

Extending Your Reach: University and Community Partnerships



Presented by The University of Texas at Brownsville

Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions

“Meditation XVII”

NUNC LENTO SONITU DICUNT, MORIERIS.

Now this bell tolling softly for another, says to me, Thou must die.

“No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as any manner of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”

—John Donne, 1624

In the beginning...

There was university,
community,
and the gap in between

The Ivory Tower





GEORGE — JUST WHAT WE NEED TO HELP
YOU GET ON YOUR HIGH HORSE!

Town and Gown

- Communities



= pockets of need

= free labs for experimentation

= passive recipients of expertise

Town and Gown Cont'd

- Universities were looking for partnerships that would...

...serve their
own interests



Town and Gown Cont'd

- Partnerships rooted in **charity**
- Should be rooted in **equity**



The New Partnership

- Builds **relationships** with the immediate community
- Improves **image** and **support**
- **Collaborates** on mutually beneficial projects
- Are public and private, large and small, urban and rural

The New Partnership Cont'd

- Pioneers in exploring **mutually beneficial** relationships
- **Faith** that community interactions would prove to be valuable
- Trial and error



Searching for Partners

- University mission statement...

how is it relevant?

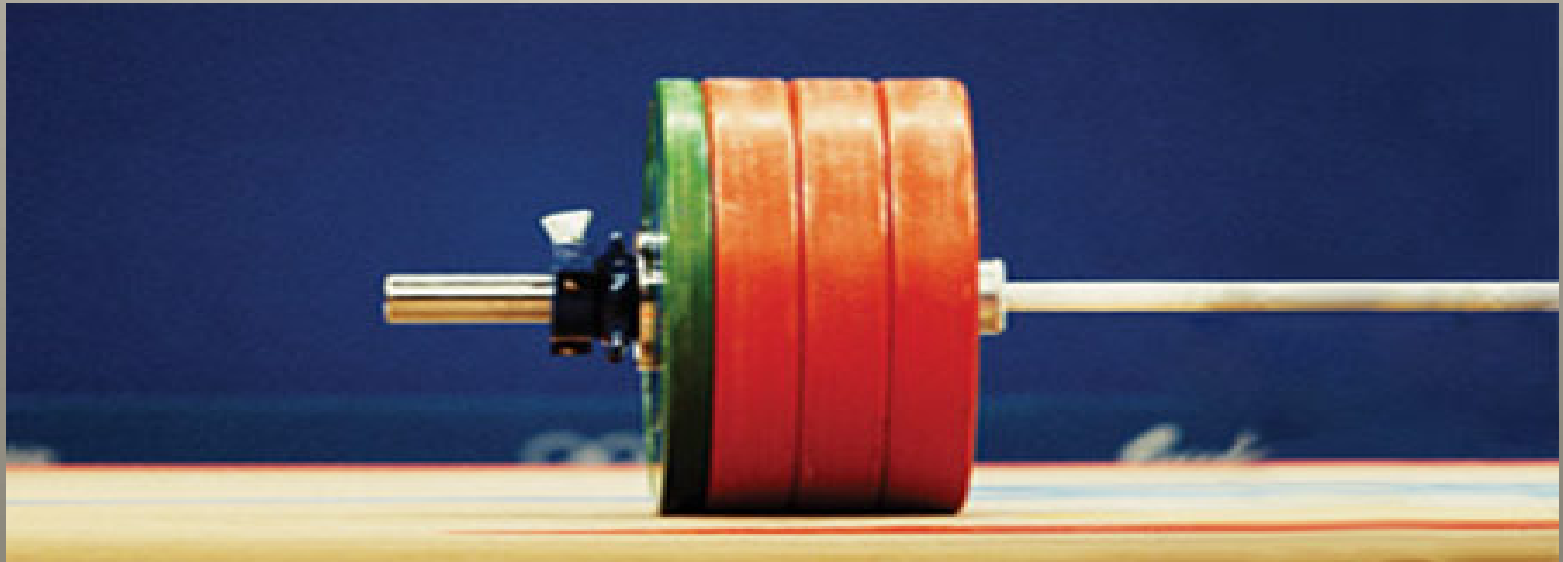


UTB/TSC Mission Statement

- UTB/TSC **advances economic and social development, enhances the quality of life,** fosters respect for the environment, provides for personal enrichment, and expands knowledge through programs of research, **service,** continuing education and training. It convenes the cultures of its community, fosters an appreciation of the unique heritage of the Lower Rio Grande Valley and encourages the development and application of bilingual abilities in its students. It provides academic leadership to the intellectual, cultural, social, and **economic life** of the bi-national urban region it serves.

Searching for Partners Cont'd

- Partnerships should reflect
 - university strengths
 - community strengths
 - regional characteristics and challenges



Searching for Partners Cont'd

- Selected arrays of partnerships that are cultivated are better than
numerous partnerships that engage in random activities
- Be choosy with your partnerships...
more is not necessarily better

Creating Partnerships



Creating Partnerships Cont'd

- Launching a partnership is relatively easy
- Launching a **relationship** is tricky



Creating Partnerships Cont'd

- Starts with university and local agencies
- Over time, lasting relationships show commitment and foster **trust**
- Developmental steps are necessary for gaining access to **deeper, more complex, informal fabric of the community**
- Don't be a flaky partner!

Maintaining Partnerships

- Mutual benefits
- Mutually agreed-upon goals
- Sense of reciprocity
- Success defined
- Outcomes measured
- Clear identification of resources and strengths
- Ongoing, comprehensive evaluation

The UTB Experience

- 2002 \$600K HUD HSIAC for small business incubator
- Partners involved

BEDC

EDA

Ex-Im Bank

SBA

Workforce Solutions Cameron

The UTB Experience Cont'd

Leveraging Non-Matching	Grant Requirement Totals 3 Years	As of 12/31/05
EDA Construction		\$ 1,000,000.00

Leveraging Matching	Grant Requirement Totals 3 Years	As of 12/31/05
UTB/TSC Renovation/Abatement		\$ 5,200,000.00
UTB/TSC Common Area Fees		\$ 1,550.00
UTB/TSC Equipment and Communication Infrastructure		\$ 1,700.00
UTB/TSC Support Personnel		\$ 50,000.00
UTB/TSC - GBIC Renovation and Environmental Abatement		\$ 1,300,000.00
TOTAL	\$ 6,030,000.00	\$ 6,875,000.00
Percentage Met by UTB/TSC:		114.01%

The UTB Experience Cont'd

- 2005 \$600K HUD HSIAC for expansion of small business incubator into two rural sites
- Partners involved

BEDC

EDA

Ex-Im Bank

SBA

Workforce Solutions

Cameron

HUD RHED

Port Isabel EDC

Private Investor

Raymondville EDC

The UTB Experience Cont'd

- EDA = **\$1.25 million** for incubator expansion
- HUD RHED = **\$300K** for Raymondville
- EDA = **\$1.25 million** for Raymondville's Rural Technical Skilled Training/Distance Learning/Small Business Incubator Center
- Building Donation \approx **\$1 million** to UTB & Raymondville
- Volunteers = **\$113,278** in Raymondville

The UTB Experience Cont'd

- 2008 \$600K HUD HSIAC for creation of a Go-Green Assistance Center



The UTB Experience Cont'd

- Established Partnerships

BEDC

EDA

Ex-Im Bank

SBA

Workforce Solutions

Cameron

HUD RHED

Port Isabel EDC

Private Investor

Raymondville EDC

BHA

UTB Departments

UTHSC

The UTB Experience Cont'd

- Developing Partnerships

Bahia Grande Project

Consulting Point

Cottonwood Estates

Green Club Verde

Harlingen Downtown

HEB

Photon8

South Texas Energy Partnerships

SPI Go Green

Putting it all Together (and to Work)



Factors for Success

- Several factors have contributed to the success of UTB-community partnerships

Funding

Communication

Synergy

Measureable Outcomes

Visibility and Dissemination of Knowledge

Technology

Organizational Compatibility

Simplicity

Funding



Funding Cont'd

- Something to consider...

source of funding

In other words...

Who's sponsoring the project?

Local? State? Federal? Private?

What is the nature of that relationship?

Funding Cont'd

- Most government agencies (and, to a lesser extent, foundations) are more likely to support partnerships that focus on

community-driven endeavors,

And show potential for

improving the community

(Yes...there are exceptions...)

Funding Cont'd

- Role of the funders
 - should be defined **early**
 - should be defined **clearly**
- A funder may choose to be
 - active** or
 - passive**

What's the difference? Is one better than the other?

Communication

Saying what you mean and meaning what you say

- Woman without her man is nothing.
- **Woman: without her, man is nothing.**

Communication Cont'd

- Initial Meetings

define the shared mission

clarify shared goals

Are we all on the same page?

Communication Cont'd



Communication Cont'd

- Effective meetings consist of
 - assignment of **objectives**
 - effectiveness of **communication**
 - clarity of **decision-making**
 - clarity of **accountabilities**
 - right skills** in the **right place**
 - credible partnering **behavior of leaders**
 - responsive** ways of working

(The Partnership Index, 2004)

Communication Cont'd

- Logistics a problem?
- Try living in Texas



Mountain Standard Time

Central Standard Time

Communication Cont'd



Communication Cont'd

- Budget for communication with your partners
video-conference equipment
travel expenses



Plan that you'll be meeting with different partners at different locations *before* you even create the relationships

Synergy

- Success
acknowledges
participating
stakeholders



Partnerships

Synergy Cont'd

- **Two-way** street approach
- A rigid uni-directional (university to community) style will have **less chance of being successful**

Synergy Cont'd

- Interaction of multiple factors that leads to **more significant change** than would be expected if acting separately on the same population

7 heads are better than 1...



Measurable Outcomes



Measurable Outcomes Cont'd

- Partnerships need specific measures of results

Early in the development of a university-community partnership, members should be encouraged to construct measurable objectives

How do we know we've achieved our goals if we didn't create a way to measure success?

Measurable Outcomes Cont'd

- “University-community partnerships can become either a **quagmire of thoughts based on power relations** or the clearly more desirable option of an innovative partnership that **amalgamates both theoretical and practical perspectives**” (Martin, Lawrence, et. al.).

Visibility and Dissemination of Knowledge

- Partnerships do not exist in a **vacuum**
- Knowledge should be **disseminated**

**There are no secrets
among friends...**



Visibility and Dissemination of Knowledge Cont'd

- Data, results, communications, etc., should be analyzed and distributed (when appropriate) to the partners

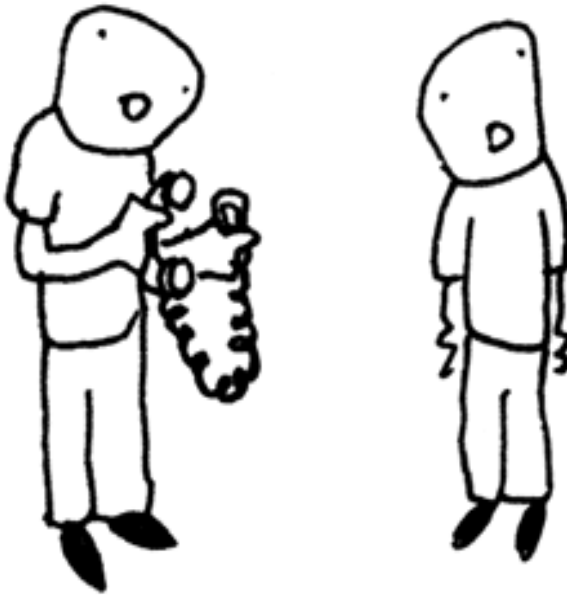
What's going on with our money?

What's going on with our progress?

What's going on, period!

Technology

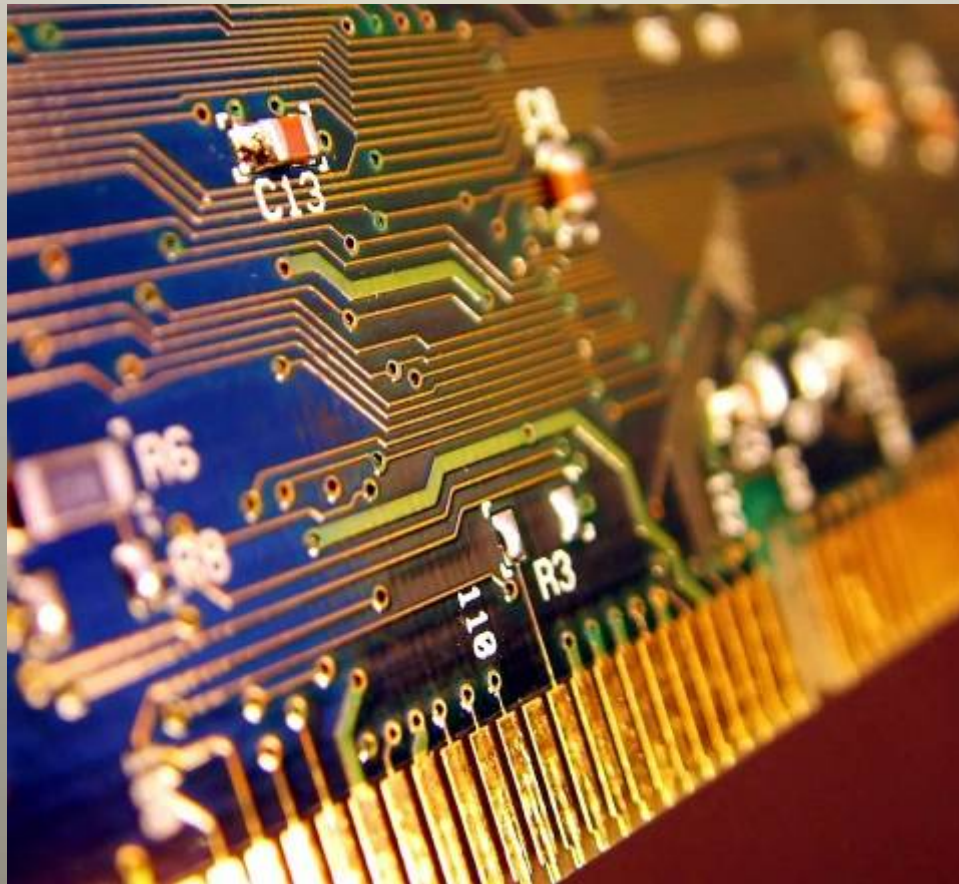
look, i attached
an old telephone
hand set to
my cell phone



that's pretty
awesome... do you
think you could
hook a horse up
to my car?

Technology Cont'd

- Technology can make university-community partnerships more **efficient** by enabling 24-hour communication and reducing transit times



Technology Cont'd

- Technology also plays a significant role in
broadcasting the purpose and outcomes of successful university-community partnerships
providing information through websites on stakeholders, programs, and contact info
connecting partners who are otherwise logistically restricted

Technology Cont'd

- Pitfalls

Sometimes a phone call or a face-to-face meeting is important



Organizational Capacity



What are you
good at?

Organizational Capacity Cont'd

- Traditional schematic: partnerships involve organizations that function in a relatively **similar manner**
- University-community schematic: academic environment operates in a fashion that **sometimes does not relate well** to the off-campus environment

Organizational Capacity Cont'd

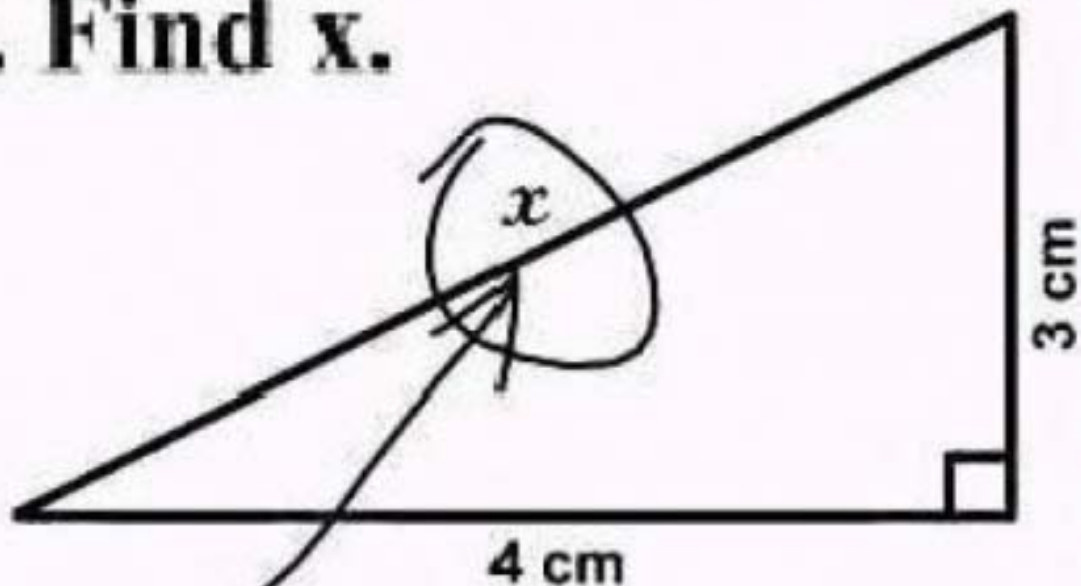
- Solution

all stakeholders **share** the status of
“expert”

power and decision-making are **shared** by
entities that bring the unique strengths of
each organization to the table

Simplicity

3. Find x .



Here it is

SIMPLICITY

Simplicity Cont'd

- Common mistakes in university-community partnerships

grossly **underestimate the investment** of time and money required

grossly **underestimate the level of skills** necessary for success

enter into collaborations **without being adequately prepared** and then become overwhelmed by the complexity of the tasks involved

Simplicity Cont'd

- Example of one of our partners' plan
create an incubator
and farmers market
and organize major (recurring) city events
and provide educational classes
and yoga
and a tourist train
and massage therapy
and...**world peace**

Simplicity Cont'd

While stakeholders often come together with the hope of enacting social change, there is a **danger of this enthusiasm** leading to projects that are **ambiguous and unobtainable**

And that scares the **bejeezus** out of **funders**...



Closing Remarks

- Innovative partnerships are alive, well, and flourishing—indicative of the continued need for collaboration

Some social problems are simply beyond the range of single organizations; synergistic efforts are required to increase the potential impact

Closing Remarks Cont'd

- The concept of innovation is both essential and implied in any description of university-community partnerships

These partnerships, by their very description, require stakeholders to produce innovative programs and policies through synergistic relationships

Closing Remarks Cont'd

- Innovation can be achieved by following the guidelines for

Funding

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