Teaching and Service Partnerships at the Center for Community Democracy and Democratic Literacy

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Summary

The initial work of this McCormack Graduate School center focuses on the seven major placed-based initiatives within Boston, creating a Community of Practice to extend and expand best practices throughout the city; and provides expert strategic, design, policy and program advice in the creation of the Boston Promise Initiative led by the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), one of the initial twenty-one projects in the nation awarded by the Obama administration.

Anticipated Results

The Community of Practice will:

- Develop a common set of indicators to measure progress on the goals shared by the seven initiatives, and additional indicators for those goals unique to a specific initiative.
- Identify the data that is critical to measure progress against those benchmarks.
- Increase the capacity of the individual initiatives to understand and use data.
- Document the effectiveness of place-based strategies to impact public policy and the allocation of public and private resources.
- Use the data to improve related neighborhood and citywide service delivery systems.

Next Steps

The Boston Community of Practice will pursue four areas of cooperative work:

- the acquisition and use of data for measuring results within and among all participants.
- the development of a consistent youth development strategy.
- the design and use of a theory of change around place-based initiatives.
- the identification and use of successful community economic development tools.

Working with the Ford Foundation and film makers, the center will help promote the documentary *Gaining Ground* which looks at DSNI’s 27-year history of community leadership. The film will be used as a teaching tool about the:

- DSNI systems change.
- importance of minority voices in the political and public affairs arenas.
- transformative powers of partnerships for community, economic, urban, workforce and youth development.
- Use of media for community-building and community development.

FOR MORE INFORMATION visit www.umb.edu/ccddl

Partners in the Community of Practice

- Boston Promise Initiative (Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative)
- Boston Rising (Eos Foundation)
- Bromley Health-Jamaica Plain Learning Center Project
- Circle of Promise (City of Boston)
- DotWell
- Higher Ground
- Resilient Families/Resilient Communities (Local Initiatives Support Corporation)

*Support for these efforts has come from local philanthropies.*