ABSTRACT

Mining the Prospects of Community Literacy: A Tentative Model for University-
Community Collaboration

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The social tensions between the Waco community and Baylor University, often
ill-perceived, are complicated. While the university is a place that fosters a sense of
community among its students, there is still a disparity between the university and
surrounding Waco community. Both the university and the community have taken
measures to increase collaboration and connection between the two, in order to address
social issues within the community, such as poverty and educational needs. My thesis
explores the role of community literacy in bridging social disparity, specifically its role in
community improvement in Waco. Rhetoric scholars Higgins, Flowers, and Long define
community literacy as a way to expand our understanding and use of rhetorical practices
in the public realm, in a way that crosses boundaries and leads to community
improvement. In my thesis, I draw upon and outline studies by scholars in rhetoric and
composition who have researched the benefits of service-learning and community literacy
in the classroom, as well as in the community. These studies discuss community literacy
and present various models of university-community collaboration, in which service-

learning and community literacy are used as means for social change. I then present my

primary research on the perceived areas of improvement in the Waco community, and

present my proposal for a tentative model of university-community collaboration that

specifically aligns with the needs and goals of both the Waco community and Baylor

University.

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MINING THE PROSPECTS OF COMMUNITY LITERACY: A TENTATIVE MODEL

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Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn.
–Benjamin Franklin

CHAPTER ONE

Literature Review

Introduction

The picturesque campus of Baylor University is nestled in the heart of Waco, Texas. Acres of land, beautifully tilled with the same green grass, flowers lining the garden in front of Pat Neff Hall, with impressive red brick buildings make the Baylor campus the most beautiful in all of Texas. Baylor University was established in 1845 and is the oldest university in the state of Texas. The institution was founded on a vision of scholarship and intellectual growth combined with a Christian faith. Since Baylor's establishment, it has grown to educate more than 15,000 students yearly to help them grow intellectually and spiritually[1]. Baylor was originally established in Independence, Texas, but relocated in 1886 to merge with Waco University. The university offers over 100 undergraduate fields of study to accommodate and hone a range of interests and disciplines. The student population consists of roughly 70 percent White/Caucasian, 7.3 percent Black/African American, 6.3 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 10.6 percent Hispanic/Latino. Students are 56.6 percent female and 43.4 percent male[2].

Baylor University has a long-standing tradition of fostering a sense of community among its students and faculty. The university holds various events to promote fellowship among its students, and during university events such as Homecoming, one can witness a

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[1] Baylor University History: http://www.baylor.edu/about/index.php?id=88778
[2] Baylor University Demographics:
http://www.stateuniversity.com/universities/TX/Baylor_University.html

reunion of the Baylor family spanning generations. However, outside of the Baylor

campus lies a diverse, growing community. Waco's racial demographic is as follows:

White/Caucasian makes up 45.8 percent, Black/African American makes up 21 percent,

and Hispanic/Latino makes up 29.6 percent, with other ethnicities representing less than

1.5 percent. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Waco boasts a population of 124,805,

with over 26.3 percent of the population living below poverty level[3]. Although the

surrounding Waco community bears one of the largest poverty rates in the country, the

city has been working towards improving its areas of needs through projects that assist

Waco residents, such as parent resource centers for young or single parents, as well as

programs that make healthcare accessible to low-income families. In addition, Waco has

been celebrating its diversity and culture through local art and music shows. It has been a

mecca for developing small businesses that help define the Waco community.

     Although the university and the Waco community are physically in close

proximity to each other, there is a tension between the university and the community.

"The Baylor Bubble," "Waco isn't safe," "Wacoans resent Baylor students" are phrases

used by Baylor students and Waco residents alike, yet these perceptions about both the

university and surrounding community are often ill-informed. Based on personal

experience, there is a perception among Baylor students that the university is a safe haven

from the surrounding Waco community. While students do not altogether have an

aversion to interacting with the community, students often have differing ideas on the

Waco community and on how to help the community. However, there are also many

Baylor students who actively wish to make a help in their community. Many Baylor

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[3] U.S. Census 2000

students have expressed a desire to break out of the Baylor Bubble and make a difference within their communities[4]. Students have joined organizations such as the Waco Arts Initiative, a non-profit that encourages art expression and provides art classes to Waco residents, to become more engaged in their communities. These students have expressed that their work in their respective organizations has given them a feeling of fulfillment at being able to enact change within the community. What these students want to gain from their college education is not only professional success, but also having the opportunity to use their talents and interests to help people in the community. Other students have gotten involved in organizations such as the Waco Collegiate Forum, an organization in which students from MCC and Baylor get together for dinner and discussion on community issues. Students enjoy this organization because it allows them to hear and learn insights that are different from their own, and students from each school have gleaned a great deal from hearing different viewpoints.

Additionally, it is not always the case that Wacoans hold resentment towards Baylor students. Many Waco residents take pride in the fact that Baylor University is in their community; many take pride that their community is known for the university. Waco residents have also gained much from the same programs that involve Waco students in their community, such as Waco Arts Initiative and Waco Collegiate Forum. Through Waco Arts Initiative, students and residents in the Waco community have found a safe place to express and cultivate their creativity. Because they are under mentors who invest in them, they have developed their own goals and ambitions that surpasses expectations set for them. There are many residents who express bitterness towards

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[4] Lane Murphy. "Engaging Poverty." <u>Baylor Magazine</u> Summer 2009: 30.

Baylor students and view Baylor as a center with valuable resources that are not being shared and spread throughout the community. However, many residents also welcome the presence of Baylor students and feel that the presence of the university is beneficial.

The dynamic between Baylor and Waco is multifaceted. Although there are many exceptions to the standard tension felt between the university and the community, the tension still exists, and it contributes to the social gap between Baylor and Waco. How can this tension be resolved in a way that is productive to both the university and the community? How can the existing beneficial relationships between the university and the community (through organizations such as Waco Arts Initiative) be expanded and emulated? How can further university-community engagement be facilitated?

Many scholars of rhetoric and composition have found ways to address the social gap between the university and the community through community literacy. Community literacy has been defined by scholars such as Wayne Campbell Peck as "a response of urban residents to dilemmas and opportunities in their lives" (Peck 20). Community literacy refers to the ways we can expand our understanding and use of rhetorical practices in the public realm, in a way that crosses boundaries and leads to community improvement. Literacy, in this case, refers not only to the act of reading and understanding through the written word, but also the act of writing—of communicating thoughts through the written word to enact social change. Community literacy, as shown by many scholars of rhetoric and composition, has proven an effective way to bridge the social divisions among different social groups, including the university and the community. These scholars point out a significant distinction that needs to be made, however. Using literacy to bridge social gaps is different from charity work or

community service. Doing work to help the community is often associated with viewing that community as a "charity case" or a project. However, these assumptions can often lead to feelings of resentment and can even be viewed as a form of oppression. Rather than viewing the community as a "project," scholars of rhetoric and composition look at the teaching of literacy as a reciprocal act, as demonstrated in studies by Ellen Cushman, James Dubinsky, and others, who present flexible models for university-community collaboration. Both the community and the university have valuable resources to offer, and creating situations that facilitate interaction between members of the university and the community provide a chance to recognize that.

Consequently, my thesis seeks to explore the role of community literacy in social change and propose a model of community literacy that specifically targets the needs and areas of improvement in the Waco community, as well as Baylor University. My proposed community literacy model works in partnership with Good Neighbor House, which serves as a space where the common needs of the university and the community can be addressed by both university students and residents of the neighborhood. Good Neighbor House will serve as a space to facilitate university-community collaboration and community literacy, a space where diversity can be embraced and used to address issues within the community.

This section will provide a literature review that will outline what various scholars in rhetoric and composition have said about the issue of community literacy as a way to bridge social gaps among different groups. I will begin by discussing scholars' view on the significance of community literacy in community improvement. These studies will show how and why community literacy is an effective way to facilitate community

improvement, as well as ways in which community literacy can be improved. I will also discuss what rhetoric and composition scholars have said on the role of university-community collaboration in improving community literacy and using it to enact change. I will then outline studies that present various models of using community literacy to enact social change. These studies show various models of university-community collaboration, all of which address community literacy and community improvement through this type of collaboration. I will also discuss considerations that need to be made when establishing a model for university-community collaboration. These considerations will be helpful in forming my own model for university-community collaboration in the Waco community. Finally, I will discuss the application of these studies to the Waco community, as well as discuss the beginnings of a university-community collaboration model that specifically addresses the needs of the Waco community.

Community Literacy

In Lorraine Higgins, Eleanor Long, and Linda Flower's essay, "Community Literacy," community literacy is defined as a way to expand our understanding and use of rhetorical practices in the public realm, in a way that crosses boundaries and leads to community improvement. It is also defined, in Wayne Campbell Peck, Higgins, and Flower's essay as "a search for an alternative discourse" (575). Community literacy seeks to address community issues through literate practices and seeks to bridge social gaps through these practices. It encompasses the use of writing to "support collaborative inquiry into community problems," and restructures "deliberative dialogues...across lines of difference" in order to improve the community (Higgins, Long, Flower 168). Community literacy involves collaboration among various social groups to share insights

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on issues of importance and to use the various resources available from these different groups to enact change through literate practices.

The way communities use writing does, indeed, contribute to enacting change and driving individuals to action. Anne Gere, in her essay "Kitchen Tables and Rented Rooms," discusses the term "extracurriculum," borrowed from Frederick Rudolph. Extracurriculum refers to writing done by ordinary people, not necessarily academics or scholars, that "extends beyond the academy to encompass the multiple contexts in which persons seek to improve their own writing," that embraces diversity (Gere 38). Diana George responds and adds to this conversation by discussing a writer's motives for writing. She discusses how ancient rhetoricians often associated writing with a purpose for "influencing the course of cultural or political events," how rhetoricians believed that the motive for writing was often brought about by "civic exigency" (George 50). Ancient rhetoricians taught writing and rhetorical theory on the principles that the writing had to move the audience to action. George outlines several instances where writing was used by specific groups to enact change and incite their audience to adopt certain beliefs and take action. The writing came in the form of newsletters, newspapers, and magazines, and although the publications were small and specific, they connected people and ideas, and they helped to bring about change. George states that the problem with teaching discourse is that most people view small change as ineffective, but being able to write from a specific standpoint and within a specific group or community gives others access to these views. It encourages and facilitates diversity of opinion; it informs others of views other than the mainstream; it invites others to think from various perspectives.

University-Community Collaboration

What is the value of a university-community collaboration? A university education as a way not only to prepare individuals for corporate or academic success but also as a way to serve the community is, as rhetorician James Dubinsky argues, the true purpose of a university education. A university education serves not simply a practical purpose—that of preparing students for jobs. A university education also seeks to turn its students into people who will improve the community, who will use the knowledge and skills they learned at the university to enact change. In particular, this idea of education affects students and scholars of rhetoric and composition, who, as Dubinsky states, are the "direct descendants" of classical rhetoric. The original role of the classical orator was to "work to shape the community's political life," to help improve the community (Dubinsky 257). As students and scholars of rhetoric and composition, they have a responsibility to write for the purpose of social improvement.

Thomas Deans has done significant research on service-learning in composition, and his work has been influential in the development of service-learning and community-based writing. Service-learning, community-based learning, university-community collaboration, have had a positive effect on college students' education (Deans 98). In addition to the writing skills students hone, Deans states that service-learning also teaches students values beyond the classroom and places significance on the students' work. In addition, Deans believes that service-learning is one way to reexamine the purpose of a university education, of "liberal learning" (Deans . He discusses the need for institutions to remain in between the ivory tower stereotype and the utilitarian approach to education. Deans believes that service-learning attains this balance. Deans also argues for the value

of university-community collaboration because the main purpose of ancient teachers of rhetoric was to "equip rhetors to intervene in the public sphere" (Deans, 2000). Aristotle, and other ancient rhetoricians, used their skills not only for academic purposes, but rather for purposes of civic duty. Students of writing and English studies have this same duty to influence and enact community improvement.

Diana George also discusses the benefits of university-community collaboration - she argues that it is only through "[opening] our classrooms to communication of all sorts," through extending our knowledge of writing and the motives of writing beyond the classroom, do composition and communication classrooms fulfill their purpose of "[preparing] students to be active participants in a democracy" (George 58, 51). For George, the purpose of a communication or composition classroom involves community engagement, so that students can learn to use their skills in the way ancient rhetoricians believed writing was meant to be used: to incite response and action from the audience, to help influence cultural or political events, to enact change.

Models of University-Community Collaboration

Many scholars of rhetoric have found that a collaboration or partnership between the university and the community is an effective way of encouraging and improving community literacy. Scholars have formed various models to facilitate university-community collaboration, both within the composition classroom curriculum, or in the form of a space designed to facilitate interaction among community and university members. The following are models of university-community collaboration that foster civic engagement and enact change.

University-Community Collaboration Models Situated in a Classroom or

Academic Setting

James Dubinsky presents a model of service-learning that allows students to
develop professionally as well as enact change in their community. This model is
something he describes as "[closing] the gap between service and learning" (271). His
model is used in a writing classroom, where, as a part of his curriculum, the major project
is "a collaborative project involving a community organization" (263). The students
worked with community organizations to produce written products such as annual
reports, brochures, newsletters, and websites. This model of service-learning can better
prepare students for the workplace than traditional educational models because students
apply their knowledge to real audiences and real situations, while at the same time
cultivating a sense of "practical wisdom (*phronesis*) that enables them to be critical
citizens" [italics in original] (259). Dubinsky defines service-learning as "*learning-by-
doing* for others" [italics in original] (261). It involves three main aspects: learning,
serving, and reflecting (261). Learning refers to fulfilling the academic goals of a project
or assignment, serving refers to using the knowledge gained in the classroom in a real-life
situation for community/societal improvement, and reflection refers to students' reflection
on the project, what they have learned both in terms of skills and job preparation and in
terms of the community issue they sought to improve. In an ideal situation, service-
learning shifts students' goals from solely academic or professional to a much broader
scope, according to Dubinsky. Service-learning requires students to maintain
relationships with the organizations they work with, and this causes them to "*care* about
their community and seek to improve it" [italics in original] (261). Dubinsky makes a

clear distinction between service and charity, as a service-learning project takes on reciprocal roles for both the student and the organization and has the end goal of change in the community or the organization.

To make this distinction between service and charity, and to demonstrate the effectiveness of one model over the other, Dubinsky presents and compares two models of service-learning projects; one centered around charity and giving, while the other centered on change. In the charity model, the learning is focused around the giving aspect, while "the service aspect adds to the learning experience" (263). Dubinsky states that "while there is nothing inherently wrong with this model," it does not allow for the fulfillment of one's civic responsibilities as a rhetorician (263). Dubinsky's change model, on the other hand, focuses on caring. Caring encompasses forming "lasting relationships" between the students and the community participants in the project, and Dubinsky states that this model is more effective at fulfilling the professional, academic, and civic goals of a university education because it "helps them shift from a self-oriented focus to an other-oriented focus (263). Moreover, Dubinsky states that the change model causes students to "recognize that they have a responsibility to continue that work as they move from academia to the workplace" (263). The goal becomes the change, or the improvement, of the community.

In comparing and experimenting with the charity and change models, Dubinsky found the change model to be more effective. Students tended to place more value and significance in their work when the change model was used, and they also felt that the service-learning project helped them develop practical skills for their careers. Moreover, students whose projects followed the change model felt that their work met the needs of

the organization they worked with and helped address areas that needed improvement. Their work with the community organizations opened their eyes to a world they believe they would not have seen in a typical university class. Seeing community issues that needed to be resolved and working with people involved in that organization made them personally invested and committed to help enact change. The project became less about developing skills they could use in the workplace, and more about actually using their writing, knowledge, and skills for the goal of change in the organization. The students still developed skills that would be useful to them in the job market, but their goals were different, and the effect and end-result (the students' grades and the community organization) were much more desirable. Service-learning, taken with the approach of enacting change and improvement within the community, has proven an effective model at fulfilling the needs of the community as well as those of the students.

Ellen Cushman, in her article titled "The Rhetorician as an Agent for Social Change," further adds to the ongoing conversation of encouraging university-community collaboration and bridging the social gap between the university and the community. She presents her own model of a university-community collaboration that enacts social change. Cushman's model focuses on ways scholars in rhetoric can enact social change and fulfill their roles not only as participants in an intellectual conversation, but in a civic conversation as well. At the time of writing this article, Cushman was a Ph.D. candidate at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She discusses the social gap that has developed between her own university, RPI, and the surrounding city of Troy, New York. Much like Baylor and Waco, there is a clear tension between residents of Troy and students of the university, evident in pejorative terms used by both parties, such as "Troylets," "trash," or

"low-lifes" and "higher-ups" (236). However, Cushman believes that this tension is counterproductive to the role of the scholar in rhetoric. Rhetoricians who do scholarly work in civic engagement defeat the purpose of their work when they refuse to interact with the people in the community, who are the very subject of a rhetorician's work. Like Dubinsky and George state, the purpose of an education, and the work of a rhetorician, does not end with the classroom; rather, the work of a rhetorician serves a civic purpose of facilitating community engagement.

Cushman's model for facilitating community engagement is centered around activism. Activism refers to university participation in the community; activism is something that can give rise to social change (239). However, social change does not necessarily refer to "sweeping social upheavals" (240). As Cushman states, social change usually refers to small changes in routine. As a volunteer and researcher in a low-income, urban, colored neighborhood, Cushman acted as an agent for social change by helping the people in the community through writing—she wrote recommendation letters for them so they could find housing, as well as resumes, job applications, and college applications. In addition, Cushman co-directed a literacy program with a local teen in which children were invited to read and write about issues that were important to them. In all these instances, the rhetorician has provided a way to help people in the community share their alternative viewpoints and enact change in their lives.

However, Cushman takes care to emphasize that this sort of activism is different from charity work or altruism. The relationships she has formed with the people in that community is one of reciprocity. Although she is assisting them and providing them with resources they might otherwise not have access too, they are also helping Cushman in

achieving her own goals as a writer, researcher, and doctoral candidate. While Cushman may help provide status to the people in the community (such as writing recommendation letters for them or accompanying them to find housing so they appear to have more status), the people in the community whom Cushman works with grant her access to written documents such as letters, applications, and essays, that Cushman can use in her research. Both Cushman and the community residents receive something of value from their interactions and engagement. Cushman's model is centered around activism and reciprocity—forming relationships with people in the community and using resources from both parties to bring about community improvement. On the one hand, university students can make available resources such as computers and libraries, while residents offer insights into the community and the issues within it. These relationships ultimately lead to change.

University-Community Collaboration Models as Resource Centers for the

Community

Linda Flower, Wayne Campbell Peck, and Lorraine Higgins, in their article "Community Literacy," discuss another model for facilitating university-community interaction. This model is in the form of a Community Literacy Center, a space in which university students and community residents can come together and discuss issues of importance to them. The Community Literacy Center is affiliated with Carnegie Mellon University, so students from CMU come to the CLC and act as mentors for the students of the community. The aim of the Community Literacy Center is to further the mission of the original settlement house tradition, whose goal was to bring to life "a vision of social change through inquiry and politically self-conscious cultural interaction" (Peck, Flower,

and Higgins 573). Flower's model is formed around the vision of community literacy—a type of discourse that enacts social change. Community literacy is not a discourse in itself, but rather, "is a search for an alternative discourse" (575). According to Peck, Flower, and Higgins, this can be achieved through four aims: social change, intercultural conversation, strategic approach, and inquiry. In the CLC, writing acts as a means for change, "a goal-directed profess dedicated to social change," rather than the "text as an end in itself (576). Intercultural conversation allows for "unheard perspectives" to be considered; the goal is not to resolve differences but to embrace the diversity that these perspectives bring (575).

Through the work of the CLC, residents of Pittsburgh have been able to use literacy (defined in this article as "action and reflection—as literate acts that could yoke community action with intercultural education, strategic thinking and problem solving, and with observation-based research and theory building") to address issues they feel strongly about and help change those issues (573). One such case that demonstrates this is the case of Mark, a teenage writer/rapper who seeks an outlet for his creativity and for expressing issues he feels strongly about (572). Mark attends the CLC, where he and other students were able to organize a community-wide conversation regarding suspension in schools. Mark performed a rap which his peers interpreted to the audience, and he and his peers wrote a newsletter voicing their thoughts, which has since become required reading at his high school. The CLC helped Mark and his peers voice their opinions in a way that crossed cultural and social boundaries, in a way that could be understood by people of different Discourses, and in a way that would not be offensive (573). Mark was able to get his point across "to the very people he thought never cared"

(573). Moreover, the CLC provides a way for CMU students to break out of their comfort zones of the classroom and university. At the CLC, university students can engage in conversations that cross boundaries, conversations they may want to enter but do not know how to within the confines of the university or classroom. The CLC encourages diversity; diversity is the center of learning.

The Salt Lake City Community College's Community Writing Center is another model of collaboration. Although it was modeled largely after the Community Literacy Center in Pittsburgh, the Community Writing Center (CWC) is different in that it takes an organic approach to addressing the community's literacy needs. It lacks the constraints and criteria of the service-learning model, as it is not situated within a writing curriculum (378). In addition, it lacks the research requirements of a university-community collaboration like that of Cushman's, whose collaboration included both providing writing assistance and conducting research (378). Instead, the CWC is solely meant to provide writing assistance to community residents, and staff at the CWC find their own ways of addressing and providing writing assistance, rather than basing their assistance on curriculum or research.

The CWC was "originally founded to provide one-on-one writing assistance to the public" (386). Since its opening, it has expanded into five programs: The Center, which provides technological resources and allows residents to compose and receive feedback; Writing Coaching, which provides free one-on-one writing assistance on any writing genre; Writing Workplace, which is a workshop class open to both individuals and local organizations and that teaches specific genres such as press releases and grant writing; Writing Partners, in which staff collaborate long-term with a community organization to

"develop sustainable change through writing" (387). The fifth and final program in the CWC is DiverseCity Writing Series. This is the oldest of the CWC's programs, and its goal is to bridge social gaps, such as "economic disparity and racial intolerance" through writing (387). Through DiverseCity, residents write various publications depicting their own viewpoints - the writing is centered on the residents, rather than the students interviewing the residents and then producing the writing (389). In the article, which discusses the changes made to the DiverseCity program, Rousculp describes how DiverseCity focuses on what Thomas Deans, in his article, "English Studies and Public Service, calls "writing with the community," rather than "writing for or about the community (389). Much like the other models of university-community collaboration, DiverseCity provides a way to empower individuals to express their opinions on matters of importance to them, as described by Jay Robinson in his essay, "Conversations on the Written Word: Essays on Language and Literacy." Much like the study done by Diana George, where she examined various small publications, the publications written in DiverseCity provides that alternative insight. DiverseCity serves as a means for residents to take part in a conversation of importance; it "demonstrates how skilled uses of language bridge differences and foreground discourse practices," which are the core of community improvement (388).

In Oakland, California lies another model for university-community collaboration that creates a space and situation "where individuals and groups can define and redefine themselves" and enact social change (71). This model, presented by Glynda Hull and Mira-Lisa Katz, is called DUSTY, which stands for "Digital Underground Storytelling for Youth." The goal is DUSTY is "to provide a new literate space and an alternative

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place to learn" and "to provide the material tools and symbolic resources to...make it possible, even likely, for individuals to envision and enact agentive selves" (48). Hull and Katz frame this model around the concept of the agentive self. It is commonly viewed, and further supported by statistics, that people born into certain situations find it almost impossible to change the direction and course of their life. Through the work of DUSTY, however, people are able to craft agentive selves—they are able to "recontextualize" and "recenter" themselves in order to exercise control and influence over their lives, and in order to change their own circumstances (52).

DUSTY helps enact social change in several ways. It facilitates university-community collaboration through its staff. Because it runs largely on volunteers, students from the University of California, Berkeley, often come "join the children and youth from the community as tutors, mentors, and friend" (49). In some ways, for the Berkeley students, the DUSTY center is a form of service-learning, where students apply their skills to a real audience, and the focus is not on benefiting themselves, but rather, helping enact change in others.

DUSTY also helps to "make others' words one's own" through multiple discourses (46). DUSTY's aim is to help individuals craft their own identities, and this is largely done through workshop classes in writing combined with digital storytelling. Hull and Katz outline two case studies in which the individuals were able to successfully center themselves in the context or "presence" of others. For instance, Randy, a 25-year-old African American male, crafted his agentive self through his raps and digital stories. He worried that his circumstances would not allow him to break out of the life most males his age were expected to fall into, so he attended classes at DUSTY to help himself "take

charge of the course of his life" and change it (53). Through his digital stories, Randy "[represented] himself as a social critic, digital artist, and loyal son" (56). He composed digital stories that addressed issues within the community; through his stories, he "conceived of himself as the voice for his neighborhood" (60). His digital stories addressed issues such as racism and discrimination, as well as billion-dollar corporations in their neighborhood that did nothing for the people in it. In his digital stories, Randy's identity became apparent not only through the content of his story, but through the craft and composition of it. He placed himself on an equal level with figures he looked up to, such as Malcolm X, by juxtaposing their photographs with his narration in his digital story. Through his digital storytelling at DUSTY, Randy was able to create agency in his own life and voice his opinions on community issues.

Considerations in Forming a Tentative Model for University-Community

Engagement

In addition to a tentative model of civic engagement, Cushman describes her limitations as a researcher, an important aspect to consider in examining the issue of bridging the gap between the university and the community. During one particular instance, Cushman holds what she believes is a casual conversation with a male during a social gathering within the community (247). The male is a boyfriend of one of the females that Cushman has worked with in the community, named Lucy. Lucy confronted Cushman about this instance, and stated that the conversation, to her boyfriend, was not casual, but in his eyes was flirtation. Cushman agreed to limit her interactions with the males in that community. This instance demonstrates a limitation of a researcher; Cushman's lack of familiarity with this group of people caused her to not realize the

boundaries she could not cross as a researcher. Ultimately, her research subjects were mainly women and children, as she had to limit her interactions with the men in that community. Her findings were limited because of the boundaries she could not cross as a result of not being a part of that community and not knowing those boundaries (247). As researchers, and as agents of social change, we still face limitations in terms of our interactions with people in the community; we are not automatically granted unlimited access to resources and people simply because we are affiliated with a university. Despite these limitations, rhetoricians still have a responsibility to enact change through community engagement, through helping to create more situations in which students from the university and people from the community can interact and use their respective resources for the sake of community improvement.

During the revision of the DiverseCity Writing Series in the Salt Lake City Community Writing Center, Director Tiffany Rousculp outlines another important consideration in working with people in the community. Collaborations in DiverseCity always focused on working an "oppressed" group, yet by selecting groups whom they assumed were oppressed, such as low-income women or the homeless, they were making their own assumptions on diversity, resulting in a sort of exploitive relationship. Rousculp suggests that by opening the services offered by the CWC to the general public, rather than targeting "oppressed" groups, it took away the exploitive undertones while still fulfilling the mission of community improvement (396-97).

Peck, Flower, and Higgins discuss other considerations. They state that many university members assume that their curriculum is directly transferable, while community residents are wary of programs such as the Community Literacy Center. They

are skeptical that university members will be open and receptive to their opinions and viewpoints, and they believe that programs such as these are ineffective. Linda Flower suggests one way to effectively make use of university skills is through "observation-based theory building" to see how university skills transfer to the real world (586). Moreover, to help assuage the kind of skepticism from community residents, both parties should view the relationship as reciprocal and as for the purpose of community improvement.

University-Community Collaboration in Waco

Why must the gap between Baylor University and the Waco community be bridged? What purpose does bridging this gap serve? Bridging the social gap between Baylor University and the surrounding Waco community helps further fulfill Baylor's mission statement, " to educate men and women for worldwide leadership and service by integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment within a caring community"[5] Baylor University believes that its purpose for educating individuals is not only to prepare them to be successful in their respective disciplines, but also to be successful stewards of their community. Baylor University, as well as universities around the country, seek not only to leave their mark through the corporate and academic success of their students, but also through the influence of their students using their knowledge and resources to improve their community. The community, in turn, also offers valuable resources to university students. Just as in James Dubinsky's model of service-learning curriculum, students are able to apply their knowledge to real audiences other than a professor and learn real-world skills useful in the workplace. Like in Ellen Cushman's

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[5] Baylor Pro Futuris: A Strategic Vision for Baylor University

model, interaction with people in the community offers valuable insights into research on writing and literacy in the community. Moreover, students feel as though their work has more significance and a more positive effect from working with people in the community.

The issues of community literacy and university-community engagement are applicable to Waco in many ways. Like the situation with Troy and RPI, there is a distinct tension and divide between Baylor University and the surrounding city of Waco. Students in Waco have the same opinions that students in Pittsburgh do regarding dominant Discourses and oppression. Both Waco residents and Pittsburgh residents believe that they have no place in the dominant Discourse, that they are rejected by it. However, by emulating the same activities of community engagement facilitated by these scholars in rhetoric, the social gap between Baylor University and Waco could be bridged.

Within Waco, there is already an existing settlement house, called the Good Neighbor Settlement House. The Good Neighbor house shares goals and values that encourage social change and serves to create a space where people of different backgrounds can address issues of importance and strive for community improvement[6]. The goals and values of Good Neighbor are in line with that of service-learning and university-community collaboration. Therefore, in addition to further examining the social gap between Baylor and Waco, my thesis seeks to explore the possibility of establishing a Community Literacy Center within the Good Neighbor Settlement House. The Community Literacy Center in Waco will be modeled after a combination of the

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[6] Good Neighbor House information: http://goodneighborwaco.org/Good_Neighbor_Waco/Welcome.html

university-community collaboration models described above. In the following chapters, I will discuss my methods of research, including interviews with community members in the Good Neighbor Settlement House, and I will discuss how my research findings encourage the establishment of a Community Literacy Center in the Waco community. I will then present my proposal for a Community Literacy Center in the Good Neighbor House.

CHAPTER TWO

Research Methods

The social gap between Baylor University and the surrounding Waco community is complex. While clear tensions do exist between community residents and Baylor students, the gap cannot simply be generalized based on those tensions. Within Baylor University, there are various organizations that encourage university-community collaboration, such as Steppin' Out. While there are many students who remain within the boundaries of the "Baylor Bubble," there are also many students who wish to diffuse the tension between the university and community and break out of the Baylor Bubble to truly make a difference.

In order to further understand the disparity and the underlying issues that contribute to it, as well as ways in which social between Baylor University and Waco can be addressed, I utilized three methods of research. I conducted literature research to gain a better understanding of university-community collaboration. Through reading essays and articles from scholars in rhetoric who have done research on university-community collaboration, I gained a deeper understanding of how to address issues within the community and see how these scholars' proposed solutions could apply to Baylor and Waco. In addition to literature research, I conducted primary research by interviewing various individuals who are involved in encouraging university-community collaboration. These interviews gave me a clearer idea of what university-community collaboration might look like in Waco, specifically, as well as the role community literacy played in Waco. Finally, my third method of research was genre analysis. I analyzed various

documents from Good Neighbor House, the Baylor University School of Social Work, the Baylor Office of Community Engagement, and the City of Waco to more accurately determine the needs of the community, as well as expectations in terms of literacy and community improvement.

This chapter will provide a discussion and rationale of my methods of research. I will begin by discussing my literature research and how various studies in community literacy aid in addressing the social gap between Baylor and Waco, as well as issues in existing research that my research aims to address. I will then discuss the primary research I conducted, and explain my rationale for choosing my interview subjects. I will discuss my third research method, genre analysis, and explain why I chose to analyze each document and what an analysis of these documents adds to my research and proposal. Finally, I will discuss the limitations of my research methods and how these limitations might affect my final proposal for a community literacy center in Waco.

Review of the Literature

For my literature research, I chose to study articles by notable scholars in rhetoric and composition who have done extensive work on similar issues in community literacy, community engagement, university-community collaboration, and service-learning. I began my research by examining essays by John Swales and James Paul Gee, titled "The Concept of Discourse Community" and "Literacy, Discourse, and Linguistics: Introduction," respectively. I chose to begin my study with essays by Gee and Swales because their research on literacy and discourse would provide me with a solid idea of the role discourse plays in a community, as well as why a social gap can form between the university and outlying community.

John Swales is a professor of linguistics at the University of Michigan, and his research focuses on working with nonnative speaker of English to help them master the discourse succeed academically. His essay is an excerpt from a chapter of his book, called Genre Analysis. This excerpt unpacks the concept of "discourse community." This excerpt is significant to my research because it provides a solid definition for a discourse community and invites me to think about how community literacy plays a role in a discourse community. It is also significant because it further helps me understand the Waco community in terms of literacy and discourse; I can further identify various discourse communities within the Waco community as well as Baylor University, and thus understand how to bridge those discourse communities.

James Paul Gee is a Professor of Reading at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. His research has dealt largely with New Literacy Studies, and this particular article that I examined discusses the distinction between discourse and Discourse (capital D), Discourse meaning an identity kit, a set of values and practices one follows. This article is significant to my study because it adds to my understanding of discourse community, which is an essential part of designing an effective community literacy center that specifically addresses issues in the Waco community.

In order to understand that value of literacy in community improvement, I researched articles by Anne Gere, Diana George, and Thomas Deans. These articles argued for the importance of literacy in enacting change within the community, and they helped support my argument that a community literacy center would be an effective way to bridge social disparity. In addition, they supported my argument by providing examples of benefits, both to university students and community residents, of

community. I chose to study an essay by Anne Gere, titled "Kitchen Tables and Rented Room," because she explains the influential role of writing beyond academia and within the context of a community. Diana George's essay, "The Word on the Street: Public Discourse in a Culture of Disconnect," is another relevant source to my research, as it explains the purpose of writing in terms of the historical role of rhetoricians, whose purpose was to influence civic change. Thomas Deans's essay, "English Studies and Public Service," also helps provide an understanding of the value of literacy in enacting societal change; Deans's essay is relevant because he explains the importance of literacy in terms of what students and residents may take away from a university-community collaboration.

To further expand my understanding of literacy and discourse, I consulted studies by Linda Flower, Lorraine Higgins, Wayne Campbell Peck, and Elenore Long. These scholars would be helpful in my own research because of their involvement in the Community Literacy Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in partnership with Carnegie Mellon University. Their involvement in the Community Literacy Center, as well as their areas of interest in research, makes them a credible, informative source for my own research. Moreover, their model of university-community collaboration serves as a solid basis for designing a model specific to the Waco community.

Their studies, titled "Community Literacy," and "Community Literacy: A Rhetorical Model for Personal and Public Inquiry," gave a more detailed, precise definition to the term "community literacy." These articles provided both the theoretical definitions of the concept of community literacy, as well as real-world examples of this concept put into practice. Moreover, the articles provided an explanation for the value of

a university-community collaboration. In addition to examples of university-community organization, namely the Community Literacy Center (CLC) in Pittsburgh, in partnership with Carnegie Mellon University, it showed the effectiveness of the CLC in addressing issues of importance to the residents. Moreover, it showed the effectiveness of the CLC in helping the residents shape their own lives, create agentive selves, and voice their opinions to help improve aspects of the community they felt were important.

These studies by Flower, Peck, Higgins, and Long provided a solid theoretical idea of the concept of community literacy, as well as concrete examples of this concept put into practice and used in a way that promotes change in the community. The articles by Linda Flower, Lorraine Higgins, Wayne Campbell Peck, and Elenore Long provided one model of university-community collaboration—that of the Community Literacy Center, which regularly encouraged the interaction between university students and people in the community. However, it was important that I examine other models of university-community collaboration in order to determine which model might best fit the needs of the Waco community, which model might best encourage university-community collaboration in a productive way.

James Dubinsky, a rhetoric and composition scholar whose research focuses on service-learning, presented another aspect of university-community collaboration. His article presented a model of university-community collaboration in a classroom setting, with service-learning as a central part of the writing curriculum. Research into this model of university-community collaboration is significant and relevant to my study because it discusses the consequences and benefits of service-learning to students whose curriculum is centered on service-learning. Providing excerpts from his own students discussing their

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experiences with a service-learning based curriculum, and basing his own model of service-learning off of his students' feedback, also provides validity. In addition, it presents considerations I will need to make when designing a model of university-community collaboration specific to the Waco community. Dubinsky's article discusses the advantages and disadvantages of a service-learning-based curriculum, which will help influence what kind of service-learning and collaboration model is best suited for the residents of Good Neighbor House and Baylor University students.

Ellen Cushman's article, titled "The Rhetorician as an Agent for Social Change," presented a different aspect of university-community collaboration. Cushman's model of university-community collaboration involves a research-based relationship. I chose to draw from Ellen Cushman's model because in her article, Cushman outlines a clear, striking similarity between the social disparity in her community in Troy and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), and the disparity between the Waco community and Baylor University. This article was particularly helpful because it provided an example of how I could design my community literacy center, as well as some considerations I needed to keep in mind when working with residents within the community. Both Cushman and the Good Neighbor House volunteers have dual obligations: a civic purpose in working with and creating healthy relationships with the community in order to encourage community improvement, as well as the need to understand the community from a research standpoint, in order to address ways to improve the community in a way that is unique to their respective fields. Cushman, in her essay, discusses significant considerations to make in forming this relationship and maintaining a sense of reciprocity, as well as considerations in understanding boundaries within that relationship. The article provided

relevant insights into forming a relationship between the university and community, and also showed the benefits of that relationship, namely determining the needs of the community firsthand, and finding commonalities between university students and/or faculty and community residents. Cushman's article provided a potential model for university-community collaboration that was especially relevant due to the similar relationships that exist between university and/or doctoral students and community residents, and due to her similar goals in cultivating these relationships. Moreover, Cushman's study provided beneficial insight into how to cultivate reciprocal relationships between the university and community, and insights into learning about understanding both the needs of the university student/faculty member and the community residents. Cushman's article showed the benefits of forming relationships with the community members, the effectiveness of determining needs through forming these relationships, and considerations in forming these relationships.

Another university-community collaboration model I examined is the Salt Lake City Community College Community Writing Center (CWC). The CWC was discussed in an article by Tiffany Rousculp titled "When the Community Writes: Re-envisioning the SLCC DiverseCity Writing Series." This article and model is relevant to my study because it draws a great deal from the Community Literacy Center (CLC) in Pittsburgh. Examining and researching the CWC in Salt Lake City allowed me to see how a university-community collaboration model was modeled after an existing one, as well as how to adopt an existing model to fit the needs of the community. The CWC drew upon much of the same research I drew upon for my own study, including Thomas Deans and Linda Flower; therefore, it had the same goals for community improvement through

literate practices and relationships between higher education institutions and the community, referred to by Deans as "writing *with* the community" (Rousculp 387, italics in original). Moreover, the CWC proved relevant to my study because it invited me to think about including other higher education institutions around Waco, rather than only Baylor University. Including other higher education institutions would allow for more insights into community improvement and facilitate relationships not only between the universities and the community, but also between the various institutions around Waco. Since the CWC was based in a community college, I was able to see how a community partnership differed in a community college rather than a university, and how those differences could be incorporated into a single community literacy center where students of different backgrounds worked with community residents. I was also able to identify advantages and disadvantages to the CWC model, which was not restricted to the classroom or to research, and instead was open to the public and employed volunteers. The CWC provided additional insight into designing a community literacy center that was modeled on an existing, effective one, but was also adjusted to fit the needs of the community.

Finally, I researched another model of university-community collaboration, called the Digital Underground Storytelling for Youth, or DUSTY. DUSTY was discussed in an essay titled "Crafting an Agentive Self: Case Studies of Digital Storytelling," written by Glynda A. Hull and Mira-Lisa Katz. DUSTY, located in Oakland, California and in partnership with students from The University of California, Berkeley, is a relevant model to my study because it heavily incorporates multimodal composition and digital media, skills which I believe will be useful to include in the

model I design for the Waco community. I chose to research DUSTY because it was an example of a community literacy center that incorporated digital media, and it explained the purpose and benefits of digital media on learning literate practices. The use of digital resources in a community literacy center has been a debated issue, as Waco may not have the resources to provide these tools to community residents. DUSTY provided relevant reasons for encouraging the use of digital media and showed how the use of digital media was productive and significant in community improvement. Moreover, it showed how the use of digital media in composition was significant for residents of all ages, as it outlines case studies for both an adult and a child using these digital resources to compose narratives. DUSTY provides a rationale for making an effort to provide residents with digital resources and teach residents how to use these digital resources, because it makes a significant impact on the way a person views himself, the choices he makes, and consequently, plays a role in addressing community issues.

Personal Interviews

In addition to literature research, I also conducted personal interviews with the following people:

- Rosemary Townsend, Director for Business Affairs and Community Partnerships at the Baylor Office of Community Engagement,
- Dustin Morrow, Director of Media and Public Relations at Good Neighbor House,
- Dr. Laine Scales, Founder of Good Neighbor House and Dean of the Baylor School of Social Work
- Dr. Bonnie Lesley, Former Superintendent of the Waco Independent School District
- Hannah Kuhl, Social Worker with the Waco Independent School District and Baylor Social Work Alumna

Personal interviews were beneficial and significant to my research because it provided me with additional insight into considerations I would need to make in designing a university-community collaboration model for Good Neighbor House and Baylor. In addition, it gave me insight into the specific needs of the Waco community, particularly the needs of the people in the Sanger Heights neighborhood, where the Good Neighbor House is situated.

Baylor

To understand the goals of Baylor in terms of civic engagement, as well as to get a picture of Baylor's efforts in achieving this goal, I spoke with Rosemary Townsend, Director for Business Affairs and Community Partnerships at the Baylor University Office of Community Engagement. Rosemary was an excellent source of information on community developments, particularly programs concerned with community service and improvements. Her daily interactions with the City of Waco, and in encouraging more civic engagement for university students, made her a relevant source of information regarding the needs of the Waco community. Rosemary knew a range of people in the city who were working towards community improvement, and she was able to explain their roles in the community. She also was familiar with various programs established by the City of Waco that were designed to improve the community and make resources available to more residents. Rosemary was able to explain the purpose and goals of these programs, as well as the needs each program addressed. From this, I was able to I was able to infer the specific needs of the Waco community in general, which would then help in determining the specific needs of the Sanger Heights neighborhood within Waco. My interview with Rosemary gave me a clear idea of the goals of the Waco community in

terms of community improvement, and subsequently, helped me determine what ways university students could get involved in community improvement and increase their engagement with community residents. Moreover, Rosemary provided me with documents from the City of Waco and the Baylor University School of Social Work that provided demographic information for various parts of Waco, as well as information on Baylor's Pro Futuris Plan and Waco's plans for community development. My interview with Rosemary gave me a solid foundation of what needs a university-community collaboration should address and helped me determine how literate practices could be used to address those needs.

Waco

I also spoke with Dr. Bonnie Lesley and Hannah Kuhl to get an idea of the issues and needs in the Waco community, as well as existing efforts to address these issues. Dr. Lesley has worked as a superintendent for the Waco ISD and has also done work on programs and organizations aimed at community improvement. She remains heavily involved in the various programs and organizations established by the community. Because of her position and political involvement in the City of Waco, Dr. Lesley had plenty of relevant information on my project. She works with an organization called Texas Kids Can't Wait, and remains involved in the programs designed to help the community improve. Therefore, she was able to provide me with existing programs targeted towards education and literacy, as well as second-language acquisition. She also provided me with insight into the educational needs of the community, such as government funding and necessary skills. This information was helpful and relevant to my project for a number of reasons. Learning about existing programs, both in the

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community and the university, was helpful because I was able to see what these programs did effectively and what could be improved. I was able to see gaps in the programs, what the programs failed to do, and analyze the current relationship between the Waco community and Baylor University, in terms of community engagement programs. I was also able to gain insight into what kinds of needs a community literacy center would need to address, as well as considerations to make in naming the community literacy center and making sure community residents would respond to the community literacy center.

Additionally, I spoke with Hannah Kuhl, social worker who works regularly with the Waco ISD, as well as with a program called the Parent Resource Center (PRC). Hannah Kuhl was a significant person to interview because of her experience working with parents and students in the Waco community. She had important information regarding the needs of the students in the Waco community, as well as issues the students and parents faced regarding education. She explained the purpose of the Parent Resource Center, as well as the skills she viewed were necessary for the students to learn. Although Hannah worked primarily with elementary students, she was able to discuss needs that parents of these students faced, particularly in terms of access to resources such as computers. This information was pertinent to my study because the community literacy center will also be designed to target parents and older residents who need to learn skills that will help them attain and perform higher-paying jobs that will get them a better living. Hannah's insight helped me consider what sorts of skills a community literacy center would address, and what sorts of skills were important to residents of various age groups. For children, it was basic encouragement to master literate skills, while for adults, it was practice in skills that are necessary for higher-paying jobs.

Good Neighbor House

I spoke with Dustin Morrow to get an idea of the goals of Good Neighbor and to find out how Good Neighbor can serve as a middle ground where the goals of Baylor and Waco can come together. In addition to being the Director of Media and Public Relations at Good Neighbor House, Dustin is also a doctoral candidate in English at Baylor University. Because of Dustin's affiliations with both Good Neighbor House and Baylor, he provides accurate insight into the needs and expectations of Good Neighbor residents and Baylor students. Dustin has put in extensive effort in helping Dr. Scales bring the concept of Good Neighbor House to fruition, so he has a clear idea of what Good Neighbor's goals are, and what can be done to achieve those goals. Dustin was also able to explain Good Neighbor's mission and what Good Neighbor hopes to accomplish through their activities because of his heavy involvement in the organization. In addition, Dustin has met with some residents from the Sanger Heights neighborhood, so he understands the considerations one might need to make when establishing a program to benefit the Sanger Heights residents. Dustin has also been involved in the construction and remodeling of the houses in Sanger Heights, which has given me an idea of the priorities and timeline of Good Neighbor House. Because Dustin has been involved in the construction and development of Good Neighbor House, I was able to estimate how long a community literacy center might take to be established, and thus understand what my limitations were in terms of time and resources.

Dustin's affiliation with Baylor University was also beneficial to my research. As a doctoral student in English, with interests in community literacy and second-language acquisition, Dustin was also able to provide me with insight from his own research in

rhetoric and composition and his experience working with ESL students. Dustin's experience teaching English as Second Language provided me with interesting insight into another consideration in designing a university-community collaboration model: English-language acquisition. Because of Dustin's academic and professional background, he was able to provide me with considerations in designing a model of a community literacy center and in targeting it towards different audiences, such as residents who were non-native English speakers. This helped me in considering how to position the community literacy center, how to make sure that it addressed the needs of various audiences yet remained effective and fulfilled the purpose of community improvement. Dustin's experience and research in ESL teaching also provided me with insight into how to approach that, particularly regarding digital media, which he said was beneficial in helping ESL students learn English. Dustin's own research as a doctoral student helped me in determining what considerations to make in various aspects of designing a community literacy center for Good Neighbor.

Dustin was also able to give me insight into the considerations I would need to make for the Baylor students, who would be working with Sanger Heights residents at the community literacy center. He had suggestions, based on his experience as a student at Baylor, on what sort of programs the community literacy center could include, and what benefits would come out of a partnership with Baylor. Dustin also was able to share what students could benefit out of volunteering at Good Neighbor House and at a community literacy center, based on his own experience as a volunteer and student at Baylor. He has experienced benefits of working at Good Neighbor, so he is a credible source for providing information on how that kind of work might benefit students. In addition,

Dustin was also familiar with other Baylor programs that were planning on getting involved in the development of Good Neighbor House, further showing the benefits students hoped to gain through a reciprocal partnership with a community organization.

To learn even more about the founding of Good Neighbor House, the idea behind it, and the significance of the Christian mandate in its mission, I interviewed Dr. Laine Scales, founder of Good Neighbor House and Dean of the Baylor University School of Social Work. Like Dustin, Dr. Scales was affiliated with both Good Neighbor and Baylor University, and thus provided extensive insight into addressing the needs of both the Sanger Heights neighborhood and the Baylor students. Dr. Scales founded Good Neighbor House when purchased the property on Sanger Heights and decided to use it as a revival of the settlement house movement, which she had been researching. She gave me a great deal of information and further resources on settlement houses. From the interview and the additional resources Dr. Scales provided me, I learned about how activities of a settlement house helped bridge social disparity within communities. It helped my consider ways in which community literacy center held at Good Neighbor House would both adhere to the values of settlement houses and help residents use literate practices in productive ways that addressed issues of importance to them.

Since Dr. Scales founded Good Neighbor House, she has a clear idea of what sorts of activities and programs she would like Good Neighbor House to host, as well as in what direction she would like Good Neighbor to go. She was able to communicate what goals and needs Good Neighbor House serves, which was primarily the need for community. Because Dr. Scales knew and communicated what needs she wanted Good Neighbor to address, I was able to think of ways in which a potential community literacy

center model would be in line with those needs and goals of Good Neighbor. Her goals and vision for Good Neighbor House played a significant role in the way I designed a university-community collaboration model specific to Waco. Dr. Scales addressed my questions about Good Neighbor House, such as why she chose the Sanger Heights neighborhood, why she chose to turn the property into a settlement house, and why she chose to include the Christian mandate in the Good Neighbor House mission statement. Knowing why Dr. Scales made these decisions helped me to further understand the aims of Good Neighbor and think of how a community literacy center could be in line with those aims.

Dr. Scales also discussed some considerations I needed to make in regards to a community literacy center that I had not thought of. One of the major issues I needed to consider was being able to get an accurate idea of the needs of the Sanger Heights residents, and thus address them in the community literacy center. Dr. Scales' academic background is in social work, so she was able to explain various ways of determining the needs of the community in a way that was sensitive and respectful towards the residents. This played an integral role in helping determine ways to obtain the information needed in order to design programs within a community literacy center that would effectively address the needs of the residents. It also opened up considerations I had not thought of, including the way the residents may respond to the volunteers at Good Neighbor. Dr. Scales' interview invited me to think about new ways I might obtain the information I need while remaining within the constraints of the social work principles. It also invited me to think about possible issues that may arise in obtaining the information about the needs of the residents. Moreover, because Dr. Scales was familiar with the residents and

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had a background in social work, she was able to explain how the needs may change, particularly after volunteers had formed relationships with the residents. These relationships may take time, but from them, the volunteers will likely determine an accurate picture of the needs of the community. Being made aware of these issues caused me to think about ways in which I can design a community literacy center model that is flexible enough to accommodate the growing and evolving needs of the Sanger Heights residents, yet also answers to a current need as well.

Furthermore, Dr. Scales also had considerable knowledge of literacy centers and programs that had been started in Waco and Baylor. Dr. Scales explained that there was a community literacy center at Baylor several years ago, which indicates several things. It indicates that there was, and perhaps still is, a need for a literacy center in Waco, a need for residents to have resources that will help them improve on literate practices. Dr. Scales also had knowledge on language programs, such as Learning English Among Friends (LEAF) that were being held on the Baylor campus. Dr. Scales' knowledge of Baylor programs aimed to help bridge social disparity through language, as well as her knowledge of the Waco community and the Sanger Heights neighborhood, was greatly beneficial in helping me consider the needs a community literacy center should address, the way those needs should be addressed, and the ways to go about determining those needs.

Genre Analysis

In addition to literature research and personal interviews, I also conducted genre analyses on documents I received from the City of Waco, the Baylor University School of Social Work, and Good Neighbor House. Conducting genre analysis on these

documents gave me additional insight into the goals of Good Neighbor and the needs of the Waco community. The documents I analyzed include the Good Neighbor House Settler Description and Application, Baylor Pro Futuris, Strengthening Connections and Collaborations for Youth and Young Adults in Waco Fall 2011 Reports, Moving from Poverty to Prosperity, Seeing Opportunity in Our Community, and a Profile of Waco: Economic Resource Guide for Business and Industry.

To help me better understand the aims of Good Neighbor House and the role settlers play in helping to fulfill those aims, I analyzed two documents from Good Neighbor House—one, a description of the settler role, and two, the application to be a settler at Good Neighbor House. In addition, analyzing the settler description and application gave me more insight into how Good Neighbor might go about obtaining information about the needs of the Sanger Heights neighborhood, as the settlers will socialize and form relationships with the residents. The application to be settler is much like a volunteer application at a non-profit organization; in addition to the application form, it requires a résumé and three essays answering three questions in the application. These questions largely deal with the reasons applicants want to be settlers, their views on social change and community development, and their views on working within a Christian organization. Based on the questions posed, readers (and applicants) get a clear idea of the values of Good Neighbor House, as well as their primary goals. In addition, the role of settler is something taken seriously and given a great deal of weight at Good Neighbor House; settlers appear to be the primary people who carry out the mission of Good Neighbor House. Good Neighbor relies heavily on their settlers, and understanding the settlers' role provides a context for designing a community literacy center for Good

Neighbor House, where settlers and volunteers from Baylor and MCC will regularly interact with Sanger Heights residents.

Another document I analyzed was the Baylor Pro Futuris. Analyzing this document helped me think about Baylor's involvement in Good Neighbor House, as well as how a community literacy center might help further Baylor's goals of increased civic engagement. The purpose of the Pro Futuris document is to present a proposal for Baylor University's plans for growth and further community involvement. A draft of Pro Futuris was drafted by the university's Board of Regents, President, Vice President, and Provost, and it was then released and given feedback on how it could be improved and made more effective before being adopted. Baylor University's mission statement is "to educate men and women for worldwide leadership and service by integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment within a caring community." Baylor's mission statement, as well as its motto, *Pro Ecclesia, Pro Texana*, communicate the heart of Baylor's purpose—to not only educate individuals on an intellectual level, but also to teach them to be stewards of their community. Thus, Baylor's mission for the future, aptly titled Pro Futuris, seeks to expand Baylor's involvement in the Waco community. Pro Futuris begins by discussing Baylor's mission, and then goes on to discuss the six themes upon which the university has been developed. Namely, the six themes center around Baylor University's belief in how the academic programs that support a knowledge of the sciences, arts, humanities, that foster civic engagement, and that provide a Christian foundation, are essential aspects of human development and support Baylor's mission to carry out excellent scholarship with a strong sense of civic responsibility.

The social practices and cultural values that have influenced this plan, and consequently, this text, deal largely with Baylor's involvement in the Waco community. The document discusses Baylor's efforts to involve themselves in improving the Waco community through involvement in service organizations, mission trips, etc. The Pro Futuris document was drafted to address the inquiries raised through observation— namely, observation of areas of need within the Waco community that Baylor could help improve through its resources. This text responds to the ongoing conversation of integrating Baylor and Waco—getting rid of the "Baylor bubble," the social gap that separates the university community from the Waco community. This document responds to this conversation by showing how Baylor has progressed in terms of academic goals, as well as involvement in the Waco community through work with the Texas Hunger Initiative, Campus Kitchens, Baylor Poverty Initiative, and others. This also establishes ethos with the reader, as it lends credibility to Baylor's proposed plans for working towards a goal of integrating the university and the Waco community and of improving their standards both for academics and for civic engagement. In addition, its aspirational statements give a more detailed description of each aspect of Baylor's proposed improvement and help to validate the claims made at the beginning. For instance, Aspirational Statement Three discusses Baylor's work with digitizing their libraries as well as collaborations with various projects to preserve historical and cultural texts and make them more accessible. It then explains its plan to further this and conduct research to address community concerns.

I also analyzed two reports written by students of the Baylor University School of Social Work. Analyzing these reports gave me a clearer idea of what the needs of Waco

might be, since it provided demographics for the various parts of Waco. In addition, the report provided visual aids to show various aspects, such as agency distribution in various parts of Waco, or maps that locate social service agencies around Waco. The report, written by master's candidates of the Baylor School of Social Work, presented their own proposals for the most effective ways to address the issues in Waco, primarily poverty. The proposed solution was to "launch our young people into productive working lives," something that the community literacy center also aims to do through teaching literate practices. Thus, analyzing the report also gave me ideas for community improvement from a social work perspective.

Finally, I analyzed documents released by the City of Waco. These include a publication titled Profile of Waco: Economic Resource Guide for Business and Industry, an annual report for 2010-2011 called "Seeing Opportunity in Our Community," and a report from the Poverty Solutions Steering Committee to the Waco City Council, titled "Moving from Poverty to Prosperity." Analyzing these documents gave me a clearer idea of the specific needs the City of Waco is addressing and how they are addressing them. The first publication I analyzed, Profile of Waco, centers not only on poverty, but also on issues dealing with health care and public safety, indicating that Waco's issues are not simply poverty. The publication presents Waco as a city that is growing, and emphasizes the positive features of Waco, as if the publication's aim was to attract more residents to Waco, and therefore have a stronger workforce. This showed that combating issues such as poverty could be done in ways that were less charity-focused and more focused on strengthening the education and workforce of the city.

Limitations of Research Methods

Limitations of my research methods include the limited number of people I spoke to, regarding Good Neighbor House, the Sanger Heights neighborhood, and the City of Waco. Although analyzing documents and reports released by the City of Waco with the purpose of community improvement, I have not been able to see firsthand how these changes and proposals have affected Waco, and whether the effect was positive, or perhaps ineffective. Although I have spoken with Dr. Scales and Dustin Morrow, who have had experience in developing Good Neighbor House and understand clearly what the goals of Good Neighbor House are, they still are not entirely clear on the specific needs of the Sanger Heights residents, partly because Good Neighbor House is still in its development stages, and settlers have not been able to meet with residents, form relationships with them, and determine their needs. Another limitation in determining the Sanger Heights needs is simply making sure that the Sanger Heights residents view Good Neighbor House as an establishment that is theirs, that is something their community needs, rather than a top-down way of helping them. Consequently, gathering information on the needs of the Sanger Heights residents in a way that is sensitive and not top-down is another limitation of my research methods. Finding out their needs is largely something that will be determined as the settlers form relationships with the residents, and that process may take time. This also affects the way I design my model of university-community collaboration, as I will have to design a model that is flexible enough to accommodate the needs that may arise, yet the model must also address a need so that residents find it useful when it is first established. Despite the limitations, my research methods still have provided me a comprehensive view of Waco, Good Neighbor House,

and the Sanger Heights community, which will ultimately help me design a university-community collaboration model that is effective and beneficial for both Waco residents and Baylor students.

CHAPTER THREE

Findings and Discussion

As discussed in Chapter 1, there is a disparity between Baylor University and the Waco community. There is a disparity in terms of criteria such as poverty/income levels, education levels, as well as perceptions of the issues within each group. The social gap between Baylor University and the surrounding Waco community has many implications on both the community and the university. One notable consequence of the social gap is the stigma that the Waco community is unsafe, or the stigma that Baylor students are elite. Another implication of the social gap is the decreased civic engagement among Baylor students, as well as a decreased involvement in community issues and community improvement. My thesis argues that university-community collaboration in the form of a community literacy center is a way to bridge the disparity between Baylor and Waco, as well as provide benefits to both community residents and university students. In a community literacy center, university students and community residents can come together and use their diverse backgrounds and knowledge as a way to further understand the roots of the issues within the university and community and use literate practices as a way to address those issues. My thesis proposes a community literacy center housed in Good Neighbor House, a local settlement house in the Sanger Heights neighborhood, that serves as a common ground for Waco and Baylor.

Through my document analysis and personal interviews, I have researched the needs of the Waco community, the needs that the City of Waco has addressed, and the goals for improving the Waco community. This research into the Waco community has

given me insight into the priorities of the community, as well as the ways in which literate practices contribute to addressing the needs and areas of improvement in the community. In addition to information on the Waco community, I also researched the goals of Baylor University, in particular, their Pro Futuris plan, which is a continuation of the Baylor 2012 goal. Through researching Baylor's goals, I was able to determine the priorities of Baylor University, particularly in terms of civic engagement. Moreover, through personal interviews with Dustin Morrow and Dr. Laine Scales, I was able to get an accurate picture of the goals and values of Good Neighbor House, as well as how those goals might align with those of Waco and Baylor.

Understanding the goals and areas of improvement for both Baylor and Waco has given me insight into what kind of university-community collaboration would be most beneficial in addressing both the goals of the community and the university. In this chapter, I will report my findings, based on my personal interviews and document analysis, on the goals and areas of improvement that the Waco community aims to address. In particularly, I will discuss the issues of poverty and education, steps the city has taken to address these issues, and areas that remain to be addressed or goals that remain to be met. I will then report my findings on Baylor University—their progress since the Baylor 2012 plan; their current goals for improvement, particularly in the areas of civic engagement; the steps they have taken to meet their Pro Futuris goals; and the strategies they have put forth to fully meet their objectives for the university, particularly in civic engagement and community improvement. Finally, I will present my findings on Good Neighbor House, as well as why they serve as the common ground, or the "hyphen" between university-community collaboration.

Based on my research on the Waco community, one of the predominant issues that needs to be addressed is that of poverty. However, the issue of poverty is not one that can simply be resolved. As stated in a report on poverty released by the Poverty Solutions Steering Committee in Waco (PSSC), titled "Moving from Poverty to Prosperity," poverty is rooted in a great deal of issues. The working definition of poverty is derived from the federal government, which defines poverty as falling at or below a designated minimum income, or poverty guideline. For instance, a family of four whose total income is less than $23,050 is considered living in poverty. However, the PSSC report states that simply not falling under this minimum wage does not mean that the family is not living in poverty; in fact, they deem what they call "a minimally adequate income" to be around 200 percent of the designated minimum income that the government has set forth. Therefore, it is a goal in Waco to help more families have access to resources that will give them the skills to perform higher paying jobs, and therefore, meet the standards for a minimally adequate income. In the chart below, Waco is one of two cities, out of the six shown, in which more of the population fall under the 200 percent minimally adequate income than above it, showing how the poverty in Waco is an issue that needs to be resolved in order for the city to make progress and grow.

The poverty in Waco has also been an indirect cause of other areas within the community that need to be improved, such as education and communication. According to Dr. Bonnie Lesley, who has served as a superintendent and administrator in the Waco Independent School District, stated that there is a need for a stronger effort in second-language acquisition for students who do not speak English. One significant way to

increase civic participation is by acculturation, and ESL students and residents cannot fully participate in the activities of the community unless they are given help in learning English, in a way that is not top-down and in a way that is sensitive to the different cultures and languages of its students.

Another area of improvement in the Waco community is education. Dr. Lesley also stated that funding for education is far behind that of other, more privileged communities, and she emphasized the importance of having grassroots organizations push for more funding in schools. Education is not only an area of improvement in Waco; it is also an influence in the poverty of the community. Students who do not receive an education, for financial reasons or other reasons, find it difficult to obtain higher paying jobs that allow them to earn a minimally adequate income for living well in the community. Often, according to Dr. Lesley, students and residents are not aware of the resources available that are geared towards helping students develop the writing, interviewing, and interpersonal skills needed to perform at a higher paying job, or gain admission into a higher education institution or vocational school.

The City of Waco, the PSSC, and the Poverty Solutions Group (PSG) have come up with three main themes in order to come up with solutions that directly address the main causes of poverty in the city. The three major themes consist of building economic strength, aligning support to promote self-sufficiency, and fortifying health and education for youth. Rather than a charity-focused goals, these themes are aimed towards helping the community residents gain the skills and agency to address and influence the issues in their own community. Moreover, the themes are "inextricably entwined" (16). In order to

address one theme, the others must be addressed as well; one theme cannot be addressed without taking the other two themes into consideration.

The first theme, building economic strength, primarily addresses the issue of making more higher-paying jobs available in the Waco community. Addressing this issue includes analyzing the current availability of higher paying jobs that will provide residents with an adequate income, and subsequently, figuring out the extent to which more of those jobs need to be added. Once this is figured out, other considerations and decisions to be made include finding and recruiting employers who can open up higher paying jobs. However, this is not solely an economic issue; education plays a significant role in higher paying jobs, as students and residents need to be equipped with the skills to perform those jobs well. Therefore, building the economy also means making available resources so that residents can learn and master skills needed to perform jobs well, including literate practices, social and interpersonal skills, and knowledge of technological resources such as word processing programs, email, and basic computer software.

The second theme, which centers on promoting self-sufficiency within the community, involves helping residents by providing them with resources to solve their own problems and have more agency in their own lives. For instance, it could involve making available, or promoting the availability of, resources for help with basic needs, such as healthcare or attaining Medicaid or Medicare, or resources for parents, such as the Parent Resource Centers, which help educate parents on resources for helping raise their children and helping to develop skills needed in the workplace. Promoting self-sufficiency also involves working with residents who face other challenges, such as

disabilities, addiction, or ex-offender status, and finding resources that help integrate

them into the community. The final theme, which is to "fortify health and education for

our children," involves raising the young residents in the community and making sure

that they do not fall behind more privileged or middle-class students. The final theme

centers on keeping an even playing field for students of various socioeconomic

backgrounds and giving the community residents a sense that they can change their own

situation, that they can have agency over their own lives and develop skills that will help

them attain higher paying jobs and help them move out of poverty.

Proposed Solutions for Areas of Improvement

To fulfill and accomplish these major themes, the City of Waco, PSSC, and PSG

has come up with the following twelve aspirations that promote these themes[7].

1. Improve the health of our children and support healthy lifestyles for all.
2. Prepare our children for success in school and beyond.
3. Launch our young people into productive working lives.
4. Gainfully employ our working-age population.
5. Care for our elderly population.
6. Support residents who face special challenges.
7. Empower our residents.
8. Align our social services efficiently and effectively.
9. Strengthen our neighborhoods.
10. Upgrade our shares spaces.
11. Energize our economic base.
12. Enjoy life together.

To promote these aspirations, the community has established programs and

organizations with the aim of community improvement. In terms of ways the community

has addressed literacy and educational needs in Waco (Aspiration #3), there has also been

research done to analyze ways to improve these issues.

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[7] Report from: Poverty Solutions Steering Committee: Moving from Poverty to Prosperity.

Aspiration #3, which focuses on the education of youth and residents in the Waco community, is most related to the studies in community literacy and service-learning that I researched and outlined in chapter 1. Based a report done by the Baylor School of Social Work and City of Waco, there is a need for increased efforts in promoting education, the completion of education, and providing or making available resources to help students transition from school to working lives or to help students gain the skills needed to succeed in school as well as the workplace. According to the report, the Waco community had an unemployment rate of 8.2 percent, and 26.1 percent of the population (ages 25 and up) were high school graduates (U.S. Census). Between 2007 and 2011, 75.7 percent of the population were high school graduates, while 21.5 percent had a bachelor's degree (U.S. Census). In the Sanger Heights neighborhood specifically, 29 percent of residents have a high school diploma or GED, and 25 percent have an education of 9th grade or less. Moreover, 7 percent of residents in the Sanger Heights neighborhood have a bachelor's degree (U.S. Census).

"High school completion is below what Waco's average would be," Dr. Laine Scales, Dean of the Baylor School of Social Work, said of the Sanger Heights neighborhood. Moreover, Dr. Bonnie Lesley discussed how many parents of student in the Waco ISD did not have the skills needed to seek out jobs or educational pursuits. For instance, when she was organizing forums in the Waco ISD, she noted that many parents did not have email addresses because they did not have access to email. Moreover, some did not have telephones. Because of this, Waco residents did not have the means to contact people with access to resources they might need, such as information on jobs, parenting information, or information on health care. In addition, Waco residents did not

have the same resources that allowed them to be active participants within their community, as a great deal of information on the community's activities is communicated through online means, such as websites. Hannah Kuhl, social worker who works regularly with the Waco ISD, said that one main factor in addressing education issues is a lack of mentorship. During her experience working with students in the Waco ISD, she explained that a pattern she saw in students was that they did not have a parent to read with them and help reinforce those literate practices.

According to a study done by MSW and BSW students in the Baylor University School of Social Work, there are three primary roots affecting the education of individuals in the Waco community. The first theme is adolescent development. Adolescent development is affected by factors such as self-esteem, decision-making, lack of skills, and technology.

According to the study, a main factor was self-esteem and self-confidence. The study noted that individuals who lacked self-esteem and confidence had the mindset that an education was not feasible for them, in terms of financial means, intellectual ability, and/or circumstances outside of their academic life. Decision-making was another factor discussed in the study; students did not make use of or have access to the resources to help them make healthy decisions that would impact their future positively. Lack of skills was another significant factor affecting the education of individuals in Waco and the transition from school to working lives. According to the study, students did not have experience practicing the skills necessary to perform higher paying jobs, such as writing skills, interpersonal skills, interviewing skills, and job search skills, which impeded their transition from school to finding a job. Because students did not know how to search for

a job or how to find contacts who would assist in their job search and application, they had more trouble entering the workforce in Waco. Finally, technology played a significant role in affective the working lives of Waco residents, particularly the youth. The media remains a strong influence on residents, particularly the youth in Waco, contributing to their views on society and education. Moreover, not all students have access to technological resources, such as computers, which in turn affects their response to a more technologically-driven curriculum. Lack of access to technological resources also affects the extent of civic participation and awareness for residents, as well as their job searching abilities and marketability for higher paying jobs, which often require a working knowledge of technological skills, such as computer programs.

Another main theme outlined by the study was termed "direct relationship." This referred to relationships with people, often older adults and mentor figures, who could assist and advise the youth on their career aspirations and academic pursuits. Positive direct relationships and mentorships, such as supportive teachers, counselors, and parents, positively influence a student's career aspirations and perception of his or her life, and therefore, are necessary in order to effect improvements in the education of Waco's youth. Finally, a factor in the education in the Waco community, according to the study, are "systemic factors," defined as "outside influences that affect the youth in Waco...often beyong their control" (Baylor School of Social Work). Systemic factors include the economy, the educational system, the government, and school-community connections. These systemic factors significantly influence the quality of education for individuals; for instance, Dr. Lesley explained that the Waco ISD was largely underfunded. She discussed the disparity in funding for education; low-income and minority communities

received as much as $10,000 less in funding than higher-income communities.

Furthermore, Dr. Lesley explained that resources were available for residents of Waco.

For instance, McClennan Community College (MCC) offers adult education, but this

poses a problem for residents with limited transportation of limited access to resources

providing information on how to get to MCC. "All the pieces are in place in Waco, but

it's a fragmented situation...there needs to be some kind of formal collaboration formed

so that people can...share the resources and the information," Dr. Lesley said.

Existing Solutions to Address the Areas of Improvement

The report from the PSSC, "Moving from Poverty to Prosperity," lists several

existing examples of addressing each aspiration, that set an example for further

development and promotion of the aspiration. For Aspiration #3, programs such as career

awareness programs in schools, dual credit programs between Waco ISD schools and

MCC and/or TSTC also offer students the chance to begin thinking of their careers once

they finish high school. The Waco Business League is another existing program designed

to address the improvement of the working lives of Waco residents. The Waco Business

League works in collaboration with Waco ISD and supports career and technology

programs that help students develop and pursue their interests while they are still in

school. The LEAD program is another program aimed to improve career prospects for

students; this program, which stands for Leadership, Education, and Development, serves

to help students cultivate business leader-student relationships. Summer employment

programs, according to the report, are another way to help students prepare for their

careers. Organizations such as Communities in Schools and Workforce Solutions

collaborate to form federal summer employment programs for students that help equip

them with skills and experience needed in the workforce. Mission Waco is another organization that promotes summer employment programs for students in the Waco community.

The Parent Resource Center, started by John Hudson, is another program established by the Waco community targeted at improving the education and career development of Waco residents. Currently, there are locations in three elementary schools located in underprivileged communities: J.H. Hines Elementary, Crestview Elementary, and South Waco Elementary. The Parent Resource Center (PRC) is an organization formed on the idea of providing a link between the community and the school. According to Hannah Kuhl, a social worker who works regularly with the PRC, many issues that students deal with pertaining to issues like attendance and grades can be attributed to outside situations, such as family. The PRC is a holistic program designed for families, rather than either children or adults. They provide parenting education classes, work with the children, and help provide resources such as computers and help filling out applications, so parents and their children can come to the school and have access to those resources.

Avance Waco is another program that focuses on parent-child education. Located in South Waco, Avance provides nine-month parenting classes for parents with children ages 0-3. These classes teach parents how to deal with emotional, social, physical, and cognitive development of their children. For instance, parents are taught to be role models and advocates for education by providing literacy and ESL classes and help with earning a GED. Another program that aims to work with families, particularly in the areas of learning language and literacy, is a program called Learning English Among

Friends, or LEAF. LEAF started a few years ago in Waco, with Dr. Rob Rogers and Dr. Randy Wood, modeled under their family literacy proposal. LEAF started in Cesar Chavez Elementary and local schools around Waco, with classes for parents and children to learn English, taught by volunteers, who are usually students in the Baylor School of Education. The purpose of LEAF is to provide families with the skills they need, particularly in terms of literacy and language, to be productive members of society, help acculturate immigrant families, and help them adapt, find jobs, and provide a living for their families.

The City of Waco has also put forth programs to encourage Waco youth to further their education and prepare for a future career, where they can apply their skills and be productive members of their community. In 1995, the MAC Scholarship Program was established, which provides scholarships and grants to students enrolled in McClennan County schools. The program assists students in filing for Pell Grants and attaining the financial assistance to pursue higher education. The MAC Scholarship Program encourages higher education by showing students that an education is something for which they can attain the financial means.

Baylor University Goals for Improvement

Baylor University continually strives for excellence in its students, faculty, research, and community involvement. In 2012, Baylor University established Pro Futuris, a name for their new strategic vision, an extension of their previous vision called Baylor 2012. As a part of my research, I analyzed the document outlining the Pro Futuris vision for Baylor University. The mission statement of Baylor University is as follows:

"...to educate men and women for worldwide leadership and service by integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment within a caring community."

The Baylor 2012 vision worked to fulfill this mission statement further. After the establishment of the Baylor 2012 vision, Baylor increased its reputation and became classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a Research University with High Research Activity. The university added 238 full-time faculty positions, with over three-fourths of the hired staff having earned their doctorates at a university classified under the Carnegie Foundation's highest ranking: Research University with Very High Research Activity. The university increased its number of doctoral programs offered and encouraged further research, particularly in the sciences, with the addition of the Baylor Sciences Building and the Central Texas Technology and Research Park. Average test scores for students, including SAT, GRE, and GMAT increased, and university-sponsored funding went from $25 million to $125 million in the fiscal year 2012. The Baylor 2012 vision also placed greater emphasis on community involvement among students and faculty. The university established various discipline-specific mission trips to third-world countries, such as medical mission trips for science and pre-med students.

Baylor's Pro Futuris vision strives to take the university's progress even further. The goals in the Pro Futuris vision are outlined in five aspirational statements that aim to fulfill the university's mission for academic excellence grounded in Christian faith. The aspirational statements are as follows[8]:

I.   Transformational Education – where academic excellence and life-changing experiences ignite leadership potential that increases our students' desire for wisdom, understanding of calling, and preparation for service in a diverse and interconnected global society;

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[8] Baylor Pro Futuris: A Strategic Vision for Baylor University

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II. Compelling Scholarship – where research discoveries illuminate solutions to significant challenges confronting our world and where creative endeavors reflect the breadth of God's creation;

III. Informed Engagement – where our Christian faith, in conjunction with our expertise and resources, inspires a desire to address systemic problems facing our community, both local and global, and renews our dedication to improvement self and service to others;

IV. Committed Constituents – where the dedication of alumni and friends advances Baylor through sustained involvement and philanthropy;

V. Judicious Stewardship – where the value generated by and derived from a Baylor experience is supported through a diversity of revenues, prudent management of our resources, and the pursuit of outstanding quality and character in every area of University life.

The social practices and cultural values that have influenced this plan, and consequently, this text, deal largely with Baylor's involvement in the Waco community. The document discusses Baylor's efforts to involve themselves in improving the Waco community through involvement in service organizations, mission trips, etc. The Pro Futuris document was drafted to address the inquiries raised through observation—namely, observation of areas of need within the Waco community that Baylor could help improve through its resources. This text responds to the ongoing conversation of integrating Baylor and Waco—getting rid of the "Baylor bubble," the social gap that separates the university community from the Waco community. This document responds to this conversation by showing how Baylor has progressed in terms of academic goals, as well as involvement in the Waco community through work with the Texas Hunger Initiative, Campus Kitchens, Baylor Poverty Initiative, and others. This also establishes ethos with the reader, as it lends credibility to Baylor's proposed plans for working towards a goal of integrating the university and the Waco community and of improving their standards both for academics and for civic engagement. In addition, its aspirational statements give a more detailed description of each aspect of Baylor's proposed

improvement and help to validate the claims made at the beginning. For instance, Aspirational Statement Three discusses Baylor's work with digitizing their libraries as well as collaborations with various projects to preserve historical and cultural texts and make them more accessible. It then explains its plan to further this and conduct research to address community concerns.

Aspirational Statement One is primarily concerned with the integration of academic achievement, community engagement, and leadership among the students. To further increase academic achievement in the university, Baylor has set goals such as increasing funding for programs in science and engineering and increasing the number of Ph.D. and graduate programs offered (Pro Futuris). To encourage community involvement, Pro Futuris proposes for increased programs that focus on community service and educating students on issues within the community. Leadership development also ties in to increased community engagement; other proposal to improve leadership development are providing more opportunities for students to get involved in their communities and help make a difference.

Aspirational Statements Three through Five also deal largely with increased community engagement. Statement Three is primarily concerned with encouraging university students and faculty to use their knowledge, skills, and resources in ways that are productive and helpful to the surrounding Waco community, in ways that address the needs of the community. Aspirational Statement Three discusses programs that Baylor has established, in the hopes of facilitating further community involvement, such as the Texas Hunger Initiative, Campus Kitchen, the Baylor Interdisciplinary Poverty Initiative, and Steppin' Out. These programs provide ways in which students can get involved in the

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community and form stronger partnerships between university students and community residents. Aspirational Statement Four focuses more on awareness regarding issues in the university and community. Statement Four proposes goals to increase connections and communication between the university and surrounding community, using tools such as social media to keep students, community members, and alumni informed of the issues and plans of the university and community. Increased communication is another way, according to the Pro Futuris document, that can help improve relations between the university and community. Aspirational Statement Five focuses on Baylor's mission, of its students and faculty being called to share their resources and knowledge. Baylor does not simply aim to educate students in preparation for future jobs; Baylor aims to educate students who will be stewards of their community, who will use their education for the benefit of society.

Baylor University currently does have strong programs that encourage community involvement. For instance, in every student organization, from cultural organizations such as Asian Students Association, to honor societies, such as Golden Key, students are required to fulfill a certain number of community service hours. These organizations have partnerships with various organizations, such as Steppin' Out, Campus Kitchen, Adopt A Highway, and Fuzzy Friends. Baylor students regularly work with these organizations in order to fulfill their service requirements. However, these service events are also a social event for the students; they are a chance to meet with their peers and get to know other members of the community. Through involvement with community organizations, students have the chance to learn about issues within the community.

Baylor students have also shown interest in community organizations, such as Waco Arts Initiative, Waco Humane Society (or the Humane Society of Central Texas), and Waco Collegiate Forum. Waco Arts Initiative aims to provide community residents with a quality arts education and a healthy creative outlet and after-school activity for students in the community. Waco Humane Society employs volunteers from both local school districts and higher education institutions to help socialize the animals and make them suitable for adoption. Waco Collegiate Forum also strives to bring students together; it brings together students from Baylor, MCC, and TSTC and discusses ways that students can begin careers in Waco in order to help improve the community. Students who have gotten involved in these organizations have done so out of a desire to break out of the "Baylor Bubble" and do something more meaningful in the community. These three organizations are voluntary, and primarily staffed by volunteers who are Baylor students or students from other higher education institutions around Waco.

Areas for Further Improvement in the Community and University

While Baylor University has a number of programs that encourage further community engagement, one area of improvement for these programs is the way they target and aim to help the community. According to Dr. Lesley, people in the community have felt that programs such as Steppin' Out and Campus Kitchens do "to" the community, rather than "with" the community. In other words, these programs take a more charity-centered approach, doing something for the community residents without the residents determining it as a need of their own. For instance, Steppin' Out usually involves students picking up trash outside of a building or painting someone's house. While this is indeed helpful for the resident, these sorts of charity acts do not get at the

main issues within the community—the issues of residents needing educational resources for higher-paying jobs. Moreover, the types of activities that these organizations center on do not always regard the dignity of the community residents and view the residents as a sort of project, or charity case. These programs, in a way, do follow a top-down approach. The organizations determine the needs of the community, rather than the community letting them know what the needs are. These organizations take an approach in which they believe they know a way to help, a better way to live, rather than finding out what the residents need and then helping them to address those needs. These organizations determine a need and address it; they do "to" the community, rather than working with them to collectively work through issues of importance. This contributes to the social gap between the university and community in several ways. Because of these sorts of programs, the community can come to view the university students not as willing to help, but simply contributing services for their own benefit (e.g., service requirement). The community residents can come to view university students as ignorant of actual community issues, and they can come to resent university students for viewing them as a charity case rather than as equals, rather than trying to help community residents create agency in their own lives.

The issue is complicated, however, because the activities of these organizations do fill a need. Houses do need to be painted; under-privileged or homeless residents do need to be fed. However, organizations aimed at community engagement should also adopt an approach that is change-centered, that is focused on helping by empowering individuals in the community so that they, in turn, can be more productive members of the community. Therefore, to address the issue of top-down university-sponsored

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community engagement programs, the university needs to create programs in association with the community that address concerns put forth by members of the community. These organizations need to first identify the needs of the community, and then propose solutions to address those needs. The organizations affiliated with Baylor that are partnered with the community need to be organic; they need to be born out of a need that the community residents agree is a need. This way, the community will respond much more to the resources and services being provided by that organization, as these will be resources and services that the community actually thinks they need. These organizations need to form a more reciprocal relationship between the university and community, rather than a top-down approach, where both parties learn, and both parties find importance in the issues they are addressing.

Another area of improvement in the university and community, in terms of civic engagement, is that many of the programs established by the community and the university have no sense of collaboration, according to Dr. Lesley. As a result, residents might not be aware of resources that might exist that would help them in their current situation. Moreover, there are fewer connections between the university and the community, which is limiting in several ways. Universities, schools, institutions for higher learning, can all provide resources that community organizations might not have or might lack the funds to attain. A lack of collaboration between the university and community is a part of the reason why efforts to address community issues are less effective; they lack the necessary resources and connections that a university has that can help address issues within the community. A partnership between the university and community is also beneficial as it fulfills the civic purpose of an education, both in

general and as part of the mission statement of Baylor University. A lack of collaboration between the university and community takes away from the value of a university education; part of a university education is being able to use one's knowledge to effect change. A lack of partnership and civic engagement takes away this purpose, and students view their education as merely job training, rather than as having a civic purpose. Having a closer partnership or collaboration with a university would be beneficial to both the students and the community residents. The community residents would gain access to resources they need, while the students will be more engaged and educated about issues within their community. Furthermore, they will help to enact change to address those issues.

To improve this issue within the university's and the community's attempts to enact social change, programs should be put forth that are in collaboration with both the university and the community. Good Neighbor House in the Sanger Heights community provides an example of an organization that is moving in that direction. Good Neighbor House is a settlement house project that is staffed primarily by volunteers who are mostly students, doctoral candidates, or professors at Baylor University. Good Neighbor House provides a link between the university and community; it is located in a neighborhood in Waco, and the settlers living in the settlement house form relationships with residents in that community. The settlers and volunteers have direct connections with Baylor University, and therefore can provide valuable knowledge and resources that will help the residents and will help close the social disparity between the university and community.

While Baylor University, MCC, and the City of Waco has put forth programs that are targeted towards alleviating poverty, increasing education, and encouraging civic

engagement, there is still much to be done to effectively accomplish these goals. Baylor and the City of Waco can put forth more programs in collaboration with the university and community, and these programs can spend more time identifying the actual needs of the community that they serve, so that community residents can respond to those programs and so the programs can effect positive change. These changes have benefits both to the community and to university students, however. Increased civic engagement further fulfills Baylor's mission and the goals for its Pro Futuris vision. It adds value to a university education, as students gain skills such as interpersonal skills, as well as an increased awareness for the issues within their community and ways to address these issues. Students gain experience in teaching and writing, and both students and residents use these skills in a way that is productive to the community. Establishing a program that addresses the needs of the Waco community, which include resources and mentorship in literacy skills, skills that are necessary for attaining higher paying jobs and helping residents to work their way out of poverty, will be effective in fulfilling the goals of both the university and community, and consequently, decreasing the social gap between the two.

A Partnership With Good Neighbor

The settlement house tradition began in England in 1884 as a Progressive era movement. At that time, it was largely a male enterprise, with university students and clergymen who, out of their religious motivation, moved into the poor cities during their holidays to help them. The settlement house movement spread to the United States by 1886, and by the time it reached the U.S., it became a predominantly female enterprise. Middle-class women moved into the poor neighborhoods in the nation's largest cities to

help the residents and address their needs. The most notable settlement house was called Hull House, which was founded in Chicago by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr in 1889.

The settlement house has had a rich history in Texas, as well. A trend among settlement houses in Texas was enrolling community children in kindergarten programs at the settlement house. For instance, a settlement house in south Dallas had a program called the Cotton Mill Kindergarten. These programs also included boys' clubs, girls' clubs, cooking and sewing classes, and a playground. A nurse also lived at the settlement house to provide medical attention to the residents. Settlement houses also had a religious motivation. One such example are the Wesley Houses, which sought to spread Christianity and were established in association with the Dallas Methodist Church. Settlement houses in Texas also served specific ethnic groups, such as the Rusk, in Houston, which primarily served Mexican Americans, and the Bethlehem Settlement, also in Houston, which primarily served African Americans. These settlement houses that served a specific ethnic group provided English-language classes, as well as other programs such as boys' and girls' clubs. In 1943, University of Texas Professor George I. Sánchez received a grant to involve university students in the settlement houses, where they would live, interact, and work with the residents in the settlement house. Recently established settlement houses have added drug and delinquency-prevention to their programs, and some continue to provide English classes for immigrants.

The Community Literacy Center (CLC) in Pittsburgh (in partnership with Carnegie Mellon University) is also in a settlement house. Upon conducting research on community literacy, I have found that university-community collaboration models share

much of the same goals as the settlement house tradition: of fostering interaction among diverse groups, of facilitating community improvement through this kind of productive interaction, and of bridging social disparity. The Pittsburgh CLC has fostered community improvement by providing a space where students and residents could collaborate and hold conversations on important social issues. This model has helped to fulfill the goal of the settlement house through addressing the community's literacy needs. Through addressing the community's literacy needs, community residents have learned to express their opinions on various issues. A university-community collaboration model, such as a community literacy center, provides an opportunity for residents and students to exercise influence over their own lives and their community, through use of the resources offered by members of the university and community.

Good Neighbor is a settlement house founded by Dr. Laine Scales of the Baylor University School of Social Work, as a way to provide a space for people of different backgrounds to interact, hold their activities or programs, and learn to value the diversity and use this in a way to enact community improvement. The Good Neighbor House is situated in the Sanger Heights neighborhood, where the organization is currently working with the Sanger Heights Neighborhood Association to restore houses in the neighborhood. These houses will serve as spaces open to the community where different programs can come in and utilize the space. The goal of the Good Neighbor House is to provide a space that encourages diversity, community interaction, and community improvement.

The Good Neighbor House responds to a need for a greater sense of community. It also responds to a need for a space that brings people together, out of their individual

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homes, and into the neighborhood. Families tend to live in isolation from their neighbors, so the Good Neighbor House serves as a place where neighbors can come together and solve community issues together. Moreover, the Good Neighbor House responds to a need of community in terms of diversity and in terms of appreciating differences. Sanger Heights, unlike the rest of Waco, is uniquely diverse. Most of Waco tends to be quite segregated; East Waco is predominantly African American, North Waco is mainly Hispanic/Latino, and South Waco is predominantly White. On the other hand, the ethnic diversity is much more spread out in Sanger Heights. Over 50 percent of the Sanger Heights population is Hispanic/Latino, while nearly 30 percent is African American. About 20 percent of the Sanger Heights population is Caucasian. The Sanger Heights neighborhood is a completely different world from a place like Baylor University, so having the Good Neighbor House in a diverse neighborhood would be an ideal place to encourage diversity and encourage people to come together and learn to appreciate each other's differences. The Sanger Heights neighborhood plays a significant role in contributing to Good Neighbor's mission of community interaction.

Upon complete restoration of the properties, Good Neighbor hopes to move in the first settlers to live in some of the houses in Sanger Heights. This way, the settlers can have regular interaction and determine the needs of the community through relationships with their neighbors. The settlers are the heart of carrying out the vision of the Good Neighbor House. Once the settlers live in the neighborhood, they will get to know the residents, have conversations with them, and ultimately, determine the needs of the residents and be able to work with the residents themselves to address these needs and issues.

Another significant aspect of the Good Neighbor House is the Christian

motivation behind it. The mission statement of Good Neighbor is as follows:

> Building on the Christian mandate to love our neighbors and on the ideals
> of the early settlement houses, Good Neighbor facilitates social integration
> and worship among diverse Wacoans as we invest our knowledge, faith,
> and experiences in community life together.

Christian faith is a significant aspect of Good Neighbor's mission, and by

including the name "Christian" in their mission statement, Good Neighbor House is tied

to Christianity and identified as a Christian organization. However, Good Neighbor is not

exclusive to Christian participants; it welcomes and encourages people of various faiths

to take part in their activities and learn together. Stating Christianity as a part of, and

driving force of, Good Neighbor's mission was an issue of debate during its

establishment. The risk of including Christianity in Good Neighbor's mission statement

was that people of other religious beliefs might feel excluded from participating in Good

Neighbor's activities. However, Good Neighbor has chosen to remain associated with

Christianity and not exclude it from their mission statement because they want to present

a different perception of Christianity. Board members at Good Neighbor believe, based

on their experience and personal interactions, that non-Christians tend to have a negative

view of Christians. Many non-Christians have had unpleasant experiences in Christian

communities and feel as though Christians do not accept their beliefs. By associating

themselves with the Christian faith, Good Neighbor House hopes to reshape the pre-

conceived image of Christians and show that Christianity is accepting of, and welcomes,

different beliefs. Good Neighbor hopes to communicate this idea of Christianity through

word of mouth and through showing residents that people of various beliefs are

encouraged to hold their activities and programs at the Good Neighbor House. While the

board members were motivated to establish Good Neighbor based on a Christian mandate, they strive to make it known that others do not need to respond to this motivation. The difference made by stating that the organization is driven by a Christian call to love one's neighbor is that people may have a different, more positive image of Christianity as a faith that accepts other faiths and strives to do good to their neighbor.

CHAPTER FOUR

Proposal for Community Literacy Center

Good Neighbor is an ideal organization in a model for university-community collaboration in Waco because it shares the same mission and goals for diversity, interaction, and community improvement. Good Neighbor strives to enact change through facilitating productive partnerships between members of different social, racial, and economic groups. In addition, Dr. Scales has said that in preparing the settlement house for various programs to utilize it, "literacy was one of the first [programs] that came to mind for us." A partnership with Good Neighbor would help further carry out the vision of Good Neighbor, as well as that of Baylor University. In addition, the board members from Good Neighbor all have some connection to Baylor University; many teach at Baylor, while others are graduate students at Baylor. The Baylor University Interior Design Program, as well as students from Baylor's Social Work program, is also working with Good Neighbor. Because Good Neighbor already had strong connections with Baylor, it would be more feasible to get Baylor students involved in the university-community collaboration model. Consequently, the university-community collaboration model would be more effective at carrying out its goals and helping to enact change.

In this chapter, I will argue for the suitability of Baylor's partnership with the settlement house for the community literacy center, and how this partnership is beneficial to the goals of Good Neighbor, Baylor, and the community literacy center. I will then explain the criteria on which I based my model of the community literacy center, as well as considerations made when designing the model. Finally, I will discuss my proposal for

a community literacy center, discuss the significance of community literacy versus a vocational-based approach, and argue how my proposed model follows the criteria and effectively responds to the considerations that were previously set forth.

<p align="center">*Criteria in Designing a Community Literacy Center for Waco*</p>

As part of my research methods, I interviewed members of the community and of Good Neighbor, including Dustin Morrow, the Media and Public Relations Director, and Dr. Laine Scales, the founder of Good Neighbor House. Based on their interviews, I have determined criteria for designing a community literacy center that abides by the values of Good Neighbor and addresses the needs of the Sanger Heights neighborhood.

An important criterion to consider in a prospective community literacy center is keeping the activities organic, meaning that they should come from people within the community. What Good Neighbor does not want is an approach where privileged university members come to the community literacy center to teach the community residents what they know and show them what they believe is best. "We want things to be useful because [residents] think it is useful, not because we do," Dustin says. The approach for the community literacy center should be reciprocal and equal. Both university members and community residents should assume the role of a learner and understand that each is the other. Good Neighbor has been careful to make sure that all their activities are organic, so the community literacy center must come from people in the community. This way, the participants, the residents, will find the activities of the community literacy center useful and beneficial on their own terms, and not because privileged university students tell them that it is useful and beneficial. Moreover, making sure that the model is organic and that it comes from the community will make residents

more likely to attend the programs offered by the community literacy center. If residents believe that the programs offered at the community literacy center are something they want or need, they will attend and benefit from them.

Making sure the volunteers understand that the community literacy center and Good Neighbor House takes a reciprocal approach leads to another key consideration made in designing the community literacy center. The volunteers need to understand the spirit and mission of Good Neighbor, and they need to be trained not only in helping residents with literate practices but also in investing themselves in Good Neighbor's mission. Good Neighbor wants to employ volunteers who will share the same view of facilitating community interaction among diverse groups. Therefore, in designing a community literacy center, there also needs to be a way to make sure the volunteers are informed and will help in carrying out Good Neighbor's vision.

In addition, the community literacy center also needs to be flexible enough to adapt to the needs of the Sanger Heights community. The Good Neighbor House is still in its beginning stages; it is still in the process of restoring the old property on Sanger Heights. Good Neighbor has done a demographic portrait of the Sanger Heights neighborhood, which also contains educational information, but they have not done an assessment of the needs of the residents. According to Dr. Scales, a significant part of determining the residents' needs comes after moving settlers into the Good Neighbor house and allowing the settlers to interact and form relationships with the residents. During the interaction, settlers and residents can hold conversations about what the needs of the neighborhood might be. The proposed community literacy center needs to be

designed in such a way to accommodate the needs that have yet to be determined, yet still offer instruction that is likely to be useful, beneficial, and wanted by the residents.

Community Literacy Center Proposal

Back in 2004, Waco did have some model of a community literacy center. It began as a mission out of the Baptist General Convention in Texas, and it was housed in what is now the Student Foundation Building. Back in the 1990s, Dr. Rob Rogers, from the Baylor University School of Social Work, started partnering with the Baptist General Convention. He received a grant to establish a center called Literacy ConneXus. Literacy ConneXus was built on the idea that literacy plays a significant role in every aspect of a person's life, and increased literacy is a way to considerably improve one's life. The director of Literacy ConneXus at the time, Lester Meriwether, stated that based on his research, one in five people in the United States was illiterate, and this number was sometimes greater in certain ethnic or socioeconomic groups. A considerable percentage of immigrants could not read signs or applications, which impeded them from attaining and holding higher-paying jobs were literate practices were required and were a significant part of the job. Furthermore, Lester added that the low literacy level had a spiritual impact on individuals. A low literacy level in an individual meant that he or she also had trouble reading the Bible and developing his or her faith. In addition to improving people's economic and social circumstances through a literacy center, Literacy ConneXus also strove to help individuals develop in their faith.

Although Literacy ConneXus is no longer running in Waco, the presence of a community literacy center shows that there is a need for improved literacy in the Waco community. The motives behind the establishment of Literacy ConneXus also shows that

literate practices do play a significant role in bridging social gaps and in facilitating

community improvement. As shown in the activities of Literacy ConneXus, gaining a

better grasp of literate practices allowed individuals to attain and keep higher-paying jobs

that required literacy. Individuals were able to exercise more control over their lives and

express their views on issues of importance. Moreover, Waco still has existing programs

that focus on the importance of language, such as Learning English Among Friends

(LEAF), where volunteers are a part of an Engaged Learning Group at Kokernot

Residence Hall at Baylor University. Baylor, as well as the Waco community, recognizes

that language and literacy are integral parts of community improvement. In a society

centered around written communication, language and literacy play significant roles in

bridging social disparity. Previous models of literacy and language centers have shown

that there is a need for improving these skills among community residents in order to help

address issues such as social disparity. A community literacy center responds to these

needs, and a partnership with the university benefits both the community residents and

the students. Students gain the opportunity to apply their skills, converse about

community issues, learn to appreciate diversity, and use their knowledge in a productive

way that improves the community. Residents gain the opportunity to work with students

who have knowledge on literate practices and use of technological resources, in order to

build their literacy and use it to exercise influence over their own lives.

The proposed community literacy center will be in partnership with Baylor

University and Good Neighbor House. Good Neighbor House will provide a space where

students from Baylor, as well as MCC and/or TSTC, can interact with residents from the

Sanger Heights neighborhood, discuss their views on community issues, and work

together to address these issues through the use of literate practices. What sets this model of university-community collaboration apart from other, vocation-based models, is that the objective of a community literacy center is not simply the practice of literacy and the mastery of skills needed to attain a job or excel in school; the intention, rather, is to provide a resolution to community issues, to allow otherwise marginalized voices to be heard in a way that effectively crosses boundaries, in a way that other groups will acknowledge and consider. The text composed is not an end in itself, and the literate practice is not an end in itself. Rather, as stated in Peck, Flower, and Higgins' article, "Community Literacy," the community issue "takes precedence over canonical texts" (575).

The community literacy center I am proposing for Waco, Baylor and Good Neighbor House centers, therefore, on a community issue, as well as the practice and mastery of literate skills. However, as opposed to a center such as The Writing Center at Baylor University, which focuses on teaching and honing literate skills by helping students and residents with writing papers, letters, resumes, and other documents, the community literacy center will use writing to get at the core of a community issue and allow people to express their opinions on the issue, as well as what can be done to address it.

Based on my research on the needs of the Waco community, a primary need that needs to be addressed is the availability of resources, primarily educational resources. When I spoke with Bonnie Lesley, she stated to me that Waco ISD was one of the most under-funded school districts in the nation. Although Good Neighbor House has not done a needs assessment on the Sanger Heights neighborhood, they have done a demographic

assessment, which has also provided information on the education levels of the residents in the Sanger Heights community. Based on the educational portrait, the majority of residents in the Sanger Heights neighborhood do not have a college degree. 29 percent of residents have a high school diploma or GED, while 25 percent have less than a 9th grade level education. 7 percent of residents have a bachelor's degree.

Educational resources are important to address for a variety of reasons, one being that it does have a more direct effect on the poverty issue in Waco. Having a community literacy center where residents and students are encouraged to engage in conversation about the availability, allocation, and even the usefulness of the resources at their disposal, will provide helpful insights into what can be done to improve the educational needs of the Waco community. According to the U.S. Census and the demographic portrait of the Sanger Heights neighborhood, both the neighborhood and the rest of the Waco community have educational levels that are lower than average. Most residents fail to either begin college or attain a bachelor's degree, and their highest level of educational attainment is a high school diploma or GED. The report from the Baylor School of Social Work addresses some underlying causes of these educational statistics; however, their surveys come from a smaller group of people within the Waco community. Furthermore, personal discussions on the education issue, between both residents of the community and students enrolled in higher-education institutions would be more productive, as it would provide a situation where both students and residents can share their views on education, its purpose, and ways in which education can be maximized.

The educational issue is also relevant to Baylor University. A primary goal of Baylor's Pro Futuris plan is to increase civic engagement and to instill in their students a

sense of civic responsibility. The social gap between Baylor and the Waco community is also largely situated in an educational gap, as many Waco residents do not attain a bachelor's degree, thus separating them from the university. Working to address the education issue through university-community engagement gets at the core of the issue and helps to influence the way this issue is addressed. Moreover, it helps to bridge the social gap by addressing concerns the residents may have for attaining higher education, particularly when there is a research university in their community. Issues that may arise through these conversations are the cost of the education, which is something that residents can write about, thus making their opinions known. Addressing the educational issue in Waco will serve to bridge the social gap by making it a possibility to increase the number of local students at Baylor—students who grew up and attended Waco ISD, and go on to attend Baylor University.

In this community literacy center model, residents will be encouraged to engage in conversation with other residents, as well as students, and share their views on the educational issue. Throughout this engagement, students and residents can be encouraged to express their views through literate practices. Perhaps a resident could write a letter to the school board expressing his views on what needs to be improved in the educational system, from his perspective. One example of a possible beginning project for residents and students to work on is to write their own essays on their views on education, and workshop (e.g., read through, critique, provide helpful suggestions) each other's essays. This way, students and residents learn about the various perspectives different groups may have on a particular issue. Moreover, students and residents will be able to modify the essays in ways that they know will be more accessible to other groups, and thus help

make each group's opinions heard. The settlers, students, or volunteers can work with the resident to polish the letter and state claims in a way that cannot be misconstrued to be offensive, as well as in a way that portrays the resident as someone informed, as a citizen with a valid opinion. This way, his opinion is heard in a way that is not offensive, in a way that other groups are willing to acknowledge. This community literacy center model follows the example set by Peck, Flower, and Higgins' Community Literacy Center in Pittsburgh, where a high school student wrote about his views on student suspension, was able to have his opinion considered, and was able to influence the direction of the issue. The community literacy center model in Waco aims to do the same. It aims to allow residents to master and use literate practices to not only have their views on a community issue heard and considered, but also to be an actual influence when that issue is addressed.

One starting place for this community literacy center model is to involve students from Baylor by having them work with Good Neighbor House on class projects. For instance, in Professional Writing courses at Baylor, students are often assigned to write a profile of their chosen community organization. This profile is then used by the organization to spread awareness about the organization. Professional Writing students are also often asked to compose promotional material for organizations, such as brochures or fact sheets. Thus, students learn about the needs of the organization, and the writing that they produce is aimed at addressing those needs. The organization also is able to use these texts in a way that benefits them. This is similar to Dubinsky's service-learning model, in which students enrolled in an undergraduate writing class work with community organizations on writing projects, in a reciprocal partnership. The writing that

the students produce (or co-produce with the organization) helps that organization, while the partnership with the organization, the engagement in the organization's goals and mission, ultimately helps the student in many ways, from attaining course credit on the project to learning professional skills needed in the workplace to finding significance and value in the work that they do with the community organization. In this particular approach, students in classes such as Professional Writing classes at Baylor, where they are usually required to work on some sort of community-based writing project, will work with Good Neighbor House as their community partner. Through this community-based writing project, students will have to familiarize themselves with the mission, history, goals, activities, and needs of Good Neighbor House, and produce written documents that Good Neighbor House feels will benefit them. This approach places great emphasis on the reciprocal relationship because the students need to be familiar with the goals and needs of the university in order to do well on the project, and the organization would benefit from the written documents produced by the students. Limitations or disadvantages of this approach include students who may not be willing to participate in a project like this, particularly students enrolled in a writing class simply to fulfill a requirement, students without any real interest in the aims of the course. Another limitation are students who wish to work with a different organization, and who may not do their best work because they were not able to choose their community partner.

Another approach is to encourage volunteer work at Good Neighbor House by increasing awareness of Good Neighbor House and the community literacy center. This could be done through class projects within the Professional Writing Department, or by volunteers at Good Neighbor House. In this approach, the issue itself—of education in

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Waco—is the motivational force for students and residents. Students who wish to make a difference in their community, who realize that education in the community affects not only the residents but also the university, and the social gap between the university and the community, will find relevance in working with residents to address this issue. This approach follows the model of the Pittsburgh Community Literacy Center, where volunteers from Carnegie Mellon University work with residents in Pittsburgh to address issues of importance in the community. This approach also emphasizes a reciprocal relationship, because interacting with community residents helps make the university students informed of the issues within the community. Students hear the views of the residents, and use their resources and knowledge to contribute to the ongoing conversation surrounding the issue. These students work at the Community Literacy Center to escape the rigid institutional structure of the university and engage themselves in issues of real importance, rather than remaining in the ivory tower of the university. Since many Baylor students are already involved in community organizations, such as Waco Arts Initiative, Caritas of Waco, and LEAF, students who have an interest in getting involved with the community in a productive, effective way may be interested in working with Sanger Heights residents at the community literacy center.

The approach I believe will be most effective is a combination of the two approaches I discussed above. The classroom approach is effective, because it both emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between university students and community residents, and it provides motivation for both the students and the residents to produce writing that effectively provides exposition and addresses the community issue. However, as stated earlier, this model has some limitations concerning students who may lack

interest in the project or the organization. Therefore, an alternative approach is to encourage a partnership with Good Neighbor House, without requiring a partnership with Good Neighbor House. This way, the students who do work with Good Neighbor House have a genuine interest in the mission, goals, and activities of Good Neighbor, as well as a real interest in addressing the needs of the settlement house. The second approach mentioned above is also an effective approach, for several reasons. The students who volunteer at the community center are there by choice, because of a real interest in helping to address the issues within the community and engage in productive conversations within the community. The approach I believe will be most effective combines class participation, as well as voluntary participation, so that community literacy center volunteers are not limited to students taking writing classes; it is open to any student with an interest in community engagement.

As settlers begin to live at the Good Neighbor Settlement House and form relationships with the Sanger Heights residents, settlers will begin to further determine other issues within the community that the residents wish to address. These could perhaps be housing issues, or the need for a program that raises awareness for a cause or issue that residents feel is significant. Whatever the issue, it is important that the needs be determined by the residents living in the community, for several reasons. One primary reason is that residents will understand the importance of a certain program or movement because the need it addresses is something they actually feel is a need. A priority of Good Neighbor House is to keep everything they do organic; everything needs to come from within the community; everything needs to be activities that the residents feel they will actually need and use. Another reason is to emphasize a main difference between a

community literacy-based model and a vocation-based model of university-community collaboration, which is the emphasis on a reciprocal relationship. The residents need to feel that they have a say, that the approach is not top-down, where the someone is assuming the needs of the community, or telling the community residents what they think their needs are, telling the community residents a better way to live. While vocation-based model, such as The Writing Center at Baylor, still follows a teacher-student paradigm, the community literacy center model breaks away from the classroom paradigm and embraces an approach based on conversation, diversity, and reciprocity, where both the students and the residents are learning from each other and addressing a common issue together.

The community literacy approach is significant in that it not only works to address community issues; through addressing these issues, community residents, and even, in some cases, university students, attain a better mastery of literate practices, which then allows the residents to exercise more agency over their own lives. This other outcome of the community literacy approach is significant, primarily because it will also help in improving the poverty situation within the Waco community. Addressing educational needs is listed as a part of the goals of the City of Waco, to help alleviate poverty in the community. Members in the community, such as Dr. Bonnie Lesley and Hannah Kuhl, have stated that, based on their experiences, literacy skills are skills that students need in order to become productive working members of their community.

To both address and determine the literacy needs of the Sanger Heights residents, my proposed community literacy center for Waco follows a writing workshop model. In this workshop model, residents can bring in any written pieces they have been, or would

like to, work on. Volunteers, most likely students from Baylor University, McClennan Community College, and Texas State Technical College, work with the residents on these pieces. In practice, this model of workshop instruction allows the resident to direct the instruction. The resident brings in a written piece he or she wants to work on, or is working on, and prompts questions to help him improve his literacy in that particular genre or work. This way, the volunteers are addressing the actual needs of the resident, and the resident is letting the volunteers know what his or her needs are. "Once we are able to get settlers living [at Good Neighbor House], they can have conversations, go door to door; in that process, they'll find out about [literacy] needs," Dr. Scales says.

As residents continue to attend programs and classes at the community literacy center and form relationships with the volunteers and settlers, Good Neighbor House will be able to determine what the general literacy needs of the Sanger Heights residents are. Thus, they will also be able to tailor the community literacy center programs to the needs of the Sanger Heights residents. The flexibility of this model is effective because it avoids the "top-down" approach. "The problem with settlement houses in the past was that people would come into a poor neighborhood saying, 'We know a better way to live and so we'll teach you the things that we know and you can apply it to your life," Dustin says. Dr. Scales adds that "one of the basic principles of social work is that the person tells you what their need is rather than our deciding," so that the residents respond to what is being offered.

The workshop model allows for the residents to direct the instruction and let the volunteers know what the areas of need are. It ensures that residents actually want and need the programs and instruction done at the community literacy center. It allows the

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volunteers, as well as the board of Good Neighbor, to get an accurate picture of the literacy need of the Sanger Heights community, and consequently, effectively address those needs.

Previous scholarly work on university-community collaboration has shown that tutoring in certain written genres has also been helpful in bridging social gaps. Some genres that were shown to be beneficial were letters and creative non-fiction works, such as personal essays. These types of writing have allowed community residents to communicate their views on issues and change their situation. For instance, in Ellen Cushman's model of university-community collaboration, Cushman assisted a woman in her community in writing a letter of complaint to her housing complex, who was treating her unfairly. This caused the housing staff to reexamine the way they were treating their tenants and view the woman in a different light. Through learning to communicate her views on an issue through literate practices, the woman was able to change her situation and improve an aspect of her life. Another example is Mark, a fifteen-year-old student living in Pittsburgh. He regularly attends sessions at the Community Literacy Center in Pittsburgh, which was established in partnership with Carnegie Mellon. Mark and his peers collaborated on a written piece sharing their views on student suspension. Since the writing and performing of the piece, it has become required reading at Mark's high school. These instances show that developing literacy skills in these genres help people to exercise influence on issues of importance to them, both personal and in their communities. It allows them the opportunity to enact change and improve their communities in some way, and the community literacy center strives to do this in its activities. Therefore, the workshop approach of the community literacy center will also

address literacy instruction in these genres, as well as genres that the residents believe are helpful to them.

Although Good Neighbor wants its programs to address needs mentioned by the community members, it may take a while before residents are comfortable enough to voice their needs. In addition, it may take a while before close relationships are developed between the volunteers and the residents. The community literacy center needs to start by addressing something that the residents do need, to ensure that they find the community literacy center as something useful and beneficial to their lives, as well as to ensure that residents to attend the programs established by the community literacy center. "It's okay and not too top-down to say, 'We have literacy skills to offer; what would be appealing?" says Dr. Scales. "You have to let people know what you're able to do and what resources you have and let them choose."

Based on Dr. Scales's interactions with the residents, one need she has found was help in filling out applications. She has spoken with several residents throughout the restoration of the Sanger Heights houses, and these residents have stated that they would like help in filling out applications for jobs, schools, aid, etc. and would show up if classes were offered in these areas. The Baylor Law School did some work in helping Waco residents fill out applications a few years ago. They would hold classes at the Baylor Law School, where residents could come and get help filling out applications. Because there was often an application fee, the residents also got help in getting the money to pay the fee. However, this model required the residents to travel to the Law School. Having the residents travel to a different place to get the help they need presents various issues, such as directions on how to get there, where to park, and when to find

time to make the visit. Because going to the Law School served as an inconvenience for many residents, this method was not as effective as it could have been. "It would be better to say, 'Let's have the law professor come to the community and explain what you need,'" says Dr. Scales.

To fill this need for help in filling out applications, the proposed community literacy center will also offer workshop instruction on these applications. This skill is valuable because often, applications, particularly for college or financial aid, are complicated and difficult to complete, particularly by residents who have not had experience filling them out, or who have lower literacy levels. Learning to interpret and fill out an application allows community residents to view themselves as part of an educated group. It allows them to gain the confidence to seek out opportunities of education, employment, or aid, and it lends credibility, in terms of the way others view them. Learning to fill out applications makes a difference because it allows the person to gain a sense of greater control over the course of his life. Residents are no longer intimidated by the complexity of applications, and they are more willing to apply for jobs that require greater literacy skills or programs that allow residents opportunities to work or attend school.

In addition to the application itself, a significant portion of a job or college application is the cover letter, résumé, and/or essay. The proposed community literacy center will also offer workshop instruction in these genres. Residents can work on their cover letters, résumés, or essays, and they can receive feedback from other volunteers. Honing their skills in these genres are also helpful because the skills are transferable. In writing a résumé, cover letter, or essay, residents can transfer the writing skills they pick

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up to other literate practices and other genres. They can become more accustomed to communicating their opinions and views through the written word. Further familiarity with literate practices also helps in bridging social disparity, because residents can seek out opportunities for educational or career advancement. Moreover, residents can also give feedback to others. The community literacy center shows, through the spread of literate practices, the reciprocal approach of this model. In addition, it emphasizes the aspect of learning together. Both the residents and the volunteers learn and teach, rather than a top-down, formal instruction approach.

An addition goal of the community literacy center is to provide resources that assist with improving digital literacy, much like the DUSTY model in Oakland, where residents compose digital narratives that help them express their views on issues of importance to them. However, there is a current debate about technology among the board members of Good Neighbor because technology presents a financial burden. According to Dustin, Good Neighbor is spending around $50,000 to restore the old house in Sanger Heights, and they do not anticipate having or wanting a large budget to spend on other activities beyond the construction. If Good Neighbor decides to set aside a budget for technology, it will be a great financial burden, because along with the technology, they will have to purchase insurance for the technology. If a technology gets damaged, it is costly to replace or repair. Furthermore, technology becomes outdated very quickly. Incorporating digital resources into the community literacy center presents challenges in terms of financial issues. In addition, many residents of Sanger Heights cannot afford the various technologies, so some forms of digital literacy instruction might not be helpful because they have no use for the technology. However, a familiarity with

current technology is still an important skill to have, and instruction in digital literacy might prove valuable to the residents.

Our current age is dominated by technological innovations, which are revolutionizing every aspect of our lives. "I think it is important for anyone living in this world today," says Dr. Scales on offering digital literacy instruction. "It would be nice to have some kind of public computer space that anybody could utilize, because a lot of households still don't have them." Like a limited knowledge in literate practices, a limited knowledge of digital resources will also impede the residents' ability to break out of their social constraints and promote changes in their lives. Many jobs are now requiring a working knowledge of basic computer programs, such as Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. Not having this knowledge will affect a resident's chances of attaining a higher-paying job that does require digital literacy, just as being illiterate affects a resident's chances of attaining a better job that requires knowledge of literate practices.

Moreover, the written word has become intertwined with technology. Often, rather than handwritten applications for jobs, schools, or scholarships, the applications are now electronic. Exams that may be required for school, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), are now administered electronically and rarely provide a paper option. Individuals who lack a working knowledge of digital resources are greatly limited, even in aspects such as filling out an application or taking a standardized test. Technology has become a necessary knowledge, and it is important that residents learn to work with the common technological resources in order to more effectively enact change in their lives and in their community.

Having a basic knowledge of various computer programs and technologies would also be helpful in second language acquisition and in developing literacy skills. Australian teacher Christopher Walsh did a multimodal composition project with his English as a Second Language students, most of whom were from countries in Southeast Asia. During this project, Walsh found that his students were able to use images to communicate their thoughts. The students' projects were multimodal compositions about the Great Migration and the Dust Bowl, and the students arranged images and sounds from this era to communicate their message. This project showed that the ESL students understood the content of their compositions, but even though they could not communicate their understanding through words, they could do it through other visual and auditory media. From there, the ESL learners could then develop their written communication. The digital composition acted as an aid to the ESL learners' written communication skills. This instance shows how a knowledge of digital resources contributes to one's literacy and language skills.

Although incorporating technology instruction into the community literacy center may present a budget constraint, there are ways to work around these budget issues to attain the necessary digital resources. According to Dr. Scales, the board of Good Neighbor is hoping to appeal to businesses and donors for donations for resources such as computers. A few years back, Hewlett Packard donated computers to the Baylor University Library. Pattie Orr, the Vice President for Information Technology and Dean of Libraries, was able to arrange for the computer donation so that the students and faculty could use those resources. The board of Good Neighbor may be able to arrange a computer donation such as this, and it would be less expensive because the quantity is

much less. In addition, Good Neighbor is not requiring the most current, cutting-edge technological resources. They simply need resources, such as computers, that will be enough to give their residents a general knowledge of basic computer programs and functions. As residents become more familiar with using current technology, they may also become more skilled at adapting to new programs. In addition to learning current technologies, residents also learn how to learn new technologies.

To make sure that the volunteers at the community literacy center are really invested in the mission of Good Neighbor, volunteers will be given information about their roles within the organization and will be expected to abide by the values of the Good Neighbor House. The volunteers at the community literacy center will include students from Baylor University, McClennan Community College, and Texas State Technical College. Baylor students enrolled in Professional Writing classes, such as Technical and Professional Writing and Advanced Expository Writing can opt to volunteer at the community literacy center. Students in these courses are typically required to work on a semester-long project, where they collaborate with a community organization and produce community-based writing to improve the organization. Choosing to volunteer at the community literacy center has benefits for those students: they do not need to go through the trouble of finding an organization to work with for their projects, and they can be sure that the work they do with the organization does make a difference. Students may also have insight to offer residents they work with, from their experiences in their Professional Writing classes. Residents may have insight to offer the students in terms of literacy needs and how written communication is used in their community.

The mix of volunteers also contributes to the effectiveness of the community literacy center model. Because the volunteers are a mix of students from Baylor, MCC, and TSTC, the diversity will be appealing to residents. The varied backgrounds of the students shows that the mission of the community literacy center is not oppressive, and volunteers will not tell the residents what they need. Rather, the diversity shows that the students and residents will assume the role of learners and learn together. The mix of educational backgrounds embraces Good Neighbor's goal of encouraging diversity, embracing differences, and facilitating interaction among various groups. The community literacy center will not only facilitate interaction among university students and community residents; it will also promote interaction between Baylor students, MCC students, and TSTC students, who may not interact on a regular basis. The mix of volunteers working with the residents and learning together towards a common goal of community improvement presents benefits to all groups involved. A community literacy center not only presents benefits in terms of literacy improvement and community improvement; the center also promotes interaction among groups of people who might not otherwise interact, which ultimately contributes to community improvement as well.

This community literacy center model effectively helps in carrying out the vision of the Good Neighbor House because it facilitates interaction and learning among university students and community residents. The workshop model avoids a "top-down" approach because it invites the residents to share their needs and direct the instruction. The volunteers get an accurate picture of the actual literacy needs of the residents by allowing the residents to prompt the questions and show what written genres they believe are helpful to them. The volunteers from Baylor, MCC, and TSTC do not address what

they think the needs of the Sanger Heights residents are; instead, the workshop approach allows the volunteers to learn from the residents and find out what they actually need, in terms of literacy instruction. Literacy provides a potential solution for the low education levels in the Sanger Heights neighborhood, and it provides residents with a productive outlet for expressing their opinions on community issues and using literate practices to enact change within their community. The model provides a tentative solution to the community issues through instruction in essays, letters, and applications, as well as instruction in digital literacy, of which there is evidence that this sort of knowledge is useful and beneficial. However, the model is also flexible enough to adapt to the changes that Good Neighbor may undergo. It is flexible enough to adapt to the needs of the Sanger Heights community, as the volunteers and board members learn what those needs are. In addition, the volunteers at the community center also contribute to its effectiveness. The mix of student volunteers from Baylor, MCC, and TSTC allows for more diverse interactions among not only the volunteers and the residents, but also, interaction among the students of the different schools. This community literacy center effectively addresses the considerations that need to be made in establishing a program with the Good Neighbor House and provides room for adaptability as Good Neighbor develops. It serves as an effective, flexible model of university-community collaboration that is specific to the Waco community. This model of university-community collaboration contributes to bridging social disparities through using literate practices to enact community change in Waco.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have researched existing models of university-community collaboration, researched the needs of the Waco community and the goals of Baylor University and Good Neighbor House. From this information, I formulated a proposal for a community literacy center housed in Good Neighbor, that provides a link between Baylor University and the surrounding Waco community. This proposal presents a model I designed that meets the needs of the Waco community, through a community literacy approach. This approach, community residents and university students address issues within in the community through literate practices; at the same time, community residents and university students master various literate practices that ultimately influence their lives in various aspects, such as creating more agency in their lives and making their opinions heard in ways that are accessible by others. The community literacy approach serves as a way to learn more about community issues, beginning with the education gap, by writing and conversing with residents and university students and hearing their views on the issue. In addition, learning these literate practices through community literacy helps both students and residents sharpen the skills needed to form productive working lives and attain higher paying jobs. These skills may include essays, letter and email writing, proficiency in basic computer programs and software, filling out applications for jobs, school admission, or financial aid, and interpersonal skills. My model addresses these aims through its partnership; students from Baylor University, McClennan Community College, and settlers at Good Neighbor can volunteer at the community

literacy center and work with residents to hone these skills through writing about issues of importance to them. The interactions with the volunteers help residents hone interpersonal skills that are helpful for interviewing. Furthermore, the volunteers work with residents on needs they have, such as writing a letter or filling out an application. Volunteers also help residents improve their skills through having them write on issues that concern them; in this way, they both address the issue of importance and gain practice in a skill they will need.

To take this project further, the next steps are to present this proposal to the board of directors of Good Neighbor House. The board meets periodically to discuss the progress of the organization. The proposal, according to Dustin Morrow, Director of Media Relations at Good Neighbor, can be sent to the board online, and the board can review the proposal and suggest adjustments to the proposal, if needed. Once the proposal is approved, the project would then be handed over to Anthony Luevanos, Director of Community Relations. The board will oversee the implementation of the community literacy center, and then the settlers will help inform the neighborhood residents of the community literacy center and the resources it offers. Moreover, the settlers, through forming relationships with the residents, will be able to identify further, more specific needs that need to be addressed, and the community literacy center can offer more resources that address those needs.

Currently, Good Neighbor House is still in its initial stages. The goal for Good Neighbor is to provide a space for community organizations, such as the community literacy center, to meet and hold their programs. It is a space in a location that is accessible to residents, so residents do not have to deal with issues such as getting to a

further location, finding transportation, or finding parking at that location. Since Good Neighbor, situated in the Colcord House, is within the neighborhood, residents can walk to the facility; the facility is in the area where they live.

Good Neighbor has several plans underway for facilities. One space will be the multipurpose room and kitchen, which is designed for groups and organizations to meet and hold their activities, in a place that is within the community, so that residents can come out of their homes, meet, and interact with people both from the community and from the universities. Good Neighbor will also use their space for the Good Neighbor Cafe and community library, which will be open on certain hours during the week. These will also be staffed by volunteers, and refreshments and drinks will be provided for donations, as a way to fundraise. The community library will also provide resources for residents, and the cafe will be a space for people to meet, socialize, and get to know the people in the community. Through this, they can develop an awareness for the issues that are important to the people in the community, and work with their neighbors to develop ways to address these issues.

Good Neighbor House is still undergoing reconstruction and remodeling, and they are still finding means for fundraising. They are also still seeking out more volunteers to help with construction and painting to speed up the process of completing the space and having it serve its purpose. Good Neighbor aims to be completed by the fall of 2013. Therefore, the proposal will be presented during the summer of 2013, to provide enough time to be approved by the board and then to raise awareness of the programs. Other ways to take this project further is to spend more time in the Sanger Heights neighborhood with the Good Neighbor volunteers to learn more about the areas of

improvement and issues of importance to the members of that community, which will then help in targeting those specific needs in the community literacy center.

This project can also be taken further by spreading more awareness and recruiting more volunteers from both Baylor and MCC. Promotional documents, such as flyers and brochures, can be made, perhaps by students in the Professional Writing program who regularly work with community organizations, to spread awareness for the need for volunteers. Awareness can begin in the classrooms, where students in Professional Writing classes work on projects that require collaboration with a community organization, to help that organization further meet its goals. Composing promotional material for an organization such as Good Neighbor will provide students with skills and experience that is valued in writing and communication professions. Volunteering at the community literacy center will also have benefits to the students; they will have experience in teaching and collaboration, as well as helping to provide insight on community issues.

In conclusion, while my proposal does accommodate the basic literacy needs of the Waco and Sanger Heights, it has room to expand and hone in on specific needs and issues that might be important to the residents of Waco. In order to make this proposal come to fruition, it simply needs to be presented to the board of Good Neighbor House. It is my hope that the community literacy center can be in operation once reconstruction is completed for Good Neighbor House, and can begin to help meet Aspiration #3 for the Waco community, as well as the Pro Futuris plan for Baylor University, and help residents gain the skills they need to have more agency in their lives and enact positive change in their community.

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