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University-Community Partnerships: 2006 Worcester Speaker Series

A report prepared by MARGA, INC with support
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ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

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Over the last decade, partnerships between colleges and universities, government, and businesses have helped foster economic development in the city of Worcester, Massachusetts. In 2006, the Worcester UniverCity Partnership, a coalition of private and public sector organizations working with colleges, in collaboration with the New England Resource Center for Higher Education, organized a speaker series aimed at promoting the depth and impact of university-community partnerships in the city. This report provides highlights from the 2006 Worcester Speaker Series, discusses the history and characteristics of Worcester's partnerships, and suggests steps toward a workable action agenda for the city. This is a portrait of one city's approach to strengthening its partnerships, which can also serve as a model for other cities interested in promoting economic development through university-community partnerships.

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Introduction

Over the last decade, partnerships between colleges and universities, community groups, government, and businesses have helped foster economic development in the city of Worcester, Massachusetts. To build on these efforts, in 2006, the Worcester UniverCity Partnership (the Partnership), in collaboration with the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE), organized a three-part speaker series aimed at promoting the depth and impact of university-community partnerships in the city. The Partnership is a collaboration of the Colleges of Worcester Consortium, the City of Worcester, and the business community, including the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Worcester Business Development Corporation. The Partnership works to promote long-term growth and prosperity for the city. NERCHE is a center for inquiry, research, and policy; it supports administrators, faculty, and staff across the region in becoming more effective practitioners and leaders as they navigate the complexities of institutional innovation and change.

Those attending the speaker series included representatives from local and regional colleges and universities, community groups, city and state government, financial institutions, and businesses. The goals of the series were: to strengthen relationships and encourage dialogue between institutions; be a forum for new ideas (by bringing in outside experts as speakers); and encourage institutions to commit to actionable steps in the area of economic development. The organizers will hold a fourth meeting to allow institutions collectively to draw up an action plan for strengthening the impact of university-community partnerships in Worcester. The results of the final meeting will be published under separate cover.

Worcester's experience and progress with university-community partnerships to date can serve as a model for other cities interested in promoting economic development through these types of partnerships. This report, sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, provides highlights from the 2006 speaker series, discusses the history and characteristics of Worcester's university-community partnerships, and suggests steps toward a workable action agenda for the city. This is a portrait of one city's efforts to strengthen its partnerships.

History and Characteristics of Worcester's Partnerships

Worcester once had a thriving industrial base as the home of steel, abrasives, and textile manufacturers. Yet, in recent decades, Worcester lost much of its heavy industry. The decline in manufacturing became a crisis as residents found themselves out of work and the economy rapidly declined. Other anchor institutions, or entities rooted in Worcester, were forced to step up and take on greater responsibility within the community.¹ These institutions, including many service businesses, colleges and universities, and medical and biotechnical facilities, became the city's major employers and the community's hope.

¹ Anchor institutions are organizations rooted in their communities; they are generally universities, hospitals, and government entities, but may also be businesses for which relocation would be difficult or impossible. As a result, these institutions have a vested interest in improving their communities.

Marga Incorporated is a consulting firm that advises public and private organizations in how to develop mutually beneficial cross sector partnerships and philanthropic initiatives. The views expressed in this discussion paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent positions of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston or the Federal Reserve System.

Worcester is now recognized for its excellent educational and cultural facilities; the city has nine colleges and universities with approximately 30,000 students. Institutions of higher education within Worcester include: Assumption College, Becker College, Clark University, the College of the Holy Cross, the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester State College, Quinsigamond Community College, and the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, which recently opened a new campus downtown. These colleges and universities have a significant impact on the city's economy and quality of life: besides being employers, they procure a significant amount of goods and services locally, and engage many students in service activities within the community.

In addition, many Worcester colleges and universities have contributed directly to urban revitalization by providing the financing, guarantees, real estate, or technical expertise necessary for economic development projects such as affordable housing, business parks, and even a magnet high school. In the past, some Worcester schools considered themselves enclaves removed from the outside world. Over time, city colleges and universities have come to understand their success is intrinsically linked to the fate of their communities. For example, institutions in distressed neighborhoods often have difficulty attracting and retaining students and faculty. Some of the early university-community partnerships began as colleges and universities teamed up with their local neighborhoods to undertake revitalization at the neighborhood level. Then, as government officials and local businesses were drawn into these partnerships, transformation began across neighborhoods.

There are many examples of university-community partnerships in Worcester. The University Park Partnership (UPP) is a national model for neighborhood revitalization. UPP is the result of long-standing collaboration between Clark University and its surrounding community, including neighborhood residents and organizations, local churches, government officials, the business community, and public schools—all organized around the Main South Community Development Corporation. UPP focuses on four major areas of urban redevelopment: housing and physical rehabilitation, education (Clark professors teach at UPP's magnet high school), economic development, and social and recreational activities for neighborhood residents.

The College of the Holy Cross is actively working to help increase the capacity of the South Worcester Neighborhood Improvement Corporation (SWNIC), and has guaranteed two loans totaling \$1.4 million for SWNIC that will allow it to develop affordable housing. In 2005, the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Science opened its downtown Worcester campus, which is expected to bring new vitality to the area. Also that year, the Worcester Polytechnic Institute broke ground on a major multipurpose development project, Gateway Park, designed to increase the city's competitiveness in life sciences and bioengineering and to bring housing, office space, retail, and lab space to a former brownfield.

Worcester is a living laboratory for university-community partnerships. Despite the improvements that have been made in Worcester in recent years, the city still has challenges, and there are several distressed neighborhoods. One of the questions that local officials began to ask is, How can the city's partnerships be leveraged to stretch resources even further and have greater impact? In early 2005, then Mayor Timothy Murray established a task force to examine best practices from across the country and to recommend ways in which Worcester could better utilize local colleges and universities for economic development and expansion of the tax base. The task force produced a

report that led to the Worcester University Partnership, a formalized multiinstitutional partnership intended to promote transformation citywide.

The Partnership's work officially began in May 2005 with the hiring of its founding executive director, Armand W. Carriere, former associate deputy assistant secretary for University Partnerships at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The Partnership has key factors in place: "brand" institutions as participants; top-level support in the higher education, business, and public sectors; and strong facilitation through its executive director and board of directors. Moreover, members are actively involved in promoting economic development: member presidents of the Consortium of Colleges have found ways to leverage the resources of their schools to contribute to the city's economy; the City of Worcester has initiated partnerships between sectors and promoted them through policy; and, the business community has provided leadership for several large development initiatives.

Early on, the Partnership drew from the work of CEOs for Cities to identify nine areas of potential economic development opportunities that would benefit all stakeholders. These areas include:

- 1) The colleges as *purchasers*
- 2) The colleges as *employers*
- 3) The colleges as *developers of real estate*
- 4) The colleges as *providers of intellectual capital* to a variety of audiences
- 5) The *development and incubation of small businesses*
- 6) *Workforce development*
- 7) Downtown revitalization through an *emphasis on students as consumers*
- 8) The involvement of students as *interns and volunteers* in public, nonprofit, and for-profit organizations
- 9) *Marketing* the City of Worcester

All Partnership activities to date have focused on those nine areas. Examples of initiatives include a major campaign to emphasize local purchasing by the colleges and universities, the renovation of an abandoned theater, and new faculty-student applied research and service learning projects linked to community-based organizations.

In 2006 the Partnership began to focus on developing a long-term strategy for the city's university-community partnerships. It decided to increase the knowledge base of its members on the most recent trends in the field of campus-community partnerships and joined the New England Resource Center for Higher Education in sponsoring the 2006 Worcester Speaker Series. The highlights are presented in the next section of this paper.

Speaker Series Highlights

The 2006 Worcester Speaker Series consisted of three day-long conferences, each of which was held at a different institution of higher education around Worcester and focused on a specific topic related to community and economic development: (1) evaluating the success of university-community partnerships (Clark University); (2) leveraging resources for university-community partnerships (College of the Holy Cross); and (3) the university as urban developer (Worcester Polytechnic Institute).

Each conference had three objectives:

- to highlight the work of Worcester area colleges and universities and other New England institutions currently engaged in economic development activities while helping to encourage dialogue and strengthen relationships between institutions;
- to be a forum for new ideas, educating and informing the academic, public, and private sectors of the enormous potential that exists when collaborative efforts are undertaken; and
- to help refine the Worcester UniverCity Partnership initiative while presenting it as a model for replication on other campuses and in other communities as well as help Worcester institutions move forward on an action agenda for economic development in the city.

Each conference consisted of a keynote speech followed by a panel discussion. Below we share highlights and take-away lessons from the meetings.

Session 1: Evaluating the Success of University-Community Development Partnerships

Held at Clark University, February 23, 2006

Keynote Address: Ken Reardon, Associate Professor at Cornell University, and chair of Cornell's Department of City and Regional Planning

Ken Reardon opened the first conference with a presentation highlighting the context within which university-community partnerships exist, the history of the growth in partnerships, success stories, and best practices. Reardon described the urban-economy shift from manufacturing to service. He also painted a picture of other changes hitting communities, including suburban sprawl, concentrated poverty, and slowing growth. These changes have led to greater income disparity between the “haves” and “have-nots,” which has drawn a line down the middle of many communities. According to Reardon, this shift, coupled with shrinking available resources at the federal and state levels, has meant that troubled municipalities have had to find their own answers. As a result, cities are looking to nonprofits and anchor institutions to relieve some of their burden.

Reardon also described the “explosion” in the number of partnerships between institutions of higher education and their surrounding communities. He suggested that this increase is partly a result of urban colleges and universities’ new understanding that they need to partner for economic development if they are going to be successful in recruiting and retaining faculty and students. Additionally, alumni and communities are demanding this kind of involvement. During his presentation he described a number of existing university-community partnerships that, through thoughtful collaboration, have been able to have a positive impact on their surrounding communities. Two of his case studies are described below.

Case Studies

Trinity College is a small liberal arts school in Hartford, Connecticut, that has historically faced recruitment challenges in part because of its distressed surrounding neighborhood. The president of the institution made a choice to develop stronger relations with the community. The college and the surrounding neighborhood established the Learning Corridor, a comprehensive redevelopment plan focused on education, youth and family wellness, community development, and civic engagement. The collaborative effort has had a transformative impact on the college and its environs. For more information on the Learning Corridor, visit <http://www.learningcorridor.org>.

Students at the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) in Philadelphia responded to an act of violence against a professor by approaching university leaders and urging the institution to become more engaged in the community. Working with residents, UPenn has helped to transform West Philadelphia into a more vibrant, safer community. A key factor in the effectiveness of UPenn's work with the community has been the school's decision to incorporate community engagement into all areas of the university, including class curricula, the mission of its departments and centers, and employment, purchasing, and real estate development guidelines. For more information on the University of Pennsylvania's partnership with West Philadelphia, visit <http://www.upenn.edu/president/westphilly>.

Reardon concluded his presentation with a list of best practices for sustainable partnerships:²

- to overcome initial skepticism, partnerships must be built organically;
- the leaders of the institutions must back the partnership;
- partnership sustainability requires beneficial opportunities and outcomes for all involved;
- it is essential to reflect on and respond to successes and failures; and
- there is no optimal strategy as each community is different.

Panel Discussion by Academic, Community, and Local Government Leaders

Following the keynote presentation, representatives from Worcester and Boston participated in a panel discussion on how colleges and universities have impacted economic development in their areas. Panelists included:

- John Bassett, President, Clark University
- David Forsberg, President and CEO, Worcester Business Development Corporation
- Barbara Haller, Councilwoman for the City of Worcester
- Barry Bluestone, Director, Center for Urban & Regional Policy, Northeastern University

The panel reinforced the keynote address and built upon the theme that urban communities are changing and university-community partnerships can improve economic development efforts as long as they are collaborative, mutually beneficial, and reflective. Forsberg commented on the fact that every partnership he has participated in

It's not about rescuing one's own institution in a troubled neighborhood; it's the motivation of enlightened self-interest and the motivation of providing students with values and an appreciation for being a part of their communities.

John Bassett, President of
Clark University

² For additional information on Ken Reardon's research on university-community partnerships, please visit: <http://www.bos.frb.org/commdev/c&b/2005/Summer/University.pdf>.

has had the involvement of a local university. He added that universities have the ability to set a precedent and to see the upside of investing in long-term development projects. Bluestone described the changes that have been taking place in Boston since the 1980s, including the flight of 25- to 44-year-olds who take advantage of job opportunities and a lower cost of living in other areas. In his view, this loss of intellectual capital has an impact on universities and the city.

Session 2: Leveraging Resources for University-Community Partnerships: Financial Institutions and Philanthropy

Held at the College of the Holy Cross, April 10, 2006

Keynote Address: David Maurrasse, President, Marga, Inc.

David Maurrasse started the second conference by discussing the interrelationship between university-community partnerships, financial institutions, and philanthropy. He discussed how to engage financial institutions and philanthropic organizations in partnerships, providing guidance on leveraging resources to strengthen projects and programs between institutions of higher education and their surrounding communities. Maurrasse's goal was to generate dialogue on the ways in which pockets of resources can be tapped—in Worcester and elsewhere.

Maurrasse presented the following ideas for partnerships to consider when assessing how to tap additional resources:

- university-community partnerships need to go beyond the concept of charity and focus on promoting mutual gain for all partners;
- why partner? Everyone benefits from a healthy city and region because all stakeholders are interdependent. True revitalization of neighborhoods, cities, and regions requires the application and coordination of multiple resources across sectors. Improving communities cultivates future consumers, employees, students, etc. And, significant costs can be avoided: for example, revitalization may help people live within the community in which they work, reducing long-distance commuting;
- funding strategies to achieve successful partnerships need to be as comprehensive as possible, and partnerships need to think about stretching dollars further, unlocking all existing resources, coinvesting, and leveraging; and
- how do we bring together independent partnerships that are functioning on parallel tracks while at the same time get beyond the problems of ownership and ego? Partnerships need a convener—a facilitator—to bring people together to share resources.

Panel 1 - Experience in Worcester

The first panel following the keynote address consisted of members of the Worcester community and included:

- Ron Charette, Executive Director, South Worcester Neighborhood Improvement Corporation (SWNIC)
- Jack Foley, Vice President for Government and Community Affairs and Campus Services, Clark University

Charette opened the panel with an interesting example highlighting the potential of partnerships with financial institutions. Charette explained that the Worcester city government created a south Worcester management plan to address the economic and social issues facing the neighborhood,

including dilapidated housing and vacant lots. To build housing, the city and community needed to borrow. Holy Cross, a member of the South Worcester community, found a financial partner, TD BankNorth, and together they supported the project through funds and a favorable interest rate. The project helped residents and institutions think strategically for additional ways to stretch resources.

Jack Foley described the evolution of a partnership between Clark University and SEEDCO in the 1980s. Clark's president at the time, Richard Traina, recognized the importance of revitalizing the distressed community around the university and offered \$47,000 of initial funding for the partnership. According to Foley, over the course of 20 years, this sum has been leveraged to create resources worth over \$100 million. In this case, the university provided credibility and acted as a catalyst for new investment. After Clark's initial investment, banks began to invest, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development came through with a \$2 million grant, and local foundations and corporations also contributed.

Panel 2 - National and Regional Models

The second panel, focusing on national trends, included the following panelists:

- Burt Sonnenstein, Chief Financial Officer, Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Rick Greenberg, Executive Vice President, Marga, Inc.
- Anna Steiger, Senior Research Associate, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

The second panel discussion centered on factors that are important to national funders. According to both Sonnenstein and Steiger, there is a movement toward the use of indicators to target resources to where they are most needed and to measure impact. The Annie E. Casey Foundation

There are seven or eight critical factors in university-community partnerships, but by far the biggest challenge is sustainability.

-Burt Sonnenstein, CFO
Annie E. Casey Foundation

uses indicators to compare conditions between low-income neighborhoods and the rest of a city. These differences then drive programs and help the foundation assess its progress. Thus it is important for university-community partnerships to document and quantify their successes. Sonnenstein added that foundations need to rethink certain strategies. Historically, they have been more interested in supporting programs and less interested in providing operational support or capacity building, two important issues for budding university-community and multi-institutional partnerships. Building on

the theme of mutual benefit, Steiger also discussed the ways in which partnerships can tap into the self-interest of financial institutions by providing opportunities to comply with the Community Reinvestment Act and by fostering financial literacy and education. However, it may take work on the part of institutions to identify what the local financial institutions care about most.

Session 3: The University as Urban Developer

Held at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, October 5, 2006

Keynote Address: David Perry, Director, Great Cities Institute, University of Illinois-Chicago, and Wim Wiewel, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Baltimore

The third and final conference focused on the role institutions of higher education can play in the bricks-and-mortar development of cities and how development activities can transform and revitalize communities. Keynote speakers David Perry and Wim Wiewel focused on the changes that

are taking place in attitudes of academic institutions regarding their role in economic development, as well as the ways in which universities can become successful urban developers.

Perry started the discussion with his thoughts on the movement from the campus as an “academic community” to the “urban institution”:

“Universities have to be good developers if they want to be good landowners. A campus can’t be just a campus anymore; it has to be much more. The design of a campus should weave in the retail area of a city, like the University of Washington in Tacoma, Washington. The campus master plan became a part of the city’s overall master plan.”

Colleges and universities have become forces for economic development and, through targeted, well-planned urban development initiatives they have proved that they can make a direct impact on the revival of communities. Some of Perry’s other conclusions are:

- colleges and universities are no longer simply in a city, but rather of the city; they serve as an engine and driver of contemporary urban development;
- the very meaning of a campus is becoming blurred;
- real estate practices are key components of the fiscal and programmatic future of higher education; and
- universities are embedding themselves more fully in the land economy of the city.

Wim Wiwel’s presentation highlighted key reasons a university may choose to become involved in urban development. Wiwel mentioned the university’s need to expand geographically, to improve the neighborhood, and to generate income from operations. He believes that the process of real estate development takes the following:

- leadership;
- strong internal structure, including internal capabilities, capacity, and expertise;
- partners both in the community and in the private sector (private developers);
- community relationships and political capital;
- patience (it’s a “long and winding road”); and
- financing.

Wiwel also discussed the “knowledge economy,” a term that describes the way in which universities stimulate their regions’ economic development. A city with a strong knowledge economy attracts smart people and creates opportunities for them to develop and apply what they know. Universities help by attracting students and faculty and offering opportunities for research. According to Wiwel, city planners need to begin planning more systematically with these institutions because many higher education institutions have become a large part of the urban economy and have resources. Wiwel also lamented the fact that there is not an obvious exit strategy for universities engaged in development projects. The lack of one makes having the right ingredients even more important.

There should be a staffer in city government who deals full-time with higher education.

*-Wim Wiwel, Senior VP for Academic Affairs
University of Baltimore*

Special Session: The New Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Campus in Downtown Worcester

Following the keynote speakers, Charles F. Monahan, Jr., president of Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS), talked about the school's new campus in downtown Worcester. When MCPHS, which enrolls 3,400 students, found itself at capacity on its Boston campus, it began looking for expansion sites. Monahan says MCPHS targeted Worcester because the city is rich in biotech facilities, hospitals, and universities. The college bought two buildings in downtown Worcester, and then another four, making a total investment of \$50 million. Because the City of Worcester provided strong support for the project, the construction was completed in nine months. On this point Monahan remarked, "When you have the community behind you, it really makes a big difference."

Panel Discussion—Gateway Park at WPI, A Model for Public-Private Investment

The afternoon panel discussed the development of Gateway Park, a new industrial complex aimed at increasing the city's competitiveness in life sciences and bioengineering. It will bring housing and office, retail, and lab space to a former brownfield. Panelists included the following:

- Dennis Berkey, President, Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI)
- D'Anne Hurd, Vice President for Business Development at Gateway Park
- Craig Blais, Vice President, Worcester Business Development Corporation (WBDC)
- Kevin O'Sullivan, President, Massachusetts Biomedical Initiatives (MBI)
- Ed Augustus, Massachusetts State Senator

Berkey opened the panel with a description of Gateway Park as an urban development created through a public-private partnership:

"Locating our life sciences and bioengineering research and graduate programs in state-of-the-art facilities will bring an important scientific core to this development, which will enrich WPI's educational efforts and attract potential collaborators to the site, both academic and corporate. This partnership means the jobs of the future, the discoveries of the future, and the industries of the future have a home here in central Massachusetts. [The park] will play an important role in the economic, cultural, and social development of the city and region."

According to Blais, the most important factor was getting all of the pieces of the puzzle organized. The first step was to garner the support of the city council and the assistance of city leadership in putting together the deal. From the start, the partnership had a clear vision and was able to attract partners with previous experience in successful initiatives. O'Sullivan stated that his company's main problem is talent retention and that both the condition of the local community and the cost of housing affect retention dramatically. As he sees it, the one goal of the park is to keep people and firms in the city and state so that the value of investments can be retained.

Summary of the Speaker Series

The Worcester UniverCity Partnership and NERCHE engaged Marga, Inc., a consulting firm advising partnerships and philanthropic organizations, to assist with the planning and administration of the speaker series. Drawing on its previous consulting work, Marga provided the organizers with

a short list of critical ingredients for successful multi-institutional partnerships, some of which were worked into the structure of the speaker series:

1. *A community convener* that can lend its name to the initiative, bringing instant credibility and, with it, greater access to funding and other resources
2. *Community representation* to ensure that the community participates in decision making
3. *Signs of success* that will build momentum and buy-in even at early stages
4. *Support at the institutional level* so that the work of the partnership appeals to an institution's broader mission
5. *Funding*
6. *Strong facilitation* to ensure community stakeholders remain at the table and that the partnership continues to move forward and make progress

The conference speakers provided several lessons learned for university-community partnerships in general and Worcester partnerships in specific. For example, several people highlighted the need for strong, visionary leaders at both the institutional and community levels. Without leadership, efforts can become fragmented and unsustainable over the long term. In addition to top-level leadership, every partnership needs mid- and lower-level contributors who can operationalize the vision, interpret needs, gather critical resources, and create links among organizations.

Speakers also emphasized the importance of organic development of partnerships and periodic reflection. The series itself provided an opportunity for Worcester partnerships to reflect on their work and opportunities for the future. This is essential both to reinforce positive experiences and to highlight the limitations of an existing strategy. Successful partnerships build upon a history of engagement between neighborhood leaders and institutional leaders. New and exciting partnerships can grow naturally out of existing networks.

Finally, speakers pointed to the need to identify mutually beneficial opportunities for institutions. For example, universities need to put institutional resources on the table to show commitment and to attract additional resources, but they should have well developed ideas about how the institution can benefit from collaboration, if partnerships are to be sustainable.

The 2006 Worcester Speaker Series also highlighted how far Worcester has come with this work. First, the city and its institutions have recognized the importance of partnerships in economic development. Second, Worcester has identified mutually beneficial opportunities for both the community and the institutions involved (for example, Gateway Park and the South Worcester work). Third, existing partnerships have begun to successfully engage residents and neighborhood groups, increasing buy-in and ownership.

Yet, as the series also highlighted, with opportunity comes challenges. Institutions will increasingly be asked to demonstrate their impact through indicators and assessment in order to attract additional funding and support. Worcester may have to undertake an extensive evaluation of how its partnerships have affected the city, creating benchmarks that can be used to show future progress. Partnerships will also face challenges in terms of expansion. Speakers from the series emphasized the need to leverage new sources of funding, but this will require institutions to show: 1) credibility and demonstrated results, 2) concrete action plans that involve the commitment of a variety of institutions, and 3) demonstrable returns on investment, both financial and social. A clear development plan and collaboration on the part of government, institutions of higher learning, businesses, and other entities will help to expand and sustain projects in the long run.

In addition, successful partnerships need to achieve and maintain a certain level of flexibility that will allow them to learn from mistakes and adapt. This will become more challenging as more partners and funders come to the table. Finally, Worcester will continue to face the issue of finding points of alignment among active partners. This speaks to the importance of strong facilitation throughout the life of the partnerships.

Next Steps

The 2006 Worcester Speaker Series provided a venue for campus-community partnerships to reflect upon the work accomplished, highlight future opportunities, and build buy-in and commitment on the part of participating institutions. The first, next step for the Worcester UniverCity Partnership will be to help institutions make use of the knowledge from the speaker series to draw up an action plan for strengthening the impact of university-community partnerships in the city.

The Partnership has identified several objectives for itself as it moves forward in this capacity:

- determine what would constitute short- and long-term success in Worcester;
- determine the Partnership's short- and long-term goals and objectives;
- assess other economic development models for application in Worcester;
- describe specific successes and failures to date and document lessons learned;
- identify steps to sustainability (nonprofit status, grant applications, etc.);
- identify the administrative and facilitative support needed to meet the Partnership's stated goals and objectives;
- identify the kinds of resources needed to enable the Partnership to meet its short- and long-term objectives; and
- determine if important partners are missing from the table and include them in future activities.

On this last point, the Partnership has identified the necessity of strengthening the buy-in of additional community stakeholders. Empowering residents to participate and take leadership in the process of economic development will be vital. Two strategies that can help do this include creating a neighborhood leadership academy at institutions of higher learning to train residents to serve on city boards and having members of the colleges or universities involved in community activities. As economic development creates new jobs, better public safety, and a better quality of life, it will be easier to convince residents of the need and value of university-community partnerships and increase trust in local institutions of higher learning.

As Worcester has discovered, university-community partnerships have enormous potential, and opportunities to leverage resources and relationships exist in many places. Below is a list of just some of the opportunities that the Partnership has identified:

- the involvement of partners like the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and the Annie E. Casey Foundation lends credibility to the efforts and may help the attract additional resources;
- the Community Reinvestment Act, which requires that financial institutions make investments in community development, has yet to be leveraged to a great degree;
- student-led efforts are working at a neighborhood level but could benefit from greater coordination among institutions and across Worcester;

- the inclusion of a *community engagement* classification code in the Carnegie Foundation's Carnegie Classification system may help attract additional resources from foundations³; and
- there has not yet been a coordinated campaign to attract support for economic development from the alumni of local colleges and universities.

As Worcester institutions heard in the first session of the speaker series, there has been an explosion of university-community partnerships across the nation. And there are several institutions of higher learning that serve as national models; for example, the University of Pennsylvania's example of incorporating community engagement into all aspects of university administration and the University of Illinois-Champaign's emphasis on resident leadership and local capacity-building. The city of Worcester, too, is a national model in its choice to invest resources into a formal multi-institutional partnership, the Worcester UniverCity Partnership, to act as a facilitator for the various partnerships around the city. As the city and Partnership move forward, they will likely continue to be a model for how partnerships grow and mature over time, as well as the types of impact that are possible through well-coordinated, intentional partnerships.

³ In 2006, the Carnegie Foundation's *Carnegie Classification*, a categorization system established to aid in the design of research studies of higher education, included a classification code for community development called *community engagement*. Interested institutions undertake a rigorous application and review process and, if successful, are granted with a ranking in community partnership.