

The Urgency of Recommitting Higher Education to the Public Good in 2020 and Beyond

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It is of course an extraordinary honor to accept this award, given to recognize the legacy of one of our great heroes, Ernest Boyer. I do so on behalf of my amazing colleagues at my dear institution, Rutgers University-Newark and our many partners in the great city of Newark, as we all work as a team to instantiate a seamless two-way street between the university and community in the service of impact and equity. For, if there is one thing that I have learned over my career it is about the *collective* nature of our work and any progress we make in it. As Secretary Hillary Clinton once famously reminded us, citing an African proverb, “It takes a village,”² and I would add in academe, as in much of life, nothing gets done by one leader, one dean, one faculty, one staff person or one student – even as risks need to be taken by all of us.

A Personal Preamble

I want to begin as a preamble to my remarks with a nod to the hubris to which we all fall prey when, at our peril, we forget both the long-arm of history and the cumulative truths of scholarly insight. This has been brought back to me many times, and one of those times came recently in rereading Boyer’s *Scholarship Reconsidered*³ in preparation for today, and seeing the striking resemblance of Boyer’s points to everything we see now as urgently needed as we strive collectively, as a community of scholars, to (re)commit higher education to the public good. Consider the following four key points from that groundbreaking treatise decades ago:

“A new vision of scholarship is required, one dedicated not only to the renewal of the academy but, ultimately, to the renewal of society itself.”

“Now is the time to build bridges across the disciplines, and connect the campus to the larger world. Society itself has a great stake in how scholarship is defined.”

“The conclusion is clear. We need scholars who not only skillfully explore the frontiers of knowledge, but also integrate ideas, connect thought to action, and inspire students.”

“One last point. This report has focused largely on faculty members as individuals. But professors, to be fully effective, cannot work in isolation. It is toward a shared vision of intellectual and social possibilities – a community of scholars – that the four dimensions of academic endeavor should lead.”

¹ Keynote address presented upon receiving the 10th Annual Ernest L. Boyer Award from The New American Colleges and Universities at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Colleges & Universities, January 23, 2020, Washington, DC.

² Hillary Rodham Clinton, *It Takes A Village: And Other Lessons Children Teach Us*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

³ Ernest L. Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1990.

Yes, Boyer thought of it all before, setting a stage of precedents for what we now see as the pressing challenges for higher education going forward. As one of my idols in social psychology and former colleague at Michigan, Robert Zajonc, used to say when those of us upstarts would announce our latest, greatest ideas, “Oh we’ve already tried that, years ago!” Yet that is exactly the point in many respects. History builds contemporary reality and so too will past ideas lead to present innovations. Progress is not linear or instantaneous and it often requires working on the same things over the decades. As contemporary theorist Scott Page demonstrates in his analysis of the *Diversity Bonus*,⁴ collective intelligence always wins out when we tackle hard problems, and no one in this room would doubt that transforming the academy, as Boyer asks us to do, is a hard problem, requiring both cumulative work and all hands-on deck.

Now, as a side bar to today’s discussion, the curmudgeon in me wants also to call attention to this framing as being the precise opposite of what we often lionize these days as “disruptive innovation.” The prototype of which involves some high-tech genius changing the world all of a sudden – or, to be politer, the search for quick outcomes-focused approaches to reversing what Charles Tilly⁵ called the “durable inequalities” of our world. We certainly see that in the education reform space all of the time, and my intention here is to suggest a modest counter to today’s (“fast food”) solutions. Indeed, we see the need for patient work every day in Newark, as my colleagues and I work collectively and inter-generationally with community partners on critical questions of the public good. Our community is a 350+ year old city, one defined by generations of migration and immigration, of striving, disappointment, and heroic perseverance, and so my abiding respect grows for the role of history, and for how the long arc of justice bends ever so slowly. Moreover, the same is true for transformation in higher education. In other words, they did not build the elite, detached, monastic model of universities quickly and we will not counter with the engaged, inclusive, anchor institution overnight either. In the same vein, the architecture of segregation and the map of durable inequalities are just that – architected to be durable – and so the promise of universities as an engine of social mobility and social justice (that is, for equitable growth in communities) will only be fulfilled brick by brick, scholar by scholar, generation by generation.

Therefore, I am actually reassured that Ernest Boyer thought about, worked on, and took steps toward progress on everything I will say today. He presaged everything about universities and our collective, collaborative role in aspiring to change the course of those durable inequalities using the opportunity lever of higher education, and so I will return to his insights repeatedly in the course of my remarks.

Universities as “Public Goods”

Taking off then from Boyer’s call for “a new American college that is connected and committed to improving, in a very intentional way, the human condition,” I’d like to frame the question as one of how close can we get to being public goods, if not in a purely technical sense, at least in the spirit of an aspirational metaphor. Of course, in economics, as the great source

⁴ Scott E. Page, *The Diversity Bonus: How great Teams Pay Off in the Knowledge Economy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017.

⁵ Charles Tilly, *Durable Inequality*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998.

Wikipedia defines it, a pure “public good is a good that is both non-excludable and non-rivalrous in that individuals cannot be effectively excluded from use and where use by one individual does not reduce availability to others.” Therefore, as Sandy Baum and Mike McPherson wrote some time ago, although technically “higher education is not a pure public good,” there are clear positive externalities that benefit the public beyond those for whom it is also a private good. As they say, “the benefits of college are not all public and they are not all private.”⁶

I want to posit, as I think Boyer would agree, that today the public needs us to be much closer to a public than private, purely market-driven good. This is true both in terms of access for more of the talented public (to the university) and in terms of contributions (beyond the university) by our community of scholars -- producing positive externalities, benefitting the collective good beyond just those who pay for it.

By contrast, I think that the national polls all suggest that the current public view of higher education is that it both excludes too many (exclusive) and hoards opportunity only for those within it/connected to it (rivalrous). In turn, therefore, if we can transform ourselves to move closer to the public good end of the continuum, opening more, working in public more, and sharing more in the public’s benefit, we may actually help defuse some of the legitimacy crisis reflected in those public opinion polls. The question then becomes, how do we – and are we willing to – transform our institutions, our mores, our practices, our disciplines, our student bodies, our professoriate in line with this model?

Institutional Transformation with an Eye toward the Public Good

Interestingly, Boyer argued that universities are actually often driven by external concerns, just the wrong ones – for example, he said, “Far too many colleges and universities are being driven not by self-defined objectives but by the external imperatives of prestige.” One need only think of the ranking wars, the narrowly defined dimensions of merit for students and for faculty, both as defined by standardized tests and by disciplinary norms, to see how much we fall prey to what social psychologists call an “exclusion mindset” of competition, distancing us further and further from the full public. Moreover, this seems exactly what needs changing if we are to realize in any way the aspirational metaphor of universities as public goods, as institutions that provide some good to everyone.

We need institutional transformation (from the outside-in), as Boyer argued, to transcend boundaries within the academy and between the academy and the world, with an eye toward the collective work to advance *equity* and *impact*, and cement the identity of our institutions – each in their own way – as indispensable partners in improving the human condition. Additionally, I suggest that there are four inextricably intertwined aspects to the necessary transformation, all aimed at the public good. First, we need to diversify the student body and faculty (building a critical mass of representation). Second, we need to recognize and reward publicly engaged scholarship (giving, as Boyer said, “scholarship a richer, more vital meaning”). Third, we need to cultivate genuinely reciprocal, sustained relationships between our universities and our communities (as the stable, committed anchors of equitable growth and opportunity). Fourth, we

⁶ Sandy Baum and Michael McPherson, *Is Education a Public Good or a Private Good?* *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 18, 2011.

need to learn to overcome our competitive instincts and collaborate across an ecosystem of institutions, organizations, and sectors (all committed to a movement of change).

So, in my homage to Boyer today, I want to briefly comment on each of these intertwined challenges, and again place them squarely in the context of the tradition that he so beautifully articulated in *Scholarship Reconsidered*, and in his many other signature contributions.

Resetting our Institutional Tables

Institutional transformation begins with who is sitting at the various tables of our institutions, and from the perspective of the public trust, this simply has to include a genuine representation of the public. Unfortunately, in my view, there has actually been a move in the last decade or so away from a focus on aggressively achieving a critical mass of diverse representation. This may be due to two somewhat contradictory pressures – first, the anti-affirmative action movement, and second, a very different argument that too much attention to structural representation – that is, to numbers per se – relegates the value of diversity and inclusion to a human resources agenda and sidelines it from full integration into the value system of the institution. Whereas I fully agree with the second qualm, I still want to argue against this pivot and call for a refocus on numbers, as necessary, though certainly not sufficient, ingredients of institutional transformation. At both the student and faculty levels, the trend has been to look for what I call “exceptional children” versus to recognize the massive demographic shifts (as documented by many, including the demographer William Frey in his powerful book, *The Diversity Explosion*)⁷ and the accompanying imperative to genuinely reset the homogeneous tables we typically set. As organizational theorist Katherine Phillips (who tragically passed away just recently) compellingly urged, it is time to ask why we so passively accept homogeneity as the default norm for our institutions, when we endlessly ask for justifications of the value of diversity.⁸

I, along with many others, argue that the need to reset the full table of representation at the student level is urgent and especially poignant as higher education is such a critical lever for social mobility, as Raj Chetty and his colleagues at the *Equality of Opportunity Project* have repeatedly demonstrated.⁹ Our institutions, even our major public institutions, simply are not meeting the mandate, as Anthony Carnevale and his colleagues at the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce document in their recent report, *Separate and Unequal*.¹⁰ Not surprisingly, public distrust is growing, as too many low-income students and students from communities of color – all of whom face systemic obstacles in the way of cultivating their many

⁷ William H. Frey, *Diversity Explosion: How Racial Demographics are Remaking America*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2015.

⁸ Katherine W. Phillips, What is the Real Value of Diversity in Organizations? Questioning our Assumptions, In Scott E. Page, *The Diversity Bonus: How Great Teams Pay Off in the Knowledge Economy*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2017, pp. 223-245.

⁹ Raj Chetty, John N. Friedman, Emmanuel Saez, Nicholas Turner, and Danny Yagan, *Mobility Report Cards: The Role of Colleges in Intergenerational Mobility*, NBER Working Paper No. 23618, July 2017, www.equality-of-opportunity.org.

¹⁰ Anthony P. Carnevale, Martin Van Der Werf, Michael C. Quinn, Jeff Strohl, and Dmitri Repnikov, *Our Separate & Unequal Public Colleges: How Public Colleges Reinforce White Privilege and Marginalize Black and Latino Students*, Center on Education and the Workforce, Georgetown University, Washington, DC., 2018.

talents – are being repeatedly side lined by business-as-usual. Carnevale, Schmidt, and Strohl document in detail these failures of our system in their forthcoming volume, entitled *The Merit Myth: How our Colleges Favor the Rich and Divide America*. We need to get serious, quickly, about resetting the student table in higher education as the face of America changes dramatically and we remain rather impassive to its glare.

The need to reset substantially the table at the faculty level is equally urgent, though perhaps not always as much a topic of public scrutiny. As for student recruitment, the implicit comfort with homogeneity, along with the “exceptional child” practices of recruitment and promotion have resulted in painfully slow shifts in the composition of the professoriate, even in the face of genuine public proclamations of commitment to diversity. As a recent member of the National Science Foundation’s Committee on Equal Opportunity in Science and Engineering (CEOSE), I can attest to the glacial pace of change, even as the STEM fields produce a reasonably diverse potential talent pool for the professoriate in many disciplines (*Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering, 2015, National Science Foundation Report*).

In the case of the professoriate, numbers really do matter for both negative and positive reasons. On the negative side is the fact that small numbers of diverse faculty (along many dimensions, but certainly along gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, nationality) leave under-represented students without sufficient role models and mentors to encourage belongingness, and as critically, under-representation leaves diverse faculty endlessly subject to the scrutiny of “solo status” and “stereotype threat” in their departments and disciplines.¹¹ This detrimental impact of small numbers is on the agenda of numerous national professional societies of late, from a range of disciplines from Physics to Economics to the Arts to Business, and more.

On the positive side of the argument for resetting the faculty table, inclusion of a new, more public facing diverse demographic in the up and coming professoriate adds enormous value for publicly engaged scholarship. As George Sanchez argued in his piece on civic engagement and the retreat from inclusiveness, “The very “public” in the United States we will seek to engage in community partnerships will shift dramatically, and will look less and less like the faculty in our colleges and universities over the next 25 years.”¹² Moreover, as Fryberg and Martinez persuasively note in their edited volume on “*A Truly Diverse Faculty*”,¹³ the strong appetite and expertise for publicly engaged scholarship amongst that new diverse generation is such a positive sign for our institutional success in having impact and being closer to what the public wants as authentic partners in evidence-informed social change. We see this all the time at Rutgers-Newark and I genuinely feel that we all have our proverbial heads in the sand if we do not assertively recruit and reward this active and engaged talent pool, and do it soon, as immigration and birthrate trends make obsolete our normative professoriate.

¹¹ Claude Steele, *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us And What We Can Do*, New York: Norton & Company, 2010.

¹² George J. Sanchez, Crossing Figueroa: The Tangled Web of Diversity and Democracy, *Foreseeable Futures*, #4, Position Papers from Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life, from 2004 Dewey Lecture, University of Michigan.

¹³ Stephanie A. Fryberg, and Ernesto J. Martinez, (Eds.). *The Truly Diverse Faculty: New Dialogues on Diversity in Higher Education*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Recognize Publicly Engaged Scholarship

As we genuinely reset the table of our campuses to represent a much broader and more diverse public, then we should expect and welcome an expansion of the ideas, interests, questions, and innovations that become the focus of scholarship and pedagogy. As Boyer argued: “It is our central premise, therefore, that other forms of scholarship---teaching, integration, and application – must be fully acknowledged and placed on a more equal footing with discovery.” This is particularly true as more questions of public interest, seen through more varied lenses, are being brought to the table for consideration, and a diverse “community of experts,” including frontline community partners, is engaged in the co-creation of knowledge. We are also, then, likely to expand our default definitions of what constitutes “discovery.”

The expansion of what counts as knowledge and productive scholarship that Boyer called for in *Scholarship Reconsidered* is equally if not even more transformative for the academy than the resetting of the table of the professoriate. It too requires a genuine mindset shift, as we need to pay as much attention to questions of importance that emanate from the “outside in” as to those seen as internally critical by our disciplines. We need to shift in a fulsome way from the tendency to privilege what others in the field have found as interesting versus what the public wants to know. As a social psychologist, I have seen my field somewhat obsessed of late with the quick answers about social behavior that an MRI produces, and I say this with no animus in mind. By contrast, I look to the great tradition of Kurt Lewin and *Action Research* that emanated in part from the burning need of a shocked public to understand the intricate and hard to measure dynamics of group behavior in the wake of the Holocaust and the fascist domination of continental Europe.¹⁴ This tradition involves anything but quick, hard and fast answers, and Lewin captured its complexity in his wise statement that the best way to understand something is to try, difficult and time-consuming as it may be, to change it. Accordingly, we would all do well today in this divisive national and global moment to pause and think deeply about what the public needs us urgently and patiently to study and to teach the next generation, as we prepare them to repair our world.

Along with an expanding vision of what is interesting in scholarship and pedagogy comes the need to re-envision how we produce scholarship, who produces it, and where it lives on. While the lone genius has never really been the model of how we actually produce scholarship, especially in fields like STEM, the reward system in the academy still acts as if that myth is reality. We cling to it in the penchant for promotion and tenure evaluations to look for instances when the scholar “really” was the lead contributor. Moreover, there is a parallel to the hegemony of “inside-out” evaluations of quality and interest (discipline to the world versus world to disciplines) in who we consider an important scholarly partner in the co-creation. This is a debate, for example, frequently seen as scholars evaluate, reward and support community-engaged science. In that regard, Ira Harkavy, Myra Burnett and I argued the benefits to science of collaborating in a genuine co-creation sense with those who live the effects on the ground. Community-engaged science increases the inclusive representation of scientists and improves the

¹⁴Lewin, K., and Gertrude W. Lewin (Ed.) (1948). *Resolving social conflicts: selected papers on group dynamics* [1935-1946]. New York: Harper and Brothers.

science produced.¹⁵ Analyses of climate change effects provide a trenchant example of the value of broadening our understanding of who, how, and where knowledge/discovery occurs, as vividly demonstrated in recent work at the National Science Foundation in which indigenous populations play a key role in understanding the “new arctic.”

Similarly, where the scholarly product appears also figures in the valuation of its worth, as seen for example in the comparison between peer reviewed journal pieces in top journals versus K-12 curricular modules or policy reports for community use. We see the value of a wide range of scholarly products all the time, even if, as the leaders of *Imagining America* long ago noted, promotion and tenure committees may still lag behind in fully embracing it.¹⁶ Placing, as Boyer desired, other forms of scholarship on an equal footing, by necessity must mean that we expand our appreciation of what scholarship looks like and where we see it in action.

Anchor Institutions as Sustained Collaborators with Communities

As we change who sits at our tables and how, where, and with whom we collaborate on scholarship and pedagogy, we inevitably move closer to producing positive externalities in the public interest. In so doing, we naturally begin to live in to the role of anchor institutions – stable, engaged, co-equal partners – that sustain an identity as fixtures of our communities to whom others look as agents of opportunity and equitable growth. Boyer foreshadowed what has now become a movement of anchor institutions (see the *Anchor Institutions Task Force*)¹⁷ when he referred to the sentiments of his friend Derek Bok. Boyer said, “Clearly higher education and the rest of society have never been more interdependent than they are today, and embedded in Bok’s pointed observations is a call for campuses to be more energetically engaged in the pressing issues of our time.”

Transforming our institutions in terms of who we are by resetting the table, and what we see as valuable, including publicly-engaged scholarship and pedagogy, positions us all to reckon with the change that comes by taking on fully the anchor institution identity, even as this adoption requires more shifting of norms and practices and mindsets. The meaning of interdependence between a university and its community requires that we think of the role of neighbor as more than just a geographic concept but rather a moral one replete with responsibility for the community’s well-being, as Rabbi Joachim Prinz of Newark articulated in his speech at the 1963 Civil Rights March on Washington.¹⁸ It requires a much more sustained engagement than universities are typically used to as we operate grant-by-grant or course by course in our common engagements. It requires paying as much attention to sustaining collaborative infrastructure as to the short-term outcomes by which we usually measure success.

¹⁵ Ira Harkavy, Nancy Cantor, and Myra Burnett, *Realizing STEM Equity and Diversity through Higher Education-Community Engagement*, January 2015. See also https://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/activities/ceose/reports/CEOSE_ReportToCongress_RP_FVmp_508.pdf.

¹⁶ Julie Ellison and Timothy Eatman, *Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University*, Syracuse, NY: *Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life*, 2008. See also Nancy Cantor and Steven D. Lavine, “Taking Public Scholarship Seriously,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 9 June 2006.

¹⁷ See the Anchor Institutions Task Force, www.margainc.com/initiatives/aitf.

¹⁸ https://tjff.com/media/Joachim_Study_Guide.pdf.

Living fully into the anchor institution model requires a thorough change in attitude, shifting from the university (and those in it) as the leader, expert, progenitor of solutions to one of co-equal partner with our community. It requires responding to suggestions from all sectors, cultural, business, government, CBOs, as to the critical issues on which to work, and being willing to see the challenges through a broad racial and economic equity lens of systemic discrimination. This latter point may seem to some to come out of nowhere, or by contrast to be specific to a university like mine that serves as an anchor institution in a city that must confront the decades, actually centuries, of sequelae of the architecture of segregation (by race and class and faith and nationality status) in order to move forward. Yet I would argue to the contrary that there is rarely a college or university, whether urban or rural, public or private, community college or research university, for whom questions of changing the equity map doesn't by necessity involve a straightforward reckoning with the history of inequality (and its racialized manifestation). This is true whether the focus is on changing the map of students and faculty and staff of the institution or the impact of its scholarship and pedagogy and its responsibility as an anchor institution.

Moreover, to reckon with history we need to be willing to step forward as *place-based institutions* and understand the specifics of the (racialized) inequality map of our communities. For history plays out differently in each place, as we see if we compare the narratives today between urban and rural communities, even as shared economic insecurities should unite not divide the largely white rural and black and brown urban centers. Not to forget, as we too often do, the particulars of the narratives of our many indigenous Native American communities profoundly affected by the racist history of our country. And it goes perhaps without saying that much as colleges and universities have traditionally adopted a distanced relationship with community, veering more to the monastery than the marketplace, as Steve Schomberg and I once noted in a piece on public engagement,¹⁹ we have been especially allergic to tackling the thorny questions of local racial equity (broadly defined) at home. This is true even as many of our disciplines rightly support and reward such efforts abroad, as seen in the recent, uplifting award of the Nobel Prize in economics to three economists who study solutions to inequality in global contexts.²⁰ I want to argue here that the time has come to stop seeing the local as parochial and the pressing questions here and now – for example, of inequality linked to race and class and citizenship and faith, and their inevitable intersections—as beyond the boundaries of our scholarly interests, our disciplinary expertise, and our institutional responsibilities.

Creating Ecosystems for Impact

Having laid out some fairly hefty transformational challenges here for our institutions, both in terms of our internal composition, norms, and practices, and our willingness to tackle the complex realities of our home communities, I want to extend what might seem as an olive branch, or fig leaf, as you will. That is, I suggest that we not take on these challenges as lone institutional agents of change. Rather that we play together in a full ecosystem. As potentially trusted agents of opportunity and equitable growth, universities as anchor institutions best serve the public good when we eschew the goal of competitive, individualistic success (embedded in

¹⁹ Cantor, N. & Schomberg, S. (March/April 2003). Poised Between Two Worlds: The University as Monastery and Marketplace, *EDUCAUSE Review* 38 (2), 12-21.

²⁰ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/14/business/nobel-economics.html>.

the rankings war, for example) and embrace a collaborative model of what I call “stackable institutions” to maximize impact. As Boyer noted: “The team approach, which seems so necessary for individuals, applies to institutions, too.” He also called for “Diversity with dignity in American higher education – a national network of higher learning institutions in which each college and university takes pride in its own distinctive mission and seeks to complement rather than imitate others.”

This fourth dimension of institutional transformation into actors within an ecosystem inevitably means even more of a democratization of higher education. This means working together across the continuum of educational impact (pre-K-20) and across types of institutions (school districts, community colleges, universities), as well as across sectors (private-public, educational-business-non-profit), and across locations (schools, prisons, neighborhood centers, libraries) to enlarge the circle of opportunity. Additionally, as we broaden this reach, we redefine place-based work as expansive not only in its networks of actors and institutions but also in the resonance of its implications, from local to national to global. We are seeing this resonance, for example, in the engagement of global partners in the Anchor Institutions Task Force and the desire to form similar task forces in Europe, South Africa, and beyond.²¹ The reach of the Talloires Network of community-engaged institutions around the globe serves as testimony to the relevance and richness of such ecosystems of transforming universities and communities.²²

Institutionalizing the University as Public Good Identity

As important as is the progress being made so far, the real work ahead of all of us is to honor Boyer’s vision of *Scholarship Reconsidered* by demonstrating that we can make the whole more than the sum of the parts. That is, we need to enact all aspects of his enriched model of scholarship at once by weaving the four dimensions of transformation that I have outlined here all together into one institutional identity. In this regard, I think we are all still at the early stages of transformation, as we work to weave what I would call a public-good identity across our institutions. To do so requires not only the proverbial “top down” commitments, but as importantly (if not more importantly), a broadly endorsed mandate from faculty, staff, students, community partners, governing structures, alumni, and so on. In this regard, Boyer, as usual, had an acute eye for who really wields the influence in such transformation. He said, on one hand, that “Indeed, the president, more than any other person, can give shape and direction to a college and create a climate in which priorities of the professoriate can be appropriately considered. Does the president, for example, push the campus primarily toward national recognition or serving local needs?” Yet, he wisely knew where the real power resides, providing this caveat to top-down leadership: “But when all is said and done, faculty themselves must assume the primary responsibility for giving scholarship a richer, more vital meaning.” I could not agree more, though I would, as I suspect he would too, expand the agents of change to students, staff, and especially to partners and influencers outside the institution – that is, to the public voice of change.

²¹ See Sjur Bergen and Ira Harkavy (Eds). *Higher Education for Diversity, Social Inclusion and Community: A Democratic Imperative*, Council of Europe Higher Education Series No. 22, Council of Europe, August 2018.

²² <https://talloiresnetwork.tufts.edu/>.

At the very least, half of the task that Boyer laid out for higher education in *Scholarship Reconsidered* and in all of his prodigious work was about changing who sits at our tables, which in turn defines what we reward as important work, and who we work with, both inside and outside the (hopefully more porous) boundaries of our institutions. Bringing a full and fair representation of the world – and empowering their authentic voices and work at those tables – is perhaps the most important transformation that we can take on, especially if we want to be fulsome, productive partners with communities, at home and abroad. Achieving this, however, will take much deliberate, sometimes risky moves by both leadership in our institutions and even more from the full inter-generational “community of scholars” who really define institutional identity, mores, and practices, as Boyer noted. In this regard, as I said earlier, it takes a village to achieve such transformation, and at the risk of local parochialism, I will end here with a brief description of how our team at Rutgers-Newark is trying to live into this fulsome task.

Institutionalizing the Diverse Urban Anchor Institution Identity at Rutgers-Newark.

Specifically, I see the work that we have been doing at Rutgers-Newark as an attempt to tie all four aspects of transformation together via the institutional identity as an anchor institution committed to creating social mobility and public impact as two sides of a single coin – equitable growth. When we are at our best, and I won’t hesitate to say that the work routinely involves two steps forward and twenty back, this equitable growth identity permeates top-down and sideways in the institution and in the community. It informs the diversity of the backgrounds of the academic leadership we hire and the publicly engaged faculty that departments recruit. It underlies the commitments we make to hiring local citizens and procuring our goods from local women, minority, and veteran-owned businesses. It energizes the research centers we support including those providing data and new models to City Hall, and those using evidence-based research to advocate state wide for social justice. For example, this work includes support of undocumented populations, of those entangled in the criminal justice system, of the need for diverse and inclusive public schools, to name a few of the arenas of our faculty’s publicly engaged scholarship and advocacy.²³ This takes on another level of complexity and reward in the multiple citywide, cross-sector collective action tables that our faculty and staff work tirelessly on with partners from all corners of the city. These include: the Newark City of Learning Collaborative, the City’s Equitable Growth Commission, the Newark 2020 Hire-Buy-Live Local Collective, the Newark Public Safety Collaborative, and Express Newark: A University-Community Arts Collaboratory, located in 50,000 square feet of co-creation in downtown Newark.²⁴

As we do this long-term work on a daily basis, the strength of the voices and narratives of the citizens of Newark buoy us, and the legacies passed on teach us how to build an equitable, vibrant future. Highlighting those voices and those legacies is so much of what we need to do as co-creators of change in a seamless two-way street between Rutgers-Newark and Newark. This is so clear when our faculty, students, and staff team up with the Newark Public Library and the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice in our AACU-supported Center for Truth, Racial Healing,

²³ <http://theinclusionproject.rutgers.edu/>.

²⁴ See a summary article on many of our anchor institution engagements, *Tackling “The Two Americas” with City-Wide Collaboration in Newark*, in Volume 2, 2019 of AITF’s [Journal of Anchor Institutions and Communities](#). See also, <https://www.expressnewark.org/>.

and Transformation,²⁵ holding inter-generational dialogue circles and community artists' events in the *Healing Sounds of Newark*²⁶ all around the city. It is what happens when the archivists of our world-renowned Institute of Jazz Studies and our Creative Writing faculty and graduate students team up with the jazz artists and arts presenters of Newark's New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJ PAC) and the educators of the Newark Public schools. It is through sessions in library stacks, school and college classrooms, senior centers, and big stage performances that we will live in to the generations of homegrown stars who have defined Newark's remarkable jazz/poetry tradition.²⁷ It is often all about raising the voices already there, which brings me to the kinds of major commitments that travel the other direction of the two-way street – from community into the university.

In this regard, there has been a real team effort at Rutgers-Newark to understand what genuine inclusion is all about locally, and globally. Our team has been very deliberate in trying to set and reset our institutional table to bring the broad public inside, as well as taking our show “outside” (even as we eschew those geographical boundaries). For example, when we made a significant institutional commitment to create what others have called a “revolutionary” Honors Living Learning Community (HLLC),²⁸ it was dedicated to *local citizenship in a global world* and accordingly recruits a highly diverse set of students on the basis of their social justice leadership potential to engage and change the equity map, locally, nationally, and globally. These future leaders include local citizens, 61% Newark residents, from a city whose ethnic-racial make-up ties it to generations of American migration, and to immigration from all over the world. They include those journeying on a pathway at odds with the typical stranglehold on the private gains of higher education of inter-generational wealth and privilege, as 76% of the HLLC students are Pell eligible, 46% are first generation, and 30% are community college transfers. These students bring the authentic knowledge of lived experience, including but not limited to having been in prison, living with the fears of an undocumented family, representing faith communities often shunned as outsiders, aging out of foster care, and raising families of their own. Their lived knowledge and insights empower pedagogy, scholarship, and community engagement with a strong dose of reality and with the optimism of perseverance, as faculty from across the institution who teach and learn with them attest.

As proud as we are of the extraordinarily diverse generation of talented citizen-leaders that HLLC is already cultivating, and we are proud of them, what is most inspiring is that they are indeed not extraordinary. They are not rare birds fitting the “exceptional child” model. Instead, we see such local talent with global roots and vision for an equitable future all over our region as we are finding out when we make institution-wide commitments to reset our table. That is happening with our RUN to the TOP financial aid program (providing last-in full tuition and fees to any Newark resident or NJ Community College Associate Degree transfer with an

²⁵ <https://www.aacu.org/trht-campus-centers>.

²⁶ www.newark.rutgers.edu/events/healing-sounds-newark.

²⁷ www.newark.rutgers.edu/news/listen-njpac-rutgers-newark-amplify-newark-voices-through-jazz-and-poetry-15-million-andrew-w.

²⁸ *The New York Times* featured the Honors Living-Learning Community (HLLC) in a May 22, 2018 story by David Kirp, concluding, “Imagine what would happen if this model went nationwide.” (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/22/opinion/honors-college-rutgers.html>). See also the PBS NewsHour report, Oct 16, 2018, https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/at-this-college-academic-excellence-requires-passion-for-the-social-good#.W8cuH_YpC60.

adjusted family income of \$60,000 or below). This program has helped us increase the representation of students from Newark at Rutgers-Newark to 14.5% of the undergraduates (a hundred percent increase since 2013). It is happening with our multi-faceted institutional programs for financial aid and legal and social support of our Undocumented students, in line with NJ's landscape as the third most immigrant-dense state in the nation. We have grown substantially the support and opportunities for NJ Dreamers with the on-the-ground advocacy and engagement of students, faculty in our legal clinics, student affairs staff, and partners in the immigrant rights advocacy community.²⁹ Similarly, our NJ-STEP prison education program, coordinating multiple "stackable institutions" across the state to teach in seven NJ prison facilities, is also bringing generations of formerly incarcerated students to gain BA degrees at Rutgers.³⁰ Working together with non-profit groups like the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice and the Vera Institute, our publicly-engaged faculty and staff in NJ-STEP advocate for voting rights, train re-entry entrepreneurs, and push the state and our nation to step to the plate and provide equitable growth pathways, especially for those from communities of color disproportionately experiencing the criminal justice system.

One of the most inspiring aspects of these institutional efforts to reset the table of educational and economic opportunity is that they create what I would call the positive virtuous cycle, attracting similarly diverse and widely experienced faculty and community partners who willingly team with these next generation students to change the nature of our disciplinary habits as well. More and more, faculty from across the disciplines, from STEM to STEAM, from law to data science, from business to urban affairs, want to come to collaborate to form "communities of experts, with and without pedigrees," as I like to call our answer to Harry Boyte's wise reprimand of the academe's "cult of the expert."³¹ This seamlessness between community and university in the pursuit of publicly engaged scholarship and justice is evident here every day. For instance, we experienced it firsthand when the Humanities Action Lab, whose home is at Rutgers-Newark, supported a global network of faculty teaming up with frontline communities to produce digital content about *Climates of Injustice*.³² As part of that global project, our students and faculty collaborated with climate activists and community organizers in the Ironbound neighborhood of Newark, a local destination for generations of global immigrants, including many whose progeny have been educated with us. A virtuous cycle indeed, and one that we believe instantiates what Ernest Boyer called a richer, more vital form of scholarship – encompassing discovery, integration, application, and pedagogy, as one united endeavor – and I would add, an endeavor worthy of the public trust in the value of universities.

Blurring the Line between Private Gain and Public Good

As we work on creating this ecosystem of educational opportunity and anchor institution engagement, the line between private gain (for some) and public good (for all) blurs, as does the false distinction between education for a career and education for citizenship, between scholarship and service, between research and pedagogy, between local and global. Indeed, Boyer argued that higher education had a responsibility to enable students to live responsibly,

²⁹ <https://law.rutgers.edu/rutgers-immigrant-community-assistance-project-ricap>

³⁰ <https://njstep.newark.rutgers.edu/about/>.

³¹ Harry C. Boyte, Civic Agency and the Cult of the Expert, *Kettering Foundation Report*, 2009.

³² See <https://www.humanitiesactionlab.org/climatesofinequality>.

and he characterized that mandate as follows: “This point, properly understood, warns against making too great a distinction between careerism and the liberal arts, between self-benefit and service.” Once again, I would extend, as I suspect he would too, this eschewing of false distinctions to all of us in a full community of scholars and partners and institutions and locations.

Ultimately, if we succeed in living in to these four intertwined aspects of a model of a university aimed toward maximizing the public good, then we will come closer to what Boyer envisioned in *Scholarship Reconsidered*. As he said, “A new vision of scholarship is required, one dedicated not only to the renewal of the academy but, ultimately, to the renewal of society itself.” It also means that the aim of equitable growth in communities is to spread the map of opportunity as widely as possible, redefining quality and merit as inclusive not exclusive, and recognizing the dynamics of progressive growth that takes a windy, often non-linear, road toward progress in the face of entrenched institutional practices and historically defined community challenges. This is at the end of the day, hard but worthwhile work, and I deeply believe that we owe it to Boyer to try to make it happen.