AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR ANNUAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

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DRURY UNIVERSITY: AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR ANNUAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

THE DRURY VISION

The Drury University vision states that “Drury will be a premier university where the finest teacher/scholars and professional staff educate students to become engaged, ethical and compassionate citizens for servant leadership in communities characterized by change, complexity and global interdependence.” This is achieved in a variety of ways at the curricular and the co-curricular levels.

As part of our new core curriculum, “The Drury Core: Engaging Our World,” all students complete two engaged learning experiences where they are involved in immersion-learning that takes students outside the traditional classroom. The engaged learning experiences give students opportunities that are memorable, challenging, personally meaningful and complex—all factors that are predictive of deep learning. Many of the engaged learning opportunities respond to students’ energy and their strong desire to serve others.

Service is part of Drury’s DNA, with students learning about engaged learning and volunteer opportunities during New Student Orientation, before they even step foot into the formal classroom. We work with a wide range of partners, including the NAACP, Isabel’s House, Ozarks Food Harvest, The Kitchen, Ozark Greenways, and many others to have a positive impact upon poverty, diversity, community development, international education, arts and culture, and wellness. Drury students are designing buildings, serving as mentors, organizing blood and food drives, performing Shakespeare, and assisting the elderly.

When communities and universities collaborate to solve shared problems, we all win. Our reciprocal community partnerships bring Drury and the community closer together. For both students and faculty, engaged learning is an emerging kind of learning experience, where students gain valuable leadership and learning experiences, and along the way, they connect with opportunities to belong and make a positive difference. Best of all, they emerge as better learners, better citizens, and better people, more fully aware of their capacity and responsibility to leave this world a better place than they found it.

In 2013, the Association of American Colleges and Universities published a report titled, “It Takes More Than A

Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success.” Drawing on data from 318 employers, the report offers compelling findings:

97% of employers would like higher education to maintain their current level of emphasis in civic knowledge, civic participation, and community engagement, with 30% actually calling for heightened emphasis in this area.

52% stated that “interest in giving back to the communities in which our company is located or those that it serves” was an important skill for their employees to have.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers 2014 Job Outlook survey asked participants to rate job seekers’ skills/qualities on a 5-point scale, with 5 being “extremely important.” At the top of the list was “ability to work in a team structure,” with a 4.55 weighted average rating.

As our community seeks to address concerns about student preparedness for the workforce, it is clear that graduating students who have acquired skills in leadership, citizenship, teamwork and global issues through service will be part of the solution.

IN 2015, as part of our commitment to the betterment of Southwest Missouri, Drury will begin publishing an annual report on its community engagement activities. In doing so, we hope to spark discussion about new service opportunities and relationships that can be forged to empower our students to use their talents and gifts to truly make a difference.

Peter Meidlinger
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

Courtney Swan
Director of Community Outreach and Leadership Development
The following two case studies are representative of the engagement efforts on which we will be reporting annually.
The Center for Community Studies is the interdisciplinary research and academic outreach component of the Hammons School of Architecture. The mission of the center is: To assist the regional community in exploring and promoting innovative planning, design and development practices that respond to the challenges of our contemporary and future society, and foster a healthier and sustainable habitat for our global community. The establishment of the Center for Community Studies formalizes and broadens the community studio initiatives that have been a part of the Hammons School of Architecture for the past 29 years.

A SOURCE FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH:
These collaborative projects are designed to benefit the community while providing educational experiences for students.

VALUE TO THE COMMUNITIES:
During the past 13 years, approximately 450 students have gone through the Center for Community Studies’ Community Studio. This translates to roughly 135,000 student hours contributed. Based on minimum wage, this equals a benefit to the communities in Missouri of $978,750. Calculated at an intern architect rate of $60 per hour that equates to a benefit of $8,100,000.

Another way to assess the benefit to the communities served is to look at the monies the communities received because of the visioning assistance from the Center for Community Studies. This is harder to calculate completely, but an indication can be determined by looking at five communities:

The five D.R.E.A.M. Initiative Designated Communities will ultimately receive $3-5 million each from the State of Missouri. Therefore, the $254,210 the Center for Community Studies received has the potential to generate $15-25 million worth of design, planning and construction services in these five communities alone.

In addition, over the past 13 years the Center for Community Studies has:
> Completed 57 community projects
> Served 36 communities
> Served 20 counties in Missouri

FOR QUESTIONS REGARDING THE CENTER
FOR COMMUNITY STUDIES, PLEASE CONTACT PROFESSOR JAY GARROTT (417) 873-7371 OR JGARROTT@DRURY.EDU.
Enactus is a global non-profit organization active on more than 1,600 college campuses in more than 30 countries and territories. Enactus works with leaders in business and higher education to mobilize university students to make a difference in their communities while developing the skills to become socially responsible professionals.

Drury’s Enactus team (formerly known as SIFE) has qualified for the national competition 16 years in a row. They won the SIFE National Exposition three times (2001, 2003, 2005) and went on to win the SIFE World Cup in 2001 and 2003. In the past year, the team completed ten projects; one of these is called Art Inspired.

Art Inspired began as a partnership between Drury Enactus and Abilities First, a non-profit in Springfield that serves individuals with disabilities. The store was conceived and launched in 2012 as an employment opportunity for impaired individuals who had struggled to find stable employment, and it currently employs nine individuals who have gained skills in production, retail and bookkeeping.

Since the opening, the team has developed new product categories, led marketing initiatives in connection with Art Walk, and begun an educational outreach program for elementary and high school students. This year, the team is developing a training program for retail associates, as well as an internship program for high school students with special needs at Central High School.

For questions regarding Enactus, contact Dr. John Taylor at 417-860-3128 or jtaylor3@drury.edu.

Drury students provide more than 148,000 hours of service annually to people and organizations in Springfield and the Ozarks. The calculated value of those hours is $2,812,000*.

*Source: www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time

In 2013, Drury collected 1,670 shoes for Stomp Out Hunger to benefit Sole Food, a local group that partners with the Shoeman Water Projects and Friends Against Hunger to reduce hunger locally and internationally, one shoe at a time.
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS. CREATIVE SOLUTIONS
Powerful connections are made every day, thanks to the many partnerships forged between Drury University and our surrounding communities.

www.drury.edu/outreach

For questions or more information, contact:

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LOOK FOR OUR INAUGURAL ANNUAL REPORT ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN 2015.

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