

Voices from the Field
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Barbara A. Holland, Ted Howard, and Andrew J. Seligsohn

Abstract

Urban and metropolitan areas face unique challenges in serving the multifaceted needs of their communities, but also have advantages that create some of the world's greatest universities. Three scholars opened the 2017 CUMU Annual Conference with "Voices from the Field." Each spoke to the changing role of urban-serving institutions and the place-based advantages CUMU members have in enriching their communities while strengthening the universities' core commitments.

CUMU advisor Barbara A. Holland, Holland Consulting, described the changing role of higher education and highlighted the distinct and powerful advantages urban-based higher education institutions have in shaping the success of the metropolitan areas they collectively serve.

Ted Howard, The Democracy Collaborative, encouraged universities to move beyond current place-making initiatives and to adopt The Anchor Mission, distilling lessons from CUMU members who are pioneering new approaches to anchor mission work to have greater impacts on their institutions and communities.

Andrew Seligsohn, Campus Compact, reflected on the inter-connected nature of two of higher education's missions: (a) educating students for democracy; and (b) carrying out their anchor mission, as well as the impact of a civically-engaged student body on creating sustainable change in our communities.

Barbara A. Holland: The Urban Advantage

Higher education is well into an era of dramatic change at every level of organization, operations, culture and mission. Looking across the landscape of the United States in specifically, this is a time when there are large and extraordinary differences in how individual universities are responding to the need to embrace change and innovation. Some institutions are taking bold actions, while others are hunkering down and hoping that they can ride through current challenges without major internal changes. The latter institutions will not thrive going forward, in part because even more change is ahead. Institutions that are recognizing the opportunities presented in a time of change will thrive and I believe there is ample evidence that the most successful will be those in urban and metropolitan contexts.

CUMU member institutions have always been innovative thinkers in part because most campuses are chronically under-funded and, therefore, creativity, imagination and experimentation have always been valued highly in our campus culture. Going back in history,

many new ideas and improvements in higher education began on America's urban/metropolitan campuses. In particular, the massive expansion of access to higher education in the post-WWII era accelerated the transition of the U.S. from a rural to an urbanized nation; a trend which is happening again today with the large influx of young adults choosing to move into post-industrial cities where they can find affordable housing, cultural diversity, entrepreneurial environments and further education, among other assets.

In this context, it is clear that there is a distinct and powerful advantage to being an urban-based higher education institution, and a corollary disadvantage to being rural and remote.

Features of the Urban Advantage

The benefits of urbanity align with the major challenges for improvement and renewal in higher education performance, effectiveness, and impact, internally and externally. These actions and strategies include the need: (a) to improve student success; (b) create productive and high impact learning environments for all students; (c) ensure broad access, attract/retain/develop a new generation of faculty and staff; (d) engage our teaching, learning and research activities with issues and opportunities of our region; (e) contribute to economic progress; and (d) develop partnerships and strategies that lead to new streams of funding and capacity, and more.

So what about an urban/metropolitan location creates these advantages?

- **People:** diversity of culture, experience, race, language, age, expectations and ambitions (85% of all people on earth live in urban spaces)
- **Concentration of broad societal issues:** large-scale access to learning through action; ensures student access to multiple hands-on learning experiences, internships, engagement, employment
- **Economic and innovation hub:** rich with partnership opportunities – business, industry and other sectors generate collaborative research opportunities, discovery/application, graduate employment
- **Political and philanthropic hub:** access to influential leaders and organizations as well as an array of intellectual and financial resources for research and partnerships
- **Arts/Creativity hub:** Broad and diverse forms of creative activity enrich urban culture, social fabric and the economy
- **Academic Pathways:** community colleges, private institutions, research universities...the full array of educational settings encourages access and contributes to social capital and equity of opportunity
- **Communications/technology access and innovation:** the classroom can be in many settings relating to every discipline; faculty can collaborate locally, regionally and globally through strong, reliable communications systems.
- **Transportation hub:** easy access to the world; sustained collaboration with global partners enhances teaching and research impacts; local/international expertise and discovery leads to new industries and other assets to the city and its academic institutions

Today's reality is that some rurally-located campuses are struggling to sustain enrollment and a robust and diverse academic workforce. Students and new generation faculty alike are drawn to

institutions in metropolitan regions because they seek access to partnerships and experiences that are not available in remote communities. The challenges of the globe play out in every urban region. More than just a laboratory for research and learning, these challenges inspire us to think anew about how we organize our assets and capacity, in concert with others, to identify solutions that will inform a hopeful future.

Summary

The changes that are emerging are extensive and inevitable, but beyond the challenges of leading change, the new directions are positive and exciting. There is considerable reason to be optimistic about the future of urban and metropolitan institutions because we are changing already, even if we don't always recognize it. Change is already well underway and it is leading us toward a model characterized by collaboration and impact.

- Teaching/learning/research are coming together as blended activities, rather than competing with each other. This increases our capacity for partnerships internally and externally.
- Students are increasingly involved in active learning strategies that enhance community capacity for progress and action. Students are our best public representatives and will contribute to the renewal of public regard for higher education
- New-generation academics are creating a new academic culture based on organization around Q's and ideas that involve partnerships across disciplines and other sectors. Many of you probably already have a body of faculty and staff that are comprised of about 40% Gen X and Millennials. Some may be even higher. Research reveals these faculty will create a new, public-facing academic culture that may also help restore higher education as an invaluable resource for local and global progress and well-being.

There is strong alignment between these emerging changes and situational context. Urban/Metro institutions are in a sweet spot, and many are already innovating and adapting to a new academic culture that includes greater emphasis on student success and cross-sector opportunities to work on challenging questions that challenge our world and require networks of intellectual resources to identify workable solutions.

This organization of urban and metropolitan universities has an extraordinary and exciting future that is unfolding before us at this conference. Society's current challenges around economy, equity, opportunity and health in a context of safe, productive and civil communities require a strong and engaged higher education sector to inform and stimulate progress and social capital. In an urbanized nation, it will be the urban and metropolitan institutions that lead the way toward a new era when higher education sector is once again at the table as an asset to progress and equity.

I have no doubt many of your institutions will be prominent leaders in renewing the social contract between higher education and society in the coming years. You have set a path for progress that is exciting, inspiring, hopeful and optimistic, and for good reasons.

Thank you for your leadership.

Ted Howard: The Anchor Mission

As everyone at this conference is well aware, the days when a university could be separate from or ignore the community in which it is based are long gone.

Over the past 20 years, the trajectory of higher education has been toward greater levels of engagement with community. In these two decades, we have seen the advent of volunteering and service learning, academically based community service and research, the creation of community engagement and outreach centers on our campuses, many forms of community partnerships, K-12 initiatives, and here and there a bit of university-led economic development (retail, housing, and so forth). Admittedly, much of this aims to create better campus districts for students, staff and faculty, not necessarily to meet the needs of the community.

We have also seen in recent years a growing trend toward multi-anchor engagement, in which universities collaborate on place-making with healthcare institutions, local philanthropy, and municipal government.

The next major development for higher education is now beginning to pick up momentum: leveraging and harmonizing ALL of the assets of the institution to benefit community.

We call this *The Anchor Mission*. This is a term of art that The Democracy Collaborative coined around the year 2010. We define it as:

A commitment to intentionally apply an institution's place-based economic power and human capital in partnership with community to mutually benefit the long-term well-being of both.

In other words, to align all of the functions of a university, from teaching and research to procurement, hiring, and treasury/investment policies, to produce ever-greater benefit to the places where we are rooted—anchored—and from which we do not exit. This innovation for our field is an orientation for acting. As university leaders at all levels begin standing for and expressing their Anchor Mission, new questions arise, and new answers appear. We become more serious and accountable regarding what we expect from ourselves and our institutions.

A particular emphasis of the Anchor Mission is on economic inclusion: ensuring that all residents of the community, including those most disadvantaged or marginalized, are included in the economy and its growth. Economic inclusion is an asset-based approach to development, with a strong emphasis of focus on those neighborhoods and areas of our community that are most challenged. Localizing our supply chains, our hiring practices, and our investment portfolios is at the very heart of how universities can contribute to a more inclusive, resilient, and vibrant local economy.

By altering our business model and corporate culture around the Anchor Mission, we begin moving our engagement to higher levels of meaning and impact. From:

- Doing some good things for and with the community, in effect a charitable impulse... to
- Making a real and measureable impact in the community in a few select areas, such as helping to improve a local school... to
- Being accountable for *all* of our functions and assets and how they can be deployed to produce positive impacts on our communities, not as charity, but as sound business practice that can also benefit our own institutions—a win-win for the institution and for the community.

At The Democracy Collaborative, for the past three years we have been participating with six universities through our Anchor Dashboard Learning Cohort. Our goal is to learn how to improve performance and measure impact through the implementation of an Anchor Mission strategy. These six universities, Rutgers-Newark, Drexel, Virginia Commonwealth, Buffalo State, Cleveland State, and Missouri-St. Louis, are pioneering new approaches to go all in for mission—the Anchor Mission.

One of the participants in the Anchor Dashboard Learning Cohort, Peter Englot, Senior Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs and Chief of Staff at Rutgers University-Newark, puts it this way:

Our understanding of the anchor mission was that it is incumbent upon us as a place-based, urban university to leverage our intellectual, human, and material capital in partnership with others across sectors of our community to make a collective impact on addressing the challenges facing our community... We understood this to be not just good for our community, but to improve our scholarship and education.

The opportunity for our communities is enormous, but still largely untapped. Across our nation, place-based universities employ 4 million people, purchase \$43 billion of goods and services year-in, year-out, and have endowments and investment portfolios of \$515 billion. Only a small percentage of this economic power is now deployed to strengthen our communities, but imagine the possibilities as more of our institutions begin to adopt an Anchor Mission framework.

Let me give you two examples of how one university and one health system are beginning to think about and implement their Anchor Mission.

Drexel University in Philadelphia (Figure 1) now sees the totality of its Anchor Mission in this way:



Figure 1. Three-fold integration of university missions to support the Anchor Mission.

Note how the core functions of Service, Academics, and Institutional Investment are all integrated and connected to one another and to community—rather than siloed off and not interacting with one another. Using this framework, all of the functions of the university are engaged in a robust conversation about how they can carry out their work in ways that benefit the community, as well as the institution.

Another model (Figure 2) of Anchor Mission implementation has been created by Kaiser Permanente, one of the nation’s largest health systems:

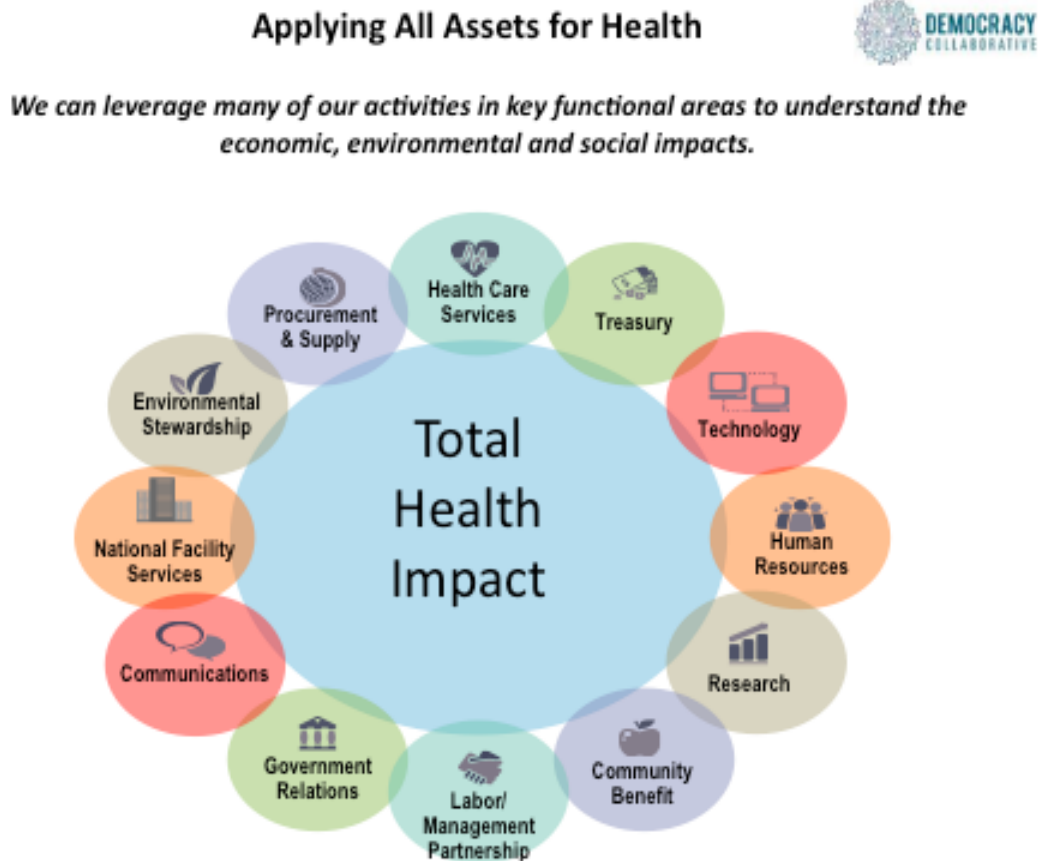


Figure 2. Assets to support an Anchor Mission.

Again, notice how Kaiser Permanente is seeking to integrate and leverage all of their functions and assets—from their IT and communications programs to their health care delivery and their supply chain—to create healthier communities.

Within the Anchor Mission framework, everything is included and nothing is left out.

Let me conclude by suggesting to you why the Anchor Mission matters.

For Our Institutions

Universities are sticky capital. We are rooted in place. We are in our communities for the long-haul. It is simply not in our self-interest to be based in communities that aren’t thriving, resilient, sustainable. Properly focused, our economic power and human capital can be important contributors to a stronger and more inclusive community. And by implementing an Anchor

Mission, we can improve our institutions, our teaching, our research, and the experience for our students, our staff, and our faculty.

For Our Communities

Many of our communities are hurting, particularly inner city and inner ring suburbs of communities of color. The statistics are stark and must be addressed head on if we are serious about ensuring a thriving and inclusive economy and meaningful democracy.

- Over the past decade, fully 90% of our core urban areas have seen disinvestment and destabilization grow;
- In the most productive and largest economy the world has ever seen, 22% of America's children live in poverty, a percentage that has not changed since 1960;
- The number of people living in concentrated poverty has doubled from 7 million to 14 million since 2000, and nearly 50 million of us live below the Federal poverty line;
- White median net wealth in the US is thirteen times greater than African American net wealth and ten times greater than Latino net wealth.

In my view, our institutions cannot succeed in the long-term if our communities are failing. We rise and fall together. This reality is at the heart of the Anchor Mission.

For Our Nation

At this time of national political grid-lock where so little can be achieved in Washington, DC for our communities, where the action is, where the innovation is, is in communities themselves, particularly in the urban areas where CUMU's member institutions are based. Our cities are our new "Laboratories of Democracy." What we do in our urban and metro areas matters—not just today but in the long-term. By adopting an Anchor Mission, our institutions can participate in developing new approaches that can scale up for profound national impact once there is a new opening politically, which of course there will be one day.

Our institutions cannot solve all of the problems our urban areas face, but we can be leaders in our communities, pointing the way for other anchors, for businesses, for the public sector. Through our example, we can help set a "new normal" for what is considered appropriate institutional behavior in our communities.

By adopting an Anchor Mission—leveraging and harmonizing all of our institutional functions and assets in support of community—we can improve our cities and improve ourselves. This is mutual, shared, enlightened self-interest of the very best kind.

Thank you.

There are many things to say about the state of national politics in the United States, which means there is much room for disagreement and competing interpretations. But one thing nearly everyone agrees about is that on the issues that matter most, we are very unlikely to see serious and sustained action in the foreseeable future. We are unlikely to forge a sustainable immigration policy or a policy to create economic opportunity for urban and rural communities that lack access to high-paying jobs. We are not going to act on climate change. We cannot ignore national politics, but we would be making a huge mistake if we were to gamble on significant forward movement coming from Washington in the near future.

In that context, the question of how to make change in and through local communities—always important—takes on additional urgency. So, I want to spend a few minutes reflecting on how we should approach the contribution of colleges and universities to community change.

In particular, I want to reflect on the relationship between what we often think of as two distinct aspects of the public mission of higher education. One aspect is what we might call the institution's anchor mission: the obligation of the university to participate actively in creating strong, healthy, prosperous communities. The other aspect is what we might call the university's civic education mission: the obligation of the university to educate students for effective participation in a just democratic polity.

Institutions typically act as if these were separate and distinct missions: One mission has to do with job creation, physical development of the built environment, purchasing practices, and other domains that seem to have nothing to do with students. The other mission has to do with academic courses and co-curricular programs, the stuff of the student experience. Those of us who believe colleges and universities must contribute to changing the country for the better tend to focus our calls for action on one of these domains or the other. So it is not surprising that we are left believing they are actually separate and distinct.

My central point is that despite the apparent gap separating these missions, there is ultimately no daylight between them. We can distinguish them analytically, and it may be useful to do so for certain purposes. In the end, though, a university cannot carry out its anchor mission without educating students for democracy, and a university cannot educate students for democracy without carrying out its anchor mission. My goal is to explain why these two apparently distinct missions turn out to be one mission and to identify some implications of that recognition.

The first way of seeing why there is no daylight between the two missions is by considering what constitutes success in the anchor mission realm. While there are many reasonable answers to the question, for the purposes of discussion let's just say that success in the anchor realm means supporting the development of a community that thrives in every way that contributes to the quality of life for residents. Anchor success is achieved when a community is strong economically, socially, and environmentally.

As soon as we spell out what we mean by anchor success, we can see that it cannot be achieved without a strong citizenry. We know this for several reasons. First, the extensive literature on

social capital makes clear that there is a powerful positive relationship between engaged citizens and community members, on the one hand, and economic prosperity. A community of people who are connected to each other creates a platform for innovation and investment in which individuals have the confidence to take risks. Isolated, disconnected individuals are not positioned to identify opportunities and resources, the keys for building a successful local and regional economy.

Second, another body of academic literature, known as selectorate theory, has shown that leaders will be responsive to the interests of those whose support is crucial to their own ability to stay in power. If the majority of citizens participates in the political life of the community, leaders will work to improve life for that majority, which requires them to act in a way that creates broad opportunity. If a small minority participates, leaders will direct benefits to that minority. The creation of broad opportunity is the achievement of a successful economy. The direction of benefits to a small minority of influential people, in contrast, is corruption, which produces economic failure for the vast majority.

If an engaged and participatory citizenry is necessary for economic success, then the education of students for effective citizenship is not separate from the anchor mission; it is the first and most important element of an anchor strategy. Examples from all over the world show that pouring money into communities in which citizens do not or cannot participate does not produce shared prosperity. It produces benefits for those in power and the people responsible for their staying in power. If colleges and universities direct economic resources to communities that have experienced disinvestment but do not support a corresponding civic revival, they will fail to achieve their anchor mission.

Put another way, civic education is not an undertaking separate and distinct from the anchor mission. Civic education is an essential means to the end of anchor success. But while civic education may be a necessary condition for anchor success, it is clearly not a sufficient condition.

It might be tempting, therefore, to imagine that other components of the anchor mission (e.g., local purchasing, responsible real estate development, inclusive hiring practices, and robust partnerships) are optional for those who care most about civic education. On this way of thinking, it would be possible to focus on curricular and co-curricular experiences for students, be glad that strengthening the citizenry in the vicinity of the university is helpful to the regional economy, and leave it at that.

But there is a problem with that view. Students, a substantial body of evidence reveals, learn not just from what institutions teach them but also from what institutions do. When institutions act in ways that manifest commitment to the public good, students are themselves positively influenced. Several strands of research point in this direction.

First, we have evidence from K-12 education. The Making Caring Common initiative at Harvard's Graduate School of Education has compiled the results of research on efforts to cultivate pro-social behaviors in students e.g., listening, compromising, working with others to solve problems. These are all behaviors that relate closely to citizenship skills. Their conclusion

is that no program is likely to have more of an impact on students than the behaviors of the adults in the school. If school professionals display, in their interactions with each other and with students, the behaviors they wish to cultivate, students will emulate them. If school professionals display other behaviors, programs will not be especially effective. To a student, the school *is* teachers and administrators. Students learn from the school.

Similarly, evidence from the responses and behaviors of college students shows that they, too, tend to follow the lead of their institutions and the people who represent them. Evidence from the Personal and Social Responsibility Inventory, analyzed by Robert Reason and his colleagues, shows the importance of institutional leadership in shaping student civic learning and development. The PSRI shows that high-impact practices, such as service learning have a substantial positive effect on student civic attitudes. It also shows, however, that the effect of high-impact practices is far more positive for students who believe that their institutions embrace the civic values such experiences seek to cultivate. If students see their universities acting as responsible anchor institutions, the students are more likely to be open to seeing themselves as responsible civic actors than if they see their universities sitting on the sidelines.

Analyses of student voter participation lead to the same conclusion. Nancy Thomas and her colleagues have studied universities that significantly over-perform or under-perform expected student voter rates based on data from the National Study of Learning Voting and Engagement (NSLVE). The overarching finding in this research is that student voting is driven by the campus climate at an institution. Programs focused on student voting may make a difference, but the biggest positive impact comes when students see that their university takes seriously values such as diversity, student voice in decision-making, and equal opportunity. When the institution lives out its stated values in its practices, students are motivated to embrace their obligation to participate in the political life of the community by voting.

All of these threads connect at a single point: If we want students to embrace the opportunities and responsibilities of citizenship, universities must embrace their own public responsibilities as anchor institutions in their communities and regions. As we have seen, the anchor mission depends on the success of the civic education mission, and the civic education mission depends on the success of the anchor mission. Therefore, we can see that there are not two mission but one: the university's public purpose mission. That public purpose mission has two dimensions, the civic education dimension and the anchor dimension.

What are the implications of that recognition? First, these two dimensions of the public purpose mission must be pursued in an integrated fashion. We miss an opportunity to show students how an institution can take on public challenges in partnership with communities if we do not engage students in the work. However, engaging students in the work requires us to connect the people on the campus who facilitate student civic learning with the people who lead anchor efforts. Connecting these people and their work also ensures that the intentions of anchor efforts will be evident to students.

That last point connects to the second implication of the inter-connection of the two missions: Anchor efforts must be designed and executed in ways that provide evidence of the egalitarian and democratic commitments of the institution. That means community members and students

must be active participants in decision-making connected to the university's public purpose mission. Unless students experience the institution's commitment to the democratic values motivating the work in the first place, we cannot expect that they will come to share that commitment.

Both public and non-profit universities receive and deserve public subsidy because their central purpose is to advance the public good. If the leaders of universities imagine that they should, must, or even can pick and choose among their obligations and pursue either their anchor mission or their civic education mission, they will undermine their own capacity to achieve their core public purpose mission. If, on the other hand, they embrace the inter-connection among the dimensions of the public purpose mission, they have the opportunity to foster new levels of creativity as faculty, staff, students, and community members work together to envision the next generation of integrated and engaged universities.

Author Information

Barbara A. Holland is recognized internationally for her scholarship and expertise on organizational change in higher education with a focus on institutionalization of community engagement. As an academic leader, she held senior administrative positions at Portland State University, Northern Kentucky University, University of Western Sydney and University of Sydney. In government-related roles, she was Director of the Learn and Serve America National Service-Learning Clearinghouse for seven years and Visiting Director of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of University Partnerships for two years during the Clinton and Bush administrations. As a researcher and consultant, she has advised more than 100 colleges and universities in the USA and other nations regarding community engagement, institutionalization, and leadership of change, and she has authored many publications of note, including the creation of the Holland Matrix for Institutionalization.

As a scholar and leader, Barbara was a founding board member and 2011-12 Chair of the International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE), and also was a founding member of the National Review Board for the Scholarship of Education, the National Advisory Panel for the Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement, and the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (now called Engagement Australia) which in 2008 named her one of their first two Honorary Fellows. In 2006, she received the IARSLCE Award for Research Achievement. She previously served as Executive Editor of *Metropolitan Universities* journal and serves in editorial roles for five other refereed journals. Barbara had been a lead faculty member for the Engagement Academy for University Leaders, sponsored by four major higher education associations, since it began in 2008.

Barbara A. Holland, PhD
Strategy Advisor
Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities
Email: holland.barbaraa@gmail.com

Ted Howard is the co-founder and president of The Democracy Collaborative. Previously, he served as the Executive Director of the National Center for Economic Alternatives. Howard directs the Collaborative's partnership with The Cleveland Foundation on the Evergreen Cooperative Business Initiative, a path-breaking strategy to create green jobs and wealth for low-income families in six of the city's underserved neighborhoods. Howard was appointed the Cleveland Foundation's first Steven A. Minter Fellow for Social Justice, a position he held from 2010 to 2014.

For the past three decades, Howard has worked in the not-for-profit/civil society sector, including more than 15 years in international development with NGOs and agencies of the UN system. Most recently, he was the Executive Director of the National Center for Economic and Security Alternatives, a research and policy institute.

Howard served for nine years as Chairman of the Board of Search for Common Ground, the world's largest conflict resolution NGO. He also serves on the board of LIFT, a national

organization dedicated to engaging college students and youth in combating poverty in our nation's urban areas.

Ted Howard, PhD
Co-Founder and President
The Democracy Collaborative
The Hanna Building
1422 Euclid Ave.
Suite 1652
Cleveland, OH 44115
Email: thoward@democracycollaborative.org
Telephone: 216-282-2022

Andrew J. Seligsohn is president of Campus Compact, a national coalition of 1100 colleges and universities dedicated to the public purposes of higher education. As president, Seligsohn has focused on strengthening Campus Compact's support for deep partnerships between campuses and communities through comprehensive campus planning. He is also leading efforts to expand Campus Compact's professional development and student civic leadership offerings. Before joining Campus Compact in June of 2014, Seligsohn served as Associate Chancellor for Civic Engagement and Strategic Planning at Rutgers University–Camden, where he worked across the campus to develop the university's engagement infrastructure to maximize community impact and student learning. Seligsohn previously served as Director of Civic Engagement Learning in the Pace Center at Princeton University and as a faculty member in the Department of Political Science at Hartwick College. At Hartwick, Seligsohn also served as the elected chair of the faculty. Seligsohn has published articles and chapters on higher education engagement, student political engagement, constitutional law, political theory, and urban politics. Seligsohn is a member of the Policy Council of the Service Year Alliance and the National Advisory Board for the All In Campus Democracy Challenge. Seligsohn holds a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Minnesota and a B.A. in modern intellectual history from Williams College.

Andrew J. Seligsohn, PhD
President
Campus Compact
45 Temple Place
Boston, MA 02111
Email: ajs@compact.org
Telephone: 617-357-1881