Beyond Service Learning: Training the Next Generation of Community Leaders

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CLIA’s Community Advocacy Clinic:

HS Students Learning & Working Together for Social Change
Community Advocacy Clinic

PAST

PRESENT

FUTURE
Northwestern High students monitor ads on Baltimore billboards for school credit

- Attendance over 96%
- Average rise of $\frac{1}{2}$ letter grade overall
- Eventual college (or equivalent) enrollment over 90%
- Significant decrease in suspensions and disciplinary actions
Other Measurable Outcomes

• Negotiated with the MTA to improve bus service for Northwest Baltimore
• Fought successfully to have an ineffectual middle school converted into an elementary school
• Lobbied school administrators to make bathroom conditions meet health codes
• Created real estate fraud workshops for senior citizens
Necessary Elements

- A school with a supportive, fearless principal
- A graduate school partner (law, social work, etc.)
- One person to pull it all together
- Connections to other advocates
- Some sort of basic problem solving model
- A little bit of funding (transportation, food, etc).
- A pressing issue to address
THE PRESENT
Concerns with the Original Clinic Model

- Teachers often left out of the mix
- Overly dependent on law school
- Class required more academic elements
- Students needed more skill development
- Exposure to a wider range of policy issues
Addressing the Concerns

- Teacher-focused model with professional development
- Law student / staff report
- Imbedded academic elements
- Formalized curriculum
Three Phases of the CAC

• Personally Responsible Citizen
• Community Responsible Citizen
• Justice Responsible Citizen
THE FUTURE
CAC 2005-2006

• Over 75 students participated
• Standard “zoned school” demographic
• Topics include vacant houses, HIV/AIDS, and school closings
• General praise for curriculum and workshops
• More training for liaisons
KEY ELEMENTS REVISITED

• A high school or middle school
• A university and/or nonprofit partner
• One responsible, dedicated individual
• Connections advocacy community
• A plan or basic problem solving model
• Some funding
• An issue to address
Next Steps: Advocacy in a Community Setting

- Importance of Adult facilitator
- Must be highly engaging for youth
- Entrepreneurial factor is key
- Local Examples