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ORIGINAL PAPER

Student Experiences of the Adolescent Diversion Project: A Community-Based Exemplar in the Pedagogy of Service-Learning

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Abstract Service-learning partnerships between universities and surrounding communities striving to create systems-level change must consider an emphasis in critical community service; a community centered paradigm where students are taught to work with communities to better understand contexts surrounding a social problem, as opposed to merely volunteering to provide a service to a community. The Adolescent Diversion Project (ADP), which has been operating for over 30 years, demonstrates critical community service through the type of relationship built between students and the local community. This article describes: a qualitative study with ADP students, the historical context of ADP, what and how students learned through their involvement in ADP, and reframes the work of this project as a form of service-learning pedagogy. Inductive content analysis was employed to identify underlying themes across participants related to their personal experiences of ADP and its impact in their lives. Findings were compared with service-learning outcomes and other quantitative studies conducted with past ADP cohorts from the literature. Consistent with past studies, ADP students become more negative toward social systems involved with their youth. This finding may explain an increase in feelings of political commitment following involvement in ADP. Consistent with service-learning outcomes, results demonstrate that ADP should be further documented as not only an effective community-based program but also as an exemplar in the pedagogy of service-learning. This study highlights why service-learning opportunities for students are not just one way to teach students, they are opportunities to bridge relationships within communities, bring life to theoretical concepts, and build the foundations necessary for educated citizens that will one day take lead roles in our society.

Keywords Adolescent diversion project · Service-learning · Community-based program · Campus-community partnerships · Alternatives to juvenile justice system

Introduction

Colleges and universities are settings within communities that are rich with resources. Historically, however, the most prominent pedagogical models used in these institutions have served to separate instructional styles and settings from communities (Davydd and Levin 2000). Within the United States, there has recently been call for a shift in this relationship (Edwards and Marullo 1999). There have been many presses for higher education in the United States to develop students' abilities in ways that produce more active learning and a more diverse set of skills. In short, there has been a call for more relevant educational models, not only for their own sakes, but for the enhanced learning that is purported to occur. It is hoped that the knowledge and skills learned in interactive and applied venues will assist students in participating in a free and democratic society. It has also been suggested that such instructional models will facilitate more productive, culturally sensitive, and responsible citizens (Edwards and Foley 1998). As it has been realized that colleges and universities can assist in such domains (Harkavy 1996), they are becoming more connected to their communities. This is evidenced by the

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fact that universities all over the US are opening university-outreach centers to further promote university-community collaborations (Lerner and Simon 1998; Kenny et al. 2002). Today, colleges and universities are more poised than ever to use educational methods that promote critical thinking, interpersonal interaction skills, problem solving, and conflict resolution abilities. One method of teaching such skills has been through the pedagogy of service-learning (Gronski and Pigg 2000). While there is little doubt that "service-learning" is becoming more popular, the scientific basis for advocating the impact of such models is less robust.

As described in this special issue, service-learning is a method of teaching, learning and reflecting broadly defined as a credit-bearing educational experience in which students link the academic with the practical through participating in an organized service activity that meets identified academic and community needs. Through this experience "students reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility." (Bringle and Hatcher 1996, p. 22) It has been suggested that this teaching pedagogy provides many benefits to students (Markus et al. 1993; Mettetal and Bryant 1996; Reeb et al. 1998) including increased critical thinking, practical problem solving, and enhanced learning of academic course content. The experience of service-learning is also expected to influence career preparation, awareness of community problems, and the connection of theory to practice (Bringle and Kremer 1993; Cohen and Kinsey 1994; Giles and Eyler 1994; Hesser 1995; Markus et al. 1993; Weschsler and Fogel 1995).

Within the service learning model, the interests of both the students and the community are of equal concern. It has been suggested that the foundation of any service learning experience will be a university/community partnership (Ruch and Trani 1990; Kezar and Rhoads 2001). These partnerships are aimed at providing mutual benefit and enhancing the potential for dynamic change. Namely, such partnerships are aimed at providing better educational outcomes, better community outcomes, and leveraged resources for all members of the partnership through systemic change (Morton 1995). Service-learning partnerships that seek to create systems-level change and provide some type of benefit to the community emphasize critical community service; a community centered paradigm where students are taught to work in partnership *with* their communities (Freire 1970; Rhodes 1997; Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2000).

Given the relative newness of this paradigm, it is imperative then that service-learning projects that exemplify the "working *with* communities" paradigm be documented and carefully scrutinized. Since they imply a "new way of doing business" for the university community, it will be important to scientifically demonstrate the relative efficacy of this model. In the spirit of this special issue, which seeks to highlight the pedagogy of service learning and its efficacy, this article, will describe the Adolescent Diversion Project (ADP) and its impact on both its students and the community over the past three and a half decades. The remainder of this article will seek to describe the development of a relatively longstanding service learning model and present previous and current findings about its impact on the students as learners, delinquent youth as recipients of intervention, and the community within which the service learning model has operated.

The Michigan State University Adolescent Diversion Project

Brief History

In any project that has been in operation this long, it is important to provide some information about the context of its beginnings. Since the late 1960s, alternatives to the justice system for juvenile offenders have been sought. This search grew out of concerns about ineffective and inefficient correctional practices, violation of constitutional rights, and concerns for humane treatments of offenders (Davidson et al. 2000). At the inception of the ADP in the early 1970s, there had been an increase in juvenile crime and an increased public awareness of the problem. (e.g., Hudzik 1984). It was in this socio-political-theoretical context that the ADP began.

Theoretical developments contemporary to the beginning of the ADP service learning model were dominated by three lines of thought. First, social learning was extremely prominent and held the promise of successful interventions for even the most difficult social issues, like juvenile delinquency (e.g., Davidson and Seidman 1975). If all behavior, including criminal behavior, operated according to the principles of learning theory, then rehabilitation was not only possible, but plausible. Further, specific interventions within the natural environment, rather than distant institutional interventions, were indicated. For if all behavior was a function of its context, through the processes of social learning, rehabilitation or retraining in artificial environments was not likely to have lasting effects. If it was the specific role models and environmental contingencies present in the real life situations of delinquent youth that produced crime, than intervention in the natural environment of youth was indicated.

Second, social conflict models argued for the importance of differential distribution of social and economic resources in producing crime (e.g., Davidson and Rapp

1976). Based in the Chicago School of Sociology (e.g., Merton 1969), it was observed that many social problems, including delinquency, were most prevalent where differential access to pro and antisocial resources was available. Namely, all youth in our culture are given equal access to awareness of desirable life outcomes, yet the means to attain these outcomes are very unevenly distributed.

Third, symbolic interactionism, as detailed specifically in social labeling theory, was employed to explain the role of traditional justice systems interventions in *increasing* crime. Seminal work done by Martin Gold (Gold 1970) had raised the ironic possibility that apprehension and intervention by the juvenile justice system increased, rather than decreased future crime. It was suggested that labeling mechanisms, both those labels attached by the system and those accepted by the apprehended youth, led to future criminal activity. The theoretical mechanism employed to explain these effects was not only differential self and other views, but differential expectations and surveillance.

It is also important to understand developments within the academy which were occurring. The seeds for the current service learning movement were being sown. In terms of specific events relevant to the development of the ADP, it is important to understand the role of community psychology. Community psychology was rapidly becoming an active sub-discipline of psychology. With the development of this new perspective on community health and well-being came demands for increased relevance. Specific models of involving the academy, its science and its students, in community issues were developing. Seidman and Rappaport (1974) had articulated an "educational pyramid" as one particular model. It is within this specific model that the ADP was originally developed. A group of researchers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, in collaboration with the local community, designed the original ADP model (Davidson et al. 1977). Based on that original model, the MSU ADP was designed and it will be the topic of this article.

Specific Design of the ADP Model

What brought Michigan State University (MSU) and the local community together was the crisis in juvenile justice. It has been described as having three components. First, juvenile crime represented a threat to community safety and local government expenditures. For example, nationally it is estimated that more than two million juvenile delinquents are arrested each year (Onifade et al. 2008). Second, in response to the crime rate, communities are expending increasingly scarce resources. Recent national estimates indicate that nearly $20 billion are spent supporting the multiple facets of the juvenile justice system (Onifade et al. 2008). Third, most traditional attempts to reduce juvenile crime have been found ineffective. Only under rather specific conditions, described as "evidence based practice," is it reasonable to expect that interventions would result in reductions in crime.

Faced with the juvenile justice crisis, a group from MSU, the Ingham County Juvenile Court, and the Ingham County community began a collaboration which would become known as the ADP. The group was made up of faculty and graduate students from MSU, administrators and staff from the local Juvenile Court, and representatives of the local community. This group sought to design and validate an intervention model, which would jointly engage the University, and the community, provide an effective alternative intervention for juvenile delinquency, and provide a platform for long term sustainability of the partnership. This activity is congruent with MSU's mission statement, approved by the Board of Trustees on April 18, 2008: "…As a public, research-intensive, land-grant university funded in part by the state of Michigan, our mission is to advance knowledge and transform lives by…advancing outreach, engagement, and economic development activities that are innovative, research-driven, and lead to a better quality of life for individuals and communities, at home and around the world."

Service-Learning Pedagogy in Practice

General Overview

ADP is a strengths-based, community-based and university-run project that arose out of significant community-level needs to identify cost-effective alternatives to primary service delivery systems. Youth are referred to avoid further involvement with the courts. Due to the fact that the project employs undergraduate students as advocates for the youth, it also provides a hands-on learning experience for undergraduate students taking Psychology credits. ADP is an intensive program where there is constant peer-support, discussion, and reflection for students. Although ADP was born prior to the term service-learning receiving widespread use, from the criteria by which service-learning is defined and conceptualized, it seems clear that the ADP should be discussed and considered among the remarkable teaching pedagogy of service-learning being conducted in universities today.

Hence, ADP is an alternative to formal processing of juveniles in the justice system. The primary goal of the project is to provide quality community-based service to local youth in legal jeopardy with the juvenile justice system and the primary aim of its activities is to keep local youth out of the formal court system. Other community-level goals of the project are: to develop the self-advocacy skills of the youth, to provide families alternative models

of conflict resolution, to establish or reestablish the youth's positive identity and relationship with their community, and increase the youth's access to resources in their community. Basic values of the program include: building on the youths strengths, providing needed resources for the youth, maintaining open communication and confidentiality, working in the youth's natural environment, and avoiding victim blaming. All of the activities of the project are based on this value system, and in order for the student change agents to be effective, it is critical that student volunteers adhere to these values.

This partnership has gone through three distinct phases. In the demonstration/research phase, the partnership sought research funding to support the initiation of a model program, which would draw on the joint resources of the community and the University. As a result, four federal grants were written and funded to establish a model intervention program and to scientifically examine its efficacy.

During this phase, the University contributed faculty and student time, theoretical and intervention information, and research and methodological acumen. The community provided a setting, organizational support, referrals of juvenile offenders from the local juvenile court as an alternative to court processing (diversion), experiential expertise, and access to records. The key community partners were the chief Juvenile Court judge, the Court administrator, the Chief of Police, commissioners from the County Board, and probation officers from the Intake Division of the Juvenile Court. The judiciary, administrators, and commissioners served in an advisory capacity for project and intervention design. The probation officers provided referrals to the ADP as an alternative to court processing and assisted with training students. The community received a new program for juvenile offenders, high quality information about its efficacy, and participation in a joint research venture. They had high expectations about the positive impact on their community, the opportunity to lower juvenile justice costs, and the opportunity to examine the efficacy of their practices with scientific rigor.

University partners included faculty and graduate students from the Psychology Department as well as the administrators who supported these efforts. They worked with the advisory group to design a model intervention based on best practice principles which would be implemented by undergraduate students. They also designed a manual that would be used to train the students. A federal research grant was sought and received to support this initial phase.

The grant supported the training and supervision of the students who worked one-on-one with juveniles referred by the Intake Division as an alternative to court processing (standard probation or residential treatment) as well as research on the effects on the community (reduced crime), the students (learning and future careers), and the justice system. The undergraduate students were involved in a new, two-semester course in which they received 3 h of weekly training and supervision for their community work. They were trained and supervised in delivering a hybrid of child advocacy and behavioral interventions (Davidson and Rapp 1976; Davidson et al. 1990, 2000).

Impact of ADP

The grants supported three research agendas: (1) examination of the processes and efficacy of the intervention model compared to placement on probation; (2) examination of the impact of the educational experience on the students involved; and (3) examination of the impact of the new alternative to the justice system on that system itself. Congruent with the three-pronged mission of MSU, the ADP sought to generate scientifically credible information about intervention efficacy, provide unique and expanded educational experiences for graduate and undergraduate students, and expand its outreach/engagement mission to an underserved area (juvenile justice).

Impact on the Community

There have been two impacts on the community partners. The first is that the ADP has resulted in a safer community. During the first two phases of the ADP, four sequential experimental comparisons of the project demonstrated that youth who participated in ADP had recidivism rates half that of a control group randomly assigned to usual treatment or outright release. These results have been reported in detail in Davidson et al. (1990) and Smith et al. 2004. Further, ADP participants attended school at a 63% rate in a 2 year follow-up compared to a 26% rate in the control group. Similar recidivism results were produced when MSU students were compared with community college students, community volunteers, and probation. The ADP model has shown substantial effects on community outcomes. The second community impact was fiscal. When local community expenditures for youth places on probation are compared to the cost of the ADP, there were direct savings of approximately $5,000. Over the course of the partnership, ADP has saved the local community over $20,000,000. In times of tight resources, this is a major accomplishment.

Impact on the System

The field of service learning often alludes to the degree to which these joint projects will impact the very system in

which they are imbedded. A third area of investigation of the impact of the ADP model was systemic. We conducted an extensive study of the local juvenile court from 1974 through 1990. How systems make decisions (in this case, dispositional decisions), is often seen as an indication of system functioning. The court system's allocation of resources to cases with particular characteristics, by deciding which cases to process, is an indication of system operation. The initiation of ADP added a dispositional option to the court system. It this way, it was intended to have direct systemic impact by providing an alternative. At the point of intake decisions, prior to the inception of ADP, the court had two dispositional options—dismiss or place on probation. Following the inception of ADP, the court had three dispositional options—dismiss, refer to ADP, or place on probation. We modeled the decision making process before and after the inception of ADP. These results have been presented in detail elsewhere (Davidson et al. 1990) and will be summarized here.

A random sample of cases, stratified by month, was drawn for the years before and following the inception of ADP. Demographic, criminal history, school performance, and extant crime variables were coded for each case and statistical decision models were developed for each time period. This research produced two key findings. First, the vast majority of youth referred to ADP were from the group who would have been predicted to receive probation based on the pre-ADP decision model. This was important to check that the alternative disposition was in fact an alternative to court processing. This was one of the intended systemic effects of the new model. However, a minority of cases would have been predicted to come from the released group. This indicated that in a small number of cases, court decision makers "expanded the net" to include youth they would have otherwise released.

Second, the result of extracting "probation cases" from the court's caseload meant that the court's resources could be more efficiently focused. Again, one of the systems level goals of this partnership was to relieve the pressure on the juvenile court through the use of an alternative model which used less expensive and more effective intervention models (the ADP model).This research demonstrated that the introduction of the diversion program allowed more efficient targeting of court resources.

In short, this preliminary examination of the systemic effects indicated that inserting the ADP model into an ongoing community court had the intended systemic effects. This "third tier" of examining the effects of service learning provided encouraging, and often ignored effects. Many service-learning models are inserted into existing community systems. It is important that the effects at the systems level are specified and systematically examined.

Impact on Students

Given that a major focus of this volume is on service-learning models, considerably more attention will be paid here to the details of the pedagogy and its impact on the students involved. First, an in-depth description of the ADP course process will be described and then specific attention will be given to the impact that ADP has had in the lives of students.

Description of ADP Service-Learning Curriculum

Pedagogically, ADP provides a two semester service learning experience focused on providing undergraduate students an educational experience which supports knowledge of the individual and social causes of delinquency, the importance of community resources, the importance of specific skill development, and the opportunity to apply formal educational knowledge. The structure of the ADP provides intense small group training in community intervention and advocacy. The ADP provides a context in which graduate students can learn to structure educational environments which are skill based, create alternatives for the solution of community problems, and provide an active context for research.

The ADP's collaboration with the community is based on a "together we can do more than either can accomplish alone" philosophy. Through joint planning and programming the ADP stimulates the sharing of resources to address serious community concerns. The dual concerns of truly effective alternatives and collaboration guide the specific activities. Both the local community and the University contribute resources to the ongoing research and development of an alternative that saves money and reduces crime.

There are a large number of people involved in the operation of the project and the structure of the project mirrors the structure of the educational pyramid. There are the college undergraduate student change agents, the trainers/supervisors, the project director, and the sponsoring faculty. The undergraduate student change agents furnish the critical ingredients of providing quality service to the youth in the local community. The student change agents are trained and work within a two semester, 30 week service-learning course experience and receive four credits per semester. The students participate in training and supervision in weekly two and a half hour class sessions in small groups of six to eight students.

Trainers/supervisors (graduate students) teach anywhere from two to four courses per semester. Within each class there is a lead trainer/supervisor and an assistant (TA). The TA is usually a student who has more recently successfully completed the course and is viewed as a resource to the

students. Trainers/supervisors conduct the class meetings where the volunteers learn the curriculum and discuss practical issues. The project director supervises the trainers/supervisors throughout the project, oversees the project implementation, and maintains the collaborative relationship with the courts. The sponsoring faculty advisor acts as an advocate for the project in the context of the university department in which it is housed, oversees the project's research, evaluation, and maintains the collaborative relationships with the local community.

Intervention activities are carried out entirely by the efforts of undergraduate college students who are trained as change agents and supervised by ADP staff. These students enroll in a two-term course sequence. A new sequence is started each semester throughout the year so that the project is available for referrals from the court year around. Training is rigorous and consists of assigned readings, weekly written and oral quizzes, in-class assignments, role play exercises, and homework. The aim of such a highly structured training program is to develop in students skills pertinent for working with adolescents and their families in a community setting. This in-depth, practice oriented training component differentiates the ADP from most other programs that work with juveniles and use volunteer or paraprofessional workers. In our experience, it also makes it a rather unique service-learning model. Further, the careful monitoring of each student's progress and grasp of intervention techniques promotes the training of competent student change agents.

The first component of the curriculum of the training/supervisory sessions occurs in the first 9 weeks of the two semester course. This component of the curriculum provides students with structured activities to train them on effective methods of intervention with adolescents who come into contact with the justice system. These weeks are focused on training students to think within a paradigm of advocacy and conflict resolution (behavioral contracting) through the use of a predetermined curriculum and a series of activities (Davidson and Rapp 1976; Davidson et al. 1990). Each of the training and supervision sessions lasts for two and a half hours. Attendance is mandatory at all of these training/supervision sessions because it is expected that the mutual discussion and input that occur within these sessions have an important impact on the work of the volunteers with individual youth.

Student change agents are trained to understand human behavior and delinquency through two models, behavioral and environmental. The environmental model emphasizes the importance of the youth's situation in determining his/her actions and asserts that the change that needs to occur in the youth's life is within the youth's environment. The behavioral model promotes conflict resolution techniques, effective communication, and negotiation skills among the advocate, the youth, and significant others in the youth's life. The advocacy model emphasizes that delinquency is possible among all youth and that the reasons that youth become labeled delinquent is due to the fact that they do not have the necessary resources available to them. This model promotes that student change agents assist their youth in learning how to secure access to and obtain resources to fulfill their unmet needs. It is typically used to help the youth establish more constructive and positive relationships at home with parents and/or siblings, through the application of effective communication and negotiation skills taught to the youth and parents by the student. The community advocacy approach helps the youth identify and gain access to various community resources that she/he is interested in. Some of the more common advocacy areas are employment, education, and constructive recreational activities. It is expected that these models will allow change agents to arm their youth and their families with the skills they need to thrive through the interpersonal and societal challenges of life as well as assist the youth in positively framing their work with their youth.

In addition to learning these two intervention approaches, students are trained in skills and techniques to assist them throughout the intervention. The skills gained are associated with the four major stages that each case moves through over 18 weeks. These skills include: (1) administering a strength-based needs assessment; (2) implementation of specific intervention strategies; (3) developing monitoring charts for goal completion and troubleshooting; and (4) case termination strategies aimed specifically at shifting the major responsibilities of the change agent to the youth's family in order to carry out further positive changes once the intervention has ended. Techniques that students are trained on are used to foster trust and confidence with the youth, such as: empathy training, conflict resolution, crisis management, emotional expression (i.e., anger management, constructive verbal communication through feelings), confidentiality, positive reinforcement, and creative thinking.

Today, the major elements of the training curriculum/project manual include students gaining an understanding of: (1) the values and goals of ADP, (2) the Environmental Resource Conception of human behavior and delinquency, (3) the Advocacy Model, (4) human behavior and behavior change strategies, (5) how to put it all together in practice, (6) environmental assessment, (7) child advocacy and behavioral change models, (8) collaborative transfer, and (9) cultural competency.

ADP also provides students with experiences in the training that will help them prepare for graduate school. During the First Semester, students are required to research, design, and present to their class a presentation that focuses on providing information about a specific

adolescent problem (i.e., teenage depression, drugs, sexual assault, etc.). The class presentation consists of a power point presentation, a guest speaker, and a brochure that provides information on the presentation topic. The homework assignments during the training require students to reflect on course reading material and become familiar with American Psychological Association (APA) writing requirements through writing short thought papers after each class session. In addition, students are required to complete 10 h of community service by the end of the first semester.

Toward the end of the formal training segment of the course sequence, students are assigned a specific youth case. The class sessions switch from being a training session to being a confidential alternative setting for small group discussion. Groups meet weekly, for 2–3 h, during which time students report on their intervention activities over the past week, receive feedback from their fellow classmates and supervisors, and establish goals for the upcoming week's intervention activities. These supervised groups provide a forum for students to share and to learn from the experiences of each other. In addition, this format allows staff to maintain continuous, detailed information about each student's intervention activities. Further, all students are provided with the supervisor's home telephone numbers and are encouraged to contact supervisors for additional advice or supervision, aside from the weekly supervised meetings, if necessary. Past research has indicated that this intensive small group supervision format is an essential factor in the success of the ADP (Davidson et al. 1990). This frequent and intensive supervision of cases is a characteristic that distinguishes the ADP from most other volunteer programs for juvenile offenders.

Once assigned to a particular youth, the student is required to spend 6–8 h a week two times per week, for a series of 18 weeks, working directly with or on behalf of his/her youth. Students are instructed to apply the material and skills learned during training to their specific case. The students' role becomes that of a change agent and advocate for their youth. They work closely with the youth and his/her family in identifying goal areas as targets for intervention and assist them in accomplishing those goals. The intervention plan for each case is individually tailored to meet the needs of that youth and family. For instance, emphasis of some students' intervention activities might involve teaching the youth and his/her parents effective problem-solving and communication skills that will enable them to negotiate and solve problems in their relationships. The intervention activities of other students might focus primarily on teaching the youth how to be an effective self-advocate within her/his community so that he/she can successfully obtain desired resources through appropriate means. Typically, students use a combination of both approaches over the course of their 18-week involvement with the youth and family. The student's primary objective is not to solve specific problems for their youths, but rather to teach their youth and his/her family effective, general skills that they can use on their own once their involvement with the ADP has ended. A basic premise held by ADP is that adolescents who have skills in resolving interpersonal problems and skills in obtaining desired community resources will be less likely to engage in illegal activities. The project's goal is to train youths in these skills so that they are equipped with effective methods of dealing with problems and situations that they inevitably will confront in the course of everyday life.

As mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, the ADP is distinct because of the specific, intensive training and supervision of intervention activities; the intensive, frequent involvement with each youth; and because of its multi-faceted nature which addresses several areas of the youth's lives. In addition to these essential components, another aspect of the program which is believed to contribute to its effectiveness involves the ADP adherence to a positive, pro-active intervention approach. All intervention activities focus upon positive and constructive aspects of the youth's lives. Interventions are designed to develop and build upon the youth's strengths and abilities, helping them to achieve a more positive orientation toward their environment. This intervention approach has been found to be the most productive and effective approach with youthful offenders (Davidson et al. 1990). Consequently, the students do not focus their intervention activities directly on the youth's delinquent or problematic behaviors.

In order for meaningful and significant changes to occur and be maintained, it is essential that the student becomes deeply involved with the youths' natural environment. The programmatic implications of this are that all intervention activities are carried out entirely in the youth's natural environment. Each student spends a great deal of time with the youth in his/her neighborhood. During the early stages of his/her involvement, the students develop close relationships with the youth's entire family. Often, the student meets and engages in recreational activities with the youth's friends as well. Further, he/she may involve school counselors and/or teachers, prospective employers, or anyone else who would help fulfill the specific needs of the youth and accomplish intervention goals. This deliberate involvement with the youth's natural environment facilitates meaningful changes and increases the likelihood that such changes will endure after the youth's involvement with the ADP has ended.

To keep records and the progress of each intervention, each student is required to turn in a weekly progress of the case each week. Keep an updated log of the intervention, turn in a Mid-intervention report as well as a Termination

report. Intervention liaisons will check each case three times throughout the intervention unbeknownst to the student change agent. These visits include liaisons going directly to the youth's homes to get their view and/or account of the intervention.

Evidence of Personal Growth in Service-Learning: Overview of Published Research Several recent quantitative studies of service learning in the criminal justice context have reported a variety of favorable outcomes in their students through service-learning experiences. Students gained a greater understanding of youth experiences (Lersch 1997; Penn 2003; Pompa 2002; Situ 1997; Swanson et al. 1997; Vigorita 2002). Students demonstrated a shift in attitudes regarding punishment and rehabilitation (Swanson et al. 1997; Vigorita 2002). Students further developed their career goals and were more likely to enter human service professions upon graduation (Penn 2003; Situ 1997), and students developed cultural competency from working within diverse settings (Lersch 1997; Pompa 2002; Situ 1997; Swanson et al. 1997; Vigorita 2002).

Consistent with the more general results on the impact of service learning on students, several studies have been conducted within the ADP model. The first of these compared a group of students who had participated in ADP with randomly assigned control groups. Kantrowitz et al. (1982) found that immediately following the ADP experience, ADP students had more positive attitudes towards youth and families and more negative attitudes towards the school, court, and educational systems compared to the control group. Further, their grades in courses other than ADP were significantly higher. In a later study using the same design, Angelique et al. (2002) found that ADP students felt more empowered in terms of their social change capacity, their career goals, and their chances for post secondary education.

Second, McVeigh et al. (1984) conducted a follow-up 2 years post undergraduate degree completion. They examined student attitudes, future educational attainment, and future career accomplishments compared to controls. The results indicated that students maintained their favorable attitudes towards youth and families, were more likely to gain entry to graduate education, and more likely to have a job in a human service field.

Recent Qualitative Study of Student Service-Learning Experiences

Background

Most recently, we have undertaken a qualitative study to examine in more depth the experience of the ADP service-learning model, and, since this work has not been published elsewhere, it will be described in considerable detail here. A qualitative approach adds rich depth to our understanding of how students experience the service learning model. In the work that has been done to date, researchers have noted shifts between pre and post-measures of self-perceptions, attitudes toward service groups, graduate school admission, and career goal attainment. Specifically, qualitative research on service learning in context of higher learning has revealed this experience enhances students' educational goal achievement and satisfaction with goal identification. A recent qualitative study (Hirschinger-Blank and Markowitz 2006) of service learning with juvenile justice to date supported and elaborated on these findings. Content analysis of student responses to interviews and focus group participation indicated that direct contact with detained youth contributed to a breakdown of negative stereotypes associated with juveniles in the justice system. The students also revealed that upon exiting the program, they felt better equipped to work with justice-involved youth. This contributed to students stating they had gained greater insight on future career goals in the human service field working with youth. The students were also able to better grasp the contextual nature of delinquency and account for systemic factors that play a role in the existence of this social problem. This study sought to answer two main qualitative research questions: (1) What do students learn from the ADP experience? and (2) How does program design influence student learning?

Method

Although there have been a series of quantitative studies conducted in order to understand what students gain from ADP, there has never been an in-depth attempt at understanding their experiences. Therefore, qualitative interviewing methods were used because they allow us to understand participants' experiences by providing a firm grasp of the issues at hand, while also providing the ability to move beyond preconceived notions. To gain an understanding of how students' involvement in ADP has impacted their learning experience and personal development, individual interviews was the method used to bring together and accentuate the personal stories of these students (Patton 2002).

Participants

In the summer of 2007 we conducted systematic interviews with half of the students who had been in ADP the prior two semesters. Out of a total of 24, the sample included 12 students. Ten of the students were female and 2 were male. All were single and their ages ranged from 21 to 24

(mean = 21). Nine students were white, 2 were black, and 1 was Hispanic. All students reflected the middle range of socio-economic strata. In regards to students' academic work, their GPA's ranged from 3.0 to 3.5, they were all full-time students, and all students were Psychology majors. All but one student worked part-time, and all but one student had been involved in some volunteer work in the human services field. All interviews took place over the phone.

Measures and Procedures

A semi-structured outline was the basis of these interviews and it reflected the theoretical domains highlighted in the above described quantitative studies. The interview focused on: (1) impact on career goals, (2) impact on desire to go to graduate school, and (3) impact on systems thinking (Mitchell et al. 1980; McVeigh et al. 1984; Davidson et al. 1990; Angelique et al. 2002).

The retrospective interview questions focused on understanding how students' involvement in the project impacted their learning experience and their personal development (i.e., Thinking back on your experiences of ADP, what are the most important things you feel that you learned from the project?, What makes that important to you?, Do you feel you have applied the information you have learned from the project in your life? If so, how? Did your experience in this project have an effect on your career goals? How? Has your experience in this project differed from your experiences in other courses at MSU? If so, how?).

The interviewer took extensive notes during the interviews and typed up summary sheets for each after listening to a digital recording of them. As the interviewer typed the summary sheets for each interview, open coding occurred where information pertaining to the areas of inquiry was extracted and summarized. From these open codes, themes emerged. The digital recordings served as back-up data sources so that exact quotes could be used for evidence supporting a category.

Although a brief review of the literature on the ADP was conducted prior to the creation of the interview protocol, a formal literature review prior to analysis was not conducted by the coding and analysis team since reading past research could "bias the researcher's thinking" (Patton 2002, p. 226). Cross-case analysis was used. Codes and categories were discussed in weekly team meetings to gain inter-coder reliability. Common themes emerged across the transcripts creating categories that were then organized into a hierarchical framework.

Authenticating the Data and Results

A couple of techniques were implemented to ensure that the findings are transferable between the researcher and those being studied. One technique involved team meetings where codes were discussed and agreed upon, which built up to the finalized coding framework. This enhanced the reliability of the results because one person's biases did not infiltrate the analysis. A second technique used to gain external heterogeneity involved merging codes that were similar to make sure that each category diverged from one another.

Results and Discussion

The students interviewed about the *impact* of their experiences in the project on their *educational and personal development* all confirmed that ADP was a positive and beneficial experience. Students enter the program for various reasons but in the end students leave the program with a unique learning experience. Students learned about themselves, gained a greater awareness of the world in which they live, and received a more realistic view of their potential career paths. More specifically, students learned the importance of considering multiple diverse perspectives and became more conscious of the problems in social systems with regard to service systems and the impact of social inequality on people's lives.

When students were asked to discuss how they learned all they did from their time in the project, although training within the classroom was viewed as necessary, students reported learning mostly through hands-on community involvement and small discussion-based classes. Within the scope of the hands-on work, learning occurred through continuous cycles of applying concepts, thinking critically, learning through experience and reflection. Many of the lessons students learned from their work as change agents in the community seemed to have translated from specific scenarios in their cases to other more broad lessons to live by in other aspects of their lives.

What Students Learn from the ADP Experience

In order to gain an understanding of students' experiences in ADP, they were asked to reflect on their time in the project and to talk about what they feel were the most important things they learned from the project. Overall, the responses of most of the students varied depending on the personal backgrounds that individual students brought with them into the course, but throughout the project students described that the most important things they learned in the project was (1) *about themselves* and (2) *gaining a greater awareness of the world* in which they live.

Students Learned About Themselves

What students *learned* about *themselves* throughout their time in the project was something very personal to each

student. Although all students that become a student of ADP are undergraduates and close in age, they are at different stages in their lives and come from different racial/ethnic backgrounds in the Midwest. These differing backgrounds and perspectives among students are reflected in their responses to what they feel they learned about themselves. One student commented that the project changed him by stating specifically that *"[this experience] changed me"*. Seven out of twelve students' responses fell under this theme. These responses varied from learning to be more responsible, to being patient, to learning to interact with people of different races; to feeling they are now a more informed citizen.

> Having that responsibility of having to meet with my youth and the stuff on the side showed me a stronger sense of responsibility which I thought I was lacking. It's important because I'm about to graduate from college and I'm gonna have to start paying back my loans, and I'm gonna have to step up and learn how to be more responsible.

> I think it will help me with voting, and as a citizen, as far as it related to underprivileged youth, and their families, and the courts system, and education; just the whole thing! I have a whole new perspective on this that I will take with me as a person.

This is consistent with the literature on service-learning that finds that service-learning has the potential to offer students opportunities to develop a number of different competencies and skills, such as: conflict resolution, time-management, and team building (e.g., Olney et al. 2006; Tucker et al. 1998). In some cases, a student's background had much to do with how much they needed to learn about themselves, their role within social systems, and the influence they have on the world.

Gained a Greater Awareness of the World

Just as students learned things that were specific to their personal experiences at this time in their lives, many students described how they also discussed gaining a *greater awareness of the world* in which they live. Students gained this greater awareness through learning first hand that there are *multiple diverse perspectives that must be considered*, by becoming *increasingly conscious of the problems within the social system*, and through getting a *more realistic view of potential career paths*.

> It gave me a broader sense of the world and I was really thankful to see that because, it's like, the different lives people live, and I am not ignorant to it anymore.

Multiple Diverse Perspectives Must be Considered When asked to describe the *most important things* they learned from the ADP, seven out of twelve students stated learning how important it is to consider diverse perspectives. Students of ADP read about and discuss the role of diversity in the context of an intervention throughout 2 weeks of their training, but knowing that we live in a society rich with diversity is one thing, and learning first-hand how those differences actually play out in real life is another. Applying the concepts of cultural diversity discussed in the classroom with their lived experiences of diverse perspectives in their interventions was vital in their gaining a full understanding of these concepts. Some students who experience ADP come from affluent neighborhoods and communities, and for some students, having to work with youth and their families that come from very different backgrounds than their own was an eye opening experience:

> Seeing a different side of society that I don't usually associate…I think it's really important to appreciate different peoples cultures and realize what people are going through, and what makes people who they are…just to know what else is out there.

Gaining this more in-depth awareness that there are multiple realities and perspectives in existence to consider in any situation require students to think more critically when in the midst of their interventions as change agents. Students are given a lot of freedom in their casework throughout each week and this work requires them to do a lot of 'thinking on their feet'. Students learn rather quickly that the work they do has little to do with themselves, aside from the fact that they must know their role in any given situation and be able to apply fairly quickly the guidelines, techniques, and skills they learned in their training as change agents. Some students discussed learning how important they felt it was for them to gain a complete understanding of their youth's environment and background in order to do their job well.

> You get to understand them and their family and their cultures and then you have to figure out what's different about their environment, distance yourself to immerse yourself in there to understand who they are as a person.

Moreover, students recognized that this was not only in relation to their work as a change agent for ADP; these lessons could be translated to other aspects of their lives as well:

> Everyone comes from a different background and not everyone views things the same way. So, always be very open when you get into a situation because you

> never know what's going to happen or what to expect. You might react very differently than someone else might to something because of different backgrounds.

These findings resonate with research in the service-learning arena that have found that service-learning increases students' capacity to see the world from multiple perspectives as well as apply the knowledge they gain from one setting to another (Eyler and Giles 1999; Eyler et al. 2001). Understanding how important it is that multiple perspectives need to be considered in various contexts and situations is an important quality for students to gain for their future careers and in their everyday maneuvering as empathic citizens in our increasingly complex world.

Increased Consciousness of Problems with Social Systems Many students described learning that they have become *more conscious of the problems with social systems*. As stated earlier, students enter ADP from various backgrounds, and yet even across those differences, although the level of dissatisfaction with the different aspects of the social system varied, a general dissatisfaction with social systems is a prominent theme across all students. This finding is consistent with earlier experimental studies conducted on ADP that found that project change agents became more negative toward the social systems involved with their clients when compared with controls (Davidson et al. 1990). The problems that students discussed being more conscious of were regarding *service systems* and *social inequality.*

Insights Regarding Service Systems Students are trained in ADP to think from a systems perspective. They are also taught how to create strategies for working with various systems that their youth may become involved with (e.g., schools, courts, community mental health) in order to meet the needs of their youth. So it is not completely unexpected that students would become *more aware of service systems* and how they function. Although students are trained to think this way, the lessons learned in the classroom were confirmed by their experiences in the community, and it is these lived experiences that have shaped the lessons they will take with them into the world. All twelve students mentioned gaining insights regarding service systems:

> I always knew that some things were really ineffective and didn't work well but I started to see how the… school district just fails students, like, there's a lot of bureaucracy and how it really does hurt people. I feel like I have more of an intimate knowledge of it. It's one of those things you know but…but since I've worked with a student now like helping him with his homework, I see how their educational experience is quite different from mine and it's kind of sad. I think I now understand more of how the system works.

The personal perspectives that students bring with them into this project, along with the unique experiences brought on by the differing youth cases, inevitably influence the depth of dissatisfaction they have with various service systems. Some students discussed how they already knew that service systems were inadequate, and others who seemed to be dealing with service systems for the first time, experienced a larger shift in perspective. There were some students that described their personal experiences with service systems and others that discussed how the problems they experienced in their case spanned other cases in their class:

> How school systems have been. I mean, there were some students in my class that had such a hard time with the schools. I've never thought of school systems so complicated and having people be so hard to get a hold of.

Such dissatisfaction with service systems from personal experiences could be compounded when hearing up to eight cases worth of weekly frustrations with various social service systems. These weekly reminders of the problems that exist in society from their peers and their own cases may have also contributed to deep emotional reactions associated with their experiences. Some students expressed the frustration they experienced once they began to realize how systems functioned:

> During the training I learned about service systems and the courts systems. I learned about how much the court system is ill equipped to actually meet the needs of the youths. The system…it's just not good enough. There are so many things that are stupid and backwards. It frustrated me, and I couldn't deal with it. As a career, I would just get too mad and want to change everything.

The negative emotional reactions to social systems could be why past longitudinal studies of ADP students have found that many ADP graduates go into human service careers (McVeigh et al. 1984). Although this research found that students' negative attitudes toward service systems did not persist over a 2-year follow up, it is interesting none the less that they were more likely to end up in human service professions. Interestingly, literature on service-learning demonstrates that service-learning is associated with a greater likelihood that students will plan to, and become involved in service-related careers after college (Moely et al. 2002; Fenzel and Peyrot 2005). This bend toward working on service-related professions could be due to the fact that students become increasingly aware of the

problems with social systems, feel an increased commitment to the social issues identified in their work as change agents, and decide whether or not to continue to work in human service. Clearly they also have experiences which make them attractive job applicants.

Comprehending Social Inequality An important level of awareness that was gained by nine of the twelve students was a deeper consciousness of social inequality and its impact on people's lives. In addition to training the systems perspective, ADP stresses the important role that one's environment plays in a person's life. Much of this is learned in the classroom through discussing the Environmental Resources Conception of Juvenile Delinquency and root causes of social problems, such as poverty and discrimination. Student change agents are trained to assess the youth's needs and work within a local context; they are required to work within the youth's natural environment. We can only speculate as to what may have caused students to be more attuned to social inequalities and how it impacts people's lives, but from the comments made by students, it appears that they were able to make the connection of what they learned in the classroom to what they saw happening in the lives of their youth.

> I now think that the environment influences people more. I really just think that being disadvantaged and not having resources available really impacts a person's life and how that person's life turns out to be. I just think that if my youth were in a more financially supportive environment then she would probably not have gone through as many hardships as she did. I don't think she's really that different from I am except for her financial situation…

Learning how the social systems work in relation to their youth's life is one way in which students applied what they learned about social inequality and it impact on people's lives, and others reflected on their own social situation in relation to such inequalities. One student described their personal process of discovering how social inequality works through service systems in quite some detail:

> I think I grew up in a low crime area where no one got in trouble besides a detention or something. I thought the cops were your friends, parents were your friends, that the legal system is there to help you, sort of that whole parental thing, that 'Dad knows best' kind of thinking. I thought the courts functioned in everyone's best interest, but then I started to see the problems like we need a budget and we're short staffed, and that there were gaps in what they could offer versus what the youth actually needed. It's just so flawed. I learned to be more skeptical about decisions made and the legal system, and sort of how much parents are engaged in kids lives and how that ties back into the courts…that whole cycle of making decisions for others, when it came to my youth. It all really helped me to think very critically about all that stuff.

As this student states explicitly, the experience of working for the ADP facilitated critical thinking around the objectives of existing systemic structures and the power they have when they are in a position to make decisions for others; and in this case their youth. This particular student underwent a considerable shift in perspective from feeling that service systems are there to assist people to then feeling that service systems should be questioned. Although not all students experienced this vast shift in perspective, all of them did to some extent. This shift in thinking about service systems and the existence of social inequality could also be due to the fact that students are trained in the ADP on what it means to "Blame the Victim" (Ryan 1976) and how regularly it happens in our culture.

These findings are consistent with the literature in service-learning identifying that student outcomes include improvements in attitudes regarding social responsibility (Astin and Sax 1998; Eyler and Giles 1999; Eyler et al. 2001; Markus et al. 1993; Myers-Lipton 1996a, b; Reeb et al. 1998; Reeb 2006; Vogelgesang and Astin 2000). More specifically, this literature found improvements in social awareness, social justice, and a decline in racist views. It is possible that students' insights regarding the appalling functioning of social service systems and the existence of social inequality may provide further understanding for why students of the ADP in the past have experienced an increase in feelings of political commitment (Angelique et al. 2002). This study also found students had a decreased sense of political efficacy compared to students randomly assigned to a control group. Although these students have gained an experiential perspective on deep seeded social issues that might spark a desire for larger acts of advocacy and political involvement, they may also feel that the problems are too big to be able to change. Future longitudinal research with ADP students could identify if these feelings and insights change over time and why.

Getting a Realistic View of Potential Career Paths As students were learning about the importance of being open-minded to diverse perspectives and how services and social systems discriminately have the potential to severely harm people's lives, four of the twelve students were also getting a *more realistic view of their potential career paths*. By coming into contact with the various service systems they

had to work with as a change agent, they were exposed to a number of people that helped them to see what various careers might be like in the real world. Two students learned that they really liked what they were doing:

> The entire 18 weeks of the advocacy has reaffirmed my passion for working with children.

> I just think that it has prepared me to work towards being a school psychologist. Helped me to see what to expect.

Two other students realized that this career option was not the right one for them:

> This experience has kind of opened my eyes up and made me questions the goals that I had previously and now I want to make sure this is something I can handle doing. I learned to work with systems and how challenging that is. Working with the school system has been huge because I didn't realize how difficult that would be. Also that if I do go into counseling, that getting too emotionally involved is probably not the best idea…Becoming too attached could be really dangerous. I learned that maybe I'm not that prepared to work that closely with people… Definitely been an eye opener. I really love it but I take it home with me and I need to learn to separate the two.

> I learned I do not want to work in the psychology field. So I switched to business. That sounds horrible but it really was an invaluable experience. I loved my youth but I learned that I can't leave my work at work; I take it home with me. I think I might go crazy if I did this as a career. I'm glad I learned that now as opposed to later.

Gaining more of a realistic view of what life in a service agency like community mental health, a court, or working as a school psychologist, was mentioned by ten of the students. Some students mentioned that they had decided to work for ADP because they wanted a more hands-on and applied learning experience. As is gleaned from some of their comments here, for some, this experience was quite helpful in their ability to make more informed decisions about their future career and educational goals. Interestingly, while previous quantitative research studies examining the long-term impacts of ADP on its graduates have found that ADP graduates are more likely to spend more time in human service positions than non-ADP graduates, they also found that there were no effects on subsequent career choice, graduate school plans, or subsequent volunteer activities (Davidson et al. 1990). This is surprising given the reasons why students joined ADP and some of the comments mentioned here, but this study varies substantially from previous studies.

Students in the ADP learned many things about who they are, where they come from, the community in which they now live, and how their social system really works. Students learned first-hand the importance of considering diverse perspectives, how important social context is in relation to social problems, and learned what life could be like on various career paths. Interestingly, these findings are consistent with the qualitative studies that were done in the developing stages of the ADP when it was housed at UIUC. Although it seems evident that the ADP training curriculum provided students with a strong framework with which to view their experiences in the community, students generated their own conclusions based mostly on their hands-on work in the community and their small group discussions in class.

How Program Design Influenced Student Learning

Students have gained a more in-depth understanding of the ADP curriculum, and with important lessons being learned, it is also important to identify just how students feel that this knowledge has been gained from ADP. All of this learning takes place throughout their involvement in this project but mostly students reported that this learning and insight primarily occurs through their *being a change agent in the community* and through *small group discussions in class*.

Learning Through Application: Being a Change Agent in the Community

When students were asked to explain *how* they learned what they did in the ADP, eleven of the twelve students overwhelmingly discussed how their hands-on work being a change agent in the community was the way they learned as much as they did in the project. Many students credited the training portion of the course to providing them with the important information they needed in order to be effective change agents but still felt that they would not have learned as much without the community-based work:

> The training really helped …but a lot of it was mostly the hands on and hearing a lot of people talk about their cases. I think that without training we all would have just fallen flat on our faces.

> The real learning is when I did the intervention. That's where I learned the most. Having the little bit of class learning was good but 90% of what I learned I learned on the job.

Much of what students learn in the classroom is based on hypothetical case examples and role-playing certain techniques and scenarios. This is valuable for getting

students into the habit of using the information they are learning, and when different material is most appropriate to use, but being able to go out and actually do what they learned out in the community with real unpredictable situations was where comprehension of the material was obtained, where critical thinking occurred, and where some insights were gained. Some students discussed how working with the youth specifically helped them to learn the most. Applying what they learned from the classroom to their work as change agents in the community (or as advocates for their youth) was the real test:

> It's kind of like playing baseball in theory and then going out and playing it. Even in the classroom you think you may know but once you're actually out there you find that you don't know as much as you thought…. I learned how to improvise, to have things sort of come naturally and not knowing how to deal with the situation. Sometimes I wish I would have handled something differently but that's because that type of thing will get better over time and with experience but you're always evaluating and trying to do better.

The learning through application that students speak of is similar to action learning. Action learning occurs through real problem solving and taking action on real problems in real time and learning while doing so (Marquardt 1999). This method of learning also includes elements of reflection on one's actions in order to improve performance in the future. This is why it has become one of the most utilized methods of developing leaders among some of the most successful corporations in the world (Marquardt 1999). With such successful entities identifying the benefits of applied action learning, and others identifying the limitations of more traditional teaching methods, such as lectures (Felder 1993), it seems relevant to consider incorporating more applied teaching methods into higher education. Interestingly, action learning regards the act of reflection, team work, and coaching as important elements of its methods.

Reflection and Interaction: Small Group Discussions in Class

Being a change agent in the community was an important aspect of students' learning experience in ADP but this learning was also accompanied by weekly small group discussion class sessions that were of critical importance for eleven of the students interviewed. There was one student who preferred lecture classes to smaller classes but all other students discussed the importance of having this time and place to learn from each other, ask questions, and discuss their cases. Students described various benefits of these alternative confidential settings:

> Definitely way more rewarding and way more beneficial…the small class discussions were more intense and more enjoyable, in my opinion. I probably should have gone to a smaller school. Just the experience you get in learning about your youth and yourself and learning what they need and how to help them has been a really cool experience. If I could do it again then I would.

Students spoke of the benefits of the small groups in different ways. Some students described small groups as a comfortable environment to be themselves, a place to get to know new people, and a place to learn from peers and get advice. Throughout the benefits mentioned about the small group sessions, it's the quality of the interaction that shines through:

> It was radically different. It was nothing like any other class. Having a group of 6–7 students with one instructor with a TA was a huge difference. The quality of that interaction was far above any other class and I think I get to know my instructors better in this class than in any other class, sort of as people and as resources, as people I could contact when I have a question, whereas usually teachers are usually just there to lecture and not do anything else.

Since students are bound to their class group by a contract of confidentiality, these small groups are the only places where they are allowed to discuss their cases. Aside from writing in their project journals or calling a peer or instructor over the phone, these discussion sessions once a week are the only places where questions can be asked, experiences can be shared, and advice can be offered by either an instructor or their peers. These small group discussion sessions provide a unique space for reflection, planning, and discussion that cannot occur in any other way throughout the project. From the overwhelming response by students of the importance of these groups in the project overall, this finding coincides with the literature in that reflection is a key component to any service-learning experience (Hatcher and Bringle 1997). Future research should consider the importance of small group discussion for students and work to identify the specific benefits gained from such discussions. Findings of this kind could better inform instructors in how to best facilitate and structure their class sessions.

Students were able to learn important life lessons from their experiences in ADP. As mentioned by students, much of the learning occurred through the applied work as change agents in the community and through the small group discussion sessions they participated in for class. The

applied learning that is discussed reflects some of the literature on action learning, which is a teaching pedagogy that has more recently gained momentum in corporate America. In thinking further about the pedagogy of service-learning, given the benefits described by students in this study, the teaching methods employed by the ADP should be taken seriously as training recommendations for other service-learning projects and partnerships.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Conclusions and lessons learned from over three decades of experience with the service-learning based ADP model occurred at multiple levels. At the level of the Partnership, all parties had to learn new roles in order to allow the partnership to occur. The University faculty and students had to expand their roles to include actual involvement and presence in the community, participation in a peer rather than "expert-client" relationship, and, maybe most importantly, patience. These are unique role behaviors within a traditional faculty position, community organization staff, and advisory board member. The community partners also had to engage in new role behaviors, including making decisions based on scientifically sound best practice rather than experiential judgment, sharing resources with a previously "un-trusted" academic institution, and allowing students to share in professional roles. They too had to learn patience with the "slow pace of science." Only with these ingredients was the partnership successful. Planfulness and perseverance in pursuing such innovative partnerships is essential since they will not be developed and maintained in a short time frame.

At the level of the service-learning model the lessons learned were many. The research outcomes clearly demonstrated that the amalgam of service learning, community collaboration, and systematic intervention can yield positive outcomes at several levels. The use of intense, time limited, one-on-one, model specific interventions can produce significant results on recidivism and school performance. Further, the use of proactive training *and* supervision of intervention activities is critical to producing robust results. In other words, it may be that specific models of service learning need careful articulation and investigation. Experientially, the students confirmed that the service-learning model had major impact on their education experience, their self views, and their perceived potency as change agents. Systemically, the ADP model also highlights the need for examining the organizational level effects of service learning models. Having direct impact on system functioning and use of resources were closely examined and demonstrated.

Much of the research on the ADP has been quantitative in nature and qualitative assessments of program elements could provide more in-depth understanding of the impact of the program among students and the youth. The findings from this qualitative study clearly indicated significant positive outcomes in graduate school planning, and preparing students for the real world, and previous studies examining the impact of ADP on student volunteers have also demonstrated other positive outcomes. Given the difference in findings between previous quantitative studies of students and the current findings, future research should examine the long-term impact of ADP qualitatively with a different sample of students. In addition, while it is clear that the impact of ADP on youth recidivism rates has been positive, future research should also involve a qualitative assessment of the impact of ADP and advocates on the youth to identify a more detailed account of what the youth are gaining from the experience. These kinds of studies could aid in identifying how to improve or enhance the applications of what is learned in the classroom and potentially improve the quality of the intervention.

At the level of innovation sustainability, several principles also emerged. While the ADP model has been fortunate to sustain for three plus decades, the benefit from this long term perspective sheds light on the potential complexity of such educational innovation. A long term challenge for university-community involvements has often been their perceived temporary nature. This has produced accurate suspicion on the part of the community towards entanglements with the academy. Unrealistic expectations for rapid results and answers on the part of the community have resulted in appropriate apprehension of community involvement by university faculty. The ADP model represents a long term commitment on the part of both partners to problem solution, careful investigation, and ultimate implementation. For such models to survive, it appears vital to include methods that will produce scientifically sound information about outcomes and cost, socially meaningful and systematic educational experiences, and a careful articulation of short and long term goals. In today's fiscally tight world, a major asset in the struggle for continued funding is having unequivocal information. Making a real impact at multiple levels and being able to demonstrate it are assets for the community and the university. In today's increasingly demanding academic environment, the potential for quality and publishable science is paramount. Educationally, the society and our students are rightly demanding value for their investment.

It is also important that sustainability and dissemination be planned as part of the service-learning model from the outset. Without this as a part of the initial plan, continuation after the end of the federal funding would have been

much more difficult. The mutual commitment to the long term also sets in motion a very different set of dynamics for the service learning model. Rather than awaiting the end of the grant, the writing of the final report, or the end of the course, a long term commitment entails a sequential problem solving process. It must also be recognized that some service-learning models may not produce such positive results at multiple levels and for the multiple stakeholders and may, appropriately, have shorter life spans. Careful monitoring of processes and outcomes at multiple levels is essential to an ongoing determination of model value for each of the parties.

It is also critical to involve key stakeholders in the innovation plan from its inception. Because the ADP engaged key community stakeholders (judiciary, staff, community members, county commissioners) from the beginning, commitment to sustainability was facilitated. This is in stark contrast to more common "internship placement" models in which universities turn over educational experiences to staff in existing community organizations in a much more narrow fashion. The model described in this article engaged both the university and the community in an ongoing process of information exchange and joint operation. Such a context provides a unique setting within which a service-learning model can make unique contributions and survive.

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