

**St. Lawrence University**  
**Bringing Theory to Practice Proposal:**  
**Engaged Learning, Student Mental Health, and Civic Development Demonstration Program**  
**April 2005**

**Project Title:** The St. Lawrence University Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership: Creating Opportunities for Agency and Intentionality in Student Learning Experiences

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**Purpose Statement:** St. Lawrence will establish an intensive living-learning program employing the best practices of engaged learning pedagogies and assess their impacts on depression and alcohol abuse among our students through primary data collection using multiple methods over a three-year period, coupled with secondary analysis of our existing student databases.

**Project Overview:** St. Lawrence will implement a living-learning Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership where students collaborate in teaching and learning experiences that integrate academics, student life, and community engagement to foster skills of citizenship and leadership, and we will assess the impact of students' participation on their mental health and behavior.

**Project Goal:** The primary goal of this project is to increase our capacity for engaged learning across all four years of our students' undergraduate experiences and to assess whether any direct linkages can be found between students' participation in engaged learning experiences and their levels of high-risk alcohol use and/or depression. Over the course of the three-year project, we will seek to move students in the direction of greater intentionality in their college experience by building on our own programs in engaged learning, within both student life and academics, as well as the experiences of other colleges and universities. We will foster on our campus a "democratic imagination" (Zlotkowski, 2004), where students identify issues and problems in society or the natural world that are of concern to them and apply theories and skills learned in class to create knowledge and pursue solutions. This goal is consistent with our liberal arts mission and institutional aims and objectives, which stress the "cultivation" of personal growth, moral self discipline, citizenship, and responsibility (SLU, 2005 pgs. 4-6).

**Project Objectives:** St. Lawrence seeks to deepen and expand our students' opportunities for engaged learning in ways that will enable us to observe and study directly the impact of participation on student mental health, as measured by their level of high-risk alcohol use and/or depression. Thus, we have two primary project objectives:

1. To launch a new living-learning initiative called the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership (Center), where the impacts of specific pedagogies of engaged learning, namely those directed toward the development of student citizenship and leadership skills, on student outcomes can be isolated and, thus, better understood. This model will allow the best opportunity to provide definitive research results documenting the effect, if any, of engaged learning on student behavior and attitude outcomes, a major contribution given the state of the research literature on this issue.
2. To implement a three-year study that will compare the levels of alcohol use and depression among a group of student participants in the Center and a control group of non-Center student participants.

**Rationale – Why this Project is Important at This Time:** Over the past 15 years, St. Lawrence has developed a series of academic-based engaged learning opportunities for our students that have ranged from individual service learning internships to community-based collaborative team research projects. Directed through our Community-Based Learning (CBL) Program, we have seen the numbers of students who participate in the various CBL programs rise incrementally each year. However, we have also received feedback from our community partners that indicates we need to strengthen our capacity to provide consistent, long-term partnerships in order to be most effective in our collaborative efforts. At the same time, our Division of Student Life in recent years has increased and formalized our student programs that focus on volunteerism and leadership development to provide students with more visible options for personal development opportunities that will complement their academic and life goals. These programs

have also seen tremendous growth in recent years. We now seek to bridge these curricular opportunities with our co-curricular programs in order to provide students with a more integrated, in-depth exposure to civic engagement and leadership across all four of their undergraduate years. We took the first step to bring together these two different approaches to student civic engagement by physically bringing the staff for the programs together to share a common space. This fall, we will take the next step by forming a living-learning community based in civic engagement and leadership that will be housed in one residence hall and include within it a (residential) First-Year Program College (FYP) focused on those themes.

Through the success of these various programs, we have seen on an anecdotal basis the positive, transforming effect civic engagement has on individual students. However, despite growing numbers of students who participate in our opportunities for engaged learning, St. Lawrence has a severe problem of high-risk alcohol use among our student body as a whole. Our research into student alcohol use has found that alcohol use is higher at St. Lawrence, on average, than levels at comparable institutions nationally. Over the past five years, St. Lawrence has taken an aggressive approach to understand and address irresponsible drinking on campus through a series of grant initiatives and institutional investments that provided funding for a social norms program, an alcohol-free events mini-grant program, special student orientation programs focused on the dangers of high-risk alcohol use, campus speakers and specialty events, and extensive, ongoing campus-based research. These various efforts have been formalized into an ongoing Wellness Initiative that continues to be funded through institutional resources. While our research and efforts through the Wellness Initiative have helped us to understand better the levels of alcohol use among our students, unfortunately – and vexingly – the prevalence of alcohol abuse has continued to rise. In the past year, we have had two student deaths related to alcohol abuse. In a similar fashion, like many of our peer institutions, we have seen a sharp increase in recent years among the number of our students who struggle with depression. During the 2003-04 academic year, 22% of students coming to Counseling Services were dealing with some form of depression. Moreover, it is estimated that more than 40% of college students will suffer from some kind of depression during their college careers.

As a result of these two prevalent problems on our campus, we have a deep interest in finding more effective ways to reduce high-risk alcohol use among our students and in determining whether there is a link between students' participation in engaged learning and their likelihood to engage in high-risk alcohol use and/or to experience depression.

Further, this project is important to St. Lawrence at this critical time for the following reasons:

1. We offer a pervasive campus culture that promotes engaged learning, but we seek to integrate and expand those experiences across all four years of students' undergraduate experience throughout both their curricular and co-curricular life.
2. We have outstanding existing integrated databases that facilitate secondary analysis for many different kinds of student outcomes research questions, but we don't have the data to assess whether there is a link between engaged learning and decreased depression and/or alcohol use.
3. At this strategic time, we have the opportunity to engage in a quasi-experimental study of existing engaged learning programs and a new Center by comparing outcomes of a matched set of engaged learning participants in the FYP College housed within the Center and non-participants.

**Project Parameters:** Although there are many forms of engaged learning, we will focus on citizenship and leadership skill development; many of the most powerful examples of engaged learning among our students have centered on citizenship and leadership in relation to community service and social activism. For example, first-year student Stacey Banfield-Hardaway's experiences at the New York State Association of Retarded Citizens illustrate how students can set their learning agendas:

*Volunteering two hours a week at NYSARC was an irreplaceable experience that only enhanced my understanding of the realities of community organizations, and piqued my interest with issues surrounding the difficulties they face. I was able to see at NYSARC the ways in which these organizations operate and the profound effect they have on the people they serve (Banfield-Hardaway 2005).*

Further, the practice of citizenship and the emergence of leadership skills have been shown to have strong effects on personal development, including improved self-confidence, self-esteem, personal agency, and accomplishment (Eyler and Giles 1999, Pgs. 151-165), which have all been shown to affect student outcomes and behavior positively. Eve Gatawa's experience volunteering at the local day care illustrates her maturation process:

*Apart from becoming a critical thinker, I appreciate most, the relationships that I formed with the staff I directly worked with and of course the ultimate moments of fun and laughter I shared with the kids. For me, there was no better benefit than the joy of raising a fallen child, wipe his tears and be able to see him smile again as he races to play again. Even though my course is over, I still visit the day care and interact with the kids as this has become a part of my personal social responsibility (Gatawa, 2005).*

As a result, we propose to promote through our project the development of students' citizenship and leadership skills through participation in the new Center. The Center's mission will be to increase and enhance opportunities for students to be agents of positive social change both on and off campus. The Center will combine academic and co-curricular activities within a living-learning community where students will work together with community partners to develop and direct community projects that address community-identified needs. The emphasis of the programming will be to develop citizenship and leadership skills through: CBL course work, independent studies, participatory action research and deliberative dialogue; volunteerism, where students, faculty and staff support and enhance community initiatives that address community needs; and leadership training, practice, and reflection. Unlike many other universities where civic engagement programs are housed in different divisions, the Center will create a dynamic partnership between existing academic programs (CBL and the FYP) with our established co-curricular Center for Volunteerism and Leadership Academy (see descriptions, below). By bringing these programs together, students will move seamlessly through student life, academics, and community involvement – both on and off campus – ultimately experiencing more integrated and intentional learning.

### **Campus Project Partners:**

- Our Community-Based Learning programs offer students academic opportunities that combine community service with course-based activities and assignments that promote student learning and personal development through reflection, reciprocity, and exposure to and appreciation of difference. Reflection requires students to understand broader historical, social, political, economic, and environmental contexts of their experience in the community. Reciprocity means that all participants in the CBL opportunity – including students, instructors, and community partners – experience both teaching and learning. Last year, more than 400 students in 17 academic courses involving 40 community organizations participated in CBL.
- Last year, the David Garner Center for Collegiate Volunteerism organized the community service work of 631 students. The Garner Center is home to the “SLU Buddies Program,” recognized by Campus Compact as one of New York State's most innovative programs; it brings St. Lawrence students and local underprivileged youth together in mutually supporting relationships. In 2003, when the program was first introduced, 22 students participated. Today, 125 St. Lawrence students participate.
- The St. Lawrence University Leadership Academy promotes and supports student leadership development and has worked with more than 250 students this year. Student participants were involved in leadership trainings, co-curricular courses on leadership development, first-year class governance, and leadership honoraries. The Academy also sponsors a Leadership Conference during the first weekend of January, which typically attracts between 125 and 175 students.
- The First-Year Program at St. Lawrence is one of the nation's oldest living-learning programs for first-year students. In their first semester, students live in one of 18 residential colleges with the other students enrolled in their FYP course. This interdisciplinary, team-taught course focuses on a topic of broad interest, is one of four fall courses students take, and is designed to help students develop the writing, speaking, and research skills they need during and after college. In the spring semester, first-year students continue work on their communication skills by enrolling in a research-based First-Year Seminar (FYS).

**Project Activities – Engaged Learning:** St. Lawrence will bring together the FYP and CBL programs by making one of the FYP residential colleges a focal point of a broader living-learning community. The University has designated a two-story common area that contains ample office space as the administrative base for the Center. The common area links two residence halls, Hulett and Jencks, that contain a variety of one- and two-person rooms and suites. The first floors of both residence halls will house the residential FYP called “Brown College,” which will be 30 students enrolled in the course *Our Communities, Our Selves*. The course uses plays, movies, documentaries, journalistic accounts, ethnographies, and social scientific studies to explore the multiple dimensions of community while attempting to understand the complex interactions of race, class, gender, and locality. Assignments blend performance, creative writing, and social science inquiry with student experiences in the community. Each student is part of a community partnership team and will spend, on average, between two and three hours a week engaged in that service. In the spring, Brown College students will continue to live in Hulett-Jencks and participate in the Center’s residential programming. Community Mentors (described below) and Community Assistants will be responsible for mentoring the first-year students in their community and on-campus activities and will also live on the first floor. The second and third floors will be occupied by upper-level students engaged in:

- self-initiated and self-designed community programs, such as “Kids for Tomorrow” where students will use the Center to host programming for disadvantaged children;
- student service organizations, such as the Big Sisters/Big Brothers program;
- community-based learning courses, e.g., one suite will house a group studying women’s health issues in the community who will be enrolled in a course on families, children and poverty; and
- leadership of student organizations, including student government representatives and others.

The Center will combine academic and student life programming and thus be accountable to both the academic and student life deans. The directors of the CBL Program, the Center for Volunteerism, and the Leadership Academy will be responsible for supervising Center programs and ensuring the integration of their functions. However, it is the students who will determine the nature of the programs and projects of engagement and it will be their skills and talents that will determine the success of the Center’s initiatives. Simply put, the Center will strive to create a learning community that emphasizes student ownership. At the core of that ownership will be the Community Mentors program. Each student Community Mentor (CM), who is a paid member of the Center staff, will work with community partners to identify needs within their organizations and develop partnership programs to address those needs. The CMs will then have primary responsibility for the coordination of the partnership programs as well as to mentor and manage other students who will be incorporated into their programs through course work and/or volunteer programs. In addition, these CMs will take on certain specialized tasks based on expertise and interest. For example, some will serve as teaching assistants in CBL courses, others as volunteer coordinators, while others might serve as participatory action research project directors. All CMs will be required to enroll in CBL101: *Leadership Development Studies*, where they will be trained in leadership skill development.

The rationale behind the CM program is to empower students to identify problems and develop programs in collaboration with community partners, faculty, staff, and fellow students. As a result, with leadership from the CMs, the Center will build on several existing partnerships with community organizations, as well as support the creation and development of new programs within the community. Among the existing and emerging partnerships that students have expressed an interest in expanding are:

- ***Partnerships on the Akwesasne Mohawk Reservation:*** In recent years, St. Lawrence CBL students have worked at both the Akwesasne Boys and Girls Club and the Akwesasne Freedom School (a complete Mohawk Language immersion school for grades one through eight) as English tutors. Student-proposed ideas for ways to improve and build on this program include: development of an extension of our University Writing Center on the Reservation, where tutors can be better trained and resources can be made more readily available to a greater number of Mohawk residents; the development of a core curriculum of St. Lawrence courses to be taught on the Reservation (for Mohawk students and St. Lawrence students), which will enable a shuttle service to bring a group of undergraduates to the Reservation for longer periods of time and in-depth cultural exchange; and the development of a program to bring Mohawk students to

visit campus and the University Writing Center, so that they can experience the college campus firsthand. These are all models that the CMs will explore next year. With Center support, we anticipate the CMs will design a program, prepare a budget, and implement a productive partnership on the reservation.

- **The Senior Buddies Program:** This program has been initiated as the result of our students' experiences in the local "Meals on Wheels" program. St. Lawrence students reported that the "Meals on Wheels" senior citizens often seek social interaction that goes unmet. In class, Sarah Nichols, a first-year student, was asked what could be done to address that problem, to which she responded:

*Why not create a program headed by volunteers from St. Lawrence that would give Canton elderly the companionship and household support they need? It would be a program similar to SLU Buddies, but for the elderly. We could read, talk, play games, or watch TV with them. However, an important aspect here is that these activities would occur in the comfort of the senior's own home and the volunteer would be thought of as a guest simply coming to visit. SLU students and other members of the Canton community could do all the volunteering. (Nichols, 2005)*

As a result, the Senior Buddies Program was proposed and is in the process of implementation. Other students have suggested a program where senior citizens are brought to the University for sporting events, artistic performances, readings, and lectures. We have begun conversations with the local nursing home and the Office of the Aging to begin planning this program. Once again, it will be next year's CMs who will complete the details of the program and prepare its implementation for next year's students.

- **Supervised Visitations Program:** This partnership project joins St. Lawrence students with the local Family Court. Currently, students are trained by the Department of Social Services and assigned (typically in teams of two) to families in crisis. The students then serve as supervisors of parental visits that the Court has mandated must be supervised. The Center will again support CM development of this project. The CMs will have much to do to develop this project, especially in clearly articulating the nature of the collaboration with both the Social Services and Family Court systems.

- **Performing Arts Partnership:** This project seeks to partner K-12 schools with St. Lawrence students and faculty to enhance the presence and variety of performance arts in area schools' curricula. Project planners aim to create and expand the opportunities for undergraduates to be more civically engaged in the community, while addressing a public need identified by area residents. As envisioned, the CMs will facilitate the creation of an advisory committee comprised of school officials, community members, and St. Lawrence students and faculty to help local schools assess current limitations in performing arts programming and develop strategies for ways in which those gaps can be filled.

- **Global Citizenship Partnership:** The goal of this project is to develop a series of CBL placements in our region that will complement community placement experiences students have through our Study Abroad Programs. Many St. Lawrence students who study abroad participate in an internship as part of their international experience; we seek to create complementary opportunities here that will enable students to conduct comparative analyses of issues related to civic engagement within different cultural contexts – consistent with the comparative focus of our Global Studies Program. For example, students who volunteered at local women's shelters in Trinidad could be placed at a local, U.S. women's shelter. CMs will identify community partners and determine course development needs for this project.

**Academic Programming:** A primary goal of the Center is to encourage and nurture the development of courses that foreground pedagogies of engagement<sup>1</sup> across the curriculum. To foster a sense of cohesion across the courses, as part of this project we will propose an academic minor, *Civic Engagement and Leadership Studies*, where teaching and learning will occur both in and out of the classroom. Consistent with engaged learning goals, students will have considerable freedom to shape how and what they learn, and will apply what they have learned to real world situations. The minor will not necessarily be driven by courses, but by student experiences in different community settings. We anticipate the minor will offer

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<sup>1</sup> In this proposal, terms such as "pedagogies of engagement" and "engaged learning" unless otherwise specified, will refer to types of engaged teaching and learning associated with citizenship and leadership development.

three tracks: *North Country Studies*, *Global Citizenship Studies*, and *Democracy Studies*.<sup>2</sup> The tracks will be differentiated by students' selection of electives and senior project focus. Students in *Democracy Studies*, for example, may enroll in a course modeled after our successful *Journey to Democracy Project*, in which students engaged in a series of sustained dialogues on local issues with community partners. In that project, students learned there are many different perspectives on community problems and solutions, which enhanced their appreciation of the complexity of democratic action.

Instead of the traditional introductory course, the minor will require three introductory half-unit courses: *CBL-100: Introduction to Citizenship, Service and Democracy*, *CBL-101: Leadership Development Studies*, and *CBL-102: Methods of Deliberative Dialogue and Democracy*. Minors will also participate in one sustained program of volunteerism, such as SLU Buddies or Habitat for Humanity or a leadership position on campus. Students will complete a course in participatory action research to gain skills to understand better the issues they confront in the community and develop strategies for positive change. Minors will complete a senior project, which builds off their experiences in and out of the classroom.

The most significant requirement will be a learning e-portfolio to be used for all courses and experiences connected with the minor. Current scholarship finds that learning portfolios complement engaged learning pedagogies well. The portfolio enhances reflection and encourages students to take ownership of learning experiences (Zubizarreta, 2004). Given that the portfolio represents the student's learning experience, it will become the basic tool by which the senior project is constructed. For the faculty, it allows for a clearer picture of learning outcomes, typically not seen with standard classroom assessment instruments.

The Center's academic programming will form important partnerships with other academic programs on campus. For example, an emphasis on communication skills as a foundation for democratic action will build on the strengths of our Rhetoric and Oral Communication Institute and the Speech and Theater Department. The Institute sponsors a workshop series where students, faculty, and staff learn deliberative and sustained dialogue training. The Center for International and Intercultural Studies (CIIS) and the Department of Global Studies will be central to the development and success of a global citizenship concentration. The importance of engaged learning on a global level and the development of global citizenship skills are shared objectives of both the Center and the CIIS.

Much of the emphasis of the initial programming will center on student, faculty, and community partner development. The Center will sponsor leadership "grant" awards for students working in the community to pursue the development of a partnership project. The funds can be used to support a research, implementation, and/or assessment component of a project, as well as student conference travel. The Center will also support student-driven residential programming centered on civic engagement activities. The CMs will play a significant role in the experimental study component of this project and will receive training in focus group facilitation, semi-structured interviewing, and quantitative data analysis.

The Center will sponsor a variety of faculty development workshops aimed at: recruiting faculty to incorporate engaged learning into new or existing courses; developing strong engaged learning courses that integrate out-of-class experiences with in-class materials; fostering productive and reciprocal relationships with community partners; creating assignments such as learning portfolios that enhance the engaged learning experience; and encouraging participation in the development of Center programming.

A key strength of the Center will be building partnerships between our students and the community. Over the years, we have learned, however, that in order to develop such programs effectively, community

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<sup>2</sup> We identified these three potential tracks based on the strengths of our academic programming in Global Studies and the Center for International and Intercultural Studies (Global Citizenship), the growth of our Rhetoric and Oral Communication Institute (Democracy Studies) and the locally-based emphasis of our CBL programs (North Country Studies). Further, what makes these three potential tracks appealing is that they will incorporate and integrate the strengths of the three programs along with co-curricular programs in volunteerism and leadership.

partners need to be encouraged to think outside the normal routine of their programs. Too often, not-for-profit agencies are stretched to their limits just meeting the minimum needs of the populations they serve. As a result, very few have the resources or opportunity to think beyond simply meeting their day-to-day responsibilities. With the establishment of the Center, we will seek to focus on developing partnerships that maximize the continuity of service our students provide community partners and to increase the level of collaborative planning that takes place between students and the organizations they serve. To enhance this process, early in each project year, the Center will sponsor a community partner workshop.

Lastly, the Center will ensure that the research and accomplishments of our students are disseminated across campus, the local community, and academia by establishing a “working paper series” and an annual campus-community symposium. The working paper series will publish all Center-sponsored student research on their civic engagement experiences and profile our community partnership projects. Faculty and staff scholarship on engaged learning pedagogy will also be included in the series. The paper will be posted online in PDF format to increase access by the larger academic community. At the conclusion of the academic year, the Center will sponsor a symposium on civic engagement and leadership. The symposium will highlight student experiences, as well as research and project outcomes, through a variety of sessions, panels, workshops, award recognitions, and a keynote address. The symposium will be organized and hosted by the CMs and all papers presented will become part of the working paper series.

The underlying objective of the Center is to foster a creative, positive student energy that will ripple out across the rest of campus and into the local community. This energy will result from giving our young scholars enriching opportunities for personal growth, as well as the space and empowerment to take ownership of their learning and capability to be agents of social change. We believe that such energy will have positive effects on the personal development of our students that will be reflected in responsible alcohol use and positive mental well-being. Creating such a center, however, will not be easy and its success will require considerable time and attention to the nurturance of community partnerships, the training of faculty and staff, the development of an integrated curriculum built on strong engaged learning courses, the successful melding of talents in academics and student life, and the mentoring of our students. There will be many components and many players; each must be well-trained and well-prepared in order for the Center to reach its goals. For that reason, a considerable amount of resources and time will be invested in student, faculty, and community partner development, as well as in our experimental study.

**Project Activities – Experimental Study:** The primary objective of the experimental study component is to examine the effects of the establishment of the living-learning experience of the Center on levels of student civic engagement, alcohol use, and mental well-being. Our working hypothesis, based on previous scholarship, is that the programming, projects, and residential experience of the Center will increase civic engagement which, in turn, will reduce levels of high-risk alcohol use and abuse, and improve levels of mental well-being. At the core of our analysis is a quasi-experimental design involving four groups of first-year students, two from the class of 2009 and two from the class of 2010. Each year, one of the groups will be assigned to an FYP College housed in the Center, and their curricular and co-curricular experiences will be compared to a comparable group of first-year students not housed in the Center. These four cohorts will be followed over their first two years at St. Lawrence University.

While our study focuses on these four groups, we will contextualize their experience by engaging in a broad-based evaluation process that focuses on various components of the University (faculty, staff, administration, and students) as well as the local community. This approach is based on successful assessment models developed at Portland State, IUPUI, and Cal State-Monterrey (Campus Compact 2001), where student outcomes are better understood within this larger context of campus and community dynamics and change. We will employ a variety of complementary methodologies including focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and secondary data analysis to complete the picture.

**Preliminary Work:** The project investigative team will begin an extensive review of prior scholarship on engaged learning, civic engagement, alcohol use, and depression. Our goal will be to develop a theoretical

model that specifies these relationships and drives the measurement process. Once the model has been articulated and the concepts clearly defined, we will turn to the operational stage and design our instruments. In addition to construction of pre-test instruments (to be administered to both groups), we will modify our existing student surveys to include questions that can serve as benchmarks for students' engaged learning experiences. We will also be able to extract the answers of students in our test groups and include them in our database for later analyses. We will make arrangement for the acquisition and administration of the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI), which generates information on mental well-being.

***Quasi-Experimental Design:*** Our first task in both Year One and Year Two of the project will be to identify and recruit our control and experimental groups from the classes of 2009 and 2010. Each spring, the FYP sends out a preference form to all incoming first-year students containing a variety of items on curricular and co-curricular interests as well as descriptions of the FYP Colleges. Students are asked to identify those colleges in which they are either strongly, moderately, or not at all interested. The FYP staff sort's students into colleges taking into account not only student preferences but also gender composition, academic skills, and other relevant characteristics that factor into creating colleges of students that will work well both in and out of the classroom. As part of this process, the FYP will select the 30 students who will become members of Brown College in 2005 and 2006, our experimental groups.

In order to isolate the effects of engaged learning experiences of the Brown College students, we will recruit 30 other students from the classes of 2009 and 2010 whose characteristics mirror the experimental groups. Among the characteristics we will take into account in the selection process include age, gender, race, social class, FYP College preferences, academic and co-curricular interests, and previous community service and leadership activities. Given that prior scholarship (Gelmon, Holland, Driscoll, Spring and Kerrigan, 2001; Eyler and Giles, 1999) has indicated that prior community service affects student outcomes, especially engagement in service learning, community service, and campus activities, we will request information on the FYP preference sheet related to prior experience with community service. Each year, candidates for the comparison group will receive a letter from the President and be invited to participate in the study. Students in the comparison groups will be compensated for their participation, while the two cohorts of Brown College students will participate as part of their course activities.

Immediately prior to the start of the fall semester, students in Brown College and in the comparison group will complete the CIRP survey (modified to include questions relevant to our study) administered to all first-year students and undergo an initial interview by a certified counselor. Both groups will also complete the pre-test survey and the BSI. At the end of the spring semester of their first year, we will administer the post-test survey instrument to each group. At the end of their sophomore year, each group will complete a follow-up survey. The data from the pre- and post-tests, as well as the sophomore follow-up surveys, will be entered into our database that will include the information from the CIRP and BSI. We will also enter data on the curricular and co-curricular activities of the four groups over their first two years at St. Lawrence. For example, information on participation in campus-wide events, CBL courses, volunteerism programs, leadership courses and activities; academic career including major, minor, GPA; housing arrangements after the first year; and incidents of inappropriate behavior. The final database will contain information on 120 students (not factoring attrition). The effects of engaged learning on student outcomes will be isolated in a series of multivariate analyses conducted at the end of each year of the project.

***Qualitative Data Collection Procedures: Focus Groups*** Midway through the fall semester, we will conduct two focus groups of eight to ten participants each to assess students' perceptions of the programs and partnerships. One focus group will include Brown College students and the second will include the comparison group. The two focus groups will be co-facilitated by one CM and one professional staff. The CMs will have been trained earlier in the semester. The sessions will be videotaped, transcribed, and analyzed. The analysis of the focus group results will allow us to make adjustments to the programming and the partnerships to ensure the best possible learning and civic experiences.

In the spring, we will conduct four focus group sessions where the protocol will focus on behavioral

outcomes including civic engagement, alcohol use, and mental well-being. Again one group will include students from Brown College, while another will gather students from the comparison group. The other two sessions will include upper class students, one consisting of Center residents and the other of students living in other parts of campus. In the second and third years of the project, we will also conduct two focus group sessions where the focus will be on the sustainability of outcomes. One focus group will consist of experimental group sophomores and the other on the comparison group sophomores. In addition to allowing us to document changes in outcomes, the results of these focus groups will allow us to develop the items for the final follow-up surveys. All groups will consist of eight to ten participants and will be facilitated by a staff professional and a CM. The videotapes will be transcribed and the results analyzed.

*Semi-Structured Interviews* We will conduct four semi-structured interviews of first-year students in the spring semesters with a goal toward understanding how the students integrate engaged learning, community service, and leadership activities into their college careers, and to investigate whether there is any relationship between that planning and academic and behavioral outcomes. The interviews will vary in length, but, on average, will last about two hours. The interviews will be transcribed and the data coded and analyzed. Also during the spring semesters of project Years Two and Three, we will conduct four semi-structured interviews on the sophomores (two candidates each from the prior year's experimental group and comparison group) to learn more about their engaged learning experiences, especially the ways in which they incorporated such experiences into their curricular and co-curricular activities during their first two years at St. Lawrence. These interviews will also cover alcohol use and depression.

*Course and Student Learning Assessment* In addition to writing and oral assignments, students in the *Our Communities, Our Selves* course will maintain electronic learning journals/portfolios of their learning experiences both in and out of the class. The journals will include entries detailing their activities at their respective agencies coupled with more directed entries that tie these activities to course readings and class discussions. The journals/portfolios will include all assignments, organized in a way that captures for the students their learning experiences as well as their reflections on what they learned, why they learned it, and how they will use that knowledge in their life experiences. The learning journals/portfolios will provide a rich insight into students' learning as it relates to the various dimensions of the course and the programming of the Center. The course will also make use of an Angel platform for creating dialogue centers where students in the course can reflect on community learning experiences with each other and other residents of the Center. In addition to being a strong learning tool, the dialogues will provide insight into the progress of the course, the Center's activities, and the students' receptivity to the experience.

*Contextual Assessment* Our findings on the effects of academic and co-curricular experiences on the outcomes within these four groups will be contextualized by engaging in a broader review of the changes and impact of engaged learning on the University and the local community. These analyses will be both quantitative and qualitative. For example, multi-year data sets from CIRP and Senior Surveys will be combined with demographic/academic information from our institutional database to create a powerful project database that allows multivariate analysis of engaged learning experiences and self-reported levels of emotional health and alcohol consumption. Data from the CORE Survey on Alcohol and Other Drugs, and program evaluations conducted by the University's Wellness Initiative, will be analyzed for the correlation between alcohol use and involvement in engaged learning experiences; and, in a similar way, other surveys such as the first-year and sophomore college success questionnaire will be analyzed.

- On the academic level, information will be collected on the number of CBL courses offered, the number of faculty offering engaged learning courses and mentoring engaged learning independent projects, and the number of students involved in engaged learning courses and independent projects. We will also monitor the level of faculty participation in engaged learning faculty development workshops and the support resources requested by faculty for CBL course development. Brief surveys of faculty will be administered and data analyzed that compares the experiences of faculty members teaching an engaged learning course compared to those who did not. On the co-curricular level, we will document any changes in the number of service organizations on campus, service-based residential arrangements outside of the

Center and the number of new co-curricular initiatives that are service- and/or leadership-based.

- On the community level, we will monitor the number of community partners involved in engaged learning programming and the number of collaborative classroom-community projects implemented. We will assess how classroom-community partnerships and student volunteer efforts have served to address unmet needs in the community. We will also assess the satisfaction of community partners with Center programming and with student involvement in their respective agencies and programs.

**Anticipated Outcomes:** At the conclusion of our proposed project, we anticipate the following outcomes:

- An increased number of students annually participating in programs offered through CBL, the Center for Volunteerism, and the Leadership Academy.
- A fully-developed and effectively functioning Community Mentors program within the Center that will sustain long-term collaborative community partnerships.
- Stronger ties between the University and the agencies and organizations within our region with whom the Center works and greater satisfaction levels reported by our community partners.
- Data and assessment evidence from which we can draw conclusions on whether there is a link between participation in engaged learning and students' levels of alcohol use or depression.

**St. Lawrence University's Track Record in Engaged Learning:** Broadly defined, engaged learning emphasizes student ownership of their learning, with stress on creating opportunities for students to apply what they learn in the classroom to real world situations, whether in a laboratory, field setting, or in a community. Students set their own learning and discovery agendas in which they identify problems and apply learned skills to seek solutions and advance knowledge. Since learning typically involves working with others, pedagogies of engagement emphasize the collaborative process, where students learn to respect and incorporate the views of others in authentic situations of discovery, problem-solving, and decision-making (Jones, Valdez, Nowakowski and Rasmussen 1994). In the past 15 years, St. Lawrence has re-engineered itself into a liberal arts university where engaged learning is the *sine qua non* of our academic and co-curricular programs. Indeed, specific, intentional engaged learning programs exist in all four years of students' work, involve nearly every student at the university, and are academic, co-curricular, or both. Examples include: the FYP, a year-long combined academic and residential program that emphasizes critical thinking and active student participation in both the classroom and the residence; study abroad in 14 countries and two off campus U.S. programs specifically designed to engage students in intensive academic study, field work and community involvement; a culminating senior year experience, now mandatory for more than 90% of St. Lawrence students; and two upper-class living-learning communities which combine academic, co-curricular education, and engaged learning (Intercultural House, where students from diverse backgrounds take a course in common that informs the negotiation of their residential community, and Commons College, where students work with faculty mentors to develop and complete a semester-long course of study). The University sponsors 11 theme cottages and five theme residences, which combine educational goals with community and social action goals, such as: International House, Women's Resource Center, La Casa Latina, Pink Triangle, Green House, and the Outing Club. As a result of our University commitment to engaged learning, data from the HEDS Faculty Survey, the HEDS Senior Survey, and the National Survey of Student Engagement all show that St. Lawrence faculty use pedagogies designed to foster engaged learning significantly more often than the faculties of comparable institutions.

**Project Evaluation:** As noted in our timetable below, data analysis will take place at strategic points throughout the study. At the end of each fall semester, we will collect and synthesize all the information and prepare a status report for AAC&U and the Charles Engelhard Foundation. The report will include analyses and updates on the success of the programming, to date, both on and off campus. Planned changes in programming and assessment procedures, if any, will also be reported. During each of the first two summers, the research team will complete a comprehensive examination of all data collected to date on the experiences of the experimental and comparison groups. We will compile the statistical analyses on effects of engaged learning on student outcomes with findings from focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and contextual analyses, to provide a broad picture of the relationship between engaged learning and student

outcomes. The results will be submitted to AAC&U and become part of the Center's working paper series.

In the summer of Year Three, we will prepare the final analyses, conclusions, and curricular policy recommendations. A final report will be produced that will highlight the experiences and behavioral outcomes of our four groups of students and probe the effects of Center initiatives on the expansion of engaged learning across the curricular and co-curricular initiatives. The richness of our findings will come from the inclusion of information on students, faculty, staff, and community partners. Thus, our approach will not only yield more definitive conclusions about if and how engaged learning affects student outcomes such as civic engagement, alcohol use, and mental well-being, but will also show the quantity and quality of engaged learning experiences and their impacts on campus and in the community.

**Sustaining the Project Beyond the Terms of the Grant:** While the project will formally end in 2008, the programming, projects, and assessment will not. The University has added resources to our CBL programs and the initiatives of the Rhetoric and Oral Communication Institute, both central components to the academic dimension of the project. CBL staffing has doubled over the past year and the FYP is a firmly established institution on campus, so collaboration between the programs will continue. Further, the Dean of Academic Affairs is committed to developing integrated programs designed to foster student intentionality and sees this initiative as a central component of that long-term goal. On the student life side, the President and the Dean of Student Life are strongly supportive of both the Leadership Academy and the Center for Volunteerism and their incorporation into an ongoing Center. Our Student Life Division has also been firmly committed to addressing the problems of alcohol abuse and depression among our students, as evidenced by our ongoing Wellness Initiative. Our Residential Learning Communities division is wholly supportive of the Center as consistent with their mandate to develop a residential experience that is seamlessly connected to all aspects of college life and is a focal point of the learning experience. With this support infrastructure in place, the University sees the Center as part of our long-term future and will continue to seek outside and institutional sources of financial support for its programming and projects.

In the short term, we plan to continue to follow the academic and co-curricular experiences of our four target groups of students and our institutional research division and counseling services will continue to monitor trends in engaged learning, alcohol abuse, and depression. Based on our findings, we will offer policy recommendations on both curricular and co-curricular requirements and programs to institutionalize the observed successes of the programming on student outcomes. In the long term, the Center's academic and co-curricular programs will become a permanent part of the fabric of our University, as will a more collaborative relationship with our community. Eventually, we hope that the partnerships will take on a life of their own and that generations of students will teach each other the skills of citizenship and leadership.

### **Implementation Timetable for Three-Year Project: Summer 2005 – Summer 2008**

#### **Year One: 2005-2006:**

##### ***Summer 2005 (tasks to be completed before students arrive in late August):***

- **June/July:** Identify/recruit control and experimental groups from class of 2009. Review prior works on engaged learning, civic engagement, alcohol use, depression. Develop theoretical model to frame the measurement process. Construct pre-test instruments; modify existing surveys to include questions to serve as benchmarks for student's engaged learning experiences. Arrange to acquire and administer the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI), which generates information on mental well-being.
- **July/August:** Center team will work with community partners to ensure that our collaborative projects (which will be managed by CMs in the fall) will be ready to go by August. Planning will also be underway for the grand opening of the Center and a series of faculty/staff and community partner workshops to be held in the fall. Purchase of hardware and software for data collection and analyses.
- **August:** Project faculty finalize syllabus and course assignments, including e-portfolio assignments.

##### ***Fall 2005***

- **August 21-24:** (first-year student orientation), project student participants complete the CIRP, the

modified first-year survey, and undergo an initial interview by certified counselor.

- Late August: Participants complete pre-test surveys and BSI. Classes begin; Center holds open house, officially launches website, distributes flyers on campus and in community. CMs will begin orientation programs preparing all students in various forms of community service for agencies and programs.
- September: Center will hold a community partner workshop and two faculty/staff development workshops aimed at developing student engaged learning opportunities in and out of the classroom.
- Mid-semester: conduct focus groups, perform analysis, and document results.

#### ***Winter Break 2005-2006***

- Winter break, all of the collected data will be synthesized and the first analysis of the project will be undertaken. A preliminary report will be prepared and distributed. In addition, during winter break the Center team will be evaluating community partnership experiences and outcomes as well as planning for spring semester engaged learning workshops.

#### ***Spring-Summer 2006***

- Semester start: Preparation of second set of focus group protocols.
- Mid-semester: Convene and videotape four focus groups, transcribe tapes, and analyze results.
- Late in semester: Conduct four semi-structured interviews of sophomores, transcribe data, and analyze.
- At the conclusion of the academic year: Center will sponsor a symposium on civic engagement and leadership. Student papers that are presented will become part of the Center working paper series. Also, Center staff will compile information on opportunities for engaged learning as they relate to citizenship and leadership across campus and in the community.
- Summer: Investigative team will review all data and analyses and conduct comprehensive comparative examination of the experiences of the two first-year groups to be completed by late August. Identify and recruit control and experimental groups from the class of 2010. Arrange to acquire/administer BSI. Work with community partners to ensure that collaborative projects are ready by August. Project faculty finalize syllabus and course assignments, including e-portfolio assignments. Plan conference on Engaged Learning and Civic Engagement and community partner and faculty workshops.

#### **Year Two 2006-2007**

##### ***Fall 2006***

- Late August: Hold Center mini-conference as classes begin. Also, during first-year student orientation, students in Brown College and in the comparison group will complete the CIRP, our standard first-year survey (modified to include questions relevant to our study), and undergo an initial interview by a certified counselor. Both groups will complete the pre-test survey and BSI. CMs will begin orientation programs preparing all students in various forms of community service for agencies and programs.
- September: Center will hold a community partner workshop and two faculty/staff development workshops aimed at developing student engaged learning opportunities in and out of the classroom.
- Mid-semester: Conduct and videotape focus groups with first-year students; transcribe and analyze.

##### ***Winter Break 2006/07***

- Winter break: Begin to finalize the post-test instrument for the sophomore groups (Year One's experimental and comparison groups); it will be administered toward the end of spring semester.

##### ***Spring - Summer 2007***

- Start of semester: Begin preparing the second set of focus group protocols.
- Mid-semester: Convene and videotape focus groups, transcribe tapes and analyze results.
- Late in semester: Conduct four semi-structured interviews of sophomores, transcribe data, and analyze. Also administer follow-up instrument to sophomores, input data, and conduct analysis.
- At the conclusion of the academic year: Hold Center symposium; compile information on opportunities for engaged learning as they relate to citizenship and leadership across campus and in the community.
- Summer: Review all data and analyses. Prepare comprehensive comparative examination of the experiences of the two first-year groups to be completed by late August/early fall. Also plan second conference on Engaged Learning and Civic Engagement and community partner and faculty workshops

**Year Three: 2007-2008:**

***Fall, 2007***

- Late August: Hold Center mini-conference as classes begin. Also, CMs begin orientation programs preparing all students in various forms of community service for community agencies and programs.
- September: The Center will hold a community partner workshop and two faculty/staff development workshops aimed at developing student engaged learning opportunities in and out of the classroom.

***Winter Break 2007/08***

- Winter break: Project team will begin to finalize the post-test instrument for the sophomore groups (Year One's groups); it will be administered toward the end of the spring semester.

***Spring-Summer 2008***

- Start of semester: Begin preparing the second set of focus group protocols.
- Mid-semester: Convene and videotape focus groups, transcribe tapes and analyze results.
- Late in semester: Conduct four semi-structured interviews of sophomores, transcribe data, and analyze. Also administer follow-up instrument to sophomores, input data, and conduct analysis.
- At the conclusion of the academic year: Hold Center symposium; compile information on opportunities for engaged learning as they relate to citizenship and leadership across campus and in the community.
- Summer: Review all data and analyses. Prepare final report.

**Persons Responsible for the Project:** St. Lawrence has organized a substantial team to oversee and implement this project that includes our President; Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs; Vice President and Dean of Student Life and Co-curricular Education; the Director of Community-Based Learning Programs; Director of Institutional Research; Co-Leaders of our Wellness Initiative research program; Director of Counseling Services; Associate Dean of the First-Year; and the Directors of the Student Leadership Academy and Center for Collegiate Volunteerism. The direct involvement of the President and the Deans of Academic Affairs and Student Life signals the importance we give to this project. The faculty and staff research expertise on the team covers all phases of our comprehensive assessment model and includes expertise in assessing levels of student depression. Additionally included are leaders of some of our most significant existing engaged learning programs, along with the leaders of the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership that we will create as part of this project.

Following are the credentials for the primary project facilitators and investigative personnel. **Ronald J. O. Flores**, Associate Professor of Sociology is the Director of both Community-Based Learning and Summerterm programs. During the past five years, he has also served as Chair of the Department of Sociology, Faculty Council, the Caribbean and Latin American Studies Advisory Board, the Dean's Task Force on Recruitment and Retention of Faculty of Color as well as Faculty Delegate to the Board of Trustees. His most recent scholarship on educational attainment patterns of Puerto Rican Youth and residential settlement patterns of recent immigrants in New York City has been published in *Urban Affairs Quarterly* and *The Hispanic Journal of Higher Education*. **Catherine A. Crosby-Currie**, Associate Professor of Psychology and **Christine Zimmerman**, Director of Institutional Research are Co-Chairs of our Wellness Initiative Research and Evaluation Subcommittee. Dr. Crosby-Currie has conducted several social norms campaigns in conjunction with campus programming to prevent high-risk drinking. She has presented seven professional presentations related to high-risk drinking and alcohol use (1998-2005) and was Project Director on two New York State-funded study projects: "College Norms Misperception Project" (1999-2000) and "Healthy Campus-Community Collaboration Project" (2000-01). For nearly a decade, Ms. Zimmerman has overseen the institution's data analysis and support for institutional strategic planning and outcomes assessment, grant assessment, external reporting, and survey research. She collaborates regularly with faculty and staff on the research design of numerous projects, served on the Alcohol Task Force, and serves on the Wellness Initiative Advisory Committee.

**Total Amount Requested:** St. Lawrence seeks \$150,000, over three years.

## PROJECT BUDGET

<b>Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership</b>	<b>Year One</b>			<b>Year Two</b>			<b>Year Three</b>		
	<b>Total Year One Costs</b>	<b>SLU Cost-Share</b>	<b>Requested Grant</b>	<b>Total Year Two Costs</b>	<b>SLU Cost-Share</b>	<b>Requested Grant</b>	<b>Total Year Three Costs</b>	<b>SLU Cost-Share</b>	<b>Requested Grant</b>
<b>Student Development</b>									
Community Mentors	\$ 24,000		\$ 24,000	\$ 24,000		\$ 24,000	\$ 24,000		\$ 24,000
Student Research Support	\$ 3,500		\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500		\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500		\$ 3,500
Residential Programming	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000
<b>Faculty and Staff Development</b>									
Faculty/Staff Development Funds	\$ 6,000		\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000		\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000		\$ 6,000
<b>Community Partners</b>									
Partnership Program Support	\$ 7,500		\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500		\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500		\$ 7,500
	\$ -			\$ -			\$ -		
<b>Programming</b>	\$ -			\$ -			\$ -		
Speakers	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000
Food	\$ 2,700		\$ 2,700	\$ 2,700		\$ 2,700	\$ 2,900		\$ 2,900
Duplication, Postage, and Materials	\$ 840		\$ 840	\$ 750		\$ 750	\$ 750		\$ 750
<b>Personnel</b>	\$ 156,089	\$ 156,089		\$ 160,513	\$ 160,513		\$ 165,069	\$ 165,069	
<b>Operating Costs</b>	\$ 10,533	\$ 10,533		\$ 10,533	\$ 10,533		\$ 10,533	\$ 10,533	
<b>Assessment Study</b>									
<u>Quasi-Experimental Study</u>									
Control Group Student Compensation	\$ 1,200	\$ -	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ -	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ -	\$ 1,200
Survey Costs	\$ 420	\$ -	\$ 420	\$ 630	\$ -	\$ 630	\$ 210		\$ 210
Focus Groups	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	
Video Recorder	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Food/materials for meetings	\$ 600	\$ -	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ -	\$ 600	\$ -	\$ -	

<b>Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership</b>	<b>Year One</b>			<b>Year Two</b>			<b>Year Three</b>		
	<b>Total Year One Costs</b>	<b>SLU Cost- Share</b>	<b>Requested Grant</b>	<b>Total Year Two Costs</b>	<b>SLU Cost- Share</b>	<b>Requested Grant</b>	<b>Total Year Three Costs</b>	<b>SLU Cost- Share</b>	<b>Requested Grant</b>
Semi-Structured Interviews	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	
Tape Recorders and tapes	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 100	\$ -	\$ 100	\$ -	\$ -	
Software	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ -	
Other Activities	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	
Survey Costs	\$ 66	\$ -	\$ 66	\$ 67	\$ -	\$ 67	\$ 67	\$ -	\$ 67
Investigative Team	\$ 10,300	\$ 10,300		\$ 8,232	\$ 8,232		\$ 4,832	\$ 4,832	
<b>Project Evaluation</b>									
Data Analysis	\$ 2,880	\$ 2,880		\$ 4,800	\$ 4,800		\$ 7,560	\$ 7,560	
Report Preparation	\$ 9,250	\$ 9,250		\$ 11,690	\$ 11,690		\$ 14,150	\$ 14,150	
<b>Project Meeting Travel</b>	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000		\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000		\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 245,378</b>	<b>\$ 195,052</b>	<b>\$ 50,326</b>	<b>\$ 252,315</b>	<b>\$ 201,768</b>	<b>\$ 50,547</b>	<b>\$ 257,271</b>	<b>\$ 208,144</b>	<b>\$ 49,127</b>

### PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY

	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>	<b>Year Three</b>	<b>Total</b>
Requested Grant	\$ 50,326	\$ 50,547	\$ 49,127	\$ 150,000
St. Lawrence Cost-Share	\$ 195,052	\$ 201,768	\$ 208,144	\$ 604,964
Total Project Costs	\$ 245,378	\$ 252,315	\$ 257,271	\$ 754,964

## Budget Narrative

**Student Development:** Compensation for the 12 Community Mentors is calculated at \$7.00/hour x 10 hours/week x 28 weeks for a total of \$24,000/year. Funds for student research are budgeted at \$3,500/year. These funds will support students engaged in independent community action research projects (or other forms of partnership development) for project-related travel, meetings with community members, supplies, photocopying, book purchases, conference participation, and other related research costs. Funds for residential programming are budgeted at \$1,000/year. Student participants will develop residential programming with a civic engagement focus, often involving community participants. Projects will bring young children and adolescents from the community to our residence for games, play time, and outdoor recreation. These monies will support logistics, food, supplies, and other materials.

**Faculty and Staff Development:** Funds for faculty and staff development are budgeted at \$6,000/year. These monies will support the incorporation of engaged learning pedagogy into existing courses and the creating of new engaged learning courses. Monies will be used for books, software and other course materials, travel, meetings with community partners, and some support for conference travel and stipends.

**Programming:** Programming funds will support Center-sponsored faculty and community partner workshops, an open house in Year One, a mini-conference at the beginning of the Years Two and Three of the project, and a symposium at the end of every academic year. We anticipate inviting a facilitator for the conference and a keynote speaker for the symposium. The keynote speaker at the symposium will be a community partner, which will keep transportation costs modest. Funds for speakers are estimated at \$2,000/year. Costs for food, duplication, postage, and materials are based on 15 participants for workshops, 25 participants for the conference, and 100 participants for the symposium. Food costs are budgeted at \$2,700 for Years One and Two and \$2,900 for Year Three for lunches, light dinners, or refreshments for Center workshops and events. Duplication, postage, and other related materials costs are budgeted at \$840 for Year One and \$750 for Years Two and Three. These funds will be used for invitations and response envelopes, posters and flyers and related postage expenses.

**Community Partners:** Partnership program support funds are budgeted at \$7,500/year. These monies will support our community partnership programs for expenses related to logistics, planning, supplies, transportation, and other program needs. Transportation funding is especially important for our work on the Akwesasne Mohawk reservation, which is 45 miles northeast of campus.

**St. Lawrence University Cost-Share – Personnel:** University cost-share personnel expenses related to the Center for Engaged Living and Learning are calculated based on the pro-rated salaries for faculty, staff, and student campus project partners: The Community-Based Learning Program, The David Garner Center for Collegiate Volunteerism, The St. Lawrence University Leadership Academy, The First-Year Program, and the Center for Teaching and Learning. The total cost share for personnel is \$156,089 for Year One, \$160,513 for Year Two, and \$165,069 for Year Three.

**St. Lawrence University Cost-Share – Operating Expenses:** University cost-share operating expenses related to the Center for Engaged Living and Learning are calculated based on operating expenses for campus project partner programs: The Community-Based Learning Program, The David Garner Center for Collegiate Volunteerism, The St. Lawrence University Leadership Academy, and the First-Year Program. The cost share for operating expenses is estimated at \$10,533/year.

**Assessment Study: *Quasi-Experimental Study:*** Control group compensation is calculated at \$10/hour for student participants, for a total of \$3,600. Costs for the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) Survey costs are budgeted at \$420 in Year One, \$630 in Year Two, and \$210 in Year Three, calculated on a base cost of \$3.50 per survey. Surveys will be administered to each experimental and cohort group three times. ***Focus Groups:*** Funds to purchase a video recorder and video supplies are budgeted at \$500. This equipment will be used to tape focus group sessions to allow for data transcription and analysis. \$600 has been budgeted for refreshments and materials for focus group meetings. ***Semi-Structured Interviews:*** Funds to purchase

tape recorders and tapes are budgeted at \$100. This equipment will be used to record interviews with first-year and sophomore students and allow for data transcription and analysis. In addition, \$500 is budgeted for the purchase of NVIVO software to assist in qualitative data analysis. *Other Assessment Activities:* \$200 has been budgeted for survey costs related to short evaluation/assessment instruments to be administered in conjunction with project events each term.

**St. Lawrence University Cost-Share – Assessment Investigation Team:** Cost-share personnel expenses for the Assessment Investigation Team are estimated at \$10,300 in Year One, \$8,232 in Year Two, and \$4,832 in Year Three. University professional staff will develop and implement survey instruments, develop the protocol for the focus groups, train the Community Mentors and student workers, and develop software and database applications for data collection and analysis. In addition, support staff and student workers will collect and input data, coordinate focus group meetings, and transcribe interview tapes.

**St. Lawrence University Cost-Share - Project Evaluation Team:** Cost-share personnel expenses related to data analysis are estimated at \$2,880 for Year One, \$4,800 for Year Two, and \$7,560 for Year Three. The University Evaluation Team will perform a comprehensive analysis – on both a quantitative and qualitative basis – of collected data to determine the impact of engaged learning on the University and the local community. Cost-share expenses for the preparation of data analysis reports, annual project reports, and the final project report are estimated at \$9,250 for Year One, \$11,690 for Year Two, and \$14,150 for Year Three.

**St. Lawrence University Cost-Share - Project Meeting Travel:** The University has budgeted \$6,000/year to enable the project team to attend annual cross-site meetings.

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# ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY

Canton, New York 13617-1475

April 15, 2005

Ms. Caryn McTighe Musil  
Senior Vice President  
Association of American Colleges and Universities  
1818 R Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20009-1604

Dear Caryn:

On behalf of St. Lawrence University, thank you and Bringing Theory to Practice, the Association of American Colleges and Universities, and the Charles Engelhard Foundation for the opportunity to submit our grant request in support of our Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership proposal: "Creating Opportunities for Agency and Intentionality in Student Learning Experiences." The programming we propose will not only enhance and build upon partnerships we have with community organizations in which our students have service-based internships, but will also serve as an in-depth research tool to discover the effects of this type of learning and commitment on our students, specifically on reducing alcohol abuse, promoting good mental health, and encouraging civic development.

As I reported to you with our preproposal submission, the members of our project team have been deeply involved with the issues of engaged learning, student mental health, and civic development on our campus for some time. The opportunity for St. Lawrence to participate in this demonstration program centered on these issues has generated a tremendous amount of discussion, planning, and enthusiasm among our faculty and staff team. Needless to say, we were thrilled to be invited to submit a full proposal. As an indication for you and the proposal reviewers of both the level of institutional investment and commitment to our proposed project, please note that joining me on our team are both our Academic Dean and Dean of Student Life, the faculty directors of our Community-Based Learning Program and our living-learning First-Year Program, our staff directors of our Center for Volunteerism, Student Leadership Academy, and Counseling Services, and our co-leaders of an in-depth wellness research program – looking primarily at our students' high risk use of alcohol – that we already have underway.

As described in our proposal, due to several timely, converging factors, St. Lawrence is uniquely well suited to serve as a demonstration site for a project that seeks to measure and assess the effect of civic engagement on students' mental health and abuse of alcohol. We are already studying this data on our campus, have the personnel with the skill and desire to do more of it, and are about to launch our biggest investment to date to promote student civic engagement: a living-learning center focused on civic engagement and leadership. We have all the necessary pieces in place to conduct an in-depth assessment that will provide new insights for us and others like us who are grappling with these challenging issues.

Our Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership and our proposed project will elevate the level of service provided to our community partners, develop our students' leadership and citizenship skills, and serve as a demonstration program with measurable, useful results. On behalf of St. Lawrence University, thank you and the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the Charles Engelhard Foundation for this opportunity and for your consideration of our proposal.

Sincerely,



Daniel F. Sullivan  
President

GHC

ST. LAWRENCE  
UNIVERSITY  
Canton, New York 13617-1475

April 15, 2005

Ms. Caryn McTighe Musil  
Senior Vice President  
Demonstration Program RFP  
Bringing Theory to Practice  
Association of American Colleges and Universities  
1818 R Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20009-1604

Dear Caryn:

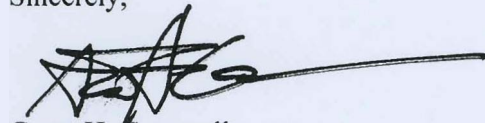
With great enthusiasm, I provide this letter of support for the St. Lawrence University proposal to the Bringing Theory to Practice project partnership with Associated American Colleges and Universities, funded by the Charles Engelhard Foundation. The opportunity to participate in this project could not come at a better time for us. This project will enable us to deepen our already advanced practices of collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Life. In discussions across campus, we are in the midst of searching deliberations about our educational programs and practices. These discussions have been informed by current research into best practices in liberal learning, but they have been especially inspired by two AAC&U publications: *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* and *Our Students' Best Work*. You will see the influence of these works in our project proposal.

Our project, "Creating Opportunities for Agency and Intentionality in Student Learning Experiences," will enable us to launch the envisioned Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership at the same time that we initiate a methodologically rigorous study of its impact. The Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership will bring several mature and philosophically aligned programs into a dynamic collaboration. These affiliations will foster the integration and intentionality of learning that are hallmarks of the most powerful liberal educations.

Through "Creating Opportunities for Agency and Intentionality in Student Learning Experiences" we will develop the center as a bridge for students to transport their ambition and hunger for education and discovery from the classroom to the community, and allow them to craft courses of study and action according to their own driving senses of purpose. As you will see, our project will allow us to measure and assess the strength of this engaged learning and its influence in steering students away from alcohol and depression and towards personal, academic, and civic accomplishments.

Thank you for the opportunity to request this grant support. With your assistance, I am convinced that we will be able to build on the progress we have made in engaged learning, mental health, and civic development and extend the impact of our prevention and education strategies in the areas of alcohol and depression in a meaningful way that will resonate on our campus and in the community for many years.

Sincerely,



Grant H. Cornwell  
Vice President of the University and Dean of Academic Affairs

Vice President of the University and Dean of Academic Affairs – (315) 229-5993  
FAX (315) 229-7416

# ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY

Canton, New York 13617-1475

April 15, 2005

Ms. Caryn McTighe Musil  
Senior Vice President  
Association of American Colleges and Universities  
1818 R Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20009-1604

Dear Ms. Musil:


As St. Lawrence University Vice President and Dean of Student Life and Co-Curricular Education, I offer my full support and commitment to our "Creating Opportunities for Agency and Intentionality in Student Learning Experiences," proposal to the Bringing Theory to Practice project partnership between Associated American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the Charles Engelhard Foundation.

In 1999, we launched the "Alcohol Initiative" at St. Lawrence, which directed a group of faculty, staff, and students to propose ways we could combat the national trends at a campus level. Two years later, we had measurable positive results. However, despite this initial progress and our continued efforts, all indications are that alcohol abuse on our campus has grown worse in the past year. We continue to center our work within the Wellness Initiative, which evolved from the Alcohol Initiative, and its proven successful components. Now, with the opportunities offered through the AAC&U, we propose to increase our efforts and test the theory that students engaged in community service can avoid the pitfalls of depression and alcohol abuse. Utilizing our First Year Program, and as described in our proposal, the new Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership, we can both provide students with academic and civic learning opportunities, *and* measure the effects of that engagement on their health and behavior.

Through our proposed project, St. Lawrence is poised to bridge the gap that often permeates the work of academic and student affairs. In a true collaborative fashion, Community Based Learning from the "curricular side of the house" will join the Leadership Academy and Center for Student Volunteerism "from the co-curricular side of the house." Together we will begin building the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership. James Martin and Sheila Murphy write: "Successful partnerships put students at the center – not first or ahead of other campus constituencies, but at the center – of every one of their efforts. In fact, to be effective, partnerships must be built on new student learning styles and new expectations of the college experience" (pg.15). These two professionals have it right – to have our students fully engaged in democracy issues, we must work together in reshaping not just the campus environment, but indeed the community in which we live and the world beyond.<sup>1</sup>

I believe that the time to take a revolutionary, multi-pronged approach to our health and wellness programming is upon us and we seek the assistance of an AAC&U grant to help us take that next step. As Vice President and Dean of Student Life and Co-Curricular Education, I am fully committed to sustaining our proposed programming for the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership beyond the terms of the proposed grant. On behalf of the University, I am grateful for the opportunity to submit our proposal and thank you for your consideration of it.

Sincerely,



M. L. Petty  
Vice President and Dean of Student Life and Co-Curricular Education

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<sup>1</sup> Resource: NASPA Invited White Paper: *Building A Better Bridge: Creating Effective Partnerships Between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs*, James Martina and Sheila Murphy (1999)

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