



## **Great Cities ~ Great Service Consortium**

Preliminary Assessment Report  
Academic Years 2007-2008 and 2008-2009<sup>1</sup>

### **INTRODUCTION**

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The Great Cities ~ Great Service Consortium is a multiyear program funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service and led by Otterbein College in partnership with Ohio Campus Compact and The University of Cincinnati. The consortium of fourteen Ohio campuses engages college students, urban K-12 youth, and community partners in innovative volunteer, service-learning, and community-based research projects to increase the connectedness urban youth feel toward their communities.

This grant utilizes the youthLEAD model (Learn, Engage, Act & Decide) to create a statewide community of mobilized college students and urban youth volunteers in civic service. The grant trains participants in the cultural competencies necessary to serve side-by-side with urban youth as capacity builders, solving community problems, serving those living in poverty, and strengthening urban wellness. The grant also advances the field of service-learning and civic engagement by offering best practices for urban youth service, strategic models for building proactive communities, and an assessment of the program. The three-year grant was started during the 2006-2007 year and fully implemented statewide in 2007-2008. There are fourteen campuses involved in the consortium, organizing sixteen different projects across the state.

### **PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY**

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This report summarizes the assessment measures for the academic years 2007-2008 and 2008-2009. This report is being written while the spring 2009 classes are continuing, so additional data will be added to the 2008-2009 academic year. A third year (for academic year 2009-2010) will also be implemented, pending approval from the Corporation of National and Community Service. Once collected, the additional data will be added to this report and finalized upon completion of the grant activity. This report comprises of mostly descriptive statistics, with some inferential statistics when appropriate

The purpose of this report is to assess a wide range of indicators, including:

1. **College Students:** Students will increase their appreciation of diversity, civic competencies, problem-solving skills, and cross-cultural competencies. Students will develop an ethic of service, leadership skills, and knowledge of the complexities of social problems.
2. **K-12 Urban Youth:** Youth participants will increase their academic achievement, knowledge of college opportunities, college aspiration, graduation rate, service ethic, appreciation of diversity, and civic competencies.
3. **Community Partners:** Core partnerships will be developed that are reciprocal and sustainable. Partners will report increased efficacy and capacity to meet goals. K-12 school partners will increase their capacity to institutionalize service-learning.

To evaluate these indicators, the Great Cities ~ Great Service Consortium utilized pre-course and post-course surveys that were developed in 2005-2006 and revised in 2006-2007 using the Cronbach Alpha to ensure congruency among questions. Surveys were administered to urban youth, college

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<sup>1</sup> Data is not entirely collected from the 2008-2009 academic year.

students, and community partners. Most questions, except for demographic related questions, were rated on five-point Likert scales. There was also an open-ended question in the college student survey.

## **OVERALL KEY FINDINGS**

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### College Students

College students participating in this program showed statistically significant progress in a number of areas, including developing an ethic of service, civic competencies, and cross-cultural competencies.

- College students showed gains in feeling that they “can have a positive impact on local social programs.” About 80% agreed or strongly agreed in the pre-course surveys, while about 86.5% agreed or strongly agreed in the post-course surveys.
- College students demonstrated an increase in civic competency from pre-course to post-course surveys. There was about a 31% gain in students who reported high or very high competency (38.6% pre-course to 50.7% post-course) in championing or campaigning for a good cause. There was an 18% gain in students who reported high or very high competency (45.9% pre-course to 54.1% post-course) in fostering a commitment to lifelong service.
- Students reported statistically significant gains in being aware of some of their own biases and prejudices (87.9% pre-course to 92% post-course) and in communicating across cultures (51.6% pre-course to 58.7% post-course).

### K-12 Youth

The youth data illuminated a number of key indicators of youth involvement in the community. More study of the specific outcomes needs to be done with revised instruments because significant changes could not be found between pre-course and post-course responses.

- The vast majority of youth indicated they wanted to attend college (about 92%).
- Most youth indicated that they can make good decisions for themselves (about 92%), but more work needs to be done to tie those decisions to the community. Only about 65% of youth indicated they can make good decisions for their communities.
- About 75.9% reported that they can be a valuable member of their communities.

### Community Partners

The community partners gave overwhelming positive feedback about the program. Community partners cited an increase in their organization’s capacity, improved ability to meet community needs, excellent overall coordination, and the ability to tackle real community problems. Furthermore, providing possibly the strongest testament to the program, all of the community partners were committed to providing on-going support to the service-learning program after the course.

- About 92% agree or strongly agreed that the partnership improved their ability to meet community needs.
- About 92% agreed or strongly agreed that the college students helped their organization establish new connections and networks.
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that the beneficiaries valued college students’ efforts.
- About 83% of respondents indicated they were either satisfied or highly satisfied with the overall coordination of the program.
- About 92% indicated they were either satisfied or highly satisfied with the quality of college students’ work.
- 100% were committed to providing on-going support to the service-learning program.

## **COLLEGE STUDENTS**

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Pre and post course surveys were administered to college students to evaluate their attitude changes throughout the class. The evaluation centered around four areas: ethic of service, civic competency/complexities of social issues, cross-cultural competency and diversity, and leadership and problem solving skills. About 865 surveys were returned, but only 222 college students returned both the pre and post surveys allowing the data to be compared. The survey contained a line that asked for the last four digits of the student's social security number, so the surveys could be paired together. This data represented eight of the fourteen campuses. The projects were tied to a diverse range of classes from business, education, political sciences, and others. Statistics on the pre-course and post-course surveys is below. When there is a statistical difference between pre-course and post-course responses, it is noted with both pre and post statistics displayed. When there is no significant difference between responses, the data is pooled together with one statistic reported, representing an average of all respondents.

### **Section I: Demographics**

<b>College Student Demographics (N=222)</b>		
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age</b>		
Under 18	1	0.5%
18-24	209	95.0%
25-29	6	2.7%
30 and over	4	1.8%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	71	32.4%
Female	148	66.6%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
American Indian	0	0.0%
Asian American	4	1.8%
Black/African-American	14	6.3%
Hispanic/Latino	3	1.4%
Multiracial	7	3.2%
White/Non-Hispanic	192	86.5%
Other	2	0.9%
<b>Class Standing</b>		
First Year	35	15.8%
Sophomore	57	25.8%
Junior	29	13.1%
Senior	96	43.4%
Graduate Student	4	1.8%

### **Section II: Ethic of Service**

One goal of this project is to demonstrate to students the importance of civic and social responsibility in the community. By incorporating community service into the curriculum, students are exposed to real problems and a better understanding for their systemic causes. Paired t-tests were used to measure the statistical difference between the means of pre-course and post-course responses. One of the

statements was found to be significant: “I feel that I can have a positive impact on local social problems.” Other statistics were reported very high, but not statistically significant. For example, about 95% of students said that “being involved in a program to improve my community is important.”

Statement	Pre-Course	Post-Course	Significance
<i>Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement at this point in time.</i>	<i>Agree/Strongly Agree</i>		
“Being involved in a program to improve my community is important.”	95.3%		-
“It is important to work toward equal opportunity for all people.”	96.2%		-
“It is not necessary to volunteer my time to help people in need.” Note	78.2%		-
“I think that people should find time to contribute to their community.”	89.7%		-
“I feel that I can have a positive impact on local social problems.”	80.1%	86.5%	**
“We need to work towards changing social systems.”	73.4%		-

NOTE: \*\*  $p \leq 0.05$  \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$

<sup>1</sup>Because this is a negative statement towards community service, the percentages represent those who “strongly disagreed” or “disagreed” with the statement.

### **Section III: Civic Competency/Complexities of Social Issues**

This section of the survey was designed to measure students’ progress on understanding the root causes of social issues the complexities of systemic problems. Out of all of the sections, this part of the survey provided the most statistically significant evidence of student learning outcomes. Students were either asked to “Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement at this point in time.” or to “Please indicate your level of competency in each of these areas.” The percentages reported are either those students who “agreed” or “strongly agreed” in the case of the first statement. When asked about competency, the percentages reported represent the students who indicated “high” or “very high.”

Statement	Pre-Course	Post-Course	Significance
<i>Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement at this point in time.</i>	<i>Agree/Strongly Agree</i>		
“Volunteer work is a temporary solution.”	24.0%	33.8%	**
“Social issues have very complex causes.”		68.5%	-
“Solutions will take more time and money.”	53.0%	66.0%	**
<i>Please indicate your level of competency in each of these areas.</i>	<i>High/Very High</i>		
“Championing or campaigning for a good cause.”	38.6%	50.7%	***
“Planning effective service projects.”	42.9%	63.3%	***
“Recognizing both rights and responsibilities as citizens.”	64.1%	77.2%	***
“Fostering a commitment to lifelong service.”	45.9%	54.1%	***
“Responding to real community needs.”	47.5%	56.4%	**

NOTE: \*\*  $p \leq 0.05$  \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$

Utilizing paired t-tests, there was a statistically significant difference between the means of pre and post course responses in each of the questions except one. All of these changes were in the positive direction. This section provided strong evidence that because of the courses, college students increased their civic competencies and their understanding of the complexities of social issues. Not only were the changes statistically significant, the magnitude of the change was very large as well. For example, only

42.9% of students indicated they had “high” or “very high” competency in planning effective service projects at the beginning of the course. An astounding 63.3% indicated “high” or “very high” competency after the course, representing about a 48% increase.

#### **Section IV: Cross-Cultural Competency and Diversity**

Service-learning programs allow college students to reach new populations and communities through community service. These experiences allow students to experience interacting with new populations and increase their knowledge of cultures and opinions different from their own. To measure this increase in awareness, the surveys included some statements on diversity and culture to assess the students’ ability to articulate and act on an appreciation for diversity as well as exhibit cross-cultural communication and advocacy skills. For each of these statements the percentage of students who agreed/strongly agreed with the statements or indicated high/very high level of competencies increased from pre-course to post-course surveys. There was a statically significant difference between pre-course and post-course attitudes in two of the statements.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Pre-Course</b>	<b>Post-Course</b>	<b>Significance</b>
<i>Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement at this point in time.</i>	<i>Agree/Strongly Agree</i>		
“It is important to work with people from other cultures.”	92.8%		-
“I am aware of some of my own biases and prejudices.”	87.9%	92.6%	**
<i>Please indicate your level of competency in each of these areas.</i>	<i>High/Very High</i>		
“Communicating across cultures.”	51.6%	58.7%	**
“Understanding values of people different from you.”	78.9%		-

NOTE: \*\* p≤0.05 \*\*\* p≤0.01

#### **Section V: Leadership and Problem Solving Skills**

The section on leadership and problem solving skills was designed to examine the amount of growth students experienced in various skills in leadership and problem solving. There were no statistically significant changes from pre-course to post-course surveys, but overall the responses showed strong leadership skills.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Pre-Course</b>	<b>Post-Course</b>	<b>Significance</b>
<i>Please indicate your level of competency in each of these areas.</i>	<i>High/Very High</i>		
“Solving challenging problems.”	69.3%		-
“Comparing different approaches to solving a problem.”	72.1%		-
“Using leadership skills.”	80.5%		-
“Working as part of a team.”	85.7%		-
“Expressing ideas, opinions, and facts in writing.”	81.6%		-
“My ability to analyze ideas.”	78.5%		-
“Applying principals from courses to different situations.”	73.0%		-

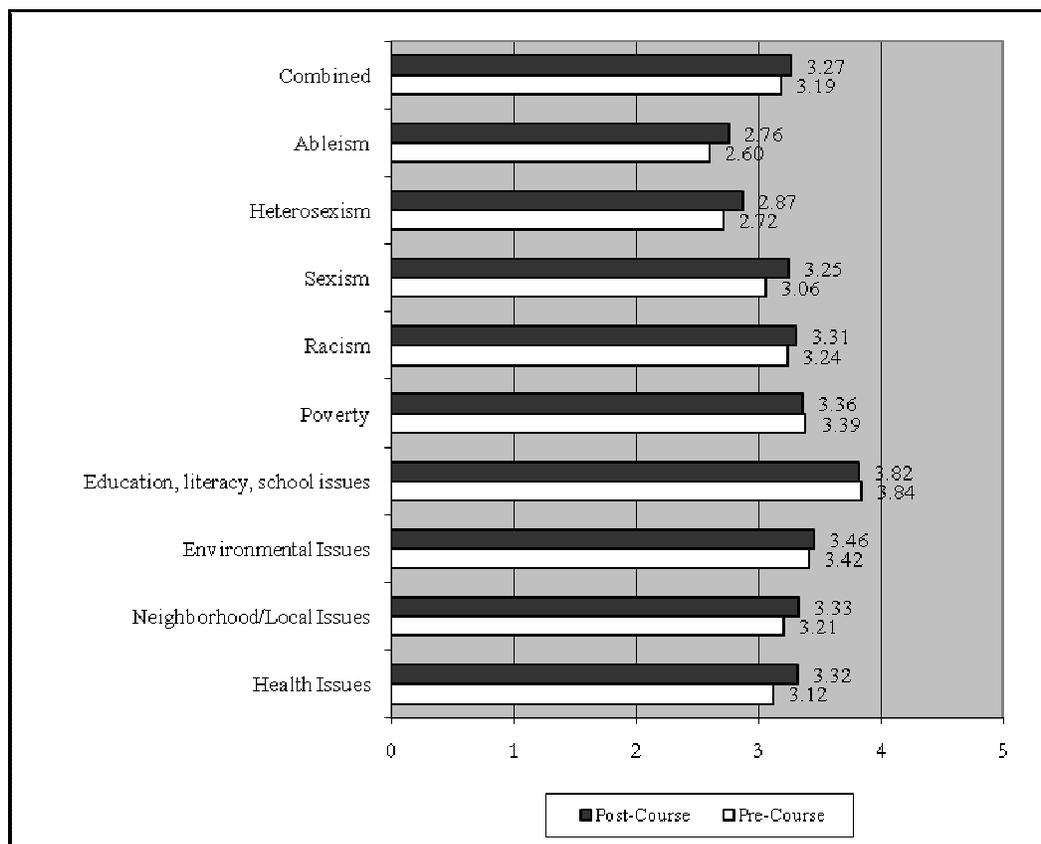
NOTE: \*\* p≤0.05 \*\*\* p≤0.01

#### **Section VI: Social Justice Continuum**

The Social Justice Continuum was designed to examine how students moved along the continuum from “Think” about an issue to “Act” upon an issue. Students were also presented with the option to select “Not an issue” in relation to statements about social justice issues that were “not a concern for

you.” The notion is that as students are exposed to issues through service-learning and can determine ways in which to address them, they will be more compelled to “Act.” After taking the service-learning course, students were more likely to act on seven of nine issues. Two of the issues, health and sexism, were significant at the 95% level.

To get an idea of the overall movement, a new variable was created in SPSS that took an average of all of the pre-course responses and post course responses. This is represented on the chart and graph as “combined.” It does show overall positive movement from think to act, but when no significance was found using a paired t-test.



Statement	Pre-Course	Post-Course	Significance
Health Issues	3.12	3.32	**
Neighborhood/Local Issues	3.21	3.33	-
Environmental Issues	3.42	3.46	-
Education, literacy, school issues	3.84	3.82	-
Poverty	3.39	3.36	-
Racism	3.24	3.31	-
Sexism	3.06	3.25	**
Heterosexism	2.72	2.87	-
Ableism	2.60	2.76	-
Combined	3.19	3.27	-

## K-12 YOUTH

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As mentioned previously, the youthLEAD model is used throughout this project. The youthLEAD model is an urban youth mentoring program for school-based service-learning. The goal is for urban youth to work alongside community partners, teachers, college students, and other urban youth in designing and implementing service-learning projects. LEAD stands for Learn, Engage, Act, and Decide. K-12 urban youth and college students come together as equal partners in mentoring relationships. Urban youth benefit from a sense of connectedness through an increase in positive activity in and out of school while also decreasing the incidents of destructive personal behaviors. College students benefit from service-learning opportunities through increased citizenship development, perspective transformation and a reduction in stereotyping/increased tolerance.

### Elements of youthLEAD:

- **Learn:** All service is grounded in school-based academic learning.
- **Engage:** Youth are engaged as problem-solvers and capacity builders in meaningful service opportunities that meet community-identified needs.
- **Act:** Youth act from a sense of civic and social responsibility that is grounded in explored values and principles.
- **Decide:** Youth are the designers and the decision-makers in the process of strengthening their communities.

The survey instrument unfortunately did not identify particular students. Because of this, only non-paired t-tests could be used to evaluate means (a weaker test than paired t-tests). Using the non-paired t-test, no significant differences were found among pre-course and post-course means. This does not indicate there were not significant changes due to the service-learning experience; it simply means that the tools used were insufficient in finding the changes in attitudes. Therefore, the data below is presented for descriptive purposes. The agree/strongly agree percentages represent pooled data from pre-course and post-course responses.

### Section I: Demographics

Youth Demographics (N=232)		
Characteristic	Number	Percentage
<b>Grade Level</b>		
1st - 5th	62	27.4%
6th - 8th	91	40.3%
9th - 12th	73	32.3%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	95	41.5%
Female	134	58.5%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
American Indian	1	0.4%
Asian American	0	0.0%
Black/African-American	103	44.6%
Hispanic/Latino	20	8.7%
Multiracial	26	11.3%
White/Non-Hispanic	72	31.2%
Other	6	2.6%

<b>Volunteer or Community Service</b>		
Yes	116	50.9%
No	112	49.0%
<b>Grades</b>		
Mostly A's	65	29.0%
Mostly B's	110	47.4%
Mostly C's	42	18.8%
Mostly D's	5	2.2%
Mostly F's	2	0.9%

## **Section II: Ethic of Service**

Developing an ethic of service for youth is an important part of this grant. College students act as positive role models throughout the grant and give youth a picture of what community service is about. Once youth get a glimpse of community service, they will hopefully be more likely to volunteer again. A majority, about 51%, reported that they never volunteered in the community before, so many of the youth in this program are getting their first look at community service. Overall, the youth who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements were high.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Pre/Post Course Agree/Strongly</b>
<i>Please choose the best and most honest answer you can.</i>	
I do things to make the community a better place.	67.3%
I try to encourage others to work on community problems.	59.1%
I feel responsible for helping others.	74.2%
I want to volunteer throughout my whole life.	57.8%
I can make a positive difference in my city.	73.4%
I can be a valuable member of my community.	75.9%
I am capable of being a leader.	71.7%
My ideas are important.	79.5%

## **Section III: Civic Competency**

Being involved in this program should give the youth an increase in civic competency because the program bring youth into real issues and solutions. This data shows that more students reported that they could identify things they like about their community than problems. A vast majority (about 88%) reported that they communicate well with other people, an important attribute when doing community service. The last statement dealt with students' attitudes toward working with others who are different from them. A vast majority of students agreed or strongly agreed that they "like to work with people who are different from me."

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Pre/Post Course Agree/Strongly</b>
<i>Please choose the best and most honest answer you can.</i>	
I can identify problems in my community.	69.6%
I can identify things that I like about my community.	77.3%
I can communicate well with other people.	87.9%
I like to work with people who are different from me.	81.8%

#### **Section IV: Misbehaving**

Due to the population of youth this grant targets, urban youth, a key goal of the project is to decrease any destructive behavior they exhibit. In other words, by showing youth the community service and how they can contribute positively to their communities, the youth will be less likely to act negatively in their communities. Providing youth with positive role models, college students, they can turn their destructive behaviors into more positive contributions to their communities. A vast majority of the youth reported they “can make good decisions” for themselves, but a large portion still get into trouble at school. More students reported getting into trouble in their school than in their community.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Pre/Post Course</b>
	<i>Agree/Strongly</i>
<i>Please choose the best and most honest answer you can.</i>	<i>Agree</i>
I can make good decisions for myself.	92.2%
I can make good decisions for my community.	64.6%
I do not get into trouble at school.	56.0%
I do not get into trouble in my community.	78.0%

#### **Section V: Increased Academic Achievement**

Proving service-learning and community service opportunities has the opportunity to make school more relevant to youth. They can use the knowledge they learn in school and apply them to better their communities. This has the opportunity to increase the academic achievement of youth. Students reported very positively about being able to learn about new subjects and activities. As expected students responded more negatively to the statements, “I like school” and “I think my classes are interesting,” but still a strong majority.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Pre/Post Course</b>
	<i>Agree/Strongly</i>
<i>Please choose the best and most honest answer you can.</i>	<i>Agree</i>
I can learn about new subjects.	90.8%
I can learn how to do new activities.	95.2%
I think my classes are interesting.	68.0%
I think the things I am learning in school will be important for my future.	82.4%
I like school.	64.0%

#### **Section VI: College Aspiration and Knowledge of Opportunities**

One of the unique opportunities of this project is the mutually beneficial relationships it builds between college students and youth. These partnerships provide opportunities for youth to get a hint into college life through the eyes of current college students. Graduation rates and college enrollment are important issues for all of Ohio’s urban centers. The partnerships the grant cultivates are an important start to getting more and more urban youth excited about attending college. An astonishing amount of the youth (about 92%) indicated they wanted to attend college. On the contrary, however, a notable amount of the youth did not know about how to pay for college, the different types of colleges, or how to find out how much college costs. This is likely due to the diversity of programs. Some gave more emphasis to college access, while others did not. More study needs to be done on individual programs to see if this emphasis made a significant difference.

Statement	Pre/Post Course <i>Agree/Strongly</i>
<i>Please choose the best and most honest answer you can.</i>	
I want to attend college.	92.1%
I know how to find out how much college costs.	66.7%
I know what different types of colleges there are.	68.5%
I know about ways I can pay for college.	64.7%

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Community partners are integral to the success of any service-learning or community based program. The community partners in the GCGS program represent a diversity of organizations such as high schools, middle schools, elementary schools, college access programs, after school programs, urban development programs, environmental programs, YMCAs, and faith based organizations. These community partners provide the avenue into the community based work that is so vital. Overall, the data suggests community partners were enthusiastic about the program and were strongly encouraged by the outcomes.

Our sample represents twelve respondents from seven different community partners around the state:

Xavier University: Avondale Youth Council (3)  
 Case Western Reserve University: The Intergenerational School (2)  
 Cleveland State University: Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization (2)  
 Bowling Green State University: Libbey High School (1)  
 John Carroll University: St. Thomas Aquinas Elementary School (1)  
 Mount Union College: Feed my Sheep Ministries (1)  
 The University of Toledo: United North (2)

### **Section I: Efficacy and Capacity**

The first part of the survey to community partners, administered at the end of the program, was on efficacy and capacity. Issues centered on how the program was able to allow the organization to better meet the needs of the community. Partners were asked “How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement at this point in time: As a result of this service learning partnership, my organization was able to...” There were five choices, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” with undecided in the middle. Overall, the community partners gave very positive feedback on the program's ability to help them meet the needs of the community. There was congruency in the responses to all the efficacy and capacity questions, giving strength to the results.

“Improve our ability to meet community needs”/ “Meet strategic planning goals”

- These two questions get to the core of the section on whether the program was in fact successful in meeting the needs of the community. These are particularly important questions because although the program is rooted in educational principals, it also needs to help the community partners. This ensures that the community partners not only want to help the students learn and expose them to different issues, but also feel the students are necessary contributors to their cause. This produces sustainability. The results to these questions were very positive. About 75% agreed and 17% strongly agreed that the partnership improved their "ability to meet community needs." Adding those together, about 92% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Only one person was undecided and there were no negative responses to this question. About 83.5% agreed or strongly agreed that the partnership helped their organization “meet strategic planning goals.” One respondent was undecided and one respondent disagreed.

“Increase the number of clients served”

- About 58.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. About 25% of respondents were undecided and about 17% disagreed with that statement. This is expected because students increase the capacity of the organization by providing additional workers.

“Increase the number of services offered to our clients”/“Grow our capacity to serve our clients”

- These two questions, largely getting at the same notion, held congruent together. About 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the first statement and about 83% agreed or strongly agreed with the second statement. The remaining either disagreed or were undecided. The responses were somewhat more positive to these two questions than with the previous question, also addressing capacity. One key component of this program is to get students to understand the complexities of long-term social problems. Because of this, the students were likely working more on activities that increased the long term capacity of the organization instead of only serving the client directly, which is represented in this data.

“Establish new connections and networks”

- An overwhelming 92% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Students bring diverse experiences and knowledge to community partners that can formulate new partnerships.

“Observe that our beneficiaries valued college students’ efforts”/“Persuade others that youth can be an asset in the community”

- Providing a strong testament to the work of the students, 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their “beneficiaries valued college students’ efforts” and about 83% agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to “persuade others that youth can be an asset in the community.”

## **Section II: Reciprocal Partnerships**

The second part of the community partner survey evaluated the extent of a reciprocal partnership between the community partner and service-learning program. This section also explored the challenges that arise when administering a service-learning program. First, respondents were asked to “rate your level of satisfaction with your connection to (the) college/university.” There were five answer choices, ranging from “deeply unsatisfied” to “highly satisfied” with “no opinion” in the middle. As with the previous section, overall the responses to these questions indicated a positive experience with the program.

“Overall coordination of service-learning programs”

- About 83% of respondents indicated there were either satisfied or highly satisfied with the overall coordination of the program. Two respondents (17%) indicated that they had no opinion. This is testament to the organization and quality of the service-learning classes that were part of the consortium and a key indicator of the success of the program.

“Communication with faculty, college students, and staff”/“Feedback and input into planning of experiences”/“Little contact/interaction with college faculty/staff”

- About 92% indicated they were either “satisfied” or “highly satisfied” with the communication, 100% indicated that there were either “satisfied” or “highly satisfied” feedback into planning, and about 78% indicated that little contact/interaction with college faculty/staff was “not a challenge.” This is especially important to the success of a service-learning class because open dialog allows the community partners and campus representatives to discuss issues early. This ensures early and ongoing support amongst the key groups.

“Scope and timing of service activities”/“College student service time period insufficient”

- About 83% of respondents indicated that they were either “satisfied” or “highly satisfied” with the scope and time of service activities. One respondent indicated “no opinion.” Responses to the second question on the time period were more mixed. About 33% of respondents indicate that it was a “moderate challenge” or “significant challenge.” About 22% indicated that it was “not a challenge” and about 11% indicated “highly significant challenge.” Many of these classes are only ten or fifteen weeks long, and faculty have to fit many things during that short amount of time. Although the responses to these questions are a bit competing, the responses to the latter question most likely indicate the community partner would have liked to have the college students involved longer.

“Too many college students” /“Too few college students”

- All respondents indicated that “too many college students” was either “not applicable” or “not a challenge.” The responses were more mixed when asked about “too few college students.” About 45% indicated that “too few college students” was either a “moderate challenge” or “significant challenge.” About 55% indicated that it was either “not a challenge” or “not applicable.” These results go along with other responses that the college student work was valued, so having more college students would not be a problem, in fact it would be valued. The responses to the latter question indicate that more college students would be valued or that there was just the right amount.

“College students not well prepared”/“College students did not perform as expected”/“Lack of college student commitment”

- About 67% indicated “non applicable” or “not a challenge” to the statement, “college students not well prepared.” About 33% indicated it was a “moderate challenge” or “significant challenge.” About 78% indicated “not a challenge” when responding to the statement, “College students did not perform as expected.” The remaining 22% indicated it was a “moderate challenge.” About 66% reported that the “lack of college student commitment” was either “not a challenge” or “not applicable.” About 33 % reported that it was a “moderate” or “significant” challenge.

“Demands upon staff time”

- About 67% indicated that staff time was a “moderate challenge” and 22% indicated it was a “significant challenge.” About 11% said “not a challenge.” Many of these community partners are small non-profit organizations with staff already spread thin. At the beginning of a program, there is a transition and educational period which ties up staff from their daily activities. In the end, as other responses indicate, the college students’ work is valued even given the demands on staff.

“Quality of college student work”

- About 92% indicated there were either “satisfied” or “highly satisfied,” with one respondent indicating “no opinion.” The responses to this question were a strong indication that the college student work, and therefore the program, was valued by the community partners.

### **Section III: Sustainability**

The final section contained two overarching questions about the sustainability of the program and the capability for the program to address real community problems. The respondents were asked, “How strongly do you agree with the following statement at this point in time.”

“The service-learning program effectively addressed a real community problem”

- About 66% “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with this statement, while about 33% were undecided.

Although about 2/3 of responded positively to this statement, it is noteworthy that 1/3 were still undecided.

“My organization is committed to providing on-going support to the service-learning program”

- Providing a strong show of support for the program, an astonishing 100% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. In any service-learning program, sustainability is a key issue. By the end of this program, the community partners were enthusiastic about continuing the program, demonstrating the success of the program in not only education college students and youth, but also providing an important service to the communities through the community partner organizations.

## **FURTHER STUDY/CONCLUSION**

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The survey data gathered so far from the consortium demonstrates a strong relationship between the service-learning classes and college student growth. College students showed growth in their perceptions of citizenship, their commitment to civic engagement, and cross-cultural competencies. College students also showed growth in understanding complex social issues and solutions to the underlying causes. The cumulative data shows that students reported higher leadership skills as a result of exposure to these issues through the community service component incorporated in the service-learning pedagogy across various disciplines.

Although no significant changes could be shown from pre-course to post-course responses from the youth, important data emerged that illuminates some ongoing problems that urban youth face. For example, although a vast majority of youth indicated they wanted to attend college, they did not necessarily know how to pay for it or how to find more information about it. Also, most youth indicated that they can make good decisions for themselves, but many did not know how to make good decisions for their communities. Lastly, it is important to note that one of the least positive responses from the youth came from the statement, “I want to volunteer throughout my whole life.” These responses could be misleading because “whole life” can be interpreted different ways. Some youth undoubtedly thought this meant everyday for the rest of their lives, while others may have thought once or twice a year would suffice. Regardless, continued emphasis should be placed on encouraging more youth to partake in long-lasting, meaningful, civic engagement opportunities.

Moving forward, to get a more significant look into the youth outcomes, the survey instrument should be revised. One of the primary issues with the survey is the lack of ability to identify pre-course and post-course surveys with the same students. If this could be done, the paired t-test could be utilized to get a stronger indication of the changes in attitudes between pre-course and post-course surveys. A major obstacle, however, is that often times the youth participants change throughout the program. Finally, the ages of the urban youth range from kindergarten to seniors in high school. Moving to two or three different youth surveys should be considered so questions can be tailored to particular age groups.

Community partners responded to the program with enthusiasm and a commitment to building long term relationships. The responses indicate that community partners (and those they serve) greatly appreciated the work of the college students and the overall coordination of the service-learning program. As a result of the program, community partners were able to increase the number of clients they served, increase their ability to address real community issues, establish new connections, and meet their strategic planning goals.

As demonstrated by the survey results, the Great Cities ~ Great Service Consortium can be hailed as a success. The program found that, consistent with previous research, service learning positively impacted college students and youth. In addition, the program effectively addressed real community problems through collaboration with various community partners.

## **APPENDIX A: LIST OF PROJECTS**

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### **Otterbein College**

#### *YouthLEAD@Otterbein*

Otterbein College, under the direction of Melissa Gilbert, Great Cities Great Service Project Director, is providing overall leadership for the Consortium. The YouthLEAD and Core Partnership Models were created at Otterbein and will be replicated throughout the Consortium. For this grant year, Otterbein will be implementing youthLEAD in all service-learning courses working with youth and continuing to find new and creative ways to strengthen engagement through teaching and learning.

### **University of Cincinnati**

#### *YouthLEAD@UC*

The University of Cincinnati, under the direction of Kathy Dick and Al Hearn, are serving as the first campus to begin implementation of the youthLEAD and Core Partnership Models into their Center for Community Engagement, which encompasses both curricular and extra-curricular service-learning. UC is providing leadership on the ways in which these models are implemented in practice at a large, urban, research institution. For this grant year, UC will be launching new service-learning courses and community partnerships using the youthLEAD and Core Partnership models. They will also be providing guidance and support to other Consortium projects.

### **University of Akron**

#### 2007-2008

#### *The University of Akron and Beat the Street After-School Program*

The University of Akron Honors College in conjunction with Beat the Street (BTS) After School Program will create a program in which Honors students enrolled in a new course, "Service-Learning in Multicultural Communities," will mentor K-12 students an economically struggling section of Akron who are part of the BTS program. It is the goal of The University of Akron and Beat the Street to create a mutually beneficial relationship with a focus on engaging the leadership talent and creativity of Akron's youth. Through these mentoring relationships and in partnership with senior citizens at the neighboring community center, urban youth will design and lead projects geared towards celebrating the strengths and gifts of the neighborhood.

#### 2008-2009

#### *Knowing How To Go*

The Honors College at The University of Akron will join with our community partners, Destination College to present a service-learning Honors Colloquia course during the spring semester, 2009. The themes of the course will be on urban youth, as well as modeled after the national campaign, KNOWHOW2GO. The UA Honors students and Destination College participants will explore the four themes which characterize the campaign: Be a Pain (in a good way); Push Yourself; Find the Right Fit; and Put Your Hands on Some Cash. The class will focus on the joint development of projects that address these issues for current students in Destination College and younger students who might benefit from this guidance.

### **Bowling Green State University**

2007-2008 and 2008-2009

*Citizen Artist Community Engagement Project*

The Citizen Artist Community Engagement Project (CACE) is a new 6-credit service-learning course that will be offered by the Department of Theatre and Film at Bowling Green State University (BGSU). BGSU will partner with Libbey High School, a diverse urban high school in the south side of Toledo in the Toledo Public School District. In concert with the youthLEAD model, BGSU and 11th grade Libbey students will work towards the creation of a documentary theatre project focused on citizenship. Libbey students will conduct interviews with a wide spectrum of Toledo community members. BGSU students will consult and problem-solve along the way. Working collaboratively, all of the students will synthesize their findings into an original theatre performance about civic life in America to share with peers and community members, followed by a post-performance dialogue.

### **Case Western Reserve University**

2007-2008 and 2008-2009

*Learn and Serve at The Intergenerational School and Case*

Case Western Reserve University's (CWRU) College Scholars Program (CSP) will expand its partnership with The Intergenerational School (TIS), an innovative, high performing urban community school, by developing and operating a multigenerational After School Reading Club. Undergraduates in the CSP, a leadership and service learning-oriented multiyear curriculum, will work as partners with older TIS students in serving a group of younger TIS students in an after-hours reading/tutoring program. School teachers and TIS's older adult, trained volunteer Reading Mentors will guide the program. Case students and TIS students will become experts in literacy tutoring and work collaboratively with teachers and volunteers to find better ways of enhancing after school program effectiveness.

### **Cleveland State University**

2007-2008 and 2008-2009

*Universal Honors Experience: Focus on Urban Youth*

Cleveland State University will partner with the Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization (DSCDO), an organization working in the community adjacent to campus. Through an Honors' seminar entitled "Student Leadership and Service: Focus on Urban Communities," Cleveland State students will work with youth on the DSCDO Youth Advisory Council to assess community assets and needs in designing a National Make a Difference Day community service project. Together, the college students and youth will design, recruit, and implement a project that results in better understandings of the local community and fosters a sense of ownership and pride for all involved.

### **University of Dayton**

2007-2008

*Building Environmental Understanding and Stewardship: A Team Approach*

Adventure Central environmental education center and the University of Dayton's Fitz Center for Leadership in Community and departments of Biology and Geology are partnering through GEO/BIO 479L Environmental Instrumentation Lab, an upper level service-learning course in environmental biology and geology. UD students will complete a watershed assessment in collaboration with urban youth at Adventure Central. UD science majors will become mentors to a group of young residents who primarily come from inner city neighborhoods and actually live in the watershed. The younger students, meanwhile, will have a unique opportunity to meet, plan and work alongside scientists, visit campus, discuss college and careers, and extend their learning to others through a service project they help design.

2008-2009

*Engineering in Urban Education: Robotics Outreach at Kiser Pre K-8 School*

The University of Dayton's MEE 499 Engineering Service Learning, an upper level mechanical engineering course will partner with Kiser Neighborhood School a Dayton Public School that serves pre-kindergarten through 8th grade students. Engineering students will learn about urban education and conditions in an urban setting. They will develop and practice fundamental engineering, leadership, communication and team work skills. Engineering students will be positive role models as they expose middle school students to hands-on applications of science and math within the field of engineering. Curriculum will be developed by the engineers and Kiser teachers aligning with the state and national teaching standards.

### **University of Findlay**

2007-2008

*The Blanchard Valley Watershed Research Project*

The Blanchard Valley Watershed Research Project will connect students from The University of Findlay Environmental Sampling and Statistics class, students from Central Middle School, and students in an Environmental Science class from Findlay High School to study issues facing the watershed in Hancock County, Ohio. The Blanchard Valley Watershed has been rated "impaired" by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA). Together students will design an action service plan that will seek to change the impaired status to one of quality while remaining sensitive to the needs of all stakeholders.

### **John Carroll University**

2007-2008

*Cultivating Community: John Carroll University and St. Thomas Aquinas Elementary School*

John Carroll University's Cultivating Community service-learning course encourages students to learn about the city of Cleveland and its residents. For this project, JCU will partner with St. Thomas Aquinas Elementary School, located in the heart of the Hough neighborhood in center-city Cleveland. JCU students will form mentoring relationships with St. Thomas Aquinas 6th graders. Together, they will design and implement a service project in the Hough community for John Carroll University's Day of Service in April 2008.

### **Marietta College**

2007-2008 and 2008-2009

*The Digital Storytelling Project*

The McDonough Center for Leadership and Business at Marietta College and the Marietta Family YMCA have formed a partnership to create a unique opportunity for Marietta's youth: learning the technology of filmmaking and using it to tell the stories that define and shape their hometown. "Digital Storytelling" is a program where high-risk youth learn marketable skills in filmmaking. This program nationally has had a significant impact on the youths' pursuit of higher education and technology-related careers. Students from two leadership service-learning courses (Seminar in Leadership Behavior and Capstone Seminar in Leadership Studies) at the College will work with youth from the YMCA to help them define the scope of their projects, to assist with the operation of the equipment, and to accompany them as they interview people and create films throughout the City.

**Mount Union College**2007-2008*Communicating Common Ground and Strategic Life Planning*

The project will be split into two academic service-learning courses and two community partners. The first part of the project involves a communication course in Organizational Communications and the partner will be Feed My Sheep Ministries, a new service-learning partner for Mount Union College. Mount students will create an organization that will assess and help meet the needs of youth “clients” at the Feed My Sheep community dinners. With the help of the Mount students the youth will develop a strategic plan for their lives and their futures. The second course will involve another communication course, Interpersonal Communication. This project will partner with The Alliance Neighborhood Center’s after school program, The Appleseed Project. Mount students will work with 5th graders in order to identify perceptions of diversity and to develop programming to empower children in thinking about diversity in a positive, enriching and powerful way. Together the Mount and Appleseed students will develop a video and discussion guide that will address issues of diversity in the Alliance City School system.

2008-2009*Boys in Fitness Together (BFIT) / Girls in Fitness Together (GIFT) and A New Tomorrow*

The project will be split into four academic courses and two community partners. We will partner with the Alliance Family YMCA for the entire academic year to develop and implement a health and fitness program for the 4th and 5th grade boys called BFIT. Mount Union students will work with the YMCA and the boys to develop a program that meets the wellness needs of young boys in the area. The second partner The Tomorrow Center will involve Mount Union students working alongside this charter school’s students to develop community educational outreach programs focused on preventing drug and alcohol addiction.

**University of Toledo**2007-2008 and 2008-2009*Service-Learning Initiative for Youth Empowerment*

“UT Service Learning Initiative for Youth Empowerment in Toledo” is a collaborative effort by five faculty members at the University of Toledo and a local grassroots organization, Northriver Weed and Seed Network (NWSN), in an effort to enrich students’ learning and help local community. Four different service-learning courses in disciplines including English, Criminal Justice, and Communications will partner with NWSN on projects ranging from tutoring, visual media creation, website development, and other projects to be conceptualized by the youth at NWSN.

**Wright State University**2008-2009*Partners for Citizenship*

Wright State will offer two courses: French 321 Advanced Grammar and Composition and Honors: Social Activism and the First Amendment. WSU students in French will partner with Stivers School for the Arts to engage in discussion of historical, current, and changing attitudes toward immigrants and will jointly develop material in French and English to present at WSU’s French Immersion Day as well as in their schools and communities.

Honors students in the second course will involve Westwood PreK-8 students to identify limitations they face as a public school. They will present their research together at school board meetings and to public officials as well as devise solutions on how to improve public education.

**Xavier University**2007-2008 and 2008-2009*Social Marketing to Urban Youth: A Service-Learning Course*

“Social Marketing to Urban Youth: A Service-Learning Course” will allow Xavier University students enrolled in two service-learning courses to work alongside youth in Cincinnati’s Avondale community to identify and activate key influencers – persons or entities within the lives of urban youth who have a significant influence on information channels and decision making – in order to stress the importance of education. These key influencers might be leaders who formally engage with youth – such as youth pastors and athletic coaches – or everyday citizens who interact with youth informally, such as barbers and business owners. Xavier students, with direction and active participation from a core group of urban youth, will create key messages about the importance of education that resonate with urban youth, and then work with key influencers from the neighborhood to promote these messages.