focus on community based volunteers.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal motivation</strong></td>
<td>Belief in the purpose of education</td>
<td>&quot;We could really leverage the knowledge base and the cultural emphasis on service and community and civic engagement and all that...I feel like I'm one of those people that’s like, &quot;We’re going to get everything out of it that we can.&quot;&quot; (Community partner 1) &quot;...to benefit in some way from the service resource, knowing that we cannot do all this heavy lifting by ourselves and that you will have someone who has a different approach, a different way to solve a problem&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the interviews, community partners emphasized the needs in the community. Given the size of the town, they described needs in context of the greater region rather than town only.

Interestingly, this was counter to the university leaders’ description. All three university leaders discussed the local needs in context of the surrounding town. Partners described the poverty and
income challenges present through health and education disparity. For both partners, the students’ presented a tremendous human resource for their organizations and community. Each described personal stories of interactions with students both on and off campus. For one, the campus and its students provided a safe space for dining with her autistic son. For another, students provided critical thinking to community-wide system challenges. The students were able to support and build local infrastructure as well as provide direct service. Though always complimentary, one partner described the disparity between the campus and community. She acknowledged that despite the college’s efforts, some members would always see the college as ‘different than’ the community and ‘unapproachable’ for others. However, students’ service by providing on-campus programming for the community has broken down many of those barriers.

Partners described the college’s cultural resources as a crucial benefit. They noted the space, and access to cultural activities as an asset. They fondly described participation in the events professionally and personally through detailed stories of how the college’s location and access to human and cultural resources have enriched their lives in the town.

*Word frequency in community partners’ interviews.*

By looking at the top fifty words that appear in all interviews, I was able to isolate words that were emphasized. As illustrated below in Figure 4.4., community, students, school, and engagement were utilized most often. The words used most frequently appear larger in the graphic. This visual confirmed the emphasis on engagement through an emphasis on community, know, works, and people.
Table 4.6. provided another view of the top 15 words frequently used regarding civic engagement. It illustrated how many times words were used in the two community partner interviews. The words community, people, college, and students were used most frequently. County and service were referred to 35 times each, slightly below the 39 times “students” was referenced.
Table 4.6. Frequently Cited Words for College A Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>communication, communications, communities, community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>college</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>county</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>counties, county</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>service</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>service, services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>united</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>united</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engagement</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>engage, engaged, engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>going</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationship</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>relationship, relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schools</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>school, schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resources</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>resource, resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>role</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>civic</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>civic, civically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>serve</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>serve, served, serves, serving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The word frequency of community partners also emphasized community. The primary difference between the two was a lower level of emphasis on students though the word appeared in the top words referenced. Community partners’ words depicted a strong emphasis on its primary resources: its people, local college, and community as a whole.

**Strategic plan.**

College A’s strategic plan acknowledged the complex changes in the higher education landscape. Specifically, it addressed the “role, relevance, vitality, and credibility” of the higher education experience. It outlined the role of private liberal arts institutions in engaging young people to serve as active, engaged citizens in their communities, preparing students for particular job responsibilities, and increasing opportunities through information technology and online education. The document also noted challenges including the rising costs of higher education and its impact on students attending private liberal arts colleges along with the increased pressure to develop additional facilities for student recruitment and retention.

One of the college’s strategic priorities focused on students examining their lives and experiences so as to lead empowered lives as engaged citizens. Within this priority, service,
community-based learning, and research opportunities were emphasized as a means to empower students’ power to act. This was part of an emphasis to develop knowledge as well as build a desire and ability to live out that knowledge in service to the world. The liberal arts institutions were empowered through developing leadership skills, creative problem-solving skills, career development, and opportunities for community-engaged learning. This emphasis supported the comments made by university and community leaders in the interviews.

**Financial data.**

College A has an office of community service with two full-time staff that fell under the vice president and dean of student life. The office coordinates the Bonner Scholars program, school-wide service days, and student service partnerships in the community. There was also support on the academic side for service learning though there was not a formalized office there. According to the 2011 Form 990, the institution had $350,484,784 in assets; $105,724,709 in liabilities; and $244,760,075 in net assets at the end of the year. The institution had $207,316,357 in an end of year balance for endowment funds.

**Summary.**

In the interviews, several key points were emphasized:

1) Leadership believed students were encouraged to empower lives as engaged citizens.

2) There was partnership equality between campus and community leaders.

3) Civic meant city and local government partnerships for the institution.

4) Economic disparity was specific to the rural community.

5) Resources were multifaceted: employer, provider of arts and cultural events, and source of student human resources through service.
College B Findings

University leaders.

Interviews at College B were held with the president, provost, and associate vice president for academic affairs. Key aspects of each research question were highlighted in Table 4.7, with corresponding interpretations and quotations from university leaders.
### Representative Quotations for College B Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision</strong></td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service</td>
<td>&quot;Different features stand out to different people.&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;It's really interesting. It's a powerful mission, I think, that can attract so many people adherents.&quot; (Provost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus and community relationship</strong></td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>&quot;We are a company town. The town wouldn't exist were it not for the college. The town wouldn't exist were it not for the college, because the institution preceded the town. College B still owns the municipal water supply. It once owned the municipal utilities. It once owned the hospital. It was a real company town.&quot; (Provost).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community needs</strong></td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>&quot;There are diversity challenges locally. There are certainly socioeconomic challenges locally. Our numbers of free and reduced lunch students [at the local elementary school] have increased over time, even as the population has grown with manufacturing jobs that are available in the community.&quot; (Provost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Most of it is really about poverty and what access you have to good foods. When you're poor, you're going to eat what you can afford and not necessarily good foods.&quot; (Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressing community needs</strong></td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;We work with...students to teach them about the place they come from and give them a skillset of--and also inspire them to return to that area to make it a better place.&quot; (Provost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investment</strong></td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
<td>&quot;We bring in people from all over the region and we provide them with mini-grants to help them go back into their own communities and try to help struggling communities.&quot; (Associate VP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;We give money to rape crisis centers, to medical providers, to people who are working on hunger and nutrition throughout the area.&quot; (President).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operationalizing the vision</strong></td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;I do think there is a large part of our campus that is very involved, who enjoy being involved in the community, but do not want a mandate from the administration.&quot; (Associate VP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;We have all kinds of individuals in all different positions here—it's most faculty, staff, and administration---who actually get involved in these things personally. That's considered part of the ethos here.&quot; (President).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Civic engagement development</strong></td>
<td>Created systems for engagement</td>
<td>&quot;We created the town around the college...I saw that civic engagement has always been a part of [the college] because we created the civic here.&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal motivation</strong></td>
<td>Belief in the purpose of education</td>
<td>&quot;You can look at the world and say, if higher education continues on somewhat of a downward trajectory--which it is right now--what consequences will that have not only for my own grandchildren but everybody's grandchildren?&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First experience in service</strong></td>
<td>Childhood influences</td>
<td>University leaders did not answer this question at College B.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At College B, civic engagement was embedded in the mission-driven focus of the institution. Through its guiding commitments, the institution had a focus on outreach to its surrounding region. College leaders emphasized outreach to the region as a funder, partner, and
resource as well as inreach by educating the children of the region. Founded as the first interracial college in its region dedicated to racial and gender equality, the educational experience was forged in all students having a job either on campus or in the community that was intrinsically linked. Students were recruited from the surrounding region, entered without financial debt, and graduated with an understanding of how their knowledge strengthens and uplifts the region. Early in our conversation, the president emphasized why, in the face of many strategic priorities for liberal arts institutions; does a leader choose to invest in engagement with the community? He described an investment in quality of place along with the ethos of the institution. A college wanted to make the community a stronger place. Quality of place and community were important to alumni, students, parents, and families who want to be a part of and return to before, during, and after their collegiate experience. The college campus was not separate from its community but rather intrinsically linked to it. College B was formed in the Calvinist tradition with an emphasis on making a difference locally. The responsibility of education at the institution was to make things better with an emphasis on social justice and equality. Given students did not pay tuition at College B and one of the guiding principles was investment in the region, the institution was able to invest in local nonprofits and community based organizations through grants and funding. The president acknowledged the challenge of identifying only one part of the budget as civic engagement. Rather, the college’s investment was seen through multiple programs that supported community-based training and local investment.

In my conversations with university leaders, it was clear that the institution’s commitment to civic engagement derived from its guiding commitments. There was an overriding commitment to the community and region in its approach to education. However, the manifestation and description of civic engagement was in specific programs. One administrator
acknowledged that faculty chose whether or not to engage in service learning in their coursework. Many pushed back on a requirement to integrate civic engagement into their academic teaching. There was a center for service learning and civic engagement on campus that provided the opportunity for faculty to integrate both into their courses. However, it was not a requirement for faculty to integrate service learning into the curriculum.

At College B, the institution was founded first and the town grew around it. All three university leaders emphasized the economic, health, and educational disparity in the region. They saw the institution’s focus on educating leaders with an ethos of making a difference locally. The institution’s commitment to the region and on educating students in the region was emphasized. College leaders noted the defining character of the institution’s commitment to strengthening the region through education.

Word frequency in university leaders’ interviews.

The word cloud in Figure 4.5. shows the frequency of civic engagement and related words in interviews with university leaders.
Through the word cloud, four words appeared most frequently. The excel spreadsheet in Table 4.8. below provides a view of the top 15 words frequently used regarding civic engagement. It also illustrates how many times words were used in relation to civic engagement in the three administrative interviews. Those used most frequently were students, people, community, and engagement. Students appeared 106 times in the three interviews. The word people appeared 105 times. Community was referenced 104 times and engagement was used in 91 places.

**Figure 4.5.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College B Leaders
Table 4.8. Frequently Cited Words for College B Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>people, peopled, peoples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>communicate, communities, community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engagement</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>engage, engaged, engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>college</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>college, colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>educational</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>educate, educating, education, educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>institutions</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>institute, institution, institutional, institutionally, institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitments</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>commitment, commitments, committed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>civic</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>civic, civically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faculty</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>faculty, faculty’ll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mission</td>
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<td>region</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>region, regional, regionally, regions</td>
</tr>
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<td>challenges</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>challenge, challenged, challenges, challenging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>campus</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>campus, campuses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>program, programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Community partners.

Table 4.9. below describes the aspects, interpretations and representative quotations from conversations with two community partners. The health outreach director for the county health department and the counselor for the local school were interviewed.
Table 4.9. Representative Quotations for College B Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community</td>
<td>&quot;Engagement is where the students actually—or faculty, or whoever—actually gets in communication with folks outside.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>participation and student service</td>
<td>&quot;Students being aware of the issues around them; it can be state-wide, regional, and national as well. It starts with faculty and administrators helping students find avenues of awareness and figure out how to be activists for what they have a passion for in reaching out.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus and community relationship</td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs</td>
<td>&quot;I see them as having a very noble purpose, but I also see them at times being a little misguided in particularly the more liberal tendencies. Some people call it progressive or whatever.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>&quot;[The] college owns most of the land around us. It is hard on us because we don’t have any taxes coming in. They find other ways to help us... When I think of the college I see it as a collaborative effort of education.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community needs</td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>&quot;We have a wide array of groups that do a variety of really good things. Sometimes they're not terribly coordinated together, so that would be—we're probably better than some communities, but it's still an issue because duplication of efforts and things like that.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Housing is another issue that we deal a lot with...there's no resources out there for housing for families...I would have to go back to the basic needs&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing community needs</td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in</td>
<td>&quot;The president asks. 'How can we engage, trade, and help?' He was there [at a meeting with community partners] and said 'we are a part of the community with you; we are in this fight with you; how can we help you? Let's work together to ensure students are getting what they need—especially in the STEM area.'&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
<td>&quot;The arts and cultural piece is a great resource for the community.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operationalizing the vision</td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in</td>
<td>&quot;Their role in the community is also to be a steady... People feel secure that the college is gonna stay open. That's a little bit of a comfort for particularly the economic things and all that.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic engagement development</td>
<td>Created systems for engagement</td>
<td>If it is the college giving hope I still think it is still addressing those needs. They don’t have to do address everything specifically. Just to give families hope that those things are out there. I see them providing hope in a peripheral way. (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal motivation</td>
<td>Belief in the purpose of education</td>
<td>&quot;I would say it was the labor program and the concept of service...that students have a better experience when they do things, and they can actually produce something that they can be proud of, and they can say, 'I did this.'&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Community partners emphasized the disparity of economic, education, and health needs in the community. Both described the college bond between the campus and community. Since the college was formed first and the community developed around it, there was clear acknowledgement of the resulting power dynamic. The partners described students as a crucial resource for their organizations and the community. One acknowledged the influence of students’ new ideas and experiences on children in the nearby school. The partner shared a story of a Chinese student who struggled in school given the language barrier. Once paired with a
college student, the child’s performance improved dramatically. She attributed the student’s success to the mentoring and language support from a college student also from China. The partner also gave a personal story of her own child’s exposure to science through the nearby college that helped him discover a love for science. Another partner noted the tension between college students’ desire to change the community and its desire to make community-owned decisions. The partner described students’ desire to make immediate changes in the community before it was ready. Both partners elaborated on the beauty of the campus and the resources, both human and cultural, it brought to the county.

*Word frequency in community partners’ interviews.*

The word cloud in Figure 4.6. pictorially shows the top fifty words used by community partners at College B. This is valuable for it displays the common areas of emphasis for partners.

![Figure 4.6. Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College B Community Partners](image_url)

The excel spreadsheet below, Table 4.10. provides another view of the top 15 words frequently used regarding civic engagement. It illustrates how many times words were used in
relation to civic engagement in the two community partner interviews. The words community, college, students, and people were used most frequently.

**Table 4.10.** Frequently Cited Words for College B Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>communicate, communicated, communicating, communication, communities, community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>college</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>1.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>people</td>
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<tr>
<td>issues</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>issue, issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>school, schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>program, programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>need</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>need, needed, needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>health</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>health</td>
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<tr>
<td>engagement</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>engage, engaged, engagement</td>
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<td>challenging</td>
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<td>challenge, challenges, challenging</td>
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<td>example</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>role</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>role, roles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategic plan.**

For analysis of the strategic plan, the president recommended I use several documents: first, the guiding principles for the institution; second, the scenario planning document; and third, the strategic plan which had several revisions over multiple years as the college had grown. Civic engagement was present in the guiding principles in several ways. The “motive of service to others” and “serving in community” along with “concern for the welfare of others” and “to serve the…region primarily through education but also by other appropriate services” were emphasized. The strategic plan noted the external pressures on higher education including public criticism of higher education, questions about the value of a private liberal arts institution
comparable to other options, a rise in governance concerns, changes in students and faculty lives, the value of technology and diversity, and an emphasis on assessment and effectiveness. It noted the continued debate about the value of a liberal arts institution in the higher education landscape comparable to other options. The document acknowledged the economic recession of 2008 and its impact on the college. Like all institutions in the study, the timeframe was described as a turning point for looking at strategic direction within a new financial context. The college’s key priorities, though not specifically targeted at a programmatic focus on civic engagement, contained reference to service to others throughout. Two particular areas focused on service to its region which by the college’s definition was their commitment and to civic engagement and the labor program with experiential education and service to community as components. This inclusion emphasized comments in interviews with university leaders that civic engagement was not described as such but rather was an ethos within the guiding principles and institution’s actions.

Financial data.

In addition to the guiding principles of the institution and a focus on inreach to its students coupled with outreach to its region, the college had several specific structures for engagement with the community. One was the community service and service learning center that was very focused on faculty and student engagement with community needs. Another was a center focused on the region which provided training opportunities to local residents. A third was the labor program which placed students in work opportunities both on campus and in the community. A fourth was the grant program focused on the needs of the region. It provided financial funds for community organizations serving the region as defined by the institution’s mission. According to the 2011 Form 990, the institution had $1,216,583,875 in assets;
$87,736,244 in liabilities; and $1,128,847,631 in net assets. The institution had $942,618,000 in an end of year balance for endowment funds.

**Summary.**

In College B’s analysis, several key points were emphasized:

1) Service was mission driven.

2) The college formation spurred the town’s creation.

3) Diversity, race, and difference were apparent between town and community.

4) The college provided financial and human resources for the community.

5) The foundation of liberal arts education drove civic engagement.

**College C Findings**

**University leaders.**

Interviews at College C were held with the president, provost, and vice president for student affairs. Key aspects of each research question are highlighted in the chart below, Table 4.11. with corresponding interpretations and quotations from university leaders at College C.
College C was regionally focused like College B. The college saw its purpose as educating and empowering students in the region. However, the college differs in its business model from College B. The institution is tuition driven and has a smaller endowment than the
other colleges studied herein. As a liberal arts college, the institution served both traditional and non-traditional students. It provided undergraduate and graduate curricula both traditional in-classroom as well as online instruction. In my conversation with the president, it quickly became clear he ascribed to the teachings of Earnest Boyer referred to in the literature review. He believed in the power of engaged, applied learning that benefits and strengthens the community while introducing students to how their work can improve their surroundings. The president summarized the college’s mission as having a way to make their communities better. The institution opened its doors to the communities and provided access to the campus for events, facilities, on-campus dining, and student programming. For the president, the outreach was about engaging the community and building the campus’ brand as an open environment for all students. For him, when the community succeeded, the college grew. Their fate was intertwined. The college did not require all students to participate in community service. Rather, the Bonner Scholars program started eight years prior under the president’s leadership. He described it as his legacy for the program has grown from eight to seventy two students who were engaged in the community through direct service. The college leadership offered the Bonner program budget to me as the investment made in civic engagement.

Another college leader emphasized the service-oriented professions offered by the college. She described the ‘helping’ nature of the professional degrees of education, nursing, and business which the college was known for and the tie to the college’s service mission.

Additionally, the college targeted first generation college students in the region. All leaders described their work as providing access to higher education for students in the region through a living and learning community. Another college leader described the mission as learning to live in the grey and helping students understand their purpose through helping other people. For
university leaders, civic engagement was lived through the mission and experienced through service learning on the academic side and the Bonner Scholars program on the student affairs side of the organizational structure.

*Word frequency in university leaders’ interviews.*

Figure 4.7. below shows a visual representation of the top fifty words that emerged in conversations with university leaders at College C.

![Word Cloud](image)

**Figure 4.7.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College C Leaders

Additionally, Table 4.12. below provides a view of the top 15 words frequently used regarding civic engagement. It illustrates how many times words were used in relation to civic engagement in the three administrative interviews. The words used most frequently were students, community, engagement, and service. Students appeared 139 times in the three
interviews. The word community appeared 133 times. Engagement was referenced 89 times and service was used in 88 places (see Table 4.12.).

**Table 4.12.** Frequently Cited Words for College C Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>students, students’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>communicate, communicated, communication, communicator, communities, community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engagement</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>engage, engaged, engagement, engaging</td>
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<tr>
<td>service</td>
<td>88</td>
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<td>college</td>
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<td>0.98</td>
<td>college, colleges</td>
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<td>civic</td>
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<td>people</td>
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<td>0.72</td>
<td>people</td>
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<tr>
<td>faculty</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>faculty</td>
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<td>campus</td>
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<td>0.50</td>
<td>campus, campuses</td>
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<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>42</td>
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<td>time, times</td>
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<tr>
<td>mission</td>
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<td>school</td>
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<td>0.44</td>
<td>school, schooling, schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>institution</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>institution, institutional, institutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Community partners.**

Table 4.13. below describes the aspects, interpretations and representative quotations from conversations with two community partners. The director of civic engagement of a local school and volunteer coordinator for a camp for ill children were interviewed.
Table 4.13. Representative Quotations for College C Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Vision                               | Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service        | "They are there to serve, not only to students that are going to school there, they’re there to serve the community that they reside in." (Community Partner 1)  
"They are [a] Methodist-based college. I don’t know much about [the] specific religion but I do know they are very good about helping students along the way whether financially or [through] counseling." (Community Partner 2) |
| Campus and community relationship    | Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community | Their motto is every student, every day. I’ve always said they aren’t talkin’ about just the kids on their campus; they’re talkin’ about the whole community. Every student in this county benefits from them being in the community because they reach out to the school, they reach out to the different community organizations, they provide volunteers, all kinds of leadership. (Community Partner 1)  
"Just being on the campus it is a beautiful campus. It is really small; Everyone knows each other. All students who come out there are very receptive to feedback. They understand why they are doing this and they want to help." (Community Partner 2) |
| Community needs                     | Disparity of needs in the community                                             | "We have a really high poverty rate. Our unemployment is really high. We have a lot of parents who have to travel outside the county to work. They work at rather low-paying jobs, so they really can’t afford afterschool care for their kids, so we sort of step in and take care of that so that they’re able to still go to work." (Community Partner 1) |
| Addressing community needs          | Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service          | "There was one year we were actually completely without funds, and we ran our program, strictly with volunteers through the Bonner Program for the whole school year." (Community Partner 1) |
| Investment                           | Financial and time investment                                                   | This was not addressed                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Operationalizing the vision          | Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service          | "I think our kids greatly benefit from it. They love these college kids. They’re really mentors to [the children]. I mean, they really encourage them...we [have] a real high poverty rate. They encourage them." (Community Partner 1)  
"We do have a good connection with their nursing program. Besides Bonner students we have a lot of nursing students and practicum students." (Community Partner 2) |
| Civic engagement development         | Created systems for engagement                                                  | "Scheduling probably is the hardest part of it because we have to work around students’ schedules that come to volunteer with us. I’ve not really had any challenges as far as like what you would think, behavior or something like that with the college students. That’s not been an issue at all. It’s just been kind of working around their schedules." (Community Partner 1) |
| Personal motivation                  | Belief in the purpose of education                                              | "It’s very good for our kids and it’s good for most kids, with the college students. They’re all kids to me, but we’ve had some come to us as human services, as counseling majors, and after working a year or so in our program they decided to turn to education." (Community Partner 1)  
"Just wanting to help them be more successful in life." (Community Partner 2) |

Community partners described the college in regards to their experience with its students. For one, the students wanted to help and give back to the community. They were open to feedback and ways to improve. For the partner, the college’s mission was religious based because of the students’ expression of service. The partner emphasized the rural nature of the community and region and that students drove a far distance to the service site. For another
partner, the college’s mission applied not only to the college students but to the students in the local elementary school. She saw the community as an extension of the college given the students’ work in the community.

*Word frequency in community partners’ interviews.*

Figure 4.8. provides a visual representation of the top fifty words used in interviews with community partners.

![Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College C Community Partners](image)

**Figure 4.8.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College C Community Partners

Table 4.14. below provides a view of the top 15 words frequently used regarding civic engagement. It illustrates how many times words were used in relation to civic engagement in the three administrative interviews. The words used most frequently were college, community, students, and program. College appeared 54 times in the three interviews. The word community appeared 38 times. Students were referenced 38 times and program was used in 37 places.
Table 4.14. Frequently Cited Words for College C Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>college</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>communication, communities, community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>students, students’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>program, programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volunteers</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>volunteer, volunteered, volunteering, volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organization</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>organization, organizations, organized, organizes</td>
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<td>school</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>challenge, challenges, challenging</td>
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<td>campus</td>
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<td>campus</td>
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<td>experience</td>
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<td>experience, experiences</td>
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<td>support, supporting, supportive</td>
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<td>0.45</td>
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<td>involved</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>involved, involvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategic plan.**

College C did not have a strategic plan. The president explained that the college participated “in strategic doing rather than strategic planning.” The president was not an academician by trade. Rather, he was more “business acclimated than most presidents that you would encounter. I'm a former CFO in admissions, development, and chief financial officer. I'm very much wired—I mean this is a business,” said the president. In regards to the absence of a strategic plan, he said, “I don't know of a college in the country that's been on more of an upward ascent than this college has been…We know where we're going.”

**Financial data.**

The college has a Bonner Scholars and community service office. It serves as the primary coordinating entity for organized service on campus. According to the 2011 Form 990, the
institution had $62,747,775 in assets; $18,811,035 in liabilities; and $43,936,740 in net assets.

The institution had $14,297,224 in an end of the year balance for endowment funds.

**Summary.**

In College C’s analysis, several key points were emphasized:

1) The mission was access to quality higher education for the surrounding region.

2) The college was employer, artistic and cultural venue, and source of student resources.

3) The president saw service and civic engagement programs as his legacy.

4) Poverty was affected by the rural nature of community.

5) The mission was driven by faith-based roots.

**College D Findings**

**University leaders.**

Interviews at College D were held with the president, provost, and vice president for communications. Key aspects of each research question are highlighted in Table 4.15. below with corresponding interpretations and quotations from university leaders at College D.
At College D, civic engagement was a part of the Quaker heritage of the institution. In my conversation with the president, we discussed why civic engagement is important to liberal arts institutions. He linked the foundation of the liberal arts experience for students to discover
how to achieve success in their life and make a difference in the lives of others. The president acknowledged that value based education was pitted with students’ desire for a professionally oriented degree. For him, civic engagement was the defining characteristic that helped students connect their value in the world with a career-driven expression in the community. Through hands-on experience with community-based service that strengthens community, students gain a clearer understanding of their value in the world and ways to translate their liberal arts foundation into a profession. The president described the partnership between campus and community as a four-year laboratory. He emphasized the ability of College D students to support local needs with research and skills learned in the classroom. The president noted that civic engagement was more than the Bonner Program but a part of the strategic vision of the institution to engage its students and the liberal arts experience beyond the college walls. I also interviewed two leaders who were viewed as the connection to service by community partners and who had key roles on campus with community. The first served as a vital connector between campus and community. His position was created prior to the current president and served as a representative of the community’s efforts to strengthen the community. The second linked students and community through direct service engagement. In regards to the engagement focus of the college, both partners gave credit to the institution’s Quaker values and the president’s vision of engagement as a connector to professional career connectivity.

*Word frequency in university leaders’ interviews.*

Figure 4.9. below illustrates the 50 most frequently used words in university leaders’ interviews.
Figure 4.9. Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College D Leaders

Table 4.16. provides a view of the top 15 words frequently used regarding civic engagement. It illustrates how many times words were used in relation to civic engagement in the three administrative interviews. The words used most frequently were community, students, university, and college. “Community” appeared 189 times in the three interviews. The word “students” appeared 112 times. The word “people” was referenced 88 times and college was used in 87 places.
Table 4.16. Frequently Cited Words for College D Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>communicate, communities, community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>college</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>college, colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>help</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>help, helped, helpful, helping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>educational</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>educate, educated, educating, education, educational, educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>needs</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>need, needed, needing, needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engagement</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>engage, engaged, engagement, engagements, engaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>civic</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>civic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>place</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>place, placed, places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrative</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>integral, integrate, integrated, integrating, integrative, integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>program, programming, programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faculty</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>faculties, faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiences</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>experience, experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>giving</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>give, gives, giving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Community partners.

Table 4.17. described the aspects, interpretations and representative quotations from conversations with two community partners. The grant writer for a local nonprofit and the executive director of an environmental education nonprofit were interviewed.
Table 4.17. Representative Quotations for College D Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service</td>
<td>“They do a very good job of bringing events. The events department does a beautiful job of making sure the events are of interest to the whole community not just the [college] community.” (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“It’s a link to the rest of the world. It’s also obviously politically far to the left of the county as a community...I think that it’s just not as ostracized...to me it is still an oasis. It is still, when you go onto campus, it is not like being in the rest [the town].” (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>“Students excel by solving these more complicated problems. They come at it with such an innocence of ‘why can’t we make it work?’ In the community, we make it so darn hard.” (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community needs</td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>“I would say poverty, and broken homes or lack of good parenting is the culmination of all of that. Not to say that those are only tied to income, but those things obviously go hand in hand.” (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“The negative attitude toward trying anything new in this area has a strong hold on here. I am kind of the mind if you are not into trying something new either move or stop talking.” (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing community needs</td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>“[Having a MAT program] was a groundbreaking thing from my perspective in the sense that it is very common to talk to local teachers, or people that are trying to become teachers that are involved.” (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I think they are constantly seeing areas that the community would like to see them engage and jumping into those areas- which is good.” (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
<td>“I feel like they do a really good job of jumping in when you have a project…They are very flexible and very good about making sure the student has a good experience and that the organization has a good experience also.” (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operationalizing the vision</td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>“They are very flexible and very good about making sure the student has a good experience and that the organization has a good experience also.” (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic engagement development</td>
<td>Created systems for engagement</td>
<td>“I went on the campus for an evening and gave a little workshop on working with kids, so that was interesting to do. I thought it was helpful, and I enjoyed doing that.” (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal motivation</td>
<td>Belief in the purpose of education</td>
<td>“The kinds of things that are available just by [the college’s] presence is really good for kids [in our programs].” (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the interviews, community partners emphasized the strong relationship between the campus and community. For one community partner, the students and faculty presented a fresh breath of area, willingness to change, and different perspective. She described the students as welcomed members of the community who looked at challenges as opportunities and applied their in-classroom skills as innovative solutions. Another community partner commented on the
community’s adverse approach to change. He complimented the students’ ability to create innovative programs. Both partners elaborated on the resistance to change in the local community. They described the rich resources of their area in light of intense challenges facing their communities. They talked about the college fondly with specific description of partnerships and opportunities to be a part of the campus community as both participants and active partners with students through engagement projects.

**Word frequency in community partners’ interviews**

Figure 4.10 below illustrates the top fifty words present in interviews with community partners.

![Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College D Community Partners](image)

**Figure 4.10.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College D Community Partners

Table 4.18. below provides a view of the top 15 words frequently used regarding civic engagement (see Table 4.18). It illustrates how many times words were used in relation to civic engagement in the three administrative interviews. The words used most frequently were community, people, kids, and students. “Community” appeared 93 times in the three interviews. “People” was referenced 48 times and “kids” was used in 46 places.
Table 4.18. Frequently Cited Words for College D Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>communities, community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kids</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>kid, kids, kids’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>college</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>college, colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>school, schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>organizations</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>organic, organization, organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>education</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>educated, education, educational, educationally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>program, programming, programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>cope</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>cope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>example</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>example, examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>great</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bonner</td>
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<td>0.43</td>
<td>bonner, bonners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>campus</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>campus, campuses’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trainings</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>train, trained, training, trainings, trains</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategic plan.**

The college’s strategic plan emphasized its purpose as enabling students “of great promise to each discover and enact their purpose in the work.” The process acknowledged that to help students find their life purpose would not happen without community. Through their liberal arts education, students discovered their purpose in the world. The college’s focus was grounded in the liberal arts tradition through Quaker thought and practice. The plan emphasized looking at students’ journey as part of a ten year mindset with the educational commitment an overriding priority. The college acknowledged the external factors facing higher education as motivating factors for realigning their approach. There was an emphasis on improving the academic emphasis through additional focus on faculty and student research; investment in the core teaching faculty; and comprehensive approach to the liberal arts through integration of experiential learning into the curriculum. At College D, civic engagement was a component of experiential education which was emphasized in the strategic documents as an integral
component of the ten year mindset. Experiential learning through civic engagement, study abroad, internships, and applied research were linked to long-term success and career preparation.

**Financial data.**

College D had a newly constituted center for integrated learning which connected the institution’s emphasis on experiential learning and student’s purpose. There were five offices that supported the center’s work: career education, civic engagement, sustainability, outdoor education, and constituent relations. Each office was managed by more than one staff member who focused on the individual area. The center was directed by the associate vice president for academic affairs and center director. According to the 2011 Form 990, the institution had $229,346,897 in assets; $39,832,169 in liabilities; and $189,514,728 in net assets. The institution had $120,545,802 in an end of the year balance for endowment funds.

**Summary.**

In College D’s analysis, several key points were emphasized:

1) The commitment to civic engagement originated from faith-based roots.

2) The motivation for integrating civic engagement came from liberal arts principles.

3) Community needs revolved around economic uncertainty and changing job market.

4) The college served as an employer, arts and cultural venue, and source of diverse student human resources.

5) Students’ diversity brought difference to community.
College E Findings

University leaders.

Interviews at College E were held with the president, provost, and vice president for communications. Key aspects of each research question are highlighted in Table 4.9. below with corresponding interpretations and quotations from university leaders at College E.
Table 4.19. Representative Quotations for College E Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Vision                               | Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service         | "We are going to act like, look like and feel like one of the very best liberal arts colleges in the country. They could feel that and they were in the beginning curious but a little skeptical or nervous perhaps."  
(President) |
|                                      |                                                                                 | "I think by and large the segments of the community who experience [the college] through the reflexive, intentional, planful programs for civic engagement tend to have a positive feeling about and a clearer understanding of what the university’s mission and vision is, and of the extent to which it represents a good thing in the world."  
(VP Communications) |
| Campus and community relationship    | Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community | "Part of my job since I have been here has been to diminish the fear of the institution that was clearly apparent when I arrived. There was fear and some hostility toward the institution and the sense the institution had turned its back on the city."  
(President) |
| Community needs                     | Disparity of needs in the community                                             | "The provision of basic services is measurably under stress-is what you sense."  
(President) |
|                                      |                                                                                 | "The community had a big IBM plant here that made punch cards. It also, because of that, had a lot of IBM executives who lived there. That pulled up from the community and uprooted lots and lots of people and jobs, and they were good jobs."  
(Provost) |
|                                      |                                                                                 | "There’s significant concern about the, as I think in every state, about our capacity to continue to develop attractive employment opportunities for the citizenship. I think there are concerns about brain drain, about losing talented folks because we don’t have the right kind of opportunities for those folks."  
(VP Communications) |
| Addressing community needs          | Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service           | "We are going to act like, look like and feel like one of the very best liberal arts colleges in the country. They could feel that and they were in the beginning curious but a little skeptical or nervous perhaps."  
(President) |
|                                      |                                                                                 | "There are a number of—those things are big and solid, institutionalized programs. Then there’s a tacit, or implicit or sometimes explicit but less fully institutionalized support for a number of programs some of our faculty and staff are involved in..."  
(VP Communications) |
| Investment                           | Financial and time investment                                                   | "I think... when we attach resources and time, energy and thought to building those connections backwards, back and forth, between the community and members of the university community proper, it goes very well."  
(VP Communications) |
| Operationalizing the vision          | Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service           | "This small liberal arts college environment. It's an extraordinary way to prepare people for having a lifetime of learning, service, and leadership."  
(Provost) |
|                                      |                                                                                 | "They can sense that I am pushing a development agenda toward the commercial district."  
(President) |
| Civic engagement development        | Created systems for engagement                                                  | "We developed it, and we got it going, and then we haven't done much with it....The interesting thing that's happened is in the last 20 years or so, now high school students understand the importance of this, and high schools understand the importance. Our students are coming to us already committed to community service, civic engagement, [and] service-learning."  
(Provost) |
|                                      |                                                                                 | "There’s a number of programs that grew up because folks had—faculty or staff or community members outside the university had an idea, and there was enough sense of this is where we live, and we should take care of it, that it was able to blossom."  
(VP Communications) |
| Personal motivation                  | Belief in the purpose of education                                              | "My interest in community is the channel; the pathway is through urban design. I wish I could say it is because I am saintly in some kind of way. But honestly I think there are small towns that are livable and viable...they are texture and real."  
(President) |
| First experience in service          | Childhood influences                                                            | "I have this passion for design and architecture. I was obsessed with campuses when I was in college. That fed this real love of, not necessarily architecture, but the study of urbanism and new urbanism."  
(President) |

In the interviews at College E, there was a strong emphasis on the “quality of place” both on campus and in relationship with the surrounding community. The president emphasized the inherent connection between the campus and community. For the president, leadership was seen as involvement in developing a sense of place and transformation. Though presidents at Colleges
B and C emphasized the shared town and gown relationship with community, the president at College E emphasized the shared transformative actions of both the university focus but also on enhancing the sense of place for its members as well as institutional partners. The president acknowledged great partnerships with the local community and yet there was a concern that the local town would lose its identity to the college.

**Word frequency in university leaders’ interviews.**

Figure 4.11. below shows the fifty words utilized most frequently in interviews with university leaders at College E.

![Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College E Leaders](image)

**Figure 4.11.** Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College E Leaders

Table 4.20. provides a view of the top 15 words frequently used regarding civic engagement. It illustrates how many times words were used in relation to civic engagement in the three administrative interviews. The words used most frequently were community, students, university, and college. Community appeared 127 times in the three interviews. Students appeared 79 times. University was referenced 52 times and college was used in 51 places.
### Table 4.20. Frequently Cited Words for College E Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>communications, communities, community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>students', students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>universal, universities, university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>college</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>college, colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>school, schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>service</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>service, services</td>
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<tr>
<td>engagement</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>engage, engaged, engagement, engages, engaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>developing, development, developments, develops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiences</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>experience, experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>program, programming, programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>institutions</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>institute, institution, institutional, institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>business</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>business, businesses, busy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buildings</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>build, building, buildings, builds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Community partners.**

The chart below describes the aspects, interpretations and representative quotations from conversations with two community partners. The school counselor for a local school and director of a senior citizens’ nonprofit were interviewed.
Community partners emphasized the benefits the institution brought to their organizations. One partner discussed the students as a highlight to her work. Through her stories, she emphasized the students work as beneficial to the nonprofit. She elaborated that the students’ fresh perspective and energy strengthened the nonprofits’ ability to meet its mission. Another partner described the local arts and culture provided by the college. She emphasized both students and faculty engagement in the local school. For her, the opportunity to engage with the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service</td>
<td>&quot;I’d say their vision is one in which what I see is that they want to be more transparent. They want to be—civic engagement is their big—that’s the big buzz right now.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;I think the mission and vision is to put a student through school there who comes out as very well-rounded individual who looks at the entire world, not just a little, tiny box.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>&quot;They’re still bright kids, but now we have kids who come from Brooklyn, and Queens...and from all over the world, really, into our community now, which is great.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>&quot;I think people are finding real hardships in trying to raise their families and trying to go about their daily lives, and paying their bills, and so forth, just trying to make a living and still finding time to be a family and do things together.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;We have this Ruby Payne Bridges out of Poverty program going on right now. People, community members, and [college] members meet once a month, and we try to talk about ways that we can help those living in poverty, and what we can do for them.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
<td>&quot;We have big guest speakers. It’s free to the community. It’s just been a really nice way to bridge our community [with the college].&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;The students come into our schools and they help students. The professors serve on our school boards. They come into our classrooms and do projects.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Created systems for engagement</td>
<td>&quot;Civic engagement, I think, is meaningful, it’s ongoing, and I think a lot of college students just feel like, ‘Okay, I’m just getting my community service points, and then I’m done.’&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Belief in the purpose of education</td>
<td>&quot;My motivation is my teachers, because my teachers—it’s just like we’re doing more and more with less and less.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Childhood influences</td>
<td>The community partners did not address this question.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
college to find solutions for community problems was a great benefit. She described a shared discussion group directed at reducing poverty through collaborative engagement with the local school and college. She talked about the value of being treated as an equal partner and educator by the college engagement staff.

*Word frequency in community partners’ interviews.*

Figure 4.12. below illustrates the fifty words used in interviews with community partners at College E. Community, school, and kids appeared frequently.

![Word Cloud of Frequently Used Words by College E Community Partners](image)

The excel spreadsheet, Table 4.22., provides a view of the top 15 words frequently used regarding civic engagement. It illustrates how many times words were used in relation to civic engagement in the three administrative interviews. The words used most frequently were community, kids, school, and college. Community appeared 59 times in the three interviews. The word kids appeared 42 times. School was referenced 41 times and college was used in 33 places.
Table 4.22. Frequently Cited Words for College E Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Similar Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>59</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kids</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>school, schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>college</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>college, colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work</td>
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**Strategic plan.**

College E’s strategic plan emphasized all members of the college community’s involvement “for through engagement comes transformation.” It emphasized the small residential nature of the liberal arts institution as a key aspect of its transformative value. The plan emphasized areas of focus for the institution as learning, teaching, attending, living, connecting, and working. The learning component focused on the academic curricula and the commitment to a strong liberal arts foundation. The curriculum, described as both in the classroom and beyond the classroom, encompassed study abroad and term-away programs to further engage students in programs that complement the in-classroom experience. For teaching, the college invested in a strong, well-regarded faculty. The focus on student attendance highlighted the recruitment, retention, and financial aid process for students. For this area, the college focused on developing quality of place both on-campus and off-campus. In this area, the
plan emphasized the importance of building a shared “college town” relationship. Community connections were noted in the plan as enhancing student, staff, and faculty life. The connecting piece focused on alumni and developing deeper communications with graduates. For working, the college targeted a quality, well-functioning environment for faculty and staff.

Civic engagement was not explicit in the strategic plan. Transformative learning was emphasized throughout the document. Two areas of the plan facilitated community-engaged scholarship. First, the emphasis on teaching provided avenues for deeper experiential learning and civic engagement. Second, the focus on community development developed city, university, and community members’ investment in building the town together.

**Financial data.**

The college invested in a central center for student engagement that supported students throughout their journey at the college. It is an academic resource center for students, faculty and staff that reported to the provost’s office. The center serves as a team-based approach to study abroad, community service and civic engagement, internships, and career planning and placement options. The center has a team of sixteen staff with four designated as community service in their titles. Additionally, it was directed by a senior staff member who oversaw experiential learning and career planning. The Bonner Scholars program was housed in this center. According to the 2011 Form 990, the institution had $766,524,784 in assets; $194,215,245 in total liabilities; and $572,309,539 in net assets. The institution had $483,049,622 in an end of the year balance for endowment funds.

**Summary.**

In College E’s analysis, several key points were emphasized:

1) There were multiple perspectives of community engagement.
2) The rural nature of economy affected access to employment.
3) The college was an employer as well as an art and cultural venue.
4) Members of the campus community saw service as part of liberal arts mission; it was carried out programmatically through service learning or direct engagement.
5) The college invested in downtown development through matching funds and grant support.

Cross-Institutional Themes from Findings

All five colleges in the multi-case study faced crucial questions for their institutions’ sustainability and relevancy in a changing higher education landscape. How do liberal arts institutions survive and thrive in the current economic context for higher education? How do colleges integrate civic engagement into their strategic direction to ensure their viability and relevancy in the higher education landscape? Leaders at each institution discussed the external factors facing their college. Following the economic recession of 2009, higher education faced questions about the relevancy of liberal arts institutions in the face of career driven education, rising costs of private education, decreasing endowments due to shifts in the investment economy, and changing demographics of students entering college.

I utilized three themes for data exploration driven by word frequency and coding within university leaders and community partners’ interviews. By using manual coding, three initial ideas emerged: community, strategic direction of liberal arts institutions, and financial investment. As I looked closer at each idea in context of the interviews, strategic plans, and financial documents, three themes for university leaders’ role in civic engagement emerged as shown in Figure 4.13. below.
Figure 4.13. Three Themes Based on Multi-site Case Study Findings

*College Leadership for Civic Engagement* was a theme that developed out of interviews, and strategic plans regarding the institution’s commitment to engagement. Initial coding revealed the strategic direction of liberal arts institutions as a crucial component discussed in interviews and present in the strategic plans. It also showed a connection between the mission of the institution and university leadership as engagement with the surrounding community. Though engagement manifested itself in different ways for each president, the university leaders described civic engagement as a tool for student application of their liberal arts education. In the cases, civic engagement was considered part of experiential learning, service to the region, community development, or community engaged citizenry. It was described as part of the larger ethos of the institution rather than one specific programmatic component. Each institution had its own terminology for engagement and not all called it civic engagement. In practice, civic engagement was an applied technique for students to understand their place in the world and
work. It was a way students apply their liberal arts education in the world. It was a career, personal, and professional development tool for students. Engagement was a relationship-building resource for campus and its surrounding civic leaders. There was clear connection between the strategic direction of the majority of liberal arts institutions studied with mission as service to the community and institutional leadership as engagement in the world.

The theme of *College as Community Resource* emerged from the coding and word frequency. Initial coding revealed linkage between the financial impact the colleges had on their surrounding communities. Specifically, there was description of the economy, poverty, and the college’s investment. In the interviews and strategic plans all institutions acknowledged the important role of its surrounding community. Community partners played critical roles of connecting the campus to the community and similarly the community to the campus. In the interviews, university leaders discussed the strategic role of civic engagement within the current liberal arts landscape. Community members and university leaders described the financial impact of the university in the community within the interviews through access to resources. For the community members, civic engagement was a way to support the students and give them professional development experiences. Though the partners acknowledged the human resources student engagement provided for their organization, they were also quick to emphasize the role they had exposing students to their work in the community.

*College Leadership for Community Quality of Life* was a theme that emerged from the coding and word frequency. Initial coding showed an emphasis on the community and its linkage with faith, diversity, and the college’s role as employer. In the interviews and strategic plans all institutions acknowledged the important role of its surrounding community. Community emerged as the most frequently used word in interviews at all five institutions. Repeatedly,
community was described as the colleges’ role as an employer, place of difference, and representative of their faith-based roots. In each rural area, the college was the largest or within the top five employers in the rural community. In two cases, diversity was emphasized in context of conversation and liberal beliefs as well as racial undertones in one case compared to the town’s culture.

Through NVIVO coding, I looked at word usage in the interviews and strategic plans. The software allowed me to explore the data more holistically and compare it to the initial themes found through coding. Community emerged as the most frequently used word in interviews at all five institutions. Repeatedly, community was described as the colleges’ role as an employer, place of difference, and representative of their faith-based roots. In each rural area, the college was the largest or within the top five employers in the rural community. In two cases, diversity was emphasized in context of conversation and liberal beliefs as well as racial undertones in one case compared to the town’s culture.

All three themes revealed common commitment to an engaged learning ethos and helped to address the key research questions herein: (1) How does institutional leadership inform community partners’ perceptions about institutional commitment to civic engagement? In turn, how do community partners’ perceptions of needs inform institutional leadership in civic engagement? (2) How does the university’s leadership keep the college involved in its community through civic engagement? (3) How has including civic engagement in the strategic documents helped the institution? (4) How does university leadership utilize civic engagement as a leadership strategy? (5) What motivates university executives to integrate civic engagement into their leadership?
College leadership for community engagement.

Through the interviews, presidents and fellow leaders saw the institution’s engagement in two ways. All institutions viewed engagement with the greater community as part of their mission. The approach to civic engagement varied by the institution’s business model. College A, College C, and College E were all institutions that stated they were nationally and internationally recognized and recruited their students similarly. College B and College D recruited locally in their surrounding region. They saw their missions as educating and strengthening their surrounding area. Region was defined differently for each one. College B defined region as set by the board of trustees when the college was established. For College D, it was the surrounding counties. In both cases, part of the mission was to serve surrounding areas that are in need. Colleges B and D both talked about their mission and service in the context of inreach and outreach. Inreach meant service to support its student base which was drawn from populations of high financial need. Outreach meant service for the community at large.

College B’s ethos and mission as a liberal arts college dedicated to the surrounding region and high quality education was built on its historical foundation. The college was founded at a time of intense segregation and racial division in its southeastern home state. Its founder, a strong believer in the power of education, intentionally created the school to be a place of difference in its surrounding region. Along with the initial board of trustees, the founding leader developed the institution on eight great commitments which were the bedrock for the mission and actions of the college. The president of College B acknowledged that “the eight great commitments were not only fundamental and foundational to the business approach…they become part of the students and faculty here.” College C’s mission was to serve the educational needs of students by providing a living-learning environment within an atmosphere
of active caring and Christian concern where every student, every day, learns and grows and feels like a real human being. “The best thing about working here is our mission. The toughest thing about working here is our mission. Our mission is about other. It’s about learning to live in the grey, learning to extend yourself…learning to give grace to people” said the vice president for student affairs. “That’s the great thing about our mission. We take students that other colleges might not want…but we give them a chance” said the vice president for student affairs. College C served a student population that was “80% first generation. “It’s pretty satisfying seeing them walk across the stage” added the vice president for student affairs. Part of the ongoing growth was “broadening [the college’s] footprint and expanding its mission to other areas that also need our help,” said the president. College C was first a tuition-driven institution though they did have an endowment. The institution relied on tuition dollars for the majority of income. The college was “taking students that are the most expensive to educate with no money to pay” said the president. The college focused on its mission and expanded to include graduate programs as well as partnerships with nearby community colleges. It focused on service to the region through a quality education. The provost of College C said, “We try to operationalize the mission....to provide a tremendous amount of support to students because so many of our students are first-generation low income students.”

College D’s mission to provide the highest quality undergraduate education in the liberal arts and the sciences was shaped by their religious founding in the Religious Society of Friends tradition. College D believed in the openness to truth and the pursuit of truth in knowledge with the application to making the world a better place. The college believed in attracting the best faculty with a shared commitment to an open, cooperative learning environment. College D believed in “awakening the teacher within for its students.” It followed a belief in education that
improved the world and inspired future leaders in it. The institution’s values were best stated in its principles and practices to “value respect for persons, integrity, peace and justice, simplicity, and community.” College D acknowledged its liberal arts purpose through strengthening its teaching faculty, putting more emphasis on faculty scholarship and collaborative research. It also valued the linkage between experiential education and career development with community engagement as a key component. College D had a strong history in education for peace and justice as well as global citizenship. In the strategic documents, the college emphasized “field” study experiences as an important part of the curriculum. Drawing from a variety of experiences “local, national, and international experiential engagements” College D provided a support system to engage in the community as an integrated part of their learning experience. College D’s leadership was described through its institutional approach to community. “The traditional higher education model of rather rigid academic disciplines in rather rigid departmental structures with rather rigid staffing expectations is going to get blown up; it is in the process of being dismantled as an unworkable business model for a lot of places” said the president. He acknowledged that the higher education landscape and its funders understood the changes before liberal arts institutions. “The major donors and foundations supporting liberal arts colleges, primarily Mellon Foundation, are sending strong messages that you have got to think of more creative ways to structure your academic program and put it with a business model that makes sense” he said. Leadership within the institution was not solely from executive leadership. Faculty played a critical role in leadership and decision making through shared governance and commitment to mission. The President said the faculty “already assumed that it was fundamental.” In regards to why integrate civic engagement into the strategic direction of the university, “the basic liberal arts college question ‘how should I live’ goes right back to Socrates
very classic (question) and then there was this question ‘how am I going to make a living?’ which was often pitted against the first question.” The president iterated students at a liberal arts college “discover how to achieve (their) life and reflect on this or (they) can go to a professionally oriented place and figure out how to pay (their) bills.” The student’s choice of direction and profession was one of the critical factors facing liberal arts institutions. The president noted,

What we call a profession or a job is not reduced down to a pay check although one cannot operate in the world without it. We should not separate that kind of reflective discovery question from how you are going to bring yourself into the world in a productive, rewarding way. That’s why we put them together; it is why we have to have that component. If we are going to help students make that connection then we have to have all the pieces for them there to do that. It was a four year plus laboratory to work on that and if you do not come here to work on it and do not go somewhere else and work on it I do not think it automatically happens.

This spoke to the heart of the purpose of liberal arts institutions and their value in the changing higher education area.

College E’s mission as a leading national liberal arts institution and school of music was to transform students by providing a student experience of extraordinary quality, in a residential, small scale setting. College E emphasized quality, transformation, powerful, challenging, and engaged as defining words for its mission and student experience. In its strategic documents, the institution described experiences beyond the classroom including but not limited to internships, international travel, and service trips. College E was established by the Methodist Church as a
seminary. From its very beginnings, it was to be a national institution "forever to be conducted on the most liberal principles, accessible to all religious denominations, and designed for the benefit of our citizens in general." The surrounding community was selected as the site for the university because the community raised $25,000 for it. It was dedicated to establishing the institution in their “rough, frontier town.”

The strategic documents for the university emphasized it as a “leading institution” dedicated to “transform[ing] students.” It aspired to be a place that “attracts extraordinary students of undeniable promise and achievement and educates them to be leaders in the world.” Whether referring to alumni, current students, faculty or staff, College E emphasized each as an “engaged community.” In the classroom, students prepared to be “leaders in the world.” Beyond the classroom, students had experiences through service, international travel, fellowships, and internships to enhance the learning experience. There was also an emphasis on the “quality of place” both on campus and in relationship with the surrounding community. The president noted, “when they do well; we do well…we are linked” in referring to the surrounding town.

There was an acknowledgement of the impact of the liberal arts and higher education landscapes on the university’s leadership. Though it had a great impact on place, the provost noted the rising cost of higher education. Though this was an “incredibly expensive way to do higher education” he said referring to a low student to faculty ratio and liberal arts business model. I mean we eventually will price ourselves out of the marketplace. The provost noted, That’s going to be what separates the haves and the have-nots in terms of the future of liberal arts colleges and universities. Small liberal arts colleges with low student–to-faculty ratios are a profoundly inefficient way from one point of view of educating students. It’s very resource
intensive. I think a lot of the discourse nation-wide about higher education right now is very much focused on models that can be applied to a much bigger swatch of students than can be currently served by small liberal arts colleges.

At College E, leadership as engagement was seen as involvement in developing a sense of place and transformation. Different from all other institutions herein, the college’s strategic documents had a section focused on connecting with the local community. It described the “shared ‘college town’ relationship and the integral relationship between the campus and community. “As [the community] thrives, more faculty and staff members will choose to live in town, increasing the sense of shared community between [college and community]” described the president regarding shared transformative actions of both the university focus but also on enhancing the sense of place for its members as well as institutional partners. The president acknowledged great partnerships with the local community and yet there was a “worry. Will we lose our downtown?” This apprehension and yet excitement was pervasive in the interviews.

**College as community resource.**

The financial impact of the five institutions was clear through the interviews and strategic documents as well as the Form 990s. Though not aimed at any one research question, financial impact was repeatedly referenced in the interviews through three primary lenses. First, there was description of rural poverty surrounding each institution and the challenges of education, poverty, and job availability that emanate from it. Second, there were many references to the colleges’ investment in their community through time, resources, volunteers, facilities, events, and employees. Third, the changing economy was described regarding its impact on the institutions and communities.
A perception of rural poverty in the surrounding communities was inherent in all five cases. Community A’s school counselor described one impact of regional poverty through the test scores for children in elementary school in “the bottom 5% of schools for elementary in testing.” Yet, she acknowledged that the scores increased as the children grow for “in our high school we are in the top 20% with ACT scores. Some[where] in there we bring that up.” The school counselor credited one-on-one relationships with the children as a means for increasing student performance. She added that College B was one resource for one-on-one support and mentoring. The vice president for academic affairs discussed the impact of poverty and health on the campus and in the community. She acknowledged the connection between the two that “most of it really was about poverty and what access you have to good foods. When you're poor, you're going to eat what you can afford and not necessarily good foods. We know really good food is really expensive, right?” As a result of the health challenge for students, two faculty members are spending their sabbatical creating a program to address health for the campus and community.

At College C, the vice president for student affairs acknowledged the impact of the community’s rural location on its surrounding poverty. “When you live in a rural area, what you realize is there are just not that many services for people in rural areas.” The vice president for student affairs noted “civic engagement in a rural community takes on a different meaning than it would in an urban community.” The civic engagement director at a local school with College C saw that “we have a really high poverty rate…Our unemployment was really high.” The volunteer coordinator with College C, said “poverty is an issue in a lot of the areas…Getting local involvement is always a challenge.” The director of civic engagement at College D acknowledged, “We have a really high rate of poverty.” A school counselor said, “People,
community members, and [college] members meet once a month and we try to talk about ways that we can help those living in poverty, and what we can do for them.” The senior services executive director with College E, discussed basic “necessities like food.” She noted, “We have a lot of poverty right now, people unemployed, and I think that to a great degree was a result of lack of training.”

Based on the interviews, financial investment in the community was evident in several forms: 1) investing time and membership fees on local board of directors; 2) providing access to community and art events without charge to community members; 3) giving time through volunteering or service learning for students, faculty, and staff. The vice president of community relations for College A, said “The college supports a lot of the senior staff members and their memberships or their participation on civic boards in the community.” The college invested by paying for organizational membership of senior staff members or others on campus to participate in the community. In addition to membership on boards, the college allocated financial resources for the Bonner program and AmeriCorps*VISTA, said the special assistant to the president,

Those are parts of our mission so we want to make sure and do that…supporting things like the after-school program and setting aside resources for things like that, I think are important ways that we financially fulfill that aspect of our mission.

College A did not give direct cash donations to local nonprofits. The college provided volunteers and student support in lieu of financial donations. “We're still a very consumer-oriented place, as much as we wouldn't like to admit that most days, where we need to make sure that our students are having a positive experience” said the special assistant. He acknowledged
the tuition driven nature of higher education that focused on the college student as the consumer. Though the institution has an endowment and other financial resources, “77 % of our revenue comes from tuition. When you look at it that way, you’ve got to make sure that your consumers are happy” acknowledged the special assistant. The college also invested in its community as an employer. The special assistant to the president said, “If you’re talking financial investment, the big thing we do, of course, is that we employ 330 people, and in a community that has large nonprofits being the hospital and the college, payroll taxes are important here.” The college also invested in development of its place similar to College E’s investment in its downtown. College A invested in the Economic Development Partnership which “depends on fundraising to meet part of its operations,” noted the vice president of community relations.

The health education director for Community B said, “I think [the institution’s] willingness to have folks get out in the community and experience the community—that mindset. That acceptance of artwork and crafts and things I think has been a big plus for the community. It's kind of a reaching out. It's kind of a tangible way.” College B also invested through its volunteers. School counselor said “they find other ways to help us…They do a mentoring program, tutoring program, teen program. They provide that direction and support. When I think of the college I see it as a collaborative effort of education.”

When it comes to financial investment, the president of College B noted, “Most institutions can’t justify using some of their resources to support other nonprofits entities. In fact, most of the time, that would be considered contrary to the rules that govern the tax rules that are in effect for nonprofit organizations.” College B invests in its community financially. “We give money to rape crisis centers, to medical providers, to people who are working on hunger and nutrition throughout the area” said the president. College B utilized community members to
serve in an advisory capacity for fund allocation. “They don’t advise it; they help make the decision,” said the president. College B also maintained three outreach centers that provide funding, support, training, and service to the local community. “College B has a reputation throughout the region as being a place that’s on your side, if you’re in the region, not a—again, to make the distinction, most prestigious residential colleges consciously avoid engagement with the first 50 miles outside their border” said the provost. “We’re working with 19,000 students through GEAR UP and TRIO and Upward Bound and the Promise Neighborhood program, serving huge numbers of people from cradle to grave, many of whom are students, to encourage college access” added the provost.

The president of College C acknowledged the challenge of showing service expenditures for the college in the budget, “I don't know that we really have a good way of accurately measuring how much we're investing. We can just look at the simple operating budget for the Bonner program, but that only begins to scratch the surface of what, I think, we're doing. It hasn't been important for us to quantify how much of an investment we're making in civic engagement.” Investment was defined by allocation of resources financial, human, or time. The vice president for student affairs for College C said,

any time you’re going out into a community, you’re making an investment in them. It would just be real easy—it’d be real easy, as an institution, to just sit up here on the hill. We need every precious dollar that we can get to run the institution. We have to spend time and treasure out there that we could be spending here. The reason you do it was because you hope you’re making that part better.
For the provost at College C another form of investment was through providing students’ outreach and skills for the community. “We received $25,000.00 to do that. Because of that, the local doctors in the hospital were able to disseminate vouchers for free testing for cholesterol and blood pressure and all that screenings, and they’re expecting I think they said 3,000 or so people. They already started doing some of the screening because it takes time and all that, but they’re anticipating it’s going to be 3,000 people participate.” At College D, the vice president of community relations acknowledged that “the resources that we have, we have the human capital that was just—the community could really, really benefit from our human capital.”

Investment also came in the form of how institution dollars were allocated. College D’s president noted, “You can find plenty of faculty members in many different disciplines who would say ‘you should put another person in our department so we can lower our teaching load so that we can get our books written rather than to free up my time to oversee a collaborative classroom thing.’ Faculty returned to the classroom with their students and processed the experience. That was much more the case here.” The director of civic engagement said, “I would say again we have individuals who invest in certain organizations.” At College E, the president noted, “We realigned all of our investments ‘cause we knew we were going to do some work on campus. We shifted everything so the first wave of what we were doing on campus could be appropriately a match. We had to keep our end of the bargain.”

The president of College A said, “Some of the wealthiest people I’ve ever known about live here, and some of the poorest. The needs are great just in terms of basic needs. We have a huge economic impact here which can be measured, and we have measured it. Some of it was an economic impact.” The special assistant noted, “The hiring of a person dedicated to community service, our efforts in the area of community-based learning have really just been in the last five
to seven years where we've hired a VISTA and we've had an academic dean who's been more focused on that kind of area.” The special assistant to the president acknowledged, “We have our economic challenges. The recession created challenges for all of us.” From the community perspective at College B, the health director said, “Another primary concern was keeping people employed. That's a big one, and we're probably better off than a lot of the surrounding counties for keeping people employed.” The president of College B noted “our state, as a complete entity, is in the midst of a transformation from one sort of economy to another…we have a fairly low rate of educational attainment in the region.” The president said “that’s one of the markers of education was when you start to figure out what’s in your interest and what isn’t.” The provost acknowledged “lack of employment opportunities and poverty was a real issue.” The provost noted the changes the economy made for employers “that pulled up from the community and uprooted lots and lots of people and jobs, and they were good jobs. There have been employers who’ve come and filled the gaps.”

**College leadership for community quality of life.**

The community component of the five institutions was clear through the interviews and strategic documents. Though not aimed at any one research question, community was repeatedly referenced in the interviews through three primary lenses. First, there was description of the faith based founding and tradition of the institution. Second, there were many references to diversity of the institution and its surrounding community. Third, the college’s role as employer was emphasized.

College A’s president said “Now, we are not a Presbyterian—we're not a Christian college, don't claim to be, don't really desire to be, but we make no apologies for being interested in the spiritual life of our students.” The president said “College B would add to those good
answers that it’s part of our mission to have an impact on the place where we were put. It’s a Christian impulse.” The religious founding and affiliation of the college “can also be a divisive component for community” noted the provost. In the interviews with community partners, there were references to the social diversity between the campus and the community. This appeared in the reference to students’ beliefs for more liberal leaning beliefs than their conservative rural communities. The volunteer coordinator with Community C acknowledged, “I know they are a Methodist-based college. I don’t know much about that specific religion but I do know they are very good about helping students along the way whether financially or counseling.” Institutions can also draw funding from their faith-based roots. The provost gave an example of “The Good Samaritan grant was the one that came from the Methodist church.” College D’s president acknowledged the institution “was a Quaker school or it was Quaker influenced….The power of consensus a commitment to decision making rather than taking votes.”

In the interviews, there were several references to the diversity of the campus in comparison to its surrounding community. In College B’s case, there was discussion about the impact of race as one example of diversity’s impact. The provost said “when they walk to Walmart, it’s easy for a [someone] to hurl a racial epithet at them, because unfortunately that person has just not experienced diversity growing up here in this community…there are diversity challenges locally. There are certainly socioeconomic challenges locally” said the provost. The associate vice president for academic affairs acknowledged that the national conversation about race impacted the diversity conversation for college students. “I think it was the national conversation around race that we're having right now or not having around race right now. Everything was about race and everything was not about race at the same time. The Trayvon
Martin thing. It's not about race, but it was about race…All of those things coming together on this campus. It can be great and it can be really difficult at the same time.”

Financially, each institution impacted its community as a steady employer. College A’s special assistant to the president said, “If you’re talking financial investment, the big thing we do, of course, was that we employ 330 people, and in a community that has large nonprofits being the hospital and the college, payroll taxes are important here. The college invests in that way.” Regarding the community perception of the college, “there's a lot of people that appreciate the college because it was a generator for jobs, and that helps the economy and all that…you feel like the college was going to be there, and it's not transitional as far as it's not going to be picked up and moved out like a factory would be.” The vice president of community relations noted “the hospital was an employer of about I think 2,500, so it’s the largest employer here by far. We employ about 400, but only about 300 and some are fulltime. The president spoke to this “5 companies that employ small numbers, in 5-12 range of employees, those companies are led by College D graduates…often computer science.” As an employer, “it is hard to find people to hire that are educated and ready to jump into the workforce right away. That’s an issue” said the environmental education nonprofit director.

**Summary.**

Three themes emerged from coding and data analysis of 25 interviews, 5 strategic plans, and 5 Form 990 financial documents – *college leadership for civic engagement, college as community resource, and college leadership for community quality of life*. The themes illustrate a focus on university leadership’s role in civic engagement along with community partners’ perceptions of the value their neighboring liberal arts college bring to the community. Developed from coding of interview transcripts, the initial codes indicated a focus on community, strategic
direction of liberal arts institutions, and financial investment. With additional analysis of strategic documents and financials, the themes evolved with a focus on college and community leadership for deeper civic engagement between campus and its surrounding area. *College Leadership for Civic Engagement* addresses both the president and institution’s commitment to engagement. *College as Community Resource* emerged from the coding and word frequency. Specifically, there was description of the economy, poverty, and the college’s investment locally. *College Leadership for Community Quality of Life* shows an emphasis on the community and its linkage with faith, diversity, and the college’s role as employer.

**Conclusion**

Chapter 4 explores the interview transcripts, strategic plans, and Form 990 financial documents. By college, I highlight the key quotations by university and community leaders followed by a synthesis of the interview text relative to research questions. Word frequency is used both through charts and word clouds to illustrate the commonly used words in both college leaders and community partners’ interviews. I then analyzed the strategic plans and financials across all institutions. This analysis allowed for development of three major findings themes based on key words, and textual analysis -- *college leadership for civic engagement, college as community resource, and college leadership for community quality of life.*
Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings and Implications

This chapter articulates the connection between the study findings and the study research questions. It also shows the expansion of Weerts (2005) and Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) conceptual frameworks by exploring why college presidents at private liberal arts institutions choose to invest their leadership capital in civic engagement. The chapter concludes with implications for research and practice based on this research study.

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to contribute to the understanding of how university leadership at rural, private liberal arts institutions can more deeply integrate civic engagement into institutional priorities and be more responsive to community needs. Using a multi-case study design, the research examined university leaders’ and community partners’ perceptions of civic engagement. The three findings themes of college leadership for civic engagement, college as community resource, and college leadership for community quality of life capture the role an institution’s leadership plays in community engagement. The themes suggest the influential role of university leaders on students’ engagement as part of the liberal arts experience. The themes describe the institution as a community resource for student support, arts, and culture. Also, the themes address the institutional leadership’s impact on the rural community quality of life.

Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) conceptual framework of community boundary spanners focused on individuals within the institution who played key connecting roles for its community outreach. The themes in this study expand the conceptual framework beyond individuals to include the college as a boundary spanner within its community. The findings address the five research questions here by looking at the role of the college’s leadership through mission, action, and motivation.
1) How does institutional leadership inform community partners’ perceptions about institutional commitment to civic engagement? In turn, how do community partners’ perceptions of needs inform institutional leadership in civic engagement?

2) How does the university’s leadership keep the college involved in its community through civic engagement?

3) How has including civic engagement in the strategic documents helped the institution?

4) How does university leadership utilize civic engagement as a leadership strategy?

5) What motivates university executives to integrate civic engagement into their leadership?

**Discussion of Findings**

**College leadership for civic engagement.**

In research question two, I asked how does the university’s leadership keep the college involved in its community through civic engagement? The actions of university presidents influenced the way the college and campus engage with its community. Additionally, the cases showed multiple institutional approaches to engagement: civic leadership through board service; community-based leadership through convening and connecting constituencies for shared action; direct service and service learning for students’ liberal arts experience; career-based application for students through community-based work; and economic and community development to strengthen the town. In each case, students volunteered and served in a variety of local nonprofits through the Bonner Program and other student-based initiatives. However, the degree to which the engagement deepened from student-driven to institution-led varied by presidential leadership.

The president’s leadership philosophy that the community is improved through personal involvement was echoed in all the colleges’ approaches to engagement. The particular type of
engagement varied. Whether through direct service by students or board service by faculty, staff, and administration, engagement was hands-on and visible in the community in one case. In two cases, leadership addressed inreach and outreach to the region, whether defined as surrounding counties or surrounding states. The philosophy of civic engagement through educating students native to the region was similar. Of the two examples, region was defined differently, yet, the focus on student work to uplift the region was seen similarly. Two other examples linked career-based preparation to community-based work. Though the liberal arts institutions did not target specific career fields, they provided student application of their in-classroom education through internships, community-based research, direct service, and service learning.

Research question three asked how has including civic engagement in the strategic documents helped the institution? The financial documents did not show a clear linkage since the budgets were not delineated to specific civic engagement-based expenditures. Though civic engagement was present in each strategic plan and mission, it was defined differently. In one, it was to empower lives as engaged citizens. For another, service to the region primarily through education but also by other appropriate services was emphasized. For one, access to quality higher education for the surrounding region was described; and yet for another, integrating civic engagement into liberal arts principles for career-preparation was important; and finally in another, transformation developed from engagement. In the beginning of this study, I stated that whether called public engagement, civic engagement, community engagement, or experiential learning, all refer to intentional partnerships between universities and their community organizations that strengthen the university’s mission (AASCU, 2002; Bringle & Hatcher, 2009; Sandmann & Plater, 2009). This addressed research question three for all the colleges were able
to link their mission to engagement through the strategic plans and interviews as interconnected to their missions.

Research questions four and five are interconnected in the college leadership for civic engagement theme. In the two questions, I asked how does university leadership utilize civic engagement as a leadership strategy? And, what motivates university executives to integrate civic engagement into their leadership? How deeply civic engagement was integrated as a leadership strategy for the liberal arts institution correlated with the president’s motivation for civic engagement. For one, engagement was about urban design and economic development. This personal motivation had an influence on the vision of that particular institution. For another, engagement was about liberal arts philosophy and career-based preparation. Engagement answered a tangible way liberal arts institutions can survive in an existing career-based higher education climate. This perspective shaped the vision for the college and its leadership strategy for continued growth. For another, the institution’s commitment to work and service in the region as a liberal arts institution was motivation for his leadership as president of the college. For one, his personal experience as a community member and leader influenced his vision for the institution as an open door to its region. For all, the liberal arts mission of their institution was clear through interviews and strategic plans as a driving force. It was not service for research but service for application and strengthening the common good.

In the words of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which is a recognized force in civic engagement education:

Civic engagement requires processes in which academics recognize, respect, and value the knowledge, perspectives, and resources of community partners and that are designed to serve a public purpose,
building the capacity of individuals, groups, and organizations involved to understand and collaboratively address issues of public concern (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching website).

In Weerts (2005), Weerts and Sandmann (2010), and this study, civic engagement is defined not by relevance to the college’s mission but to partnership with the community that strengthens it equally with the college. In other words, the benefit is not slanted toward the campus or improving students but toward uplifting the community as well. In the cases, community partners all saw the colleges and their leaders as positively impacting their community. In every case, the students were the tangible example of the college’s commitment, though community partners gave examples of presidents’ personal investment of time locally through their presence.

Weerts (2005) conceptual framework provided specific examples of presidents’ actions for civic engagement. His examples are supported through this research. Weerts and Sandmann (2010) described the president’s role as champion and external partnership builder. This study expands the research to address why presidents integrate civic engagement into their leadership. Their conceptual framework presents presidents as a critical community boundary spanner connecting campus and community.

Through this study, I add to both conceptual frameworks by addressing why presidents emphasize engagement. In the cases studied, the engagement is part of the college’s mission but also reflects their liberal arts and educational philosophies. This is an important finding because college presidents of liberal arts institutions have many critical issues facing them. They must make strategic decisions for the financial well-being of their college. The decisions about their leadership strategy are not made lightly. Liberal arts institutions must clearly define their own brand of education that prepares students to be responsible, successful citizens in a larger
education landscape. The change in the financial landscape has also led to a need for innovative leadership, planning, and action. Each president asked me the ‘why’ question. They emphasized how critical the question is for presidents today who must decide where to invest their financial, strategic, and political capital. This research provides five examples of engagement in a rural liberal arts setting. It highlights the unique challenges for rural communities.

College as community resource.

All five rural communities struggled with poverty through education disparity, hunger and access to housing, and economic opportunity through access to jobs. Research question one asked how does institutional leadership inform community partners’ perceptions about institutional commitment to civic engagement? In turn, how do community partners’ perceptions of needs inform institutional leadership in civic engagement? The description of poverty in the research is consistent with additional study of rural communities. In the literature review, I referenced five ways colleges engage with their rural communities as identified by The Rural Alliance for Service Learning (2010). First, there was the leader model, where the university served as a leader in the community, sought to improve the community through its knowledge, research ability, political power, and resources. The university approached its leadership in partnership with the community or by pushing it through the change process. Second, the institution served as a facilitator. It convened mentors, organized, and developed initiatives that strengthened the surrounding community. Colleges were the glue that binds the community together to make substantive and systemic changes. They drew upon their research resources, links with influential board members, and other resources to improve the community. Third, a college acted collaboratively. By seeing the community as an equal partner, it sought to find ways to combine knowledge, expertise, and resources for mutual benefit. This model existed
without political pressure or academically imposed priorities. Fourth, a college saw its role as following the lead of the community. The community accessed the institution’s resources by asking for them. There was not an assumption that the university’s expertise or resources are needed. Fifth, the college ignored the local community and surrounding districts. The college was an isolated entity in the community. This model is the impetus for the “ivory tower” and “town-gown” symbols (Rural Alliance for Service Learning, 2010).

The cases studied support The Rural Alliance for Service Learning’s research. The colleges were an inherent resource to the community giving access to financial and human capacity. There was awareness for both local residents and university leaders that community challenges existed. For community members, the college was a local resource for addressing these issues. The key take-away in this research study was the effectiveness of the college as resource relative to its leadership approach. Community partners articulated the college’s role as collaborative partner, instigator, facilitator, and champion. There was clear appreciation for the role as partner, facilitator, and champion. However, the institutions were not seen positively as instigators of change. In two of the five cases, community partners expressed strong resistance towards the students’ impetus for local change. This study expands Weerts’ (2005) framework by looking at the role of community as resource. Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) research looked at the role of university leaders and internal champions as community boundary spanners. This research expands the study to look at the college’s role as boundary spanner and resource for economic and community growth. It supports The Rural Alliance for Service Learning’s five approaches to rural engagement and increases it to private liberal arts institutional leadership.
College leadership for community quality of life.

Community partners and university leaders emphasized the role of the college as a venue for arts, culture, and enhanced community of life. The colleges’ access to entertainment, education, and arts in ways not accessible through other venues in the rural area strengthened quality of life. Though this finding was not inherently asked in the research questions, the colleges’ role in community life was evident. Admittedly, I did not anticipate a specific link to culture, arts, and community development given the focus of the research questions toward civic engagement. The colleges provided access to cultural events and attracted students with differing opinions to the community who championed conversations about community change. For community partners, this access was a form of civic engagement and partnership between campus and community. One of the five cases focused its role on engagement through enhancing community quality of life. It saw its role as a convener and connector of resources to enhance the surrounding downtown. This particular example linked to the president’s leadership through his passion for urban design, community walkability, and locally driven quality of life. In that case, college leadership and community quality of life were intertwined. The college’s strategic plan supported this linkage through an emphasis on developing the community around the college. The case raised questions about who benefits from the community development. Those interviewed spoke of the dual benefit of downtown development though the strategic planning document emphasized its relation to the college’s growth. Community quality of life builds on Weerts’ (2005) or Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) frameworks given their emphasis on institutional leadership. This research expands their studies by seeing civic engagement as community quality of life. It draws connectivity between the rural placements of the communities studied and their surrounding liberal arts institutions.
Applicability of research questions to findings.

The five research questions explored through this study focus on mission, action, and motivation of university leaders relative to civic engagement for their institution and surrounding community. The purpose of the study was to contribute to the understanding of how university leadership at rural, private liberal arts institutions can more deeply integrate civic engagement into institutional priorities and be more responsive to community needs. As the study evolved, it became clear that though the research questions and specific interview questions asked, ‘how’ university leaders integrate civic engagement into their leadership there was another key question. ‘How’ must be preceded by ‘why’ university leaders choose to engage with their surrounding communities amidst many competing demands on institutional priorities. Each of the five research questions addressed this question by looking at the institution’s purpose, actions of both the president and institution, and the personal motivation behind his presidential service.

**Research question 1. How does institutional leadership inform community partners’ perceptions about institutional commitment to civic engagement? In turn, how do community partners’ perceptions of needs inform institutional leadership in civic engagement?**

The first question focused on perceptions of leadership by community partners and university leaders’ views of each other. It emphasized the relationship between the campus and community with a particular emphasis on university presidents and local nonprofits leaders. In the five cases, community leaders’ perceptions were shaped by the actions of the university leaders. There was clear relationship between presidents’ visibility in the community with community partners’ description of the college as civically engaged. Weerts (2005) described the presidents’ role in engagement through serving as a public face of the university’s commitment to its community. This was supported by the cases. Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) community
boundary spanning framework explored presidents’ role as symbolic and building external relationships.

Community partners described the presidents’ role as a convener of meetings for community discussion or participation in community work as deeper than a symbolic action. Their involvement symbolized the college’s commitment to improving the community. As such, the presidents’ leadership in engagement served as a boundary spanner to the community relationship with nonprofit partners. Though community partners acknowledged additional leaders on campus as liaisons to their work, the presidents’ actions indicated an institution-wide rather than program-centered commitment.

**Research question 2. How does the university’s leadership keep the college involved in its community through civic engagement?**

The second research question focused on university leaders’ actions and decisions that engage the institution in its surrounding community. Weerts’ (2005) conceptual framework described three micro-variables or actions that university leaders displayed within public four year institutions. Presidents’ aided community engagement on campus through intellectual and political support, emphasis in speeches and outward action, and funding decisions. In the cases, the presidents’ played similar action-oriented roles for their liberal arts institution and surrounding community. Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) framework described the role of provosts and academic deans as internal advocates who built internal capacity for engagement. In this study, the actions of the presidents and university leaders’ differentiated the programmatic focus versus the institutional focus on the institution relative to engagement. All colleges studied had a programmatic emphasis on engagement through the Bonner Program. All had ways for the students to volunteer or serve with community organizations. However, the linkage to the greater mission of the institution varied by the actions of the president. If the strategic emphasis of the
institution reflected economic and community development, the presidents’ actions and allocation of resources reflected that emphasis. If the strategic emphasis was on regional support of community and its students, the presidents’ actions through college-wide financial support of community reflected the focus. Through the triangulation of data using financial statements, strategic documents, and interviews, I sought the actions described in Weerts’ (2005) conceptual framework of college presidents in liberal arts institutions toward engagement. Though all presidents were willing to talk about funding and investment, the specific allocation of dollars for civic engagement was difficult to isolate. This allocation of resources relative to community boundary spanning was an expansion of Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) model.

**Research question 3. How has including civic engagement in the strategic documents helped the institution?**

The third research question focused on strategic documents and plans with the institutions’ civic commitment. Strategic documents in all the cases illustrated the linkage between civic engagement and the liberal arts’ purpose of the institution. They provided five unique approaches to engagement in the liberal arts. They showed that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach for integration of engagement. However, the colleges’ particular approaches to civic engagement mirrors their culture and institutional history. Given that both Weerts’ (2005) and Weerts and Sandmann’s (2010) conceptual frameworks focused on individual roles of leaders relative to engagement, the focus on strategic plans relative to action emphasized the college’s role as boundary spanner rather than on the individual alone. The strategic plans and actions demonstrated the college’s commitment rather than particular leaders’ roles.
Research question 4. How does university leadership utilize civic engagement as a leadership strategy?

The fourth question asked leaders to define their approach to civic engagement as a leadership strategy. This provided the most interesting dialogue in the interviews for it led to a greater question for presidents and leaders. For civic engagement to serve as a presidents’ leadership strategy, they must ask ‘why’ civic engagement is important. They must wrestle with ‘why’ civic engagement deserves political and financial capital over other institutional priorities. Presidents and their institutions must answer ‘how’ civic engagement defines their liberal arts curriculum as uniquely different from career-based preparation at four-year public institutions. For some of the cases, engagement provided a tangible way liberal arts institutions can survive in an existing career-based higher education climate. This perspective shaped the vision for the college and its leadership strategy for continued growth.

Research question 5. What motivates university executives to integrate civic engagement into their leadership?

The fifth research question explored college presidents’ personal motivations and experiences with service and civic engagement relative to their leadership. There was a clear connection in the cases between the leaders’ experience with community relative and their leadership emphasis. If their experience was grounded in experiential learning or urban design, that particular approach was reflected in the interviews and institution’s strategic direction. The presidents’ personal experiences did not focus on the existence of programmatic elements, but rather on the institutions’ strategic direction.

Implications for Future Research

This study explored university leadership of private liberal arts colleges in rural settings through the lens of civic engagement. Given the findings address rural needs, a similar
qualitative study should be conducted with private liberal arts institutions in urban communities. In this research, the institutions’ role as a community resource and a source of quality of life were evident. However, this may change in an urban environment with greater access to other community resources. This study provided two examples of institutions that saw their mission as educating and engaging students in the region. Granted, the two defined region differently. However, through a commitment to liberal arts education, they saw their work as inreach by strengthening and educating its younger generation, broadly defined. The institutions also saw their work as outreach by enhancing and engaging the surrounding community. What does this intentional choice of serving its surrounding region or area, as defined by mission, mean for liberal arts institution’s viability and unique strategic direction? How does this focus on inreach and outreach set private liberal arts institutions apart from career driven education models?

I also suggest further research on why presidents do not engage in civic engagement. All leaders in my sample had an existing commitment to engagement through the Bonner Program. The research should expand to include both institutions committed to civic engagement as well as those that do not share that commitment, but may be influenced by other strategic and programmatic priorities.

For this study, I intentionally selected the term ‘civic engagement’ as the lens for viewing university leadership. Within the field, language and terminology vary considerably among practitioners, researchers, and institutions. The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification for institutions uses specific institution-wide language; the service learning community focuses on pedagogy and academic application by discipline; the student service and volunteer movement utilizes language of advocacy, action, application, and mobilization; and experiential education encompasses applied research, study abroad, and service learning for community-
engaged education. As both a practitioner and researcher in civic engagement, I understand all of these worlds and can navigate within them. As I engaged with each campus in the multi-case study, I was sensitive to the particular institution’s definition of civic engagement and incorporated it into my understanding of the culture, structure, and application. To further engage practitioners, researchers, and leaders, the field must be sensitive to its internal definitions and ensure they do not exclude inclusion of others. This provides context for additional qualitative study of the implications of language and discourse on civic engagement in higher education.

**Implications for Practice**

Rural communities and their corresponding higher education institutions have a unique tie that binds their sustainability and growth. When the institution thrives, the community benefits and when the community thrives, the university, its students, faculty, and staff benefit. I am not naïve to think that institutions can altruistically support their communities without attention to their own survival and growth. Private liberal arts institutions are businesses that must sustain and increase their revenue in the face of competitive factors in the higher education marketplace. They must compete for students, faculty, and resources in an arena focused on career-driven preparation and readiness. However, case studies of private and public higher education institutions provide examples of win-win scenarios for both community and campus. The findings here show five different approaches to partnering with and engaging in the community.

If civic engagement is part of the university’s ability to carry out its mission, this value should be present in its financial resources, investments, priorities, strategies, and outcomes. Colleges need a tangible way to quantify and measure their engagement and its costs and benefits. Civic engagement must be more than an ideal. Like teaching and research, it needs
financial investment and personnel to advance and grow in higher education institutions. The
budgets for civic engagement should be accessible, transparent, and sufficient for programming
and growth. If civic engagement is part of the university’s ability to carry out its mission, this
value should be present in its financial resources, investments, priorities, strategies, and
outcomes.

Conclusion

The study addresses a critical question for college presidents of liberal arts institutions.
Previous studies (Weerts, 2005; Weerts and Sandmann, 2010) address how university presidents
set a strong framework for civic engagement through their social and political leadership. This
study takes the research a step further by exploring why presidents engage in civic engagement
within the private liberal arts context in rural communities. Presidents and leaders must ask “why
they engage” and what that says about their leadership philosophy? Is it driven out of altruistic
motivation to bridge campus and community? Do they desire to improve the surrounding
community by addressing healthcare, access to education, and income disparity? Or, is the
engagement to support the institution or student only? Is the engagement part of a functioning
model in higher education or is it unique to the institution? How is the community transformed
by the college’s presence? In what ways are both institution and community better off for their
shared ties and common commitments? The answers to these questions link to the findings of
this study.

Private liberal arts institutions have a unique opportunity for engaged leadership that
collectively strengthens campus, community, and develops students as global, civically invested
citizens. This study informs university leaders’ approach to integration of civic engagement in
their strategic direction. It adds to the literature on civic engagement and university leadership by
looking at the role of private liberal arts institutions in rural communities with a particular emphasis on college presidents’ leadership and motivation.

In totality, this research study provides three primary findings about the role of liberal arts colleges as leaders through engagement for their surrounding rural communities. First, the college’s leadership for civic engagement is evident in the strategic documents and actions of college leaders. However, it is not evident through the overall financial budget documents. The leaders’ personal motivations along with institutional mission impact the college’s role as a community boundary spanner. Second, the college as a resource to its surrounding community serves an important boundary spanning role for building partnerships. Finally, the college’s leadership as a cultural and educational venue adds to the quality of life in its surrounding rural community.
References


Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol: University Leadership Interview
The Role of Leadership and Community engagement in Higher Education: Exploring University Leadership

Thank you for participating in this interview. It was a part of a multi-site case study that explores university leaders’ and community stakeholders’ perceptions of community engagement at five liberal arts institutions. The purpose of the study was to contribute to the understanding of how university leadership at private liberal arts institutions can more deeply integrate community engagement into institutional priorities and be more responsive to community needs. The interview was a semi-structured conversation which means I will use the questions as a guide for our conversation. Our conversation will inform the case study analysis for the study.

University Leadership Interview

What are the primary needs facing the community here? Describe how the campus engages with the community?
How do you define the college’s engagement with the community?
Describe how the college’s vision was experienced by the community, students, faculty, and staff.
  - Give me an example of how you experience the vision of the college.
Give me an example of a strong relationship between the campus and community?
  - What makes it important to the campus?
  - How does it affect the community?
Describe how your campus was involved in meeting the needs of the surrounding community?
Describe how your college invests in the surrounding community?
What was an example of how you operationalize your vision for civic engagement on campus and in the community? Tell me about it.
Describe the development of community engagement on your campus and in the community from the beginning to the present time.
  - What particular parts stand out to you as important?
  - What parts were challenging?
What motivates you to integrate community engagement into the university?
  - Describe the first time you were involved in service to the community.
  - Give me an example of a community engagement project when you are personally involved.
What do you want to add that was not captured in our discussion?
Interview Protocol: Community Partner Interview
The Role of Leadership and Community engagement in Higher Education:
Exploring University Leadership

Thank you for participating in this interview. It was a part of a multi-site case study that explores university leaders’ and community stakeholders’ perceptions of community engagement at five liberal arts institutions. The purpose of the study was to contribute to the understanding of how university leadership at private liberal arts institutions can more deeply integrate community engagement into institutional priorities and be more responsive to community needs. The interview was a semi-structured conversation which means I will use the questions as a guide for our conversation. Our conversation will inform the case study analysis for the study.

Community Partner Interview

What are the primary challenges in your community? Describe three.
What images come to mind when you think about the college?
Tell me about the college’s role in the community.
Describe how your organization was involved with the college?
What does a civically engaged campus look like to you?
Describe your organization’s relationship with the college from the beginning to the present time.
  - Describe how you saw the college in the beginning? How do you describe the college now?
  - What particular parts stand out to you as important?
  - What parts/projects/components/relationships were challenging?
  - What parts were successful at first try?
Give me an example of how you know your organization’s work was important to the college.
Name the leaders in community engagement at the college.
  - Describe their leadership and how it affects your organization’s work with the college.
Describe the college’s vision from your perspective.
  - How was this vision experienced by your organization and the people you serve?
  - Give me an example of how you (personally?) experience the vision of the college.
What motivates you to integrate your organization’s work with the college?
Describe the first time you were partnered with the college for the work of your organization.
  - How did it go?
  - What lessons did you learn?
What do you want to add that was not captured in our discussion?
Appendix B: IRB Expedited Approval

MEMO
Expedited Approval

To: Hunter Goodman / Dr. Diana Pounder (Research Advisor)

From: Julie Nikel-Butler
        Research Compliance Officer

Date: September 23, 2013

Subject: Expedited Review of IRB #13-137
Title: The Role of Leadership and Civic Engagement in Higher Education: Exploring University Leadership

Your request to conduct the above titled research with human subjects was reviewed by a member of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The research, as presented in your application with requested revisions, meets the requirements of expedited research and was in compliance with the federal regulations for protecting the rights and welfare of human subjects and the policies and procedures of the University of Central Arkansas. Your application was approved on September 23, 2013.

You have approval to conduct the research as described in your application and revisions for twelve months. Any changes to the original proposal must be submitted for approval prior to implementation. Promptly inform the Research Compliance Office of any adverse or unexpected reactions or harm incurred by subjects as a result of participating in this research.

Approval to conduct this research expires on: September 23, 2014.

It was the investigator’s responsibility to obtain IRB approval to continue the research beyond 12 months by completing and submitting a Continuing Review form prior to the approval expiration date. If the research was completed before the 12 months ends, please send a completed Final Report form to me. Forms are available on the Sponsored Programs webpage under Research Compliance at http://www.uca.edu/sponsoredprograms.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at 852-7460 or julien@uca.edu.

c: Dr. Rhonda McClellan

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Leadership

Organizational Structure and Policies

Factors Influencing Institutional Commitment to Outreach and Engagement

Faculty and Staff Involvement

Campus Communications

Institutional history, culture

Organizational supports: rewards, incentives, promotion, hiring practices, professional development, and technical support.

Structure of outreach leadership: centralized vs. decentralized, composition of staff devoted to engagement.

Formal and informal assessment and evaluation of outreach and engagement.

Institutional mission: outreach goals aligned with campus identity.

Community needs and demographics shape campus culture and engagement.

History of relationship between institution and community.

Campus traditions and rituals.

External communications provide community with visible "entry points" to access university partners.

Campus publications highlight engagement (internal/external audiences).

Collaboration between academic disciplines to address community issues.

Facility/staff involve students in engagement efforts.

Faculty/staff socialized to lead engagement: create mutually beneficial relationships, trust building within community.

Engagement is represented as scholarship and incorporated into teaching.

Funding decisions/priorities include engagement.

CEO provides intellectual and political support for engagement.

"Public face" of engagement (host events, facilitate connections, etc.).

Structure of community partnership relationships: shared governance, goals, staff.

Engagement highlighted in CEO speeches and documents, strategic plans.

THE TIE THAT BINDS

Framework for Boundary Spanning Roles Associated with University-Community Engagement

- **Community-based problem solver**
  - Focus on site based problem support, resource acquisition, partnership development
  - *Field agents, outreach staff, clinical faculty*

- **Technical expert**
  - Emphasis on knowledge creation for applied purposes (disciplinary or multidisciplinary)
  - *Faculty, disciplinary based*

- **Community-integrated**
  - Engagement champion
  - Focus on building external, political, intra-organizational support, roles may be symbolic
  - *Presidents, Vice Presidents for Engagement, Center Directors, Deans*

- **Socio-emotional, leadership tasks**
  - Build campus capacity for engagement (rewards, promotion, tenure, budget, hiring)
  - *Provosts, academic deans*

- **Institutionally integrated**
  - Internal engagement advocate
  - Weerts and Sandmann, 2010
## Appendix E: Representative Quotations for College A Leaders

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<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
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| Vision                       | Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service | "You have a responsibility to care about your town, your city, your people, and to participate in that greater experience, which is civic engagement." (President)  
"We want to prepare our students for lives of learning, leadership, and service. Given the three legs of that mission, I think that there is significant institutional emphasis on all three pieces. The community sees that acted out by placing emphasis on students doing service." (Special Assistant to the President) |
| Campus and community relationship | Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community                         | "Traffic flow, traffic management...We’ve had a problem in town with pedestrians being ahead of crosswalks...but we’ve all got a stake in that." (VP of College Relations)  
"We try to address the educational issues, we've started an after-school program on campus. This was an initiative started by students, but then supported by the administration subsequently." (Special Assistant to the President) |
| Community needs             | Disparity of needs in the community                         | "Some of the wealthiest people I've ever known about live here, and some of the poorest. The needs are great just in terms of basic needs. Things like food...Certainly, education is not a given. There's entry points there, the basic needs for our students and for people to be involved in. At the higher level...you up the ante in terms of civic engagement, there's lots of opportunities here for that too. Our students have found them, or the opportunities found our students." (President)  
"Trying to make sure that all of our students in the area have an equal playing field. We have some very high need areas in our community in terms of socioeconomic status. All of our schools are Title I schools....Being a rather rural town, it's not as apparent that we have a poverty problem... We don't have folks who are homeless sleeping in the doorways downtown like you might see in a more urban environment, but homelessness and poverty are still a pretty big issue." (Special Assistant to the President) |
<table>
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<th>Addressing community needs</th>
<th>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</th>
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<td>&quot;From a collegiate level or an institutional level, I think one of the ways we [engage] is we try and encourage all of our employees to donate to the United Way....We give employees four hours off when they request it to go engage in volunteer service activities so they don't have to count that as paid time off or anything like that.&quot; (Special Assistant to the President)</td>
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<td>&quot;There are just any number of people here who are involved in community organizations and agencies, and of course, so many of these agencies and organizations, of course, provide internship opportunities for our students. There are also selfish reasons or self-interested reasons...to encourage this.&quot; (VP Community Relations)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Investment</th>
<th>Financial and time investment</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;We employ 330 people, and in a community that has large nonprofits being the hospital and the college, payroll taxes are important here. The college invests in that way. We have a policy of not making charitable contributions because we are [a] 501(C)(3) that has to raise its own money...we help maintain the look of the community. We’re blessed here in having a really nice performing arts center, and of course, the community is invited to nearly everything at the art center.&quot; (VP Community Relations)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operationalizing the vision</th>
<th>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Our faculty and our staff here feel encouraged to get involved in our town, whether it's to be on a chamber board or a special committee or even one of the festivals we have in town. You can find campus and college people involved in those activities. Schools, school boards, school committees. I think you got to—a lot of things in life are about showing up, and you've got to show up. I think the college's reputation now is that we show up.&quot; (President)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Civic engagement development</th>
<th>Created systems for engagement</th>
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<tr>
<td>“We’ve encouraged [students], supported them, and created some sustainability vehicles.” (President)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Engaging with the community so that hopefully the college isn’t just an isolated entity over here on its campus.&quot; (VP of College Relations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;It's been a long instilled value of the college. I think you could go all the way back to the founding. I think it was a big part of the effort of our founders, was to create civic-minded individuals.&quot; (Special Assistant to the President)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal motivation</th>
<th>Belief in the purpose of education</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;My own sense of what should happen in a good college or university is that a young woman or man is prepared to go out and be a citizen leader.&quot; (President)</td>
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<tr>
<th>First experience in service</th>
<th>Childhood influences</th>
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<tr>
<td>“I can never remember not being... I grew up with a dad who was a big city school superintendent. Mom was a nurse. It was always about giving...always about helping...always about leading.&quot; (President)</td>
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### Appendix F: Representative Quotations for College A Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations for Community Partners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision</strong></td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service</td>
<td>&quot;I also think of privilege, to be honest. I think that a lot of—to come to some place—I know there’s a lot of financial aid available, but it’s very expensive. You have to have [scored] very well academically to get in, things like that...I also think of achievement.&quot; (Community partner 1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;I think their vision is not only to provide an incredible education in the classroom at College A but also classrooms globally.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus and community</strong></td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>&quot;They’re very—with the service work they’ve done—they’ve done a food drive, and they did a book drive last year. They’re very well regarded, I would say, just from those efforts.&quot; (Community partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;One of the reasons I moved to Community A was the fact that we did have a liberal arts college. I think any time you live in that kind of community you have more access to resources like art and music, just educational opportunities.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community needs</strong></td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>I feel like a lot of work has been done in the education realm. There’s still a lot of work to do, but the health realm is where we are now really struggling...Of course, sustainable income is right in the middle of any of that kind of issue. You’re not going to be healthy if you don’t have money to buy healthy food, or if you’re stressed out.&quot; (Community partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;There is that sense of that you really have to work hard to earn the donation...Work hard to earn that ballast for your nonprofit because there are so many great nonprofits in our community.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressing community needs</strong></td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;They’ll do service projects or service works at different places like that. For example, if you’re looking at the big picture, as far as sustainable income, for example, students take a lot of pride in this after-school program that they have developed for Spanish speaking students. It’s homework help. They kind of even mentor these families a little bit...I think there’s a lot of different initiatives like that.&quot; (Community partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;They really are trying to pull people together. I think that that’s helped offset some of those dynamics of territory and 'oh we own this community, you’re in that community.' I don’t know if that’s something that they’ve done intentionally.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
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<td>&quot;[They ask] what do you need us to do? To me that means everything. I’m so used to in a nonprofit knocking on people’s doors and asking for help. To me imagine what that’s like to have someone actually call you to say tell us what you need.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Operationalizing the vision</th>
<th>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I would say that integration. The community, the school knew what was going on in the community, and the community knew what was going on with the school. If there was a meeting, a community meeting of some kind, that there’d be some kind of student, faculty, or staff or all three present, and vice-versa.&quot; (Community partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;They put up soccer goals. A number of things that I’m ashamed that some of our community members didn’t recognize.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Civic engagement development</th>
<th>Created systems for engagement</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;There’s still some kind of separation, even though all this great stuff I just talked about, there’s still some kind of I guess intimidation might be the right word for folks to come on the campus. If there was a great speaker, I would probably go and hear it, but I don’t know how many other community members would come and hear it, particularly people with fewer resources, even if they were free.&quot; (Community partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;When I came to—this program started here. There was some real resistance from—part of it was a volunteer committee that were helping me get going. They didn’t want to necessarily involve College A. They felt like it would be better to just focus on community based volunteers.&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Personal motivation</th>
<th>Belief in the purpose of education</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;We could really leverage the knowledge base and the cultural emphasis on service and community and civic engagement and all that...I feel like I'm one of those people that’s like, ‘We’re going to get everything out of it that we can.’&quot; (Community partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;...to benefit in some way from the service resource, knowing that we cannot do all this heavy lifting by ourselves and that you will have someone who has a different approach, a different way to solve a problem&quot; (Community partner 2)</td>
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## Appendix G: Representative Quotations for College B Leaders

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<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision</strong></td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service</td>
<td>&quot;Different features stand out to different people.&quot; (President)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;It's really interesting. It's a powerful mission, I think, that can attract so many people adherents.&quot; (Provost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus and community relationship</strong></td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>&quot;We are a company town. The town wouldn't exist were it not for the college. The town wouldn't exist were it not for the college, because the institution preceded the town. College B still owns the municipal water supply. It once owned the municipal utilities. It once owned the hospital. It was a real company town.&quot; (Provost).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community needs</strong></td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>&quot;There are diversity challenges locally. There are certainly socioeconomic challenges locally. Our numbers of free and reduced lunch students [at the local elementary school] have increased over time, even as the population has grown with manufacturing jobs that are available in the community.&quot; (Provost)</td>
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<td>&quot;Most of it is really about poverty and what access you have to good foods. When you're poor, you're going to eat what you can afford and not necessarily good foods.&quot; (Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressing community needs</strong></td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;We work with...students to teach them about the place they come from and give them a skillset of--and also inspire them to return to that area to make it a better place.&quot; (Provost)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
<td>&quot;We bring in people from all over the region and we provide them with mini-grants to help them go back into their own communities and try to help struggling communities.&quot; (Associate VP) &quot;We give money to rape crisis centers, to medical providers, to people who are working on hunger and nutrition throughout the area.&quot; (President).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operationalizing the vision</td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;I do think there is a large part of our campus that is very involved, who enjoy being involved in the community, but do not want a mandate from the administration.&quot; (Associate VP) &quot;We have all kinds of individuals in all different positions here—it's most faculty, staff, and administration—who actually get involved in these things personally. That's considered part of the ethos here.&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic engagement development</td>
<td>Created systems for engagement</td>
<td>&quot;We created the town around the college...I saw that civic engagement has always been a part of [the college] because we created the civic here.&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal motivation</td>
<td>Belief in the purpose of education</td>
<td>&quot;You can look at the world and say, if higher education continues on somewhat of a downward trajectory—which it is right now—what consequences will that have not only for my own grandchildren but everybody's grandchildren?&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First experience in service</td>
<td>Childhood influences</td>
<td>University leaders did not answer this question at College B.</td>
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### Appendix H: Representative Quotations for College B Community Partners

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
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| **Vision**                        | Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service                              | "Engagement is where the students actually—or faculty, or whoever—actually gets in communication with folks outside." (Community Partner 1) \[1\]  
|                                   |                                                      | "Students being aware of the issues around them; it can be state-wide, regional, and national as well. It starts with faculty and administrators helping students find avenues of awareness and figure out how to be activists for what they have a passion for in reaching out." (Community Partner 2) \[2\] |
| **Campus and community relationship** | Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community                  | "I see them as having a very noble purpose, but I also see them at times being a little misguided in particularly the more liberal tendencies. Some people call it progressive or whatever." (Community Partner 1) \[3\]  
|                                   |                                                      | "[The] college owns most of the land around us. It is hard on us because we don’t have any taxes coming in. They find other ways to help us… When I think of the college I see it as a collaborative effort of education." (Community Partner 2) \[4\] |
| **Community needs**               | Disparity of needs in the community                  | "We have a wide array of groups that do a variety of really good things. Sometimes they're not terribly coordinated together, so that would be—we’re probably better than some communities, but it's still an issue because duplication of efforts and things like that." (Community Partner 1) \[5\]  
|                                   |                                                      | "Housing is another issue that we deal a lot with…there’s no resources out there for housing for families...I would have to go back to the basic needs" (Community Partner 2) \[6\] |
| **Addressing community needs**    | Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service                                | "The president asks. 'How can we engage, trade, and help?' He was there [at a meeting with community partners] and said ‘we are a part of the community with you; we are in this fight with you; how can we help you? Let’s work together to ensure students are getting what they need—especially in the STEM area.’" (Community Partner 2) \[7\] |
| **Investment**                    | Financial and time investment                         | "The arts and cultural piece is a great resource for the community." (Community Partner 1) \[8\]                                                                 |

\[1\] Community Partner 1  
\[2\] Community Partner 2  
\[3\] Community Partner 1  
\[4\] Community Partner 2  
\[5\] Community Partner 1  
\[6\] Community Partner 2  
\[7\] Community Partner 2  
\[8\] Community Partner 1
| Operationalizing the vision | Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service | "Their role in the community is also to be a steady... People feel secure that the college is gonna stay open. That's a little bit of a comfort for particularly the economic things and all that." (Community Partner 1) |
| Civic engagement development | Created systems for engagement | If it is the college giving hope I still think it is still addressing those needs. They don’t have to do address everything specifically. Just to give families hope that those things are out there. I see them providing hope in a peripheral way. (Community Partner 2) |
| Personal motivation | Belief in the purpose of education | "I would say it was the labor program and the concept of service...that students have a better experience when they do things, and they can actually produce something that they can be proud of, and they can say, 'I did this.'" (Community Partner 1) |
### Appendix I: Representative Quotations for College C Leaders

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision</strong></td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service</td>
<td>&quot;Our mission is to make a difference here in this county, in this region.&quot; (President) &quot;We always talk about the mission. The mission applies to not only students but people in the community. (VP for Student Affairs) &quot;Service is wonderful. I love it. I think it’s a great thing, but what I really want since I’m sitting here on the academic side is service learning.&quot; (Provost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus and community relationship</strong></td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>&quot;We're trying to break down any perception of being arrogant or better than. We wanna open our doors as much as we can.&quot; (President) &quot;Local doctors in the hospital were able to disseminate vouchers for free for cholesterol and blood pressure...and they're expecting...3,000 or so people. They already started doing some of the screening because it takes time...but they're anticipating it’s gonna be 3,000 people participate. Considering that the population is roughly 4,500, that’s a pretty amazing outreach, and the nursing students are gonna be doing education and doing some of the testing.&quot; (Provost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community needs</strong></td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>&quot;We've had students who've come here that lived in homes with dirt floors, that did not have running water, that had an outhouse. They've come [here], lived in the old women's dorm, and think they've died and gone to heaven. I mean that's part of our challenge.&quot; (President) &quot;We have a pretty low per capita income, and so I think working to help improve the economic robustness of the region is something that’s important. I think for some parts of the community basic literacy is an issue.&quot; (Provost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addressing community needs</strong></td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;[An example is what] we're doing with the nursing homes, what we're doing with after school programs, what we're doing at the animal shelter, the GED center, at the bottom of the hill.&quot; (President) &quot;If you look at our degrees, our degrees are—the largest part of our degrees are going to be in education, counseling, and the helping [professions.] I think it’s really part of the ethos of who we are [as an institution.]&quot; (VP for Student Affairs)</td>
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<td>Investment</td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
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<td>&quot;Our model is different than the affluent. I think probably there are some that are slow to adjust, that are stuck in their own ways and think of only serving the 18 to 22-year-old student. They're not thinking about the 35-year-old mother with 2 children who needs to also get a degree, that can't live in the residence halls and needs to find a way to earn her degree. We very much are paying attention to that non-traditional student.&quot; (President)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Operationalizing the vision</th>
<th>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;When you see students see other students in leadership roles and how they’re reaching out and doing civic engagement and things like that, I think it just spreads all over campus.&quot; (VP for Student Affairs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;The mission talks about providing a living learning environment in which every student every day learns, grows, and feels like a real human being, and that could be interpreted in lots of different ways I think...[the College] has interpreted it is to serve students in this region.&quot; (Provost)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Civic engagement development</th>
<th>Created systems for engagement</th>
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<td>&quot;I met with the students the other night, the Bonner students, and I said, 'Out of all the things that have happened during my presidency, I think when I hang my cleats up, and stop, and fade off into the sunset, the thing that will give me the most satisfaction, that I can be the most pleased about will be the Bonner program. I want you all to be the best program in the country, out there making a difference in your home community. That's my challenge to you all.'&quot; (President)</td>
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<td>&quot;We haven’t arrived, but we’re on the road. We’re better than we used to be. We are becoming more formalized, more organized in what we’re trying to do.&quot; (Vice President for Student Affairs)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Personal motivation</th>
<th>Belief in the purpose of education</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;We want it to be an important part of the institutional fabric of this place, part of our mission, to go out and help other people.&quot; (President)</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I take a group every year to New York City...we do service learning [and] community service. When you live in a rural area, what you realize is there’s just not that many services for people in rural areas. I think civic engagement in a rural community takes on a different meaning than it would in an urban community.&quot; (Vice President for Student Affairs)</td>
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<tr>
<th>First experience in service</th>
<th>Childhood influences</th>
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<tr>
<td>This question was not addressed at College C by university leaders.</td>
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## Appendix J: Representative Quotations for College C Community Partners

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<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service</td>
<td>&quot;They are there to serve, not only to students that are going to school there, they’re there to serve the community that they reside in.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;They are [a] Methodist-based college. I don’t know much about [the] specific religion but I do know they are very good about helping students along the way whether financially or [through] counseling.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus and community</td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>Their motto is every student, every day. I’ve always said they aren’t talkin’ about just the kids on their campus; they’re talkin’ about the whole community. Every student in this county benefits from them being in the community because they reach out to the school, they reach out to the different community organizations, they provide volunteers, all kinds of leadership. (Community Partner 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>relationship</td>
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<td>&quot;Just being on the campus it is a beautiful campus. It is really small; Everyone knows each other. All students who come out there are very receptive to feedback. They understand why they are doing this and they want to help.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community needs</td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>&quot;We have a really high poverty rate. Our unemployment is really high. We have a lot of parents who have to travel outside the county to work. They work at rather low-paying jobs, so they really can’t afford afterschool care for their kids, so we sort of step in and take care of that so that they’re able to still go to work.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing community needs</td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;There was one year we were actually completely without funds, and we ran our program, strictly with volunteers through the Bonner Program for the whole school year.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
<td>This was not addressed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operationalizing the vision</td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;I think our kids greatly benefit from it. They love these college kids. They’re really mentors to [the children]. I mean, they really encourage them...we [have] a real high poverty rate. They encourage them.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civic engagement development</td>
<td>Created systems for engagement</td>
<td>&quot;We do have a good connection with their nursing program. Besides Bonner students we have a lot of nursing students and practicum students.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal motivation</td>
<td>Belief in the purpose of education</td>
<td>&quot;Scheduling probably is the hardest part of it because we have to work around students’ schedules that come to volunteer with us. I’ve not really had any challenges as far as like what you would think, behavior or something like that with the college students. That’s not been an issue at all. It’s just been kind of working around their schedules.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;It’s very good for our kids and it’s good for most kids, with the college students. They’re all kids to me, but we’ve had some come to us as human services, as counseling majors, and after working a year or so in our program they decided to turn to education.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;Just wanting to help them be more successful in life.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
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### Appendix K: Representative Quotations for College D Leaders

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<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
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<td>Vision</td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service</td>
<td>&quot;I think it makes real claims about social justice and ethical concerns, concerns for community life. This is a place that will say a lot, often informed by Quaker derived values, about certain attributes of community life: mutual respect, diversity, simplicity rather than ostentation...It’s a concrete expression of the seriousness and truthfulness of that kind of stance.” (President)</td>
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<td>&quot;We had a strategic planning initiative that started when our new president came in two years ago. He requested that the college undertake a strategic planning process.” (Director of Civic Engagement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus and community relationship</td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>&quot;The strongest relationship we have is actually the Bonner Program. The single strongest link between the campus and community is the Bonner program. It is substantial, long-standing, and ongoing.&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community needs</td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>&quot;Determine what the next economy is going to be. We haven’t been able to...It’s really a community where there’s not much of a middle class. There’s either you’re doing pretty well or you’re not doing well at all, and...there’s a tiny middle class &quot; (VP for Community Relations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing community needs</td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;If there are environmental issues in [the city]… for example if lead is found on the playground and there is uncertainty to determine how much is there and what to do with it…our faculty and students in Chemistry might go to the Mayor’s office and address that in some way. We provide expertise.&quot; (President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
<td>&quot;The question of what kind of resources should be directed to those programs that are service oriented, experiential or deal with the community more broadly. How much money should flow? Why should it flow there rather than somewhere else? They are easier from our perspective because we have answered those questions and they are not debating points here but they could become because one place where it can become an issue is what are you going to make your fundraising priorities?&quot; (President)</td>
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</table>
| Operationalizing the vision | Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service | "We have a very socio economically diverse student body as many other ways. They bring a lot of the world so to speak with them... We have students who bring with them a lot of real-world issues and problems, connections and entanglements and then because of study abroad, internships, employment, Bonner, they are also plugged into while here." (President)  
"The Center is really the hub for all kinds of experiential learning opportunities for our students." (Director of Civic Engagement) |
| Civic engagement development | Created systems for engagement | "There has always been a strong and informal volunteer tendency at the college. Not necessarily hinged to any formal program." (President)  
"What we had to first do was to build an environment of trust with the local community because if you don’t have the trust, then you’re not going to be able to do anything anyway." (VP of Community Relations) |
| Personal motivation | Belief in the purpose of education | "It is fundamental because...the classic platonic question basic liberal arts college question, ‘how should I live?’ goes right back to Socrates very classic [question]. There is this question ‘how am I going to make a living?’ which is often pitted against the first question." (President) |
| First experience in service | Childhood influences | "It has been little things like delivering foods to shut-in people or coaching little league. It has been episodic. We have moved around a lot. My communities have always been changing." (President) |
Appendix L: Representative Quotations for College D Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service</td>
<td>&quot;They do a very good job of bringing events. The events department does a beautiful job of making sure the events are of interest to the whole community not just the [college] community.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus and community relationship</td>
<td>Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community</td>
<td>&quot;It’s a link to the rest of the world. It’s also obviously politically far to the left of the county as a community...I think that it’s just not as ostracized...to me it is still an oasis. It is still, when you go onto campus, it is not like being in the rest [the town].&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;Students excel by solving these more complicated problems. They come at it with such an innocence of ‘why can’t we make it work?’ In the community, we make it so darn hard.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community needs</td>
<td>Disparity of needs in the community</td>
<td>&quot;I would say poverty, and broken homes or lack of good parenting is the culmination of all of that. Not to say that those are only tied to income, but those things obviously go hand in hand.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;The negative attitude toward trying anything new in this area has a strong hold on here. I am kind of the mind if you are not into trying something new either move or stop talking.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing community needs</td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;[Having a MAT program] was a groundbreaking thing from my perspective in the sense that it is very common to talk to local teachers, or people that are trying to become teachers that are involved.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
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<td>&quot;I think they are constantly seeing areas that the community would like to see them engage and jumping into those areas- which is good.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>Financial and time investment</td>
<td>&quot;I feel like they do a really good job of jumping in when you have a project...They are very flexible and very good about making sure the student has a good experience and that the organization has a good experience also.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operationalizing the vision</td>
<td>Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service</td>
<td>&quot;They are very flexible and very good about making sure the student has a good experience and that the organization has a good experience also.&quot; (Community Partner 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic engagement development</td>
<td>Created systems for engagement</td>
<td>&quot;I went on the campus for an evening and gave a little workshop on working with kids, so that was interesting to do. I thought it was helpful, and I enjoyed doing that.&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal motivation</td>
<td>Belief in the purpose of education</td>
<td>&quot;The kinds of things that are available just by [the college's] presence is really good for kids [in our programs].&quot; (Community Partner 1)</td>
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**Appendix M: Representative Quotations for College E Leaders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
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</table>
| **Vision**                       | Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service | "We are going to act like, look like and feel like one of the very best liberal arts colleges in the country. They could feel that and they were in the beginning curious but a little skeptical or nervous perhaps." (President)  
"I think by and large the segments of the community who experience [the college] through the reflexive, intentional, planful programs for civic engagement tend to have a positive feeling about and a clearer understanding of what the university’s mission and vision is, and of the extent to which it represents a good thing in the world." (VP Communications) |
| **Campus and community relationship** | Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community | "Part of my job since I have been here has been to diminish the fear of the institution that was clearly apparent when I arrived. There was fear and some hostility toward the institution and the sense the institution had turned its back on the city." (President) |
| **Community needs**             | Disparity of needs in the community                          | "The provision of basic services is measurably under stress—is what you sense." (President)  
"The community had a big IBM plant here that made punch cards. It also, because of that, had a lot of IBM executives who lived here. That pulled up from the community and uprooted lots and lots of people and jobs, and they were good jobs." (Provost)  
"There’s significant concern about the, as I think in every state, about our capacity to continue to develop attractive employment opportunities for the citizenship. I think there are concerns about brain drain, about losing talented folks because we don’t have the right kind of opportunities for those folks." (VP Communications) |
| **Addressing community needs**  | Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service | "We are going to act like, look like and feel like one of the very best liberal arts colleges in the country. They could feel that and they were in the beginning curious but a little skeptical or nervous perhaps." (President)  
"There are a number of—those things are big and solid, institutionalized programs. Then there’s a tacit, or implicit or sometimes explicit but less fully institutionalized support for a number of programs some of our faculty and staff are involved in..." (VP Communications) |
| Investment | Financial and time investment | "I think...when we attach resources and time, energy and thought to building those connections backwards, back and forth, between the community and members of the university community proper, it goes very well." (VP Communications) |
| Operationalizing the vision | Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service | "This small liberal arts college environment. It's an extraordinary way to prepare people for having a lifetime of learning, service, and leadership." (Provost) "They can sense that I am pushing a development agenda toward the commercial district." (President) |
| Civic engagement development | Created systems for engagement | "We developed it, and we got it going, and then we haven't done much with it….The interesting thing that's happened is in the last 20 years or so, now high school students understand the importance of this, and high schools understand the importance. Our students are coming to us already committed to community service, civic engagement, [and] service-learning." (Provost) "There’s a number of programs that grew up because folks had—faculty or staff or community members outside the university had an idea, and there was enough sense of this is where we live, and we should take care of it, that it was able to blossom." (VP Communications) |
| Personal motivation | Belief in the purpose of education | "My interest in community is the channel; the pathway is through urban design. I wish I could say it is because I am saintly in some kind of way. But honestly I think there are small towns that are livable and viable…they are texture and real." (President) |
| First experience in service | Childhood influences | "I have this passion for design and architecture. I was obsessed with campuses when I was in college. That fed this real love of, not necessarily architecture, but the study of urbanism and new urbanism." (President) |
### Appendix N: Representative Quotations for College E Community Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Aspects</th>
<th>Interpretations</th>
<th>Representative Quotations</th>
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</table>
| **Vision**                           | Civic engagement is a part of community participation and student service        | "I’d say their vision is one in which what I see is that they want to be more transparent. They want to be—civic engagement is their big—that’s the big buzz right now." (Community Partner 1)  
"I think the mission and vision is to put a student through school there who comes out as very well-rounded individual who looks at the entire world, not just a little, tiny box." (Community Partner 2) |
| **Campus and community relationship**| Relationship manifests itself in needs that are addressed by campus and community | "They’re still bright kids, but now we have kids who come from Brooklyn, and Queens…and from all over the world, really, into our community now, which is great." (Community Partner 1)  
"I think people are finding real hardships in trying to raise their families and trying to go about their daily lives, and paying their bills, and so forth, just trying to make a living and still finding time to be a family and do things together.” (Community Partner 1)  
"Jobs. Basic necessities like food. Someone to monitor some of those. Our homeless shelter closed about two years ago, and right now the solution is send them to [the nearest city]." (Community Partner 2) |
| **Community needs**                  | Disparity of needs in the community                                              | "We have this Ruby Payne Bridges out of Poverty program going on right now. People, community members, and [college] members meet once a month, and we try to talk about ways that we can help those living in poverty, and what we can do for them." (Community Partner 1)  
"I started a year ago in July here, and by the end of May we had over 200 students in here volunteering. We had the captain of the baseball team and the whole basketball team and different sororities and fraternities and independent girls who just came over on their own every Friday to volunteer." (Community Partner 2) |
| **Addressing community needs**       | Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
### Investment

**Financial and time investment**

"We have big guest speakers. It’s free to the community. It’s just been a really nice way to bridge our community [with the college]." (Community Partner 1)

"The students come into our schools and they help students. The professors serve on our school boards. They come into our classrooms and do projects." (Community Partner 2)

### Operationalizing the vision

**Engaging students, faculty, and staff in the community through service**

"Civic engagement, I think, is meaningful, it’s ongoing, and I think a lot of college students just feel like, 'Okay, I’m just getting my community service points, and then I’m done.'" (Community Partner 1)

### Civic engagement development

**Created systems for engagement**

"I think a civically engaged campus is going to be welcoming, first of all. It’s going to be kind of transparent. The community people, I think, are going to know what’s going on at [the college] all the time, and they’re going to put that information out there via paper." (Community Partner 1)

### Personal motivation

**Belief in the purpose of education**

"My motivation is my teachers, because my teachers—it’s just like we’re doing more and more with less and less." (Community Partner 1)

### First experience in service

**Childhood influences**

*The community partners did not address this question.*