

Not Just a Year of Social Justice Education: A University-Community
Collaboration to Enhance and Support Social Justice

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Abstract

This article describes an educational initiative originating in a college of education and engaging both the larger university and the community; it examines the role of leadership for social justice through an educational leadership lens and analyzes the role of the university in promoting social justice education across a university-community context. The case study examined in the article, an initiative called “Not Just a Year of Social Justice Education” (NJAY), was a practice in distributed and transformative leadership, community engagement, and informal social justice education. The author explores the theoretical and pedagogical foundations of the initiative and analyzes the case from the perspective of these frameworks. Included are reflections about the role of the university in developing socially just citizens, the process of collaborative community engagement for social justice, and the overt and covert role of leadership that must be both transformative and pragmatic. The author concludes by discussing implications for the development of approaches intended to better promote and support social justice within the context of university-community collaboration.

Keywords: education, leadership, social justice

Two years ago, a group of faculty and staff in the College of Education at Kansas State University met to discuss the possibility of engaging in collaborative social justice education work that would cross siloed disciplines, programs, and departments, and that would promote knowledge, awareness, and dialogue among students and faculty about social justice issues (<https://www.coe.k-state.edu/academics/graduate/certificates/social-justice-education/>). From this discussion emerged a wide-ranging initiative called "Not Just a Year of Social Justice Education" (NJAY). The author used a case study approach to describe and reflect on NJAY and its relationship to civic leadership, higher education, and social transformation. A case study is an investigative approach used to thoroughly describe complex phenomena, such as recent events, important issues, or programs, in ways that unearth new and deeper understandings of those phenomena (Moore, Lapan, & Quartaroli, 2012). According to Stake (2005), a case study is not defined by a specific methodology but by the object of study, a "specific, unique, bounded system" (p. 445), which offers greater rationale for calling it a case study. The findings from this case offer lessons that may be useful to others in higher education or community settings who desire to promote social justice using an informal, collaborative, educative approach.

This article describes (as suggested by Stake [2005]) the nature of the case study, its historical background, and its context. The theoretical and historical foundations reviewed and discussed relate to the scholarship of social justice and social justice education, higher education and the social justice mission, and leadership and community engagement for social justice. The article also offers reflections and insights from informants as well as a general review of the theoretical grounding of the case and this post-hoc examination of the case.

Theoretical and Historical Foundations

The Scholarship of Social Justice and Social Justice Education

Social justice is a construct rooted in theology, social work, and education, and has three theoretical roots of inquiry (Jean-Marie, Normore, & Brooks, 2009): (1) critical race theory (CRT) (Bell, 1992), which examines the relationship among race, racism, and power, and is based on general critical theory (Bohman, 2002), which aims to explain and transform various dimensions of the domination of human beings in modern society; (2) queer theory, which challenges assumptions about rigid binary categories of men/women, masculine/feminine,

and gay/straight, and seeks to understand discourse, structures, behaviors, and actions that normalize systems of power and sexuality (Meyer, 2007); and (3) feminist post-structural theory (Butler, 2006; Gorgan, 2003), which focuses upon conceptions of discourse, subjectivity, power, knowledge, and resistance in relation to issues of gender roles, inequity, and oppression. From these theoretical roots, social justice has developed as a field of inquiry and analysis. Elements of the three theories that relate to this case study include the importance of discourse; the deconstruction of knowledge and power; critiques of normative constructions of race, gender, sexuality, and other identities; and resistance to hegemony.

In bridging the theoretical aspect of social justice with the practice of education, our work stands on the shoulders of Paulo Freire (2000), author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Lev Vygotsky (1978), a founder of constructivism, and John Dewey (1997), one of the historical giants of educational theory. The idea of critical pedagogy, which greatly informed the development of this project, is an outgrowth of these three thinkers. Shields (2002) defined critical pedagogy as education that empowers learners to engage in critical dialogue that critiques and challenges oppressive social conditions nationally and globally, and that envisions and works toward a more just society. Such pedagogical priorities clearly align with CRT, queer theory, and post-structural theory.

Engaged learning, as described by Dewey (1997) and Freire (2000), is a component of critical pedagogy as well as more recent university-community practices such as service-learning and community-engaged scholarship (Deans, 1999). These pedagogical practices have interacting goals related to student experiential learning and community betterment, utilizing the community as the curriculum, or the curriculum of the community (Barbour, Barbour, & Scully, 2008). Educators for social justice must create learning environments that include numerous entry points for learning and multiple pathways for practice and ongoing investigation (Ayers, 1998). University-community collaboration and engagement optimize the creation of numerous entry-point/multiple-pathway learning environments and offer more breadth of diversity and contexts for learners.

Social Justice and the Role of the University

Universities exert a powerful influence over the socialization of students. They function, according to Winter, Wiseman, and Muirhead (2006), as "sites of

citizenship" (p. 211). It is widely accepted that the role of the university in the United States is to develop citizens for a democratic society. This includes educating students for civic and community engagement, and providing opportunities for what students need to learn and know in order to serve as active, effective citizens within a diverse democracy (Stanton, 2008). Dewey (1997) noted that in order to produce a just society within a democracy, there must be a balance between the principles of freedom and equality. This balance requires a commitment to three fundamental moral principles: justice, freedom, and equality. Dewey also called these principles "democratic ideals."

A commitment to justice, freedom, and equality aligns with promoting social justice and social justice education. However, this commitment is challenging in complex postmodern educational settings. Post-structural theorists, including Butler (2006) and Meyers (2007), have noted the considerable dissonance among justice, freedom, and equality that often emerges and complicates the realities of practice.

Community engagement widens the scope of the historical civic role of universities as socializing agents for democratic ideals (Ostrander, 2004). Indeed, universities have the potential to intentionally foster the moral and civic learning of their students (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003). Although many educators have noted that the socializing influence of universities has acted as an ideological apparatus reproducing White, middle-class consciousness and neoliberal ideologies (e.g. Winter et al., 2006), others understand it to be a mechanism for rectifying some of the failures of the democratic process, such as increasing social inequity, racism, and sexism.

Education and Leadership for Social Justice

The current focus on social justice as inherent to the role of educational leaders adds significantly to the complexity and challenge of already difficult school leadership roles (Bogotch, Beachum, Blount, Brooks, & English, 2008). Societal inequities are often blatantly manifested in schools; therefore, educational leaders have a social and moral obligation to foster equitable school practices, processes, and outcomes for learners of different racial, socioeconomic, gender, cultural, disability, and sexual orientation backgrounds (Jean-Marie et al., 2009). The purpose of educational leadership should be to enhance equity, social justice, and the quality of life; expand access and opportunity to learners; encourage respect

for difference and diversity; strengthen democracy, civic life, and civic responsibility; and promote cultural enrichment, creative expression, intellectual honesty, and the advancement of knowledge and personal freedom coupled with responsibility (Astin & Astin, 2000).

The Practice of Social Justice Leadership

George Theoharis (2007) tied social justice in education directly to the practices of educational leadership. Although Theoharis has written primarily about K-12 education and the principalship, his thoughts are critically applicable to higher education and to institutions that prepare future educators. He and others have affirmed that social justice educational leadership should center on addressing and eliminating marginalization and promoting inclusive schooling practices. When social justice leaders advocate on behalf of traditionally marginalized and poorly served students, they have a corollary responsibility to deconstruct and reconfigure traditional hierarchies and power structures, thus making leadership for social justice an active and activist orientation toward issues of inequity (Jean-Marie et al., 2009). A fundamental role of an educational leader, then, is to serve as a catalyst for conversation: Dialogue leads to discovery and new understanding—that is, the construction of knowledge, which is a basic component of critical pedagogy.

Leadership: Transformative and Distributed

Shields (2010) took seriously Freire's (1998) contention that "education is not the ultimate lever for social transformation, but without it transformation cannot occur" (p. 37) and used the term "transformative leadership" to describe educational leadership practices that critique inequitable practices, address both individual and public good, and begin with questions of justice and democracy. Transformative leadership is a form of leadership grounded in an activist agenda, one that combines a rights-based theory that every individual is entitled to be treated with dignity, respect, and absolute regard, with a social justice theory of ethics that considers these rights at the societal level (Shields, 2010).

The concept of leadership as "distributed" has also been the subject of research and theorizing in the field of education (e.g., Bolden, 2011; Spillane, 2006). Distributed leadership has been conceived as a theoretical and analytic framework focusing on how leadership is enacted rather than on the attributes of a "heroic" leader. Distributed leadership is also seen as an activity that crosses social and situational contexts. Factors related to distributed leadership include trust, support,

recognition, common vision, willingness to share, positive relations, and willingness to change—all of which contribute to making transformations more achievable and sustainable.

The Case: "Not Just a Year of Social Justice Education"

Context. The case study discussed in this article took place at Kansas State University (K-State), a Research One land-grant university. K-State's mission suggests a social justice orientation in stating that "the university embraces diversity, encourages engagement and is committed to the discovery of knowledge, the education of undergraduate and graduate students, and improvement in the quality of life and standard of living of those we serve," and "dedicates itself to providing academic and extracurricular learning experiences which promote and value both excellence and cultural diversity" (<https://www.k-state.edu/about/mission.html>). In addition, the university's Principles of Community, endorsed by student, faculty, and staff university governance bodies, includes affirming the inherent dignity and value of every person and the commitment to strive to maintain an atmosphere of justice based on respect for each other. These values are also reflected in the mission statement of the university's college of education, whose mission is to "[prepare] educators to be knowledgeable, ethical, caring decision makers for a diverse and changing world" (<https://www.coe.k-state.edu>).

History. An environmental scan within the college of education revealed that the research and programmatic interests of over one third of the faculty related to social justice (e.g., disabilities, multicultural education, critical race theory, school finance, and English language learners). Through a collaborative process among all college programs and departments, the college developed and launched a new graduate certificate in social justice education (SJE) (Thurston & Yelich-Bineicki, in press). As part of this process, a working group comprising faculty and staff from all the departments in the college, met over the course of an academic year to discuss program design and required coursework, including a kick-off event drawing attention to the launch of the SJE certificate program. However, the group wanted to focus on "more than a single event" highlighting the SJE program but also provide ongoing education, awareness, and leadership around the theme of social justice education. Thus, the thematic focus of the 2015-2016 academic year in the college of education became "Not Just a Year of Social Justice Education" (<http://www.k-state.edu/today/announcement.php?id=21247>).

Organization. The initiative was developed out of the office of the associate dean (the author), who had spearheaded the SJE certificate program development and implementation. A steering committee within the college, organized to facilitate “Not Just a Year of Social Justice Education” (NJAY), included volunteers from the certificate development group and others. Various members of the group worked with university and community partners, and for each event one or two members took responsibility for the collaboration and arrangements for contacting speakers and making arrangements for travel, honoraria, and other speaker needs. The Midwest Equity Assistance Center (MEAC), a federally funded program that provides professional development and consultation around equity issues to schools and school districts in a five-state region, was a major contributor to the work of the NJAY initiative. Table 1 lists the participants in the steering committee, the internal advisors and the community advisory committee. Both individually and collectively these group provided critical leadership and advice. Together, we identified and mobilized personal and institutional resources to help capitalize on the numerous opportunities that the campus offered for engaging in social justice education.

Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midwest Equity Access Center (two staff) • Graduate students (two students) • Undergraduate student • Associate Dean for Research, College of Education
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Advisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Dean for Diversity, College of Education • Director, Midwest Equity Access Center • Chair, College of Education Diversity for Community Committee • Coordinators, Social Justice Education graduate certificate (2) • Dean, College of Education
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Community Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College of Education, Diversity Coordinator • Director, School of Leadership Studies • College of Education faculty member • School of Family Studies and Human Services faculty member • Local community leader
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Table 1. Leadership and advisors for NJAY initiative.

Purposes. The initial working group suggested five purposes for the initiative which were adopted by the steering committee. The goal of the “Not Just a Year of Social Justice Education” initiative (<http://www.meac.org/NotJustAYear>) was to work collaboratively with others across the university and community to:

1. enhance and support the work of the college in the area of social justice and education;
2. launch and publicize the new SJE graduate certificate program;
3. raise awareness about social justice issues and social justice education professional development for individuals and groups from the university and community;
4. improve and advance the social justice agenda in the college, university, and community; and,
5. provide some coordination and support across the campus and community for activities related to social justice education.

Framework and Logistics. The framework for NJAY comprised four components: (1) a theme for each month of the yearlong initiative; (2) at least one event per month related to the theme; (3) outreach and publicity for all activities and events on the NJAY website (<http://www.MEAC.org/NotJustAYear>), Facebook, and Twitter, as well as via flyers, mass emails, and personal communications; and (4) partnership with others across the campus and community to develop, co-sponsor, and advertise events related to social justice. These components were collaboratively planned, with steering committee members and others taking responsibility for various aspects of the work and providing leadership

for specific events and community collaborations. For example, one group planned the themes and most “big events” in the summer before the initiative was launched, while individuals in a broader group were responsible for specific duties throughout the year.

University and Community Partners. Contacts with other individuals and groups had already been established for the certificate program. Many of these groups reengaged in NJAY and community organizations also became partners in the initiative (see Table 2). Participation ranged from being added to the initiative’s email list and having certain groups’ events to the initiative’s calendar to collaborating in efforts to design, arrange, and fund events. Examples of cooperative activities included contributing to the publicity for a women’s studies event and serving as one of many co-sponsors for a Trans Day of Remembrance, organized by the LGBTQ Resource Center. Many collaborations involved significant mutual engagement whereby events were jointly arranged, decisions collectively made, and leadership distributed among the planners.

• School of Leadership Studies	• Center for Community Engagement
• American Ethnic Studies Department	• Women’s Studies Department
• Center for Teaching and Learning	• K-State Student Access Center
• LGBTQ Resource Center	• 4-H
• Boys and Girls Club	• Big Brothers/Big Sisters
• USD 383 (local school district)	• Three local churches
• School of Family Studies and Human Services	• Drama therapy program
• Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work	

Table 2. University and Community Partners.

Themes and Activities. A large banner—bearing the words “Not Just a Year of Social Justice Education”—and the QR code and URL for the website were displayed outside the education building at the start of the academic year. The banner remained in place all year and was carried by students in the homecoming parade. Planned events demonstrated the diversity of topics and perspectives that were organized to meet NJAY goals (see the NJAY portfolio at <http://www.coe.k-state.edu>). Events included:

- a talk and reception for a visitor to the college, Polish educator Marzanna Pogorelska, who was honored by the president of Poland for her work related to critical pedagogy, Holocaust education, and human rights education;
- a panel of faculty from across the campus discussing critical pedagogy from their disciplinary perspectives;
- an Underground Railroad Tour with a community partner, the Wonder Workshop (a College of Education-produced documentary on the Underground Railroad in the area can be found at <http://www.coe.k-state.edu>);
- a public lecture by children’s book authors and illustrators Andrea Davis Pinkney and Brian Pinkney on “Social Justice Education Through Children’s Literature,” co-sponsored with the Kansas Reading Association;
- a public drumming in the courtyard outside the education building, with local storyteller and musician Richard Pitts, who brought the percussion instruments and lead 30 to 40 students, faculty, and staff in “drumming for social justice”;
- a panel discussion, “Justice and Mercy: The Nexus of Social Justice Education and Faith-Based Social Action” that included three local pastors, a state senator, a social worker, and an activist parent of a transgender daughter;
- “Disability as an Identity,” a public address by award-winning teacher Matt Christensen, co-sponsored by the Student Access Center;

- a partnership with the local bi-lingual, bi-cultural 4-H club (Verde Clovers) for a poetry and art workshop by club members with a subsequent public performance and photo story of the development of the art and bi-lingual poetry.

NJAY included dozens of events and activities, and engaged more than 50 leader-organizers, and over 2,000 participants. The many events, short courses, performances, public discussions that were part of the NJAY initiative demonstrate the depth and breadth of the topics addressed, the experiences provided, and opportunities for dialogue offered to members of the community and university. The year of planned activities will culminate in the fall of 2016 with the premier of a documentary developed in the College of Education with support and advice from the SJE curriculum development group and the NJAY steering committee. The film, “A Walk in My Shoes: Social Justice in Education,” features the stories of several College of Education faculty, students, and alumnae who have experienced the importance of social justice in education and are now actively pursuing a social justice agenda. The documentary and videos of most of the events are available for viewing and educational use on the college and NJAY websites (<http://www.coe.k-state.edu>; <http://www.meac.org/NotJustAYear>).

Reflections on NJAY. NJAY was an intentionally constructed initiative that created spaces for diverse individuals to feel welcome to discuss and experience topics and activities related to social justice, education, action, and social change, and provided opportunities to learn about and experience a sampling of the wide range of issues and actions that are encompassed by the work of social justice education. The framework for organizing, collaborating, planning, and implementing NJAY was grounded in the missions of the university and the college; the purposes of the initiative; the educational theories of Dewey, Freire, and others; the theoretical framework of CRT, queer theory, and post-structuralist feminist theory; and the scholarship of social justice. The collaborative nature of the initiative and the constraints of time, budget, and history influenced the leadership for NJAY. What follows are reflections about the theoretical implications of the initiative which relate to the alignment of theories of social justice, pedagogy, engagement, and leadership with our practice.

Reflections on Theory. In reflecting on the steering committee's work within the theoretical framework of social justice, we acknowledge an explicit tension between theory and practice. Gewertz (1998) defined social justice

leadership as disruptive and subversive; this was a high standard to live up to given the practical issues of time, money, communication, and other hurdles inherent to collaborative work in the university. Our practice departed from the foundational tenets of CRT, queer theory, and post-structural feminist theory because we intentionally chose to go “broad instead of deep,” as would be required to address structural and hegemonic issues comprehensively.

Although the steering committee considered our work to be part of an activist agenda, we were not attempting to rally for a specific social change or to deconstruct and reconfigure traditional hierarchies and power structures. Had we held more closely to our theoretical underpinnings, our events would have also addressed such topics as the nature or construction of knowledge; the cultural assignment and institutionalization of gender identity as opposed to biological sex and to personal identity without regard to sex or gender; the pathologization of poverty (Hansen, Bourgois, & Drucker, 2014); gender dysphoria; or the relationship of neoliberalism and heteronormativity. We acknowledge that our programs did not function as deliberate interventions to move our courses, programs, colleges, or the university toward a more just and moral agenda to enhance equity, social justice, and quality of life for everyone (Astin & Astin, 2000). Although we as individuals on the steering committee and in our partnering organizations may have aspired to such outcomes, the reality of our context and our resources informed our modest goals and expectations for the initiative.

Reflections on Pedagogy. The day-to-day practices of NJAY more clearly aligned with our pedagogical framework of social justice (e.g., Dewey and Freire) through advanced discourse, the construction of knowledge from authentic voices, attention to the lived experiences of individuals from marginalized groups or with marginalized identities, and critiques of normative constructions of race, gender, sexuality, and other identities. To fulfill our purpose of promoting awareness and education for members of the university and the community, activities and events were designed with critical pedagogy, constructivism, experiential learning, service-learning, civic engagement, and leadership in mind. As a whole, our NJAY activities provided opportunities for collaborative discourse and action in an experientially based learning process, outside the classroom, and with diverse co-learners from across the campus and the community. The campus-community nexus was critical to meeting our goals. Expanding the worldview of students and faculty siloed in disciplinary or focused-issue arenas demanded that we consider

the curriculum and context of the broader community, as well as include activities that provided opportunities for dialog, engagement, and support. We were mindful of the problem of potentially “pathologizing through silence” (Shields, 2010); that is, we tried not to celebrate some differences as legitimate and pathologize others. However, because of time and resource constraints, we were unable to focus on several marginalizing conditions that were important to us, such as age, religion, and immigration status. We were, however, able to assure that individuals and groups were the primary source of information about their own situations.

Reflections on Leadership. In considering the types of leadership that are often aligned by researchers and theorists in educational leadership, transformative leadership and distributed leadership seem to fit the operationalization of NJAY. Shields’ (2010) conception of transformative leadership combines rights-based theory with a social justice theory of ethics that considers these rights at the societal level. This definition accurately describes the role of the steering committee and advisory groups, who saw their endeavors as potentially transformative for university students, staff, and faculty, as well as members of the community. We tried to bring lived experiences of diverse others into view, facilitate moral dialogue, eradicate erroneous beliefs, broaden worldviews, support and empower others in their social justice work, foster critical reflection and analysis, and the move through understanding toward action.

Reflecting on Dewey and Freire, we believe the fundamental role of an educational leader is as a catalyst for conversation because dialogue leads to discovery, new understandings, and the construction of knowledge. This pedagogical leadership role aligns with transformative leadership; creating safe spaces and catalysts for dialogue and continuing conversation were primary drivers in our initiative. We also sought to build capacity within and across individuals and organizations by providing relevant and meaningful interactions to support and reinforce current efforts on campus and in the community. Ours was a “moral and purposeful approach to leadership” (Shields, 2004, p. 110), one that we hope has and will facilitate the development of future transformative leaders (including us).

In practice, the leadership within NJAY comprised, for us, a process, not a position. Although the associate dean served as the administrative leader, leadership was inclusive, collaborative, values-based, and accessible to all. NJAY leadership was distributed in the sense that activities and interactions were distributed across multiple people and situations (Spillane et al., 2004). As noted

earlier, various team members had responsibilities for leading specific aspects of the initiative, such as the website and calendar, fiscal issues, or specific events and collaborations. Community members and individuals in other organizations were responsible for other activities, with our team providing funding or outreach and advertising. The planned activities crossed social and situational contexts, as can be seen in the descriptions of some of the activities. Although there were a few missteps, the operations ran very smoothly. This was due in part to the trust among the collaborators that was based on our common vision and commitment to social justice. Other factors related to distributed leadership (e.g., support, recognition, willingness to share, good relations, and willingness to change) were developed or strengthened among the group and individuals and groups in the community as the year progressed. Our leadership approach was pragmatic, depending on who had time, resources, and connections. Some opportunities for collaboration were planned far in advance; others were made after major planning had occurred; and still others were completely serendipitous. Each step was a journey in our own transformation.

Reflections on University-Community Engagement for Social Justice.

Our experiences with NJAY present a range of implications for postsecondary education and university-community engagement. We think that reciprocity was critical to our collaborations across units and organizations. Though we recognized that we were not experts in social justice or issues related to social justice, we were committed, had some insightful committee members and volunteers, and had access to some resources such as funding. Each of our collaborators had expertise, networks, passion, and commitment, and also possessed resources of various kinds. We approached our collaborations by respecting and including all participants and potential participants, drawing few or no distinctions between the “givers” and the “receivers” or the “knowers” and the “neophytes.”

We also realized the absolute necessity of viewing the whole university and the community as the curriculum of social justice education, just as Barbour et al. (2008) considered the curriculum of the community in K-12 education. Postsecondary institutions are "in the position to serve as catalysts of opportunities that address what it means to make teaching learning more socially conscious and politically responsive in a time of growing conservatism, racism and social injustices locally, national, and internationally" (Jean-Marie et al., 2009, p. 14). However, we believe that those opportunities must engage communities, with their

rich array of perspectives, contexts, and diversity. Communities are learning partners that alter learning experiences for our students. Thus, we believe that collaboration is also essential for the best social justice educational outcomes for all learners. Educational leaders must continue to capitalize on the rich diversity of university and community resources in order to enhance inclusion and to assure that students explore broader issues, such as privilege, and experience different social realities.

One example of a community collaboration that occurred during the NJAY initiative was the Roots of Justice Anti-Racism Analysis Training, an intensive two-and-a-half-day workshop facilitated for the community by leaders of the nationally recognized program. The event was initially organized with a local church, and together we set the ambitious goal of training 25 or 30 participants and receiving support from a few other community organizations. However, a dozen community groups joined us in funding and participating in the training. NJAY provided scholarships for university students, staff, and faculty. Along with the impressive community support, 50 participants ended up engaging in the event, with 10 individuals placed on a waiting list. Since then, we hear regularly about outcomes of the event, such as new study groups, empowered advocacy groups, new community connections, and considerations of more Roots of Justice workshops in the future.

Reflections on Outcomes. We hope that our yearlong educative social justice initiative will, in the long run, spark awareness and respect for the lived experience of those who are marginalized and have experienced both systematic and attitudinal barriers that have prevented full and equitable participation in our democratic society. Moreover, we hope to have embodied Dewey's belief in education as the mechanism for learning the balance between the principles of freedom and equality to produce a just society. We expect students and others to have had intensely personal experiences as a result of their participation in the initiative, as is common when students are exposed to a wide variety of social justice issues (Goodman, 2011). We also hope that, from these experiences, students gained knowledge and skills for meaningful advancement toward social justice; that they actively promote social justice in whatever arena they inhabit in the future; and that they remain or become active in "disrupting and subverting" social and structural arrangements that promote marginalization and exclusionary processes (Goldfarb & Grinberg, 2002). We hope some story, piece of dialogue, or

activity has enriched each participant's awareness of privilege and exclusion, and that they will, now and in the future, consider the relationships among the individual, society, and barriers to full participation and explore the potential for local and global change through collaboration and action. Yet, individual, institutional, and community outcomes from the social justice initiative are still just hopes. A multifaceted evaluation of the initiative will take place when the final activity is completed (i.e., the premier of the video, "A Walk in My Shoes: Social Justice in Education").

On the other hand, we can attest to outcomes for those of us closely involved with the project and who learned a great deal from this process of enacting social justice education. Like Bell (1997), we gained an understanding that social justice education is both a process and a goal. Many of our lessons were very personal and challenged our thinking and our actions. Some of these lessons, noted in our reflections and discussions, include:

1. the joy and complexity of translating theoretical ideologies into practices that lead to goals of awareness and change;
2. appreciation of our own opportunities for critical dialogue, personal insight, and active engagement;
3. increased knowledge of our community and new connections that will continue to produce future collaborations and partnerships;
4. better understanding of the depth and breadth of the issues related to social justice education and to the mechanisms that will promote positive, action-oriented outcomes;
5. the value of building trust and a common vision, and of developing relationships that are reciprocal rather than charitable;
6. the power of synthesis of individual and collective experiences and of fostering critical discourse related to social action and change;
7. realizing that individuals committed to social justice must remain vigilant and continually exploit opportunities for critical reflection and inquiry;
8. recognizing the need to challenge our own privilege as members of a university community;

9. examining what it means to be educators and facilitators with the potential to become transformative leaders to influence a better future for all; and,
10. understanding, in a way we did not a year ago, that social justice cannot be separated from the practices of educational leadership (Bogotch, 2002) and that social justice cannot be separated from practices and activities within a higher education system.

Conclusions. Activities and initiatives at universities reach beyond the geographic place in which they occur. Rich dialogue can potentially have lasting impact far beyond a single classroom. As the NJAY initiative nears completion for the year, we continue to ask: What does leadership mean in the contexts of social justice goals, a land-grant university, and a college of education? What have we learned from the initiative about leadership, social justice education, and university-community engagement for social justice? How can we as individuals and as members of departments, colleges, programs, and organizations continue to influence our students and the structures of our institutions to best assure a just and equitable education for all and a just and equitable future in these challenging times?

Our work to promote social justice awareness and education aligned well with our pedagogical framework and leadership. That is, we collaborated across spaces, organizations, and institutions; created conditions that enabled others to achieve shared purposes; motivated and supported activities within organizations to enable us all to further our missions; and provided powerful stories that inspired (and continue to inspire) our work for change. We focused on enhancing connectedness and community building. Our ultimate hope is that we ended up being not just educative and collaborative, but transformative, as we continue to aspire to create a climate that facilitates and reinforces individual and collective efforts to engage in dialogue and action that promotes and sustains social justice-related educational practices.

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