



Anchor Institutions & Their Communities

*Promoting Employment and College and Career
Readiness for High School Students*

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Anchor Institutions

- Anchor institutions are enduring organizations that remain in their geographic places, and play an integral role in their local communities and economies
- The word “anchor” suggests grounded or rooted
- Anchor Institutions cannot easily leave their geographic surroundings; they are, therefore, enduring, stable, and consistent in their localities and regions even in the midst of substantial capital flight.
- Larger employers such as universities come to mind as anchors
- Some other institutions are anchors as well not because they are substantial employers, but because they tend to endure
- Others are anchors due to a mission focused on strengthening their localities



Anchor Institutions Task Force

- The Anchor Institutions Task Force (AITF) was created in 2009
- It is coordinated by Marga Incorporated (www.margainc.com/initiatives/aitf/) with assistance from the Netter Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania
- The AITF promotes the role of anchor institutions in community and economic development
- The network has grown to over 600 members – leaders of anchor institutions, leaders in the field, and partners
- The AITF is driven by core values: a commitment to collaboration and partnership, equity and social justice, democratic practice, and place



Anchor Institutions Task Force

Connecting Across Industries

- The AITF is actively expanding to include representatives of a wider range of types of anchors (i.e. medical institutions, community foundations, some corporations) in a single network
- The AITF holds an Annual Conference convening leaders in higher education, health care, philanthropy, government, and others
- Next Annual Conference: November 10 & 11 in New York City
- The AITF's affinity groups (Subgroups) strengthen peer segments in the field (health professionals, higher education presidents, economic development executives, etc.) through ongoing peer learning and exchange



AITF's Influence

- The AITF has produced important publications chronicling the field's evolution – an essay on literature in the field over recent decades:
http://www.margainc.com/files_images/general/AITF_Literature_Review_2015_v_1.pdf
- And a literature review on the proliferating writing on this topic over the last three years:
http://www.margainc.com/files_images/general/Literature_Review_2013.pdf
- The AITF is holding its first international summit in Paris in June
- In South Africa discussions are underway about establishing a local version of the AITF



AITF's Global Influence

- The AITF is convening its first international summit on anchor institutions with the Council of Europe in June 2016
- This event will include discussion about creating a version of AITF for Europe
- In South Africa discussions are underway about establishing a local version of the AITF



Types of Anchor Engagement

- Designing intentionally local job strategies
- Providing relevant training in growing industries
- Procuring local businesses & preparing entrepreneurs to effectively compete for contracts
- Providing accessible health care
- Reviving local housing markets
- Strengthening local schools



The Significance of Place

- Global issues, despite the withering of boundaries, are manifested in place
- Health, economic, environmental, and educational issues affect individuals and groups in their geographic settings
- Strategies to improve these concerns one place can be instructive toward addressing similar concerns in other settings
- While places have similarities from one city to the next, places maintain unique local contexts



Assets of Higher Education

- Institutions of Higher Education of all types contain various assets
- They bring economic and physical capital like most anchor institutions
- But they have a unique blend of:
 - Human Capital (students, faculty, staff, alumni)
 - Intellectual Capital (expertise across numerous disciplines)
- They can also bring credibility



Harnessing Capital through Community Partnerships

- Higher education's blend of physical, economic, human, intellectual, and social capital can be harnessed to strengthen cities
- In order for processes to leverage this capital to be effective, they must be collaborative with other parties in cities as well as mutually beneficial
- Given the internal fragmentation of colleges and universities, great attention is required to forge strategic community partnerships that encourage collaboration within as well as outside of institutions

Higher Education's Engagement Blends academic and institutional resources

Anchor Institutions Task Force



- Engaged research designed to address challenges facing cities
- Service learning courses involving students in the community
- Volunteer activities in the community
- *Along with:*
- Involvement in multi-institutional cross sector partnerships
- Initiatives to expand opportunities to employment and procurement
- Efforts to enhance the capacity of local business and community organizations
- Housing assistance programs



State of Higher Educational Engagement

- Conversations have turned to results in communities (not enough to only measure indicators such as hours of student service)
- There is greater awareness that universities are complex organizations (helping to manage expectations)
- More see that engagement can bring benefit to institutions of higher education and communities simultaneously
- More understand that multi-institutional partnerships and coordination with local governments will more likely bring about change



Going Forward

- Universities possess the capital and knowledge that can help communities advance
- Higher education must embrace this engaged role as central to the mission of colleges and universities (This is a more natural fit for some institutions than others)
- We can continue to advance the movement and the case for the role of higher education in community and economic development by building from those who are doing this already



Going Forward

- It is important to tell the stories of the progress already being made at various institutions in their communities
- By learning from each other, peer leaders in the field can refine and improve their efforts
- It is important to continue to make the case for the value and significance of engagement inside of institutions
- Successful efforts with demonstrable impact can attract attention from others (even skeptics)
- We must demonstrate that institutions of higher education are a part of the solution in cities



Employment, College/Career Pathways for High School Students

- Anchor Institutions, especially universities, are poised to expand opportunities for local high school students through collaborative initiatives
- The employer role of universities and college/career opportunities for high school students can be inextricably linked
- If a university intends to improve future outcomes for local communities, it is important to harness both scholarly and institutional resources to improve academic outcomes, college access, and employment prospects
- The Civic Opportunities Initiative Network (COIN) – www.newwf.org



The Economic Development Role of Universities

- Baltimore – Hopkins is a part of a partnership (Blocal) with local corporations recently pledged \$69 million in jobs and contracts especially for minority and women owned businesses and residents
- This program is based on Hopkins Local, which has been increasing employment opportunities for local residents:
www.hopkinslocal.jhu.edu
- The AITF has created a structure to enable university leaders to aspire to greater effectiveness in their economic inclusion
- The AITF's Economic Development Subgroup includes: Penn, Brown, Harvard, USC, Syracuse, Case Western, Albany, St. Thomas, FIU, Grinnell, Rutgers University-Newark



Comprehensive Economic Development

- The group created a template to track economic development metrics: http://www.margainc.com/files_images/general/AITF_Econ_Development_Subgroup_Metrics_Template_.pdf
- The template tracks employment and procurement
- As many local employment opportunities are housed in small and medium-sized businesses, business development, procurement opportunities at anchor institutions, and local employment opportunities are intertwined
- For high school students, internships in local businesses and entrepreneurship training could be valuable for the future



Penn's Role in the Field

- The University of Pennsylvania's Netter Center for Community Partnership was the catalyst in creating the chapter in a report to HUD that led to the creation of the AITF
- Penn has become recognized nationally and internationally, thus Penn is a trailblazer and pace setter – the Netter Center and the EVP's Office have been substantial contributors to the field
- For the sake of the field, Penn must continue to improve its community partnership programs to continue to set an example that can continue to influence the growth and refinement of the field nationally and globally



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