



We **WILL** Grow
School and Community Garden Program



GROWING CONNECTEDNESS: UNIVERSITY COLLABORATIONS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The Transformational Effects of Growing Partnerships

Warren



Sharpe

Warren-Sharpe Community Center is a nonprofit agency, offering social service programs to low-income, high-risk families on Joliet's south and east sides since 1991. The Center has a special commitment to serving youth, and creates a safe, nurturing place for children and teens in the heart of a troubled neighborhood.



Provides food to over 600 families/month

- ✓ 200-300 hot meals every week
- ✓ Work towards food security, not just emergency relief



Warren-Sharpe's Accidental Farming

- Youth
- Food pantry
- Transformational effects





Warren-Sharpe and Lewis University



- 1991 - Work-study (tutoring) began
- 2013 - Connection to Office of Service Learning
- 2015-16 – Shift in partnerships
 - Cultural Diversity (Sociology) – direct engagement with youth
 - Independent study (Sociology) – food-based curriculum
 - Marketing Strategy (Marketing) – branding and logo
 - Strategic Management (Business Administration) – business plan

Warren-Sharpe and Lewis University (cont.)

- 2016-17 – Community Engaged Learning
 - Strategic Management (Business Administration) – business plan follow-up
 - Cultural Diversity (Sociology) – direct engagement with youth
- Overall transition in institutional thinking about relationships and Warren-Sharpe is a key partner

Warren-Sharpe and Will County Land Use Dep

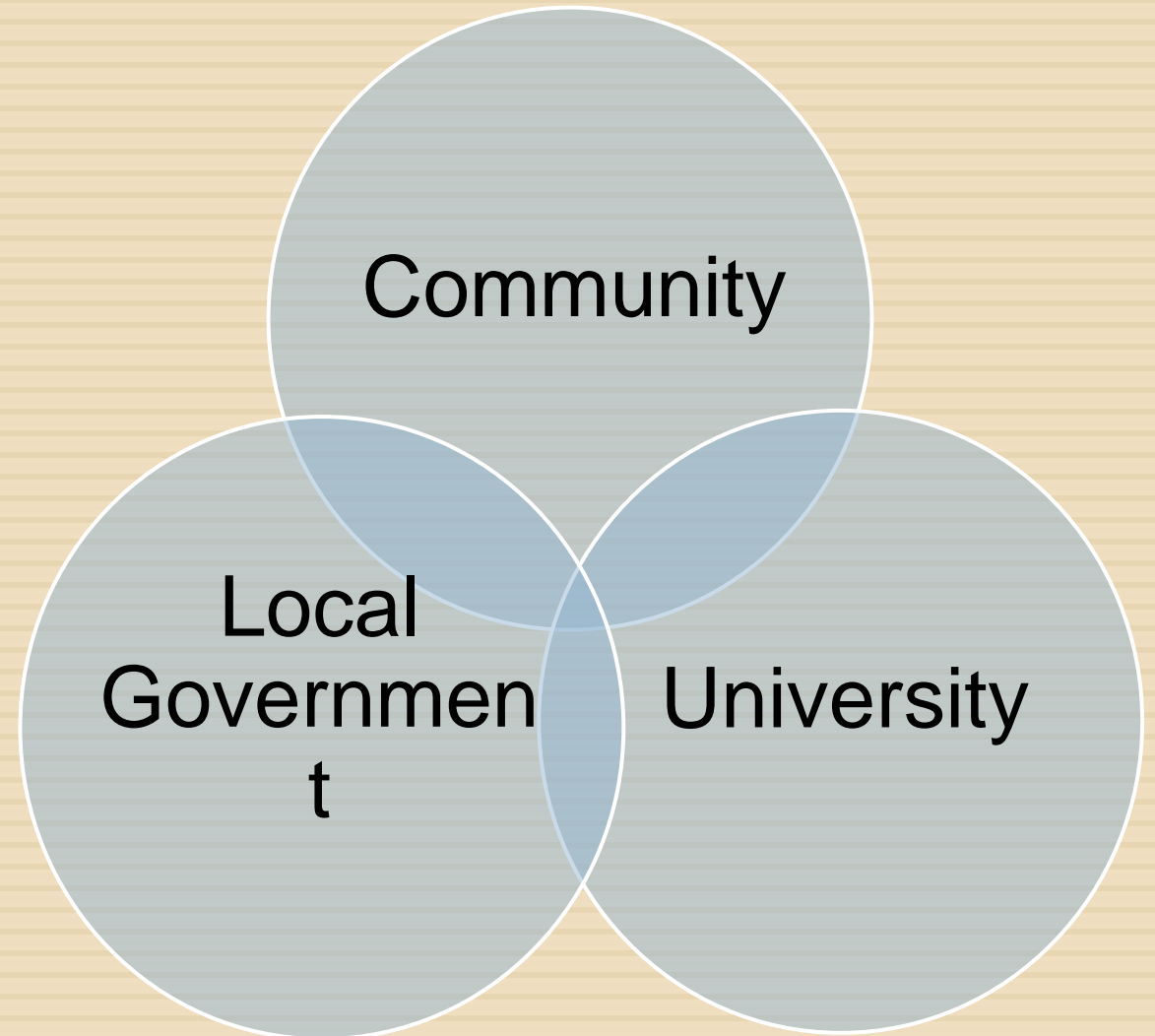
“Food is our common ground, a universal experience.”

James Beard



Benefits of Partnership

- Community Organizations
 - Credibility (i.e. funding, access to government, etc.)
 - Technical expertise (i.e. research, assessment, etc.)
 - Person power (i.e. creating/delivering curriculum, staffing programs)
 - Mentorship/learning for youth and families
 - Access to college/university resources (i.e. human, physical, etc.)



Benefits of Partnership (cont.)

- Larger Institutions (i.e. higher ed, government, etc.)
 - Direct action towards the institutional mission (i.e. justice, community, etc.)
 - Relevant and real learning experiences for students
 - Relationship-building
 - Deep learning about course content
 - Enhances public image
 - Free marketing
 - Access to funding due to collaboration

Road Blocks in Partnership

- Road blocks
 - Limited ability to form partnerships due to structures
 - Egos and territorialism
 - Power of those holding resources
 - Scarcity thinking → competition



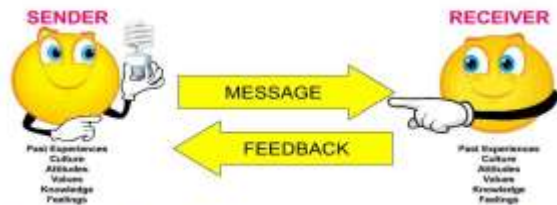
Challenges of Partnership

IN ORDER TO SAY YES
TO YOUR PRIORITIES
YOU HAVE
TO BE WILLING
TO SAY NO
TO SOMETHING ELSE.

#JY22



The receiver responds with feedback



Feedback helps the communicators make sure that the message has been decoded correctly.

The Receiver's reply to the sender is called feedback.



SCHEDULES



An Example of Successful Partnership

- Communication
 - Clearly state needs
 - Lay out expectations
- Role of partnership in meeting goals of all involved
- Equal partners around the table
- Openness
- Integrity
 - Trust
 - Follow-through



Creating Partnerships

- Develop trusting, honest relationships
- Creating reciprocal relationships
- Communicating clearly the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders
- Assessment of challenges, resources, and assets
- Identifying goals, objectives, and action plans
- Ongoing communication
- Assessment
- Celebration

Taken from "The Promise of Partnerships: Tapping into the College as a Community Asset"

Results of Collaboration

- Expansion of farm
 - Higher production and yield
 - Providing healthy food and education
 - Feeding more people
- Economic development
- Safety and well-being of youth and families in the community
- Replicability of model
- Raising awareness about short-sighted practices (i.e., housing demolition)
- Access to resources
 - Grants
 - Additional partnership (i.e., Chemistry, fence, access to water)



Growing Connectedness, Leveraging Resources

- An Exercise in Growing an Urban Farm

Questions and Conversation

Contact Information

Tennille Allen, Associate Professor of Sociology
(815) 836-5899, allente@lewisu.edu

Kay Bolden, Executive Director and Accidental Farmer
(779) 435-9002, kay.bolden@att.net

Kathy Pecora, Grants Coordinator and Local Food Development Specialist
(815) 774-7906, kpecora@willcountylanduse.com

Laura Wilmarth Tyna, Community Partner Liaison
(815) 836-5848, wilmarla@lewisu.edu