

Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement
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The *eJournal of Public Affairs* is a joint venture of Missouri State University and the American Democracy Project (ADP) at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). This partnership has resulted in several themed *eJournal* issues focusing on various ADP initiatives and on topics related to ADP's annual conference, formerly the National Meeting. The annual Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) meeting, established in 2015 as a joint venture of ADP, The Democracy Commitment (TDC), and NASPA's LEAD Initiative, has since played host to a variety of *eJournal* program sessions, and through this gathering we have encouraged participating faculty, staff, students, and community partners to submit manuscripts to the *eJournal* for publication. In 2017, the CLDE meeting and *eJournal* staff teamed up to release a joint call for submissions for a special issue focused on the content of that meeting's scholarship and practice. Other than the split issue on global engagement in 2014-2015, the issue you are reading today is the largest single issue in the *eJournal's* history.

The annual CLDE meeting hosts civic engagement administrators, faculty, staff, students, and community partners focused on institutionalizing and advancing civic learning and democratic engagement work on college and university campuses. Prior to joining forces with NASPA in 2015, ADP, which focuses its efforts on state institutions, and TDC, which focuses on community colleges, organized an annual meeting that was similar in scope. NASPA, the association for

student affairs educators, held its own annual civic engagement conference in 2013 and 2014. By co-organizing the annual CLDE meeting, ADP, TDC, and NASPA brought together our respective communities to strengthen and deepen the civic learning and democratic engagement work we are all committed to across our institutions—both public and private. As three organizations dedicated to ensuring that students graduate from colleges and universities prepared to be the informed, engaged citizens that communities and democracy need, co-organizing the annual meeting was—and remains—a way to cultivate a holistic approach to our work. Fostering academic and student affairs partnerships and collaborations on our individual campuses and across our initiatives and associations is imperative to this mutual goal.

Since 2015, the following meetings have occurred (or will occur), all organized by ADP, TDC, and NASPA:

- 2015 Civic Learning & Democratic Engagement Meeting, “Stewardship of Place: A Civic Mission of Higher Education,” June 4-6, 2015, New Orleans, LA
- 2016 Civic Learning & Democratic Engagement Meeting, June 2-4, 2016, Indianapolis, IN
- 2017 Civic Learning & Democratic Engagement Meeting, June 7-10, 2017, Baltimore, MD
- 2018 Civic Learning & Democratic Engagement Meeting, June 6-9, 2018, Anaheim, CA

At each annual CLDE meeting, the recipient of ADP’s John Saltmarsh Award for Emerging Leaders in Civic Engagement is announced, and afterward the awardee is invited to submit an essay to the *eJournal*. The first article in this issue, “Collaborative Engagement from Within the Academy: A Self-Reflexive Narrative” is by Danielle Lake, the 2017 Saltmarsh Award winner. Through her personal reflection, Lake explores the status of publicly engaged scholarship—its challenges, risks, and rewards.

In “Enhancing Civic, Electoral, and Political Engagement Through International Student Inclusion,” Adrienne McNally highlights options for institutions seeking to engage international students in the civic process. The New York Institute of Technology (where McNally directs the Experiential Education

programs) exemplifies such engagement efforts, giving international students who are often left out of the electoral process opportunities to intentionally collaborate with their peers, faculty, and administrators, thereby enhancing the civic ethos of the institution.

In “College Student Food Insecurity and Awareness and Use of Supports: Recent Findings from a Survey of Students at a Mid-Sized State Comprehensive University in Kansas,” Brett Zollinger, Shala Mills, Emily Brandt, and Wendy Rohleder-Sook explore the wicked problem of food insecurity and describe how one institution, Fort Hays State University (FHSU), is tackling the issue by utilizing institutional resources and support in concert with a Kansas Health Foundation grant. The researchers measured food insecurity and the extent to which students are aware of and are using local food supports to help FHSU meet the needs of its students and community by evolving programs, resources, and services, many of which can be adapted to other institutions.

In “Educating for Democracy in Undemocratic Contexts: Avoiding the Zero-Sum Game of Campus Free Speech Versus Inclusion,” Nancy Thomas, director of the Institute for Democracy in Higher Education at Tufts University (MA), warns of the negative consequences of mandating speech rights on campuses and offers practical solutions that avert pitting freedom against equity—such as hosting rigorous, campus-wide, faculty-led dialogue about free speech on campus. Arguing that “colleges and universities need to move beyond viewing speech as a mandate and appreciate the current conditions as a learning opportunity,” Thomas urges academics to make educating for the democracy we want (but do not have) a primary focus in this debate.

In “Bridging Civic Engagement to Civic Responsibility through Short-Term, International Service-Learning Experiences,” Stephanie Malinenko, Justine Tutuska, and Lynn Matthews discuss their qualitative analysis of students’ written reflections on a service-learning project which was designed to determine whether undergraduate students bridged their short-term engagement to the development of more sustained civic or social responsibility. In detailing their findings, the authors also make specific recommendations about encouraging students’ development of civic responsibility.

At the core of each annual CLDE meeting are pedagogies for engagement in democracy. In this *eJournal* issue, Melanie Nichole Burdick reviews *Teaching*

Civic Engagement Across the Disciplines, an edited volume published in 2017. The book's 23 chapters—many of which were written by CLDE participants, past and present—discuss the importance of civic learning and engagement and introduce readers to a variety of important resources.

Derrick Barker offers a compelling review of *You're More Powerful Than You Think: A Citizen's Guide to Making Change Happen*, by Eric Liu, a plenary speaker at the 2017 CLDE meeting who wove powerful TEDx-style talks on core concepts of civic learning and democratic engagement. Meeting attendees were given copies of Liu's book, which explores the concept of citizen power through stories of individual civic leaders reflecting deep lessons about social change.

Chase Willhite's video feature, "Food Pantry Making a Difference for FHSU Students," illustrates the connection established between FHSU and the Kansas Health Foundation to work toward eliminating food insecurity in the local community. This intentional relationship involves working in tandem to include community and institutional voices in tackling this wicked problem.

Kimber Quinney, Catalina Langen, and Scott Gross's "Democratic Engagement and Community Engagement: The American Democracy Project at California State University San Marcos," provides the first of what we hope will be a set of future "Campus Corner" feature essays. The article introduces readers to the institutionalization of ADP at CSUSM, including replicable programs that will be of interest to readers.

The final feature is a set of "CivEd Talks" delivered during the opening plenary of the 2017 CLDE meeting. CivEd Talks are short, dynamic, quick-paced presentations by members of the CLDE community intended to inspire and challenge participants' collective imagination and thinking. These stories reflect the presenters' experience with and relevant knowledge of their respective topic. The intention is for each of the three CivEd Talks to actively engage attendees in stretching their thinking and motivating them to action upon returning to their campuses and communities. The 2017 CivEd Talks were given by Martín Carcasson, founder and director of the Center for Public Deliberation at Colorado State University; Jane Coaston, political reporter for MTV News; and Eric Liu, CEO of Citizen University.

The 2018 CLDE meeting—to be held June 6-9, 2018, in Anaheim, CA—will feature three more CivEd Talks by practitioner-scholars who will actively

engage participants in thinking about and acting upon three wicked problems faced by campuses and communities: hunger and homelessness, DACA and immigration, and climate change. The opening plenary session will ask attendees to envision the work of the CLDE movement in higher education and consider how they can help “move the needle” on democratic engagement on campus, in their communities, and in civil society. The CivEd Talks will be given by Clare Cady, director of community engagement at Temple University (PA), and founder and director of the College and University Food Bank Alliance; Sian Proctor, geology professor at South Mountain Community College (AZ); and Joel Pérez, vice president and dean of students and Title IX coordinator at Whittier College (CA). Additionally, attendees will have numerous opportunities to engage in dialogue around these wicked problems during a round of featured sessions, including “Environmental Stewardship: The Civic Imperative for Learning About and Engaging Within Our Local Habitats”; “DACA and Immigration: Creating a Welcoming and Inclusive Campus Environment”; “Hunger and Homelessness: Democratic Action to Address Food and Housing Insecurity on Campus”; and “Media Literacy—What to Do Next?: Understanding and Responding to Student’s Media Literacy Skills.” To learn more about the 2018 Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Meeting and to register by the May 1, 2018, early-bird deadline, visit the [conference website](#).

We hope you will enjoy this issue and join us as we strive to foster the thriving democracy we all want and need.

Author Biographies



Jennifer is the national manager of the American Democracy Project, a civic learning and democratic engagement network of AASCU. She earned her doctorate in higher education from the Pennsylvania State University. Jennifer's dissertation focused on how faculty learn to incorporate civic learning and engagement in their undergraduate teaching within their academic discipline, for which she received the 2011 IARSLCE honorable mention dissertation award. Jennifer holds an ex-officio position on the *eJournal of Public Affairs'* editorial board and serves on the advisory board of the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge. She has contributed to a number of democratic engagement publications including authoring or co-authoring chapters in *Reimagining Democratic Societies: A New Era of Personal and Social Responsibility* (2013); *Becoming a Steward of Place: Four Areas of Institutional Focus* (2014); and *Research on Student Civic Outcomes in Service Learning: Conceptual Frameworks and Methods* (2016)



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her Master of Arts in Psychology at Chatham University and her B.S. in Biology from Walsh University.



Verdis LeVar Robinson is the first National Director of TDC after serving as a tenured Assistant Professor of History and African-American Studies having taught writing-intensive, web-enhanced, service-learning courses at Monroe Community College (MCC) in Rochester, New York, for ten years. In addition to serving as MCC's TDC Campus Coordinator since the beginning of the organization, he has served on TDC National Steering Committee and on the Advisory Council for its Economic Inequality Initiative. Professionally, Verdis is a fellow of the Aspen Institute's Faculty Seminar on Citizenship and the American and Global Polity, and the National Endowment for the Humanities' Faculty Seminar on Rethinking Black Freedom Studies: The Jim Crow North and West. He is also a Public Scholar with New York Humanities. Additionally, Verdis is the founder of the Rochester Neighborhood Oral History Project that created a walking tour of the community most impacted by the 1964 Race Riots, which has engaged over 400 members of the Rochester community in walking, discussing, and learning about the legacy of Jim Crow Rochester. He holds a B.M. in Voice Performance from Boston University, a B.S. and M.A. in History from SUNY College at Brockport, and an M.A. in African-American Studies from SUNY University at Buffalo.