

Conference on Campus-Community Art Connections
And the Creative Economy in Upstate New York
Cornell University
Museum of the Earth, Ithaca, N.Y.
9:30 a.m., May 3, 2005

Collaborations on the Creative “Campus”

By Nancy Cantor
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The arts and higher education, as a report by the American Assembly¹ noted last year, are “two powerful, historically embedded, endlessly re-invented sectors in American life. They coincide in the society as major arenas for education, experience and building knowledge. They coincide as major nonprofit actors in American life; they coincide as builders, as makers, as shapers of society’s values. They live together on campuses and in communities.”

“The real wonder,” the Assembly participants observed, “is that higher education and the arts have persisted, in parallel and in partnership, all these years, in so many places, without articulating their relationship or taking full advantage of it.”

Even the Assembly only had time to explore three areas of this partnership, the “sustaining, training, and presenting of the performing arts” in American colleges and universities, which it described as “the greatest patrons of the arts in the United States.”

“Without colleges and universities,” and I quote from the report, “artists would have fewer places to perform, fewer opportunities for

¹ 104th American Assembly on “The Creative Campus: The Training, Sustaining, and Presenting of the Performing Arts in American Higher Education” convened at Arden House in Harriman, New York, March 11-13, 2004
http://www.americanassembly.org/programs.dir/prog_display_ind_pg.php?this_filename_prefix=CCAMPUS&this_ind_prog_pg_filename=report

employment, and greatly curtailed ways to engage their audiences. If the academy did not support the arts, the activity of entire performance forms—dance, theater, music, and others—would wither or would be available only to those in areas of the country with the wealth and density to support them. Without their home in higher education, the performing arts could not live.”

The arts have reciprocated for universities by contributing in profound ways to the academy’s missions of teaching, research, and engagement with communities. The arts help higher education create the contexts of exchange between people and ideas that are necessary to tackle some of society’s most intractable problems, starting with the affirmation of difference and the embracing of inter-group dialogue.

When we consider the goals of a liberal education, I believe that students need to be both playful and responsible²—in other words, bold enough, at this stage of their lives, to experiment with ideas, attitudes, and possible truths about the world—to experience creativity – and responsible in their recognition of contemporary realities facing the diverse communities in which they can live and work productively.

The arts can play a central role in this work, this cultivation. If we in higher education care about making our students both creative and resilient, the arts should be at the core of our educational mission, the medium as well as the object of exchange.

In other words, the arts play a very broad and significant role for universities in both our discovery and educational missions, and the American Assembly report underlined these contributions. But participants in the conference—which was co-chaired by Lee Bollinger, the president of Columbia University, and me—were the first to agree that their work represented only a promising beginning for discussions on the synergy between higher education and the performing arts and—I would argue—the arts, defined more broadly as expressive culture.

And although I would urge participants in this conference to read the American Assembly report³ and consider the applicability of its

² Cantor, N. and Schomberg, S., “What We Want Students to Learn: Cultivating Playfulness and Responsibility in Liberal Education,” *Change*, vol. 34, no 6 (2002) 47-49.

³http://www.americanassembly.org/programs.dir/report_file.dir/CCAMPUS_report_report_file_C_Campus.pdf.pdf

recommendations, there is much work to be done, especially as we focus in on the collaborations between campuses and communities in the arts.

I think the Cornell project, *Re-Thinking Upstate Economic Development: A Creative Economy Model*, is exactly positioned to explore the cultural resources in the region and their potential to make the 53 counties outside of the New York City Metropolitan Area attractive to skilled professionals and to revitalize the region's cities as beautiful, interesting, and exciting places to live and work.

A year ago, the economic geographer Susan Christopherson, professor in the Department of City and Regional Planning and co-director (with Suzanne Loker⁴) of the Cornell Project, wrote that “all over the United States there is a buzz about the creative economy. Careful integration of knowledge worksites into the urban fabric can reinvigorate urban neighborhoods and downtowns.”⁵

So I am delighted that we have gathered together to network and to focus on the roles of colleges and universities in this effort and to ask each other “Should we do this?” and “How?”

Cornell's ongoing work already shows there's much to do. I was particularly struck by the findings of a telephone survey, taken in the summer of 2004, of administrative officials and faculty at 38 upstate New York colleges and universities.

Few of the respondents said that their colleges or universities had funds dedicated to community/campus artistic collaboration. It depended, in many cases, on the entrepreneurial skills of the group sponsoring the event.

When asked what resources they provided to encourage collaboration, most cited rehearsal and performance space made available to community groups, usually for long-established collaborations with performing arts

⁴ Suzanne Loker is professor in the Department of Textiles and Apparel and J. Thomas Clark Professor of Entrepreneurship and Personal Enterprise, Cornell University

⁵ Christopherson, Susan, “Creative Economy Strategies for Small and Medium Size Cities: Options for New York State,” Cornell University, *New York Creative Economy Progress Report*, (20 July 2004) <http://www.nycreativeeconomy.cornell.edu/reports/arts.mgi>

organizations, for programs or events planned well in advance, and for events that did not conflict with faculty or student use of this space.⁶

Today, as we continue our conversation about a host of new possibilities in a creative economy—and what our roles might be—I’ll focus on how those we might call “culture workers”—those who are engaged in the arts in universities and in communities—can partner to benefit both the “creative campus” and the vibrancy and prosperity of our communities.

The Arts and Campus/Community Collaboration

One way to see the particularly important and constructive role the arts can play in nurturing collaborations between institutions of higher education and our communities is to consider the expansive and inclusive nature of the arts as a medium of conversation.

There are few media of exchange in which it is so easy for participants from different disciplines, sectors, and roles to come together in conversation—the arts provide one very compelling avenue of collaboration/conversation, bridging campus and community in extraordinary ways. Let me illustrate with one example.

Last week, I took part in an evening of performances in the chapel on our campus called “Friends of Franklin School.” This was a fundraising event to benefit a Syracuse city school, once an arts magnet school, which has lost its arts funding but persists in its commitments to engaging inner city children in the arts.

The event was multi-generational—as many artistic conversations turn out to be—drawing together individual and group performers from the elementary school, Syracuse University, and the local community. The performances by children, college students, and community residents, ranged from musical theater to Cuban drumming, from ballet to Salsa dancing, demonstrating both the universality and the cultural specificity of the artistic conversation.

⁶ Susan Monagan, master’s degree student, Program on Community Development, conducted the survey. <http://www.nycreativeeconomy.cornell.edu/reports/arts.mgi>

Each performance had a power to draw us all into the minds and experiences of others living strikingly different lives, in ways that simply don't happen routinely. Every performer had standing in the conversations that night. Some of the "conversations" were tough, but they threatened no one. Differences were affirmed, and solidarity was built. And, as the principal of the school said to me, you have no idea how these arts engagements have "tamed" *and* "empowered" these young students, especially, he said, the most "at-risk" students. Actually, I do think I know, for that is what lies at the heart of the artistic conversation—it is disciplined and freeing all at once.

"Conversations" such as the ones that took place that night can serve as springboards for the kinds of sustained campus-community collaborations in the arts we all most want. And judging from the two-way enthusiasm between the faculty and students of Syracuse University and the Franklin School—based on a collaboration that has been sustained for several years in the face of funding cuts—it seems that these conversations can be extremely productive for all concerned.

Indeed, here in New York state and across the nation there is growing interest in creative collaborations between colleges and universities and local communities. Nationally, there are a host of admirable collaborations in the arts with community: The University of Pennsylvania's Community Arts Partnerships with West Philadelphia includes artists in residence in local public schools; the University of Michigan's Arts of Citizenship Program does collaborative projects in Ann Arbor and Detroit, and Michigan is opening soon a center for design at Orchestra Place in downtown Detroit; the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin and the River City Youth Foundation offer a program called "Art Builds Community" to youth in Southeast Austin; Auburn University's Rural Studio sends students to live in rural Alabama and do design/build projects in communities; and Brown University's Swearer Center for Public Service runs a program called Space in Prison for the Arts and Creative Expression (SPACE)—to name only a very few of the many thriving campus-community creative collaborations.

However, I also believe that we should not enter this territory lightly. Sustaining these productive artistic collaborations requires shared understandings and long-term commitments on all parts. So it is helpful to reflect for a moment on the assumptions about universities and communities

and the benefits of collaborations that would make it worthwhile to work together in the arts.

Universities as Public Goods

At the core of this approach is a particular vision—one that I strongly endorse—of universities and their role as public goods, connected in very rich ways to the world beyond the campus.

As Richard Sennett has observed, a city is more than a place to live, shop, or play. It is a place that “implicates the way in which people derive their ethics, how one develops a sense of justice, and, most of all, how we talk with and learn from people who are unlike ourselves—which is how a human being becomes human.”⁷

Even the term “public,” as Sennett points out, comes from the ancient Greek word for “making a city,” and this connotes more than bringing people together functionally. It means bringing together in the same place people who need each other functionally but worship different household gods. So the question that arises is: How do differing people find a way to use the word “we”?⁸

Great universities, even private ones, cannot be ivory towers, for we arise out of and must exist within a public sphere of responsibility. This intimate relationship between the university and society provides us our very identity and informs everything we do—not just what can be labeled as our “service mission.”

Steve Schomberg and I wrote that universities⁹ need to remain poised between the monastery and the marketplace—making investments in our creative infrastructure to allow long-term reflection and experimentation with ideas (the monastic side), but also pointing ourselves toward the marketplace of ideas full of the pressing concerns of the day and the many voices pushing them.

⁷ Sennett, Richard, “The ‘Civitas’ of Seeing,” *The Mayors’ Institute: Excellence in City Design*, (Washington, D.C.: National Endowment for the Arts, 2002) 47.

⁸ *Ibid.* 47-48.

⁹ Cantor, N. & Schomberg, S., “Poised Between Two worlds: The University as Monastery and Marketplace,” *EDUCAUSE Review* vol. 38, no. 2 (March/April 2003) 12-21.

Derek Bok¹⁰ has written about fears that universities will be overridden by those marketplace pressures—warning of the dangers of admitting the marketplace to the monastery. Stanley Fish advises universities to stay in the monastery and “look to the practices in our own shop, narrowly conceived, before we set out to alter the entire world by forming moral character, or fashioning democratic citizens, or combating globalization, or embracing globalization, or anything else.”¹¹

By the same token, I fear that without a vibrant engagement with the world, institutions of higher education would become stale. Excellence depends on openness and a vibrant exchange of people and ideas. Preparing future citizens is part of that excellence.

The kinds of connections between campus and community of which we are speaking today can enliven the discourse and discovery on our campuses, in our communities, and in the “third space” that is created in such partnerships.

At Syracuse, for example, we believe that our great strength as a university is based on scholarship in action—in which faculty and students learn, discover, and create through deep engagement with practitioners and the world. This is true for a range of fields and expertise in our university—from artists and architects to journalists to engineers and earth scientists to experts in information studies, entrepreneurship, or public administration and global affairs. It is also true for some of our best traditions in the core humanities—for example, in religion, ethics, and philosophy.

Our excellence is connected to ideas, problems, and professions in the world, and we seek to be a university where excellence is tested in the “marketplace.” We believe that education for citizenship in our challenged world—for students, faculty, and community—requires working on creative collaborations and inter-cultural discourse in which one fine-tunes the ability to have empathy of mind, to think globally, and to act locally.

¹⁰ Bok, Derek, *Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).

¹¹ Fish, Stanley, “Why We Built the Ivory Tower,” *The New York Times* (May 21, 2004,) A23.

In the American Assembly, Barbara White, a composer at Princeton, referred to the goal of creating “experience-oriented imaginative space”¹² for learning and discovery on campus and off. We’re calling this the “creative campus,” the one that will have no boundaries.

Therefore, we begin by assuming the fundamental interdependence of campus and community/city—both will get better if they are intertwined and so will life in the region. Viewed in such a light, the region’s “social capital”—that is, the networks of experts who trust each other—can mobilize quickly to take advantages of opportunities for innovation and to address pressing issues as they arise.

The Creative Campus and Partnerships in the Arts

Now let’s turn specifically to campus-community collaborations and investments in the arts, broadly defined. I believe that if we create sustainable, reciprocally defined partnerships in the arts, there will be benefits for all.

For example, the city of Syracuse, despite its substantial economic and social challenges, is home to an extraordinary arts community. By creating an overlay of academic programs within the existing city fabric we can generate countless opportunities. It makes all kinds of sense academically—our students will learn from those already “walking the walk,” and our faculty will forge new collaborations. Just as important, this activity will inject more energy, more creative capital, into the existing downtown community.

This is important because, as we all know, success builds upon success. Just consider, for example, what has happened in Paducah, Kentucky—a city halfway between St. Louis and Nashville. In August of 2000, a group of Paducah residents started a program to attract artists from all over to relocate to Lower Town, a historic district close to downtown. The program offered incentives ranging from low-interest loans, free lots for construction, group-rate health insurance, Web sites, and help with marketing and advertising. So far, they’ve attracted 45 artists who wanted

¹² White, Barbara, 104th American Assembly on “The Creative Campus: The Training, Sustaining, and Presenting of the Performing Arts in American Higher Education” convened at Arden House in Harriman, New York (March 11-13, 2004) 3.

the cultural atmosphere of a city without the costs, and Paducah now has a thriving cultural community and an economic outlook to match.

I tell you about Paducah because we recently invited two of the people behind its “artist relocation program” to come to Syracuse and explore with us our potential. The bottom line is that they were incredibly impressed by the arts infrastructure that we have in place and by plans for more to come.

Syracuse’s Creative Campus Strategy

Speaking of more to come, let me now describe in a bit more detail our particular strategy of building the creative campus through investments in the arts, downtown and on campus, and in partnerships between the University and the arts infrastructure of Syracuse. (As an aside, I should say that the arts are only one of the arenas, albeit a critical one, in which we are building the creative campus through campus-community collaboration.)

Setting The Context

Syracuse University is located on the crest of a hill on 50 acres of former farmland. It is approximately a mile and a half east of the downtown heart of the City of Syracuse and shares the University Hill area with several large hospitals and the campuses of SUNY Upstate Medical University and the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Progressing north down the hill, half a mile from our main campus, is East Genesee Street, the home of many of the University’s performance and drama programs housed in the Syracuse Stage complex.

This area is now also home to several newly remodeled hotels in Syracuse and is not far from the future downtown headquarters of the Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems (a multi-institution campus-industry collaboration and home to a test-bed for innovation on indoor environmental quality).

Continuing west down East Genesee Street you arrive at the heart of the City of Syracuse—both City Hall and Clinton Square were once located on the bustling Erie Canal, which intersected the city before it was filled in.

To the south of city center is the historic Armory Square district—the location of our new Warehouse, and an area in which there has been considerable private sector investment of late in retail and restaurants in close proximity to most of the City’s large museums and performance venues—the Everson Museum, the Civic Center (home of the Syracuse Symphony and Syracuse Opera), the Landmark Theatre and the Museum of Science and Technology.

Radiating south and west of the Warehouse are the south side and southwest neighborhoods punctuated with a combination of residential, factory, and mixed-use facilities as well as neighborhood churches and community centers and not-for-profit organizations. These neighborhoods are the focus of active community revitalization efforts by their residents.

Strategic Investments

What is our strategy for building the creative campus through the arts?

First, we are working to establish both a physical and a programmatic presence in the downtown, doing it in a disciplined way that plays to our substantive scholarly and educational strengths and interests. We are focusing on areas of exciting growth, often where there are interdisciplinary links. These are areas where the faculty are excited and students have ambitions and where they can collaborate with others: with nonprofit organizations; with other colleges and universities; with school districts; with community groups, cultural institutions, industry groups, and government at all levels. The notion here is that these are the kinds of projects that we can really sustain over the long haul because they are central to the interests of the campus and the community.

Second, since we see the creative campus as stretching up and down “the Hill,” we are careful to have a parallelism in investments on campus and in the downtown. The strategy is to invest simultaneously in programs and places on campus and in the downtown in ways that become intertwined, so as to create the “city as campus” and the “campus as city,” as our dean of architecture, Mark Robbins, likes to say, with people and projects crossing between them.

The signature here is to have a real physical presence downtown, in proximity to community partners, and at the same time to make parallel

investments in people and programs (and sometimes in new spaces) on campus in these same areas of activity.

Let me now provide some specific examples of these parallel investments in the creative campus.

The Warehouse

Our largest capital investment downtown is in the purchase and renovation of an old furniture company warehouse near the Armory Square district.

The Warehouse, which will be renovated under the direction of our architecture graduate, Richard Gluckman, contains 135,000 square feet of amazingly flexible space and is situated near the Museum of Science and Technology, the Landmark Theatre, the Delavan arts center, and The Redhouse, a new venue for the visual and performing arts. Starting next spring, the Warehouse will be the home for several years of our School of Architecture and will also house *Upstate: a center for design*, which will be a think-tank and consulting group focused on the rejuvenation of the Upstate region.

This building, which before renovation might just be the ugliest building in town, is set in a neighborhood that already has quite a lively mix of shops, restaurants, arts organizations, and night life. To that mix, we will add, in addition to Architecture, the Departments of Communications Design and Advertising Design from the College of Visual and Performing Arts, and a downtown home for our new Goldring Arts Journalism Program, all of which will be housed in the Warehouse. These programs represent areas of interdisciplinary investment and excitement on campus, and they “play well together.”

The Warehouse will also have many public spaces to cement our collaborations with downtown arts organizations and partners. The Cultural Resources Council, a group of artists’ organizations and individual artists, will have community incubator space. The Warehouse will contain a community gallery and auditorium (for use by The Redhouse and other groups) and a Teen Art Gallery as part of an arts education initiative in collaboration with the Everson Museum. We’ll also put a box office in the Warehouse for downtown sales of

tickets to events on campus, including athletic events and performances, and events in the city.

In the future, we hope that projects will radiate out from the Warehouse to other close-by cultural institutions such as the Syracuse Symphony and the Syracuse Opera, the Landmark Theatre, the Everson and MOST museums, and, perhaps, most importantly, to the neighborhood to the west of the Warehouse, where local churches are located and have organized groups with a passionate interest in education, social justice, community development, and better opportunities for children. Collaboration with the Syracuse City School District may make it possible to house arts education programs in schools in this area. And an artists' relocation project modeled on the Paducah experiment might well work in this area.

Parallel investment on campus. Turning next to our parallel investments on campus, in addition to building the relevant academic programs, we are redesigning signature space for a Center for the Public Humanities that will include collaborations with Cornell and the University of Rochester and will reach down the Hill and west to our Warehouse downtown.

The College of Visual and Performing Arts will also support the renowned artist Carrie Mae Weems as an artist-in-residence both on our campus and at the Southwest Community Center, which anchors the southwest corner of the area we hope to serve directly from our Warehouse downtown. The new Goldring Arts Journalism Program, a collaboration housed on campus in our Newhouse School of Public Communications and involving faculty from four colleges on campus (Arts & Sciences, Newhouse, Architecture, and Visual and Performing Arts) will also serve to cement the many ties between the work of the campus and the work downtown.

Together, with these considerable parallel investments on campus and in the heart of the city, we will nourish the creative campus for years to come. Most importantly, we will have an ability to sustain this presence, through the space downtown and on the Hill, while at the same time allowing for considerable evolution in the actual programs taking place downtown or on campus. For example, after a major renovation of Slocum Hall on campus, most of the School of

Architecture will return to their home on the Hill, freeing space in the Warehouse for new programs and people to venture downtown. Our strategy is to provide for a mix of sustainability and flexibility and we believe that the Warehouse will provide just such a venue.

East Genesee

While we renovate the Warehouse to serve as the downtown home of our art and design and communications programs, we are also expanding our presence in the performing and visual arts in the East Genesee area directly north of the campus and east of City Hall and Clinton Square.

To take advantage of the popularity of Syracuse Stage, we are leasing space nearby on East Genesee Street to house two other longstanding campus-community collaborations—the Paul Robeson Performing Arts Company and the Community Folk Art Center. We have also purchased several properties on the 900 block of East Genesee across the street from the Stage and the Robeson and Folk Art buildings, allowing us to provide more space for set design work and for music and drama practice facilities.

Parallel investment on campus. Once again, we are investing in these same programs on campus, with, for example, plans proceeding for a new Pan African Master's Program in the Department of African American Studies, which is the academic home of the Paul Robeson Company and the Community Folk Art Center.

South Side Neighborhood

We are also working to establish a satellite location for the Robeson Company and the Folk Art Center in the city's South Side—in a neighborhood where we are working with a very well-organized neighborhood association and the Gifford Foundation.

At the same time, we are sponsoring efforts to encourage start-ups on the South Side—called by its residents an “economic desert”—through the South Side Entrepreneurial Connect project, organized by The Falcone Center for Entrepreneurship of the Martin J. Whitman School of Management and supported by both the University and the

Gifford Foundation. These new entrepreneurial ventures will engage the vast creative talents of the South Side residents.

Also on the South Side, at the request of parents and grandparents in the neighborhood, Ed Russell, an assistant professor of advertising in the Newhouse School, and one of his classes have worked with local teenagers as clients to create billboards that will be beautiful and provide hope instead of focusing on crime. Lamar Outdoor Advertising gave us a low rate on the billboards, and Richard Rook, an executive with that company, gave the community the flexibility to postpone the billboards for a month when it turned out to be more difficult than anyone expected to choose from among many possible designs.

All of these South Side collaborations represent again the dual investment strategy of supporting people and programs that connect the University and the City—on campus, downtown and in the neighborhoods.

The Connective Corridor

A key part of our strategy is to face squarely the obstacles to sustaining our investment projects. For Syracuse University and Syracuse, a big obstacle is the physical and psychological distance between the University Hill, the downtown, and the neighborhoods. Not only does Interstate 81 separate the Hill area and the downtown in a very emphatic and noisy way, but the fears and mistrust between the University and the neighborhoods are also palpable. The Connective Corridor is both a symbolic and a physical attempt to address these obstacles head-on.

It will be a three-mile lighted pedestrian pathway and accompanying public shuttle bus circuit that will link Syracuse University to the arts institutions, entertainment venues and public spaces downtown. Syracuse Stage and the performing arts groups will anchor the east end, and the Warehouse will anchor the west.

It will be created through a combination of public and private funds. Congressman Jim Walsh secured the first public commitment, \$3.5 million allocated for the project in the 2005 federal highway

reauthorization bill passed March 9 by the House of Representatives. On March 21, William F. Edwards, president of Niagara Mohawk, a National Grid company, announced the first private pledge, \$1 million over the next two years from National Grid.

The streetscape of the Corridor would function as urban artwork, offering a unique combination of public art, signs identifying places of cultural and historical interest, and wireless Internet access along the way. In our city of hills, the relatively level surface of this route will make walking, running, and biking all very practical possibilities.

The proposed shuttle bus circuit would intersect with the existing bus system serving the University Hill, enabling our students to access the offerings of the Connective Corridor. We think the project will also benefit area hotels, community retail and specialty stores, and restaurants.

We are inviting nationally recognized and local design talent to compete for the design of the master plan, which will serve as a blueprint for the conceptual and physical framework of the overall project. Interdisciplinary teams of architects, landscape architects, and graphic and industrial designers will be asked to propose their vision for the corridor in the form of drawings and computer simulations. We will also ask for proposals for specific designs for bus shelters, benches, lighting standards, and future art commissions.

It is our hope and belief that as the Connective Corridor begins to move people up and down the Hill there will emerge a two-way street of exchange of people and ideas that will sprout new collaborations and more trust, changing not only the face of Syracuse but also its soul (if you will).

Campus and Community Culture Change

I began today with the notion that there is tremendous benefit to the creative campus and to the vibrancy of communities by joining forces in the arts. I also argued that making a real difference—on campus, in the community, and in between—requires sustained partnerships with

investments on both sides. I'll end by suggesting that this demands a culture change on both sides, or perhaps many culture changes.

As we pursue these creative campus collaborations we can learn much from those that have sustained their university-community partnerships through the ups and downs of funding, transitions in the economy, and changes in local leadership. For example, The Ford Foundation's Rural Community College Initiative, a 10-year-old partnership with community and tribal colleges and some of the nation's poorest rural communities in the Deep South, the Southwest, and the North Plains, has made substantial gains by realizing that people-in-relationships, not individual crusaders, are the engines of sustainable change and that "communities, institutions, and their citizens are best defined by their assets, strengths, and creative imagination, not their deficiencies and shortcomings." Change, they found, "is a verb, not a noun. It cannot be delivered overnight."¹³

In general, these kinds of programs and projects have tremendous pay-offs for universities and their cities or communities, as they keep an extraordinarily vibrant exchange of people and ideas going and generate new ideas and projects, even leading to the discovery of new methods and technologies as well as new disciplines.

They are often very attractive to a diverse group of participants, faculty, students, community partners, professional practitioners in the fields, not-for-profit organizations, and businesses. Furthermore, they are important in recruiting and retaining a diverse community of scholars who see themselves as critically connected to both a rich cultural legacy and to the extraordinarily challenged multicultural communities next to which our institutions often stand cheek by jowl.

However, they tax the resources of most faculties precisely because they are typically interdisciplinary, involve campus/community collaborative work, and require sustainable commitments, often without enormous financial support. Therefore, just as I would argue that it is critical that we open the gates of the ivory tower academy and engage with the world, so, too, would I argue that we need new systems of structuring faculty life,

¹³ Rural Community College Initiative, *Revitalizing Rural Communities: Lessons from the Rural Community College Initiative* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: MDC Inc., 2003) 1.
<http://www.mdcinc.org/pdfs/rccilessons.pdf>

especially as we become more diverse, more interdisciplinary, more collaborative with communities, and more committed to teaching and discovery work that is tested in the public marketplace arena.

To share our knowledge generously in a knowledge economy, we must find ways to stretch our traditions and to support our “culture workers.” Mentoring, financial support, and public engagement sabbaticals are important, but a key focus should also be given to the incentives and disincentives for this kind of work in our tenure and promotion evaluation process and criteria.

The current tenure and promotion system can exact a high price—costly to communities that aren’t getting access to educational partners, costly to students because opportunities for significant public work often are not available through the curriculum, and costly to faculty scholars who can’t claim community-based intellectual work in a way that counts at tenure time.

If we alter the tenure process to accommodate public scholarship, communities and universities both will benefit. But this won’t be easily accomplished. For example, existing tenure clock calendars may need some modifications, and perfecting the evaluation of interdisciplinary work will surely be a high priority. We may need in some cases to give tenure-granting rights to interdisciplinary programs. We’ll likely need to shape many different portfolios of faculty roles, akin to some of the professors of practice that have become popular or the joint appointments between campuses and cultural institutions. However, we need to be firm about these as tenure-track positions, so we don’t create a second class of faculty and devalue this kind of public scholarship in the process. We’ll need to recognize that this kind of work often makes it hard to quantify individual scholars’ and teachers’ contributions (independent of the collaboration), and hard to divide out what is teaching and what is scholarship.

Most challenging, but also rewarding, would be to devise new measures of excellence that reflect these complexities of public scholarship and yet also hold it to the same high standards as we assume for more traditional discovery work. As Julie Ellison, director of the Imagining

America consortium, points out, by doing this examination we will sharpen our standards for this kind of work and the work itself will get better!¹⁴

By the same token, there is also much culture change to be done on the “community” side of the street. For example, it is our experience that these collaborations require multiple partners to pool resources and share—rather than articulate—“turf.” This is true in terms of consortia of public-private support and also in terms of sharing space and sharing projects.

In Syracuse, for example, we believe that the best thing that could happen from our downtown presence in the Warehouse, on East Genesee, in the South Side, and through the Connective Corridor would be that many arts institutions, nonprofits and neighborhood associations worked together (with us and each other) on everything from arts business start-ups to audience cultivation for existing institutions to cultural production and educational initiatives in the neighborhoods.

If we did this, our rich arts infrastructure in Syracuse might be further stabilized and spread into the neighborhoods, networks of social capital in the arts would be energized, and innovation doubtless would follow.

As this happens, the full promise of campus-community collaboration in the arts would begin to be realized, to the benefit of the University, the City, and, with success, the surrounding very challenged neighborhoods. When creativity knows no boundaries, we will feel that things have truly “taken off.”

¹⁴ Ellison, Julie, “Director’s Column,” *Imagining America Newsletter* (Summer, 2004) 1.
<http://www.ia.umich.edu/documents/04su.no5.ia-newsletter.pdf>