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Connecting university teaching, research, and expertise to communities in Massachusetts and beyond

Luciano Ramos
University of Massachusetts Boston, luciano.ramos@umb.edu

Lauren Anderson
University of Massachusetts Boston

Kathleen Banfield
University of Massachusetts Boston, kathleen.banfield@umb.edu

Sandhya Kshirsagar
University of Massachusetts Boston

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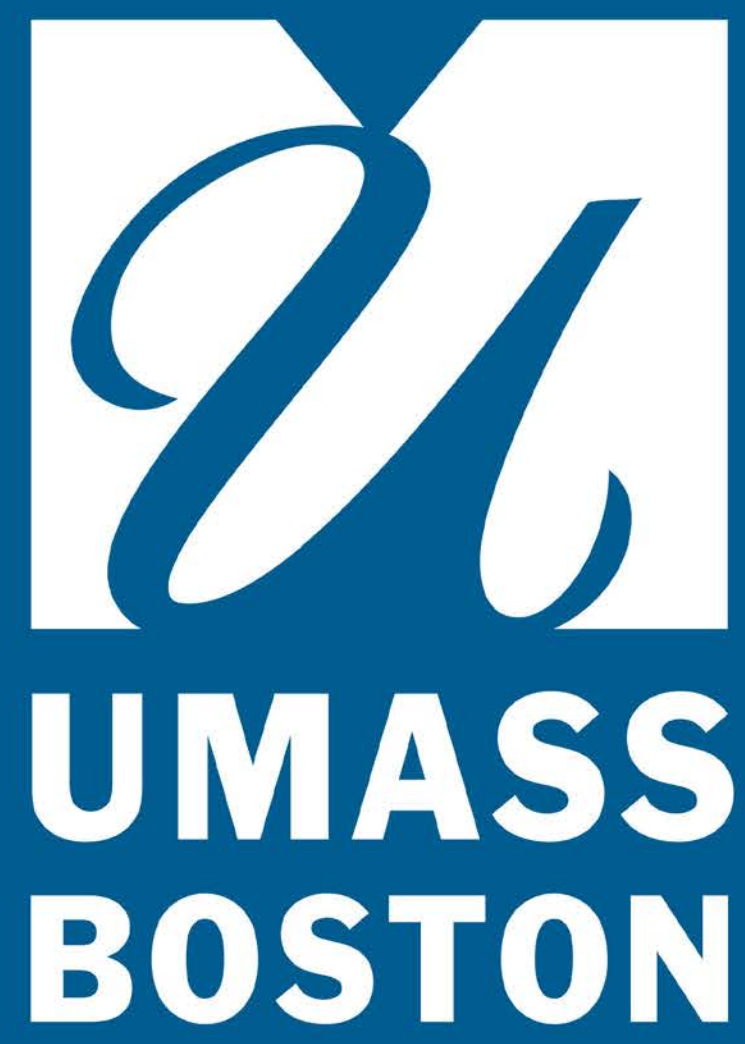
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Luciano Ramos, Lauren Anderson, Kathleen Banfield, and Sandhya Kshirsagar,
Office of Community Partnerships, Division of Government Relations and Public Affairs

UMASS BOSTON

Summary

The Office of Community Partnerships (OCP) was created in 2011 to promote collaborative campus-community partnerships that advance UMass Boston's mission as a student-centered research university while addressing critical challenges in society. This effort is aligned with the vision of the university to advance engaged teaching, research, and service through mutually beneficial and equitable campus-community collaborations.

Goals and Objectives

- Identify and document existing university-community partnerships connected to UMass Boston teaching and learning, research, and service.
- Increase internal and public awareness of identified partnerships.
- Strengthen existing partnerships and create new ones through collaboration and assessment.

Approaches and Methods

- Document university-community partnerships through survey tools, website monitoring, interviews, etc.
- Meet internal and external requests for partnerships by facilitating planning meetings and connecting relevant faculty, staff, and organizations.
- Monitor community priorities and opportunities for collaboration.
- Identify and pursue funding/recognition opportunities to help the university increase community-engaged activities and better "tell its story."

Results

- **300**+ university-community initiatives documented.
- **1100**+ unique community partners identified.
- Helped secure **$236,000** grant for CESI initiative.
- **$2,000,000**+ in pending proposals for community-engaged research in past 2 months.
- Supported faculty, student, and university recognition through **three national award programs**.
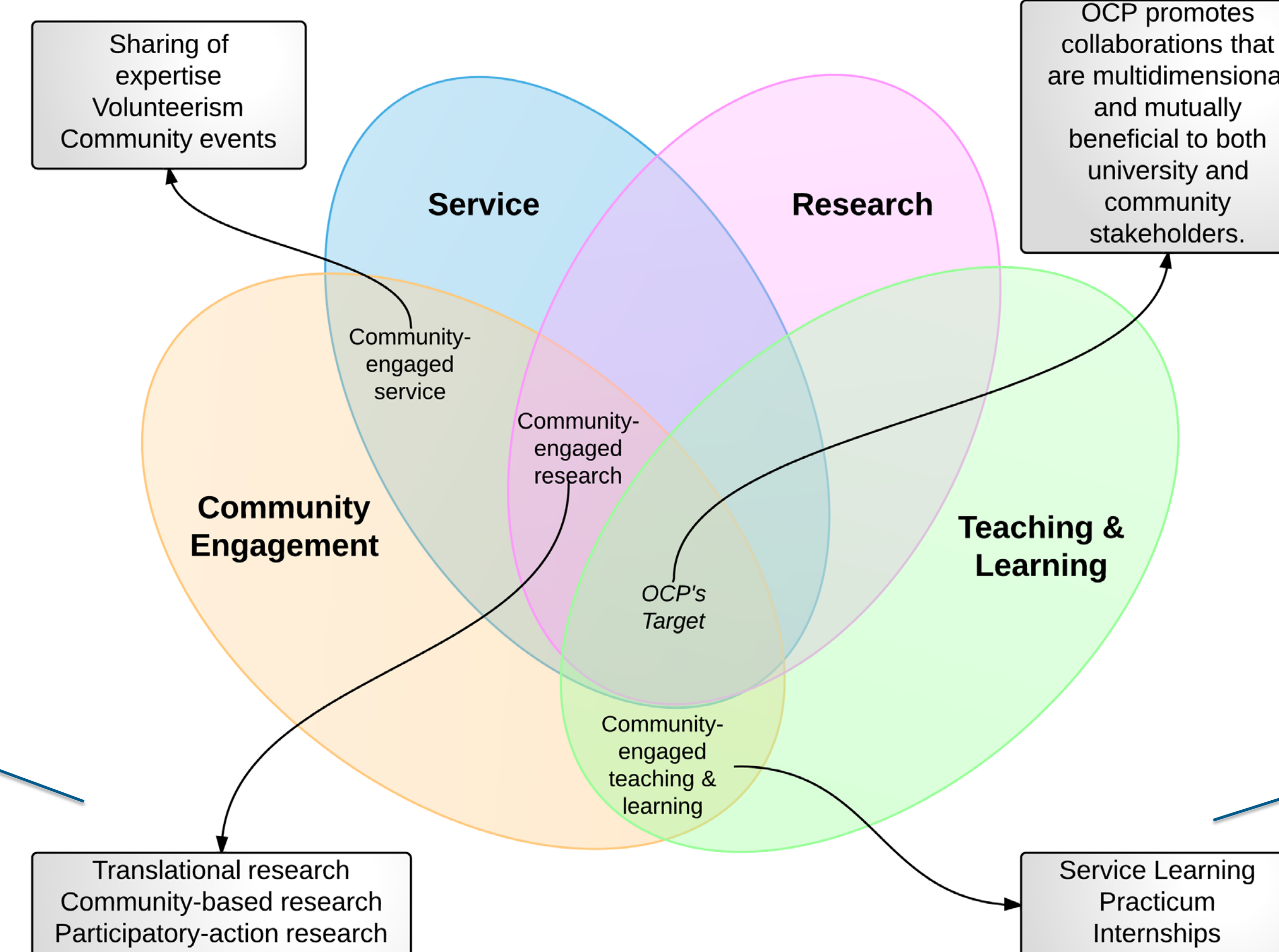
A Collaboration Illustrated

LIFT Boston is **serving as an adviser** for UMass Boston's Office of Urban and Off-Campus Support Services (U-ACCESS), which was created to provide support to students affected by chronic or persistent poverty, homelessness, financial emergencies, and other unanticipated events. UMass Boston also serves on the board of LIFT Boston. This represents **mutual reciprocity** in which each stakeholder is benefiting from each other's expertise.

The City of Boston initiated a meeting between OCP and LIFT Boston in 2011. With **OCP as the connector**, the multiple activities represented here were formed.

LIFT Boston is a lead partner in the City of Boston's Circle of Promise. OCP continues to **facilitate new relationships** that build on these activities, most recently collaborating with the Circle of Promise on several grant proposals to bring new services and support through research to residents being served by LIFT Boston and living in these neighborhoods.

Public Policy PhD students in the McCormack Graduate School are helping LIFT Boston learn through a **community-based research** project how its innovative service model helps low-income clients achieve individual and family well-being.

College of Public and Community Service graduate and undergraduate students are serving as volunteers in conjunction **with service-learning classes** and **capstone internships**.

Diagram labels: Sharing of expertise / Volunteerism / Community events; OCP promotes collaborations that are multidimensional and mutually beneficial to both university and community stakeholders; Service; Research; Community-engaged service; Community-engaged research; Community Engagement; Teaching & Learning; OCP's Target; Community-engaged teaching & learning; Translational research / Community-based research / Participatory-action research; Service Learning / Practicum / Internships.

Next Steps

- Develop an inventory of university resources, such as reports, expertise, and research that can support and/or strengthen university partnership activities.
- Work with stakeholders to conduct impact assessments of partnership activities (direct, indirect, immediate, and long-term impact on community and university).
- Conduct a social network analysis to identify community stakeholders, resources, and opportunities for additional collaboration.
- Use assessments and network analysis to guide new initiatives, strengthen existing ones, increase collaboration and enhance efficacy of community-engaged activities.

	Networking	Coordination	Cooperation	Collaboration
Example Partnership Matrix[1]	Informal, exchanging information for mutual benefit; minimal time and trust.	Exchanging information for mutual benefit, altering activities to achieve common purpose; improved access to services and resources.	Altering activities, sharing resources to achieve common purpose; substantial time/trust; some sharing of risks, responsibilities, rewards.	Most formal, longer-term; high levels of time and trust; altering activities, sharing resources, enhancing capacity of each other; full sharing of risks, responsibilities, and rewards.

Intensity and complexity of partnership →

[1]*Partnerships that Work: the stories and lessons from campus/community collaboration.* (Gray, Heffernan, and Norton 2010, p. 17) retrieved on 04/01/2013 from http://www.nycampuscompact.org/uploads/1/0/6/3/10630880/partnerships_that_work.pdf