

## **What are we learning about community service-learning in Canada? TeleLearning Seminar on Research, Tuesday, 28 April, 2009**

The goal of this seminar was to discuss the nature of CSL research in Canada and from an international perspective. We provided an overview on the state of research into service-learning and community engagement from an international perspective, and highlighted the upcoming International Service Learning Conference taking place on 9-12<sup>th</sup> October in Ottawa. This is the first time the International Association for Research on Service-learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) has held a conference outside of the U.S. and it will provide an excellent opportunity to bring together our members and highlight CSL in Canada. We finished the seminar with a discussion of current CSL research in Canada and whether there are uniquely Canadian research issues and questions that should be pursued.

### **Our featured guests included:**

**Dr. Jeff Keshen** is a Professor and Chair in the Department of History at the University of Ottawa. Jeff was the founder of the University of Ottawa's Experiential Learning program and continues to manage the program.. Jeff is also the Chair and host of the upcoming Ninth International Research Conference on Service Learning and Community Engagement, with the theme "Research for What? Making Inquiry Matter".

**Dr. Sherril Gelmon** is a Professor of Public Health in the College of Urban and Public Affairs at Portland State University. She is a former Engaged Scholar with Campus Compact, and is lead author of their monograph on assessment methods and co-author of their monograph on the Engaged Department. She is the immediate past chair of the International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement and has played a very strong leadership role in encouraging research, including hosting the Sixth Annual International Research Conference in Portland in 2006.

**Dr. Kate Connolly** is the Director of the Laurier Centre for Community Service-Learning and Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo and has an academic background in education. Kate is a member of the CACSL Steering Committee and is also the Chair of our Research Working Group.

**Barbara Harrison** is currently a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at Brock University in St. Catharines. She is involved in research on community engagement as well as being involved in a pilot project concerning the institutionalizing of SL at her campus. She is a member of the Graduate Student Network of the IARSLCE and plays a leading role in convening an Ontario Network of CSL practitioners and researchers.

### **An audio recording of this session is available on our website at:**

<http://www.communityservicelearning.ca/en/CanadianAllianceforCommunityService-Learning.telelearning.htm>

### **Here are some references and resources that were mentioned during the call:**

In my introduction, I quoted excerpts from Shelley H. Billig's forward to "Scholarship for Sustaining Service-Learning and Civic Engagement", the eighth volume in the Advances in Service-Learning Research series published annually by Information Age Publishing in

association with the International Research Conference on Service-Learning and Community Engagement. Series publications can be ordered online at <http://www.infoagepub.com/category/Service-Learning>

\*Special Note\* - Information Age Publishing is currently offering a special promotion to purchase 10 books for \$10 each to celebrate their tenth anniversary - this would allow you to purchase multiple copies or a complete set of the Advances series at a substantial discount by ordering online using their special offer.

<http://www.infoagepub.com/10-10-10.html>

The **International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement** is an international nonprofit membership organization devoted to promoting research and discussion about service-learning and community engagement. IARSLCE grew out of the Annual International K-H Service-Learning Research Conference which began as an idea championed by Shelley H. Billig, Ph.D. of RMC Research Corporation and Andrew Furco, Ph.D.

of the University of California Berkeley. They obtained seed funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, which was managed by Dr. Billig at RMC Research Corporation, and helped to support the first five years of the annual research conference. At the time of the first conference in Berkeley, CA in 2001, there were no other comparable meetings that highlighted research on service-learning and facilitated information exchange and dialogue among scholars, practitioners, funders, and students interested in research on service-learning. Click here for more information on the past conferences.

As the field has developed, the scope of the conference has expanded beyond service-learning to embrace a wide range of scholarly work related to community engagement and various pedagogies, including service-learning. A highlight at each conference is the identification of young scholars who may be current graduate students or junior faculty who are recognized for their roles as Emerging Scholars.

<http://www.researchslce.org/index.html>

The **Ninth International Research Conference on Service-Learning and Community Engagement** will be held October 9-12, 2009, at the Westin Ottawa Hotel in Ottawa, and is being hosted by the Experiential Learning Service of the University of Ottawa and co-sponsored by the Canadian Alliance for Community Service-Learning. The theme of the conference is Research for What? Making Inquiry Matter. While papers and posters on all aspects of research on service-learning and community engagement are welcome, the conference organizers are particularly interested in receiving proposals that address the goals underlying research, the most effective means of achieving them, and the implications of such goals for society; communities and community-based organizations, schools, colleges, universities, faculty, students, and scholarship. Is the research meant to transform academe? Deepen student learning? Improve community life, particularly for its more marginalized members and groups? Encourage engaged citizenship, participatory democracy, community mobilization, and/or social justice? What models or approaches are most effective? From an academic standpoint, does the research indicate that service-learning and community engagement are too often ideologically or advocacy-driven? For conference information and registration, see:

[http://www.researchslce.org/Files/2009Conference/Conference\\_Main.html](http://www.researchslce.org/Files/2009Conference/Conference_Main.html)

Additional sources of research publications related to community service-learning and mentioned on the call included:

**Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH)** is a nonprofit organization that promotes health (broadly defined) through partnerships between communities and higher educational institutions. [www.ccph.info](http://www.ccph.info)

**Learn and Serve America's National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (NSLC)** supports the service-learning community in higher education, kindergarten through grade twelve, community-based initiatives and tribal programs, as well as all others interested in strengthening schools and communities using service-learning techniques and methodologies. The Clearinghouse maintains a website with timely information and relevant resources to support service-learning programs, practitioners, and researchers.

<http://www.servicelearning.org/>

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