

## 2014 IMAGINING AMERICA PRESIDENTS' FORUM REPORT

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**In a time when higher education is facing significant challenges, how can colleges and universities address the critical social and economic challenges of our time? What responsibility do higher education leaders have to perpetuate the great public, civic, and democratic legacy of American higher education?** Presidents, provosts, and other national leaders are betting that part of the answer to these questions is embedded in publicly engaged scholarship and in the humanities, arts, and design. The Imagining America (IA) Presidents' Council and Presidents' Forum are designed as means for generating strategy and leadership on such questions that will bring Imagining America to a new stage of effectiveness and impact.

**Planning the October 9, 2014 Forum in Atlanta:** "What's holding presidents, provosts, and other national leaders back from being bolder, and how can IA provide more support and leverage?" This question guided the design of the agenda for the 2014 Forum, co-chaired by Brian Murphy. Council Co-Chair Nancy Cantor challenged the Planning Team to think about how presidents can simultaneously make the case for social justice and for business. A case study of interdisciplinary publicly engaged scholarship that demonstrates how a college is contributing to the reduction of poverty in rural America was chosen because of its focus on finding a new economy for arts and humanities, and on advancing a paradigm for development driven by culture.

**Forum Presentation:** Gladstone "Fluney" Hutchinson of the Economic Empowerment and Global Learning Project (EEGLP) at Lafayette College and Dudley Cocke of Appalshop, the arts and humanities institution in the central Appalachian coalfields, presented. By joining the expertise and knowledge of economists with that of artists, their project is developing an investment plan to simultaneously support the economic development of Appalshop and the Appalachian region. Faculty, students, and artists have been identifying and testing entrepreneurial strategies for wealth creation that tap the area's singularly rich cultural traditions. For example, a for-profit business for software development is being incubated, and its strategic advantage is proving to be its orientation to the cultural strengths of its location.

The collaborators' approach resonates with the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2014-2015, which points to the emergent intellectual coalescence around the principle of inclusive growth as a critical pillar for achieving sustainable economic development and social justice. By treating poverty as a problem that can only be solved by government and outside experts, Hutchinson and Cocke argue that the previous wars on poverty have not sufficiently supported the development of individual agency and a latent collective spirit of entrepreneurship. The Appalshop—EEGLP partnership represents an asset-based alternative that leverages the special ways in which cultural organizations create civic space and how culture, and its offspring art, shape individual and collective identity, bound or expand imagination, and ultimately contribute toward determining economic behavior.

**Forum Discussion:** Responding to the presenters' focus on the relationship between culture and economy, Forum participants challenged the idea that there is a tradeoff between "preparing for

jobs” and “contributing to a sustainable democratic society.” The forthcoming volume edited by Harry Boyte, *Democracy’s Education: Public Work, Citizenship, and the Future of Colleges and Universities*, includes strong case studies of higher education addressing immediate political imperatives while being resources for “the changing world of work.”

Responding to EEGLP’s use of asset mapping, David Scobey asked, “What if IA were to map the assets of our collective efforts to institutionalize publicly engaged scholarship in higher education? For example, one asset is the infrastructure that has been created by new centers, programs, and institutes that have been founded in the last 15 years, which cut across the immobilizing silos and bureaucracies.” George Sanchez added, “How might IA better understand the motivations of different populations who have a high sense of civic engagement, such as undocumented students, and involve them in our mission?”

Participants discussed possibilities for organizing culture change in research universities, including the ways the civic identities of faculty are developed. Opportunities noted included Civic Science as an avenue for scientists to tap, develop, and interweave the multiple forms of knowledge and expertise that are needed to understand and address complex social problems. Building on this point, Boyte suggested IA look for ways to support college presidents as public philosophers who think deeply about the purpose of higher education and the meaning of democracy. Chancellor Bjong Wolf Yeigh recommended that IA design a research protocol to help stakeholders better understand the leadership qualities and characteristics of sitting college presidents, and how those qualities and characteristics are shaping their institutions.

The Appalshop—EEGLP presentation argued that the transformation of higher education and its arts, design, and humanities disciplines can be greatly enhanced by institution-to-institution partnerships between community-based cultural organizations and colleges. To what degree do IA and its membership believe in the power of partnering with cultural organizations as a core strategy? What would it take to increase the breadth and depth of such partnerships?

### **Actions for Further Consideration:**

1. Produce a research report about the assets created to date by efforts in the last 10-20 years to institutionalize publicly engaged scholarship in higher education. Through a yearly update that would consider the gains and losses for institutionalizing civic engagement within the IA membership of 100 colleges and universities, the finding could become the basis for an annual State of the Field report.
2. Develop an institution-to-institution partnership between IA and Appalshop to test the supposition that such higher education and community-based collaborations are poised to create new knowledge that is compelling in its democratic, populist orientation and consequently effective in solving persistent community problems both on and off campus.
3. Convene presidents in a retreat setting to consider questions relevant to IA’s transition to a new institutional home in 2017: What are the most important achievements and values for IA to hold onto and cultivate as it seeks a new institutional home? Given the current circumstances in higher education and public life, what are the pressing roles and tasks for which IA is needed? Do these questions and their answers affect how you would advise IA to think about its move and the new institutional home or arrangement it might seek?

**Get involved:** IA and its Presidents’ Council depend on the vision and efforts of national leaders. Please contact IA Co-Director Tim Eatman at [tkeatman@syr.edu](mailto:tkeatman@syr.edu), and the report author, IA Assistant Director Jamie Haft [jmhaft@syr.edu](mailto:jmhaft@syr.edu), with your thoughts and commitments for 2015.

## **COMPREHENSIVE REPORT**

### **About IA Presidents' Council**

In 1999 at a White House conference, 21 college presidents founded Imagining America and created its Presidents' Council to demonstrate a national commitment to the value of publicly engaged scholarship that draws on arts, design, and humanities. Today, the Council is comprised of presidents of IA's 100-member consortium of colleges and universities, as well as former presidents, leading scholars and artists, and directors of peer organizations and foundations. The Council is co-chaired by Nancy Cantor (President, Rutgers University–Newark) and Brian Murphy (President, De Anza College and Co-Founder, the Democracy Commitment), and its Planning Team is: Richard Guarasci (President, Wagner College); Don Harward (Director, Bringing Theory to Practice, President Emeritus, Bates College, and Senior Scholar, AAC&U); Devorah Lieberman (President, University of La Verne); Judith Ramaley (President Emerita, Winona State University, Distinguished Professor of Public Service, Portland State University); and Bob Weisbuch (Former President, Drew University).

The Council's annual Forum, which typically takes place in conjunction with IA's national conference, and the Council's intervening virtual exchanges provide opportunities for higher education leaders to discuss their individual efforts and to devise collective strategies. Forum participants in 2013, which included ten presidents, recommended as follow-up that Council members think about and communicate the role presidents can play in supporting publicly engaged scholarship that draws on arts, design, and humanities – and then lead by example. (Minutes from the 2013 Forum can be downloaded here: <http://bit.ly/1CnNT8>). At the 2014 Forum, it was noted that IA is collaborating with AAC&U on the Winter 2015 issue of *Diversity & Democracy*, and that Council member Bob Weisbuch, with input from other Council members, is writing an article about why publicly engaged arts, design, and humanities scholarship, teaching, and learning matters; what it looks like from the executive perspective; and what college presidents should be doing to support it. The Council and Forum are critical components to advancing IA's Vision, Mission, Values, and Goals (<http://bit.ly/1vcGAWy>) and Theory of Change (<http://bit.ly/1CGIAfa>).

### **Designing the 2014 Forum**

“What's holding presidents, provosts, and other national leaders back from being bolder, and how can IA provide more support and leverage?” This was the question guiding the planning of the 2014 Forum, which occurred through a series of individual conversations with each Planning Team member and two group calls.

To articulate the range of positive impacts on multiple levels that can be produced by practicing a civic and democratic approach to the arts, design, and humanities, the Planning Team developed this *claim*: “*Civically engaged humanities, arts, and design are powerful resources for constructively addressing the challenges facing higher education and society. As a source of social imagination and the expression of cultural wealth/value, the cultural disciplines represent ways of knowing that are essential in the public work of naming and framing community problems and designing solutions. They can engage the whole community in envisioning a deep sense of place through complex narratives about its past, present, and future. The success of such public work rests on critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity – job skills widely identified as prerequisites for a vibrant 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.*”

Based on the claim, Judith Ramaley suggested a theme of how the cultural disciplines can advance the well-being and development of communities and their colleges: “*Because I was trained*

*as an anatomist and I taught physiology, structure and function shape the way I look at the world. Living bones have micro-fractures all the time, but there is a cellular structure that responds and mends the bones. Osteoclasts break down and reabsorb the tissues that are not needed, and osteoblasts build up a patch for that fracture. In osteoporosis, the balance needed for healthy bones is lacking. With a healthy community, the humanities, arts, and design help balance many things – different approaches to life, understandings of human nature, perspectives on how to govern ourselves in some form of mutual interaction, and political and religious beliefs. The publicly engaged humanities, arts, and design respect cultural differences, and help us see realities as well as hopes for a better future. These disciplines can detect fractures in the public realm early enough to address them.”* This resonated with Don Harward and his organization Bringing Theory to Practice’s research on individual and collective well-being, and Devorah Lieberman further urged a focus on asset-based community development. Planning Team members hypothesized that generating knowledge about assets would make a unique contribution to the national discourse about the liberal arts disciplines that too often attends to presumed deficits. Nancy Cantor challenged the group to think about how presidents can simultaneously make the case for social justice and for business, and Brian Murphy asked, “What are the various components of a broad public agenda that position higher education to advance the arts, design, and humanities?” Richard Guarasci encouraged the Council to think about the range of organizations and networks that are allied with such thinking.

To ground the Forum with a case study, the Planning Team vetted projects from across the country and invited a presentation about the collaboration between Lafayette College’s Economic Empowerment and Global Learning Project and the Appalachian arts and humanities center Appalshop. The Planning Team noted appreciation for the collaboration’s attention to finding a new economy for arts, humanities, and design and advancing a fresh paradigm for regional development driven by culture.

The Forum was scheduled in conjunction with IA’s annual [national conference](#), and the agenda was designed to explore how to strengthen collaborations between cultural institutions and higher education institutions, and how to link economic development with cultural development.

### **Forum Presentation by Dudley Cocke and Gladstone “Fluney” Hutchinson**

Appalshop and the Economic Empowerment and Global Learning Project (EEGLP) at Lafayette College entered into a formal partnership May 5, 2014 that would serve as a forum for student learning and create a strategic investment plan for Appalshop that simultaneously supports the economic development of the arts and humanities institution and the Appalachian region itself. The case for partnerships between higher education institutions and community-based institutions, and between the likes of economists and artists, has never been more compelling than at present. The World Economic Forum’s Global Competitiveness Report 2014-2015, for example, points to the emergent intellectual coalescence around the principle of inclusive growth as a critical pillar for achieving sustainable economic development and social justice. The Appalshop—EEGLP approach seeks to promote voice and agency among individuals, thus allowing communities to search for, construct, and own their particular solutions. As the project brings together the expertise and knowledge of economists with that of artists and producers, the emerging paradigm, which is portable and scalable, emphasizes both the processes and products of cultural production as a basis for organizational and regional economic renewal. By carefully documenting the project, the partners intend to advance the case for such institution-to-institution partnerships, including their effectiveness in stimulating interdisciplinary public scholarship that mutually benefits participating

students, faculty, and community members. View the presentation PowerPoint with images and research diagrams at: <http://bit.ly/10lgD7q>.

### *Appalshop in Appalachia*

For the past century, Appalachia has served as a front line in our nation's experiments in economic, environmental, social, and cultural policy. Started in 1969 as a federal War on Poverty job training program for young adults in film and video, by 1974 Appalshop had morphed into a ways and means for connecting media and performing arts with the region's cultural traditions and expressions in order to tell the Appalachian story through the voices and experiences of the people living there. Deeply rooted in its place, Appalshop has since created the largest single body of artwork from and about Appalachia. This work represents a populist call and response between the region's past, present, and future, as it celebrates its Appalachian heritage while confronting its most challenging issues, including a poisonous history of negative stereotypes. In addition to its regional work, Appalshop artists, producers, and managers have collaborated with more than a thousand communities across the United States (and in more than a half-dozen countries internationally) wishing to develop their own cultural assets. Here's a soundscape of Appalshop's Roadside Theater that was played during the presentation: <http://bit.ly/141mZRD>. Appalshop's award-winning films, plays, spoken word and music recordings, books, and photography have been instrumental in setting high national standards for the aesthetics of first-voice representation and citizen agency. The subjects of Appalshop productions include racial and class conflict; environmental justice; economic sustainability; cultural, gender, and sexual bias; health; human rights violations in the criminal justice system; and immigrant rights and citizenship. Its body of work and knowledge emphasizes people and their cultures as the most valuable asset to advance development, wealth, and freedom.

### *Economic Empowerment and Global Learning Project (EEGLP) at Lafayette College*

In the initiatives of the EEGLP, multidisciplinary teams of faculty and students engage in dynamic and diverse partnerships with communities aimed at mapping their assets, challenges, and opportunities for value and wealth creation through competitive market exchange. Since its founding in 2007, the EEGLP has partnered with organizations and citizens in New Orleans, Easton – PA, rural Honduras, and central Appalachia. All EEGLP initiatives have as their foundation:

1. An interest in economic and human development as an expansion of the capacity and choices individuals have to live lives with dignity and freedoms;
2. The adoption of a paradigm in which the intrinsic and instrumental benefits of a socially-just, inclusive, and sustainable development can be realized, and individuals and communities can build their capacity for problem-solving and self-agency; and
3. An interest in a pedagogy that makes the study of the pursuit of economic and human development a useful teaching, learning, knowledge-making, and scholarship paradigm for faculty, students, and community members.

Central to the EEGLP process is creativity, malleability, entrepreneurship, market competitiveness, and synergies between existing assets and the crafting of fresh synthesis between the assets of community and newly introduced technology, human capital, or other processes. The EEGLP recognizes culture as an essential basis for economic renewal because of the special ways in which culture shapes individual and collective identity, bounds or expands the imagination, affects the psychologies of ambitious or un-ambitious preferences, and ultimately determines microeconomic behavior.

### *An Emerging Paradigm*

To anchor their search for a paradigm for socially just, inclusive, and sustainable development that is driven by culture, the Appalshop—EEGLP partnership is developing a strategic investment plan for Appalshop that identifies and maps its assets in tandem with its region's assets. A healthy Appalshop is especially needed today during a period of massive regional economic transition: over the past two years, more than 8,000 coal mining jobs have been lost in eastern Kentucky alone, across an area that has since been designated by President Obama as one of five federal "Promise Zones." After relying on one extractive industry, coal, for the past 125 years, central Appalachia has no alternative but to develop a new economy. Appalshop is itself in a moment of major generational and economic transition; the challenge for both the region and Appalshop is how effectively they will manage these changes together.

This first phase of the collaboration completed in September 2014 has focused on identifying and mapping the assets of Appalshop and identifying and testing entrepreneurial strategies for wealth creation. See the concept map of the Appalshop—EEGLP project overview: <http://bit.ly/1oPhwzz>. Through economic impact analysis using established tools including Triple Bottom Line/TBL and Impact Analysis for Planning/IMPLAN, project leaders have studied and simulated how the increased production of the synergistic and synthetic cultural products of Appalshop might stimulate inclusive and sustainable economic development for the Appalachian region. Read two examples of economic outcomes: (1) converting Appalshop's assets into a business for software development and marketing, and (2) creating exchange value in the higher education market, here: <http://bit.ly/1w6ctPB>.

The emerging paradigm is situated within current larger discussions of the social economy and persistence of poverty, and the path to its systemic abatement, especially in an abundantly resourced, private-sector led, wealthy economy like the United States. By treating poverty as a problem that can only be solved by government and outside experts, project leaders believe the previous wars on poverty have not sufficiently supported the development of individual voice and community agency and the latent spirit of entrepreneurship. The Appalshop—EEGLP partnership describes an asset-based alternative driven by a place-based culture.

### **Forum Discussion & Actions for Consideration**

#### *Language*

The Appalshop-EEGLP project purposefully uses the language of economists with the twist that there is an *a priori* assertion of the values of social justice and sustainability. A brief example of this language usage: The students must *profit* in their learning, giving Lafayette a *return on investment* from its engagement in Appalachia. The project is focused on Appalshop *creating wealth* by leveraging its *exchange value* in private and public sector markets. Project leaders use such language intentionally as a way to communicate effectively with those working in the fields of community and economic development, and as an incentive to develop new knowledge and understanding about the vital role culture can play in all aspects of community development. Among Forum participants, the usage stimulated questions and comments about language, including:

- Does using the language of the marketplace detract from a project's ability to advance values of a commonwealth and of democracy? Does using the language of the marketplace in publicly engaged scholarship resonate for colleges? On the latter question, it was noted that some universities are embracing language about how the enlightened humanness that comes from



publicly engaged scholarship will be the basis for students' competitiveness in the marketplace.

- Faculty, staff, and students at colleges across the country are increasingly engaging in social entrepreneurship, social practice, and design thinking – it's a major trend in education right now. Some of the activity happening, though, is not modeling reciprocity. Could IA make an important intervention here?
- Many publicly engaged scholars use the term civic professionalism to describe work that is an integration of vocation, academic knowledge, and a commitment to the public good. However, Forum participants questioned if the term feels inclusive to the range of work that students pursue – for example, work that is not confined to a profession. Amy Koritz: "For three years, [IA's Undergraduate Education Collaboratory](#) has explored the discourse of civic professionalism in the context of liberal arts education, not pre-professional education. The Collaboratory is asking, How can we redefine professionalism so it is more about a broader view of the work we do in the world and the way we do it rather than just the professions? Influenced by KerryAnn O'Meara's research on faculty cultures, our Collaboratory is also concerned about the way in which faculty understand themselves as professionals, which does not necessarily include a sense of public purpose or civic obligation."
- There's a false tradeoff commonly posited today between "preparing for jobs" and "contributing to a sustainable democratic society." It is partially the product of policy discussion focused on higher education's role training for jobs. However, two Kettering-supported public deliberations involving thousands of citizens revealed deep concern for higher education's role in developing long-term adaptability among students and communities. The forthcoming volume edited by Harry Boyte, *Democracy's Education: Public Work, Citizenship, and the Future of Colleges and Universities* (Vanderbilt University Press), includes a variety of case studies in which colleges and universities are addressing immediate political imperatives while also preparing for the "changing world of work."
- The discussion provoked questions about how change occurs. Murphy asked: "Given that the market cannot and will not solve issues of global warming and structural inequalities—only state power will—how are we preparing college students to understand and build power?" Others questioned whether state power is the only significant kind of power in creating change, pointing to examples like the civil rights movement where "people power" and its cultural dimensions drove political and social change.

### *Institutionalizing Publicly Engaged Scholarship in Higher Education*

Both the EEGLP's use of asset mapping as a methodology and Appalshop's experience using culture to help a community organize itself for change led participants to discussion about how to further institutionalize publicly engaged scholarship in higher education. Some highlights:

- What if IA were to map the assets of our collective efforts to institutionalize publicly engaged scholarship in higher education? For example, David Scobey: "Today, across the country, there are important centers, programs, and institutes that cut across the immobilizing silos and bureaucracies. These centers, programs, and institutes are one of the great innovations of higher education in the last 15 years, and the fact that they got founded, empowered, and resourced demonstrates credibility. The *infrastructure* is critical, and it's powered, not merely by individual atoms of faculty creativity, but through coalitions of faculty and staff across departments and schools who are integrating it into the university's teaching and research

mission. The partnerships with community-based organizations in the arts, humanities, and design are absolutely essential, because they disrupt and push academic partners to find new alliances and new capacities.” Responding to a draft of this Forum report, Ramaley noted the challenge of creating a research report based on such asset mapping: “Efforts to define social assets lag far behind approaches to capturing economic returns/assets and yet clearly the goal here is to promote culturally rich solutions and outcomes.”

- How might IA better understand the motivations of different populations who have a high sense of civic engagement and involve them in our mission to institutionalize publicly engaged scholarship? George Sanchez: “Undocumented students have no power to vote and they are constantly denigrated, many people call them illegal, and yet their notion of the civic is very high. (In Los Angeles, 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the population is undocumented, and you’ll find a significant portion of them as part of any school setting.) I find it profound to think about what drives their civic engagement. They are the most likely to organize, tutor, and help others in a situation, but it is not because of some great sense of patriotism. They have a certain hope and desire of where they want their communities, families, and themselves to go. Their own personal status is tied into the America they imagine, the very root of what a country puts forward. Why do they care about the conversation we are having about higher education’s relationship to communities? They care deeply about the ways in which people from working communities come together to make change, and they see education’s community partnerships as a place where they can be active participants in society.” It was noted that another example of a civically engaged population is nontraditional students.
- How could a college or university president map the assets of his or her institution’s local community, and then use those assets to build a trajectory for the institution that took seriously the assets and possibilities of its surrounding neighborhoods? As Bruce Burgett noted, such a plan for the institution could take advantage of the positive effects of infusing campus-community partnerships, not only in the curriculum, but also in the context of admissions, alumni relations, and advancement.
- Where are there untapped sources of power and possibility? One opportunity cited by George Sanchez: while we often focus on changing tenure policy to include civic engagement, we could also advocate for reviewing a faculty member’s civic engagement as part of promotion to full professor. Such a policy would have implications beyond a single department and affect the entire university. John Saltmarsh suggested the Council form closer relationships with the next generation of leaders, beginning with IA’s Publicly Active Graduate Education (PAGE) Fellows.
- Where are the possibilities for changing the culture of research universities, and of faculty whose professional identities are firmly rooted in disciplines? Participants noted recent research on the trend of faculty seeing their identities stemming from their professional reputation regardless of their contribution to the common good, as well as research showing that faculty job satisfaction increases when there are opportunities to engage in civic life. As one possible avenue for strengthening the civic identities of faculty in the sciences, several people spoke about the roles arts, design, and humanities might play in reconnecting science with democracy through a variety of public work opportunities. Such opportunities can become a means of tapping, developing, and interweaving the multiple forms of knowledge and expertise that are needed to understand and address complex social problems.” Building on this point, Harry Boyte suggested IA look for ways to support college presidents as public philosophers who think deeply about the purpose of education and the meaning of democracy.



Bjong Wolf Yeigh recommended that IA design a research protocol to help stakeholders better understand the leadership qualities and characteristics of sitting college presidents and how those qualities and characteristics are shaping their institutions.

### *Higher Education's Partnerships with Cultural Organizations*

The Appalshop—EEGLP presentation argued that the transformation of higher education and its arts, design, and humanities disciplines can be greatly enhanced by institution-to-institution partnerships between diverse and inclusive community-based cultural organizations and higher education. (The term “cultural organizations” is meant to include museums, state humanities and arts councils, and other organizations in fields like community development and health that see the value of culture to community well-being.) Questions raised by Forum participants included:

- To what degree do IA and its membership believe in the power of partnering with cultural organizations as a core strategy?
- What would it take to increase the breadth and depth of higher education's partnerships with community-based cultural organizations and to help them achieve a programmatic scale commensurate with their knowledge?
- Given that the ArtPlace America representative present at the Forum stated his program's interest in collaborating with higher education to advance the field of creative placemaking, what role can IA play in seizing this opportunity?

### *Actions for Further Consideration*

1. Produce a research report about the assets created to date by efforts in the last 10-20 years to institutionalize publicly engaged scholarship in higher education. Through a yearly update that would consider the gains and losses for institutionalizing civic engagement within the IA membership of 100 colleges and universities, the finding could become the basis for an annual State of the Field report.
2. Develop an institution-to-institution partnership between IA and Appalshop to test the supposition that such higher education and community-based collaborations are poised to create new knowledge that is compelling in its democratic, populist orientation and consequently effective in solving persistent community problems both on and off campus.
3. Convene presidents in a retreat setting to consider questions relevant to IA's transition to a new institutional home in 2017: What are the most important achievements and values for IA to hold onto and cultivate as it seeks a new institutional home? Given the current circumstances in higher education and public life, what are the pressing roles and tasks for which IA is needed? Do these questions and their answers affect how you would advise IA to think about its move and the new institutional home or arrangement it might seek?

### **2014 Forum Participants** *(in alphabetical order)*

1. Kal Alston, Senior Vice President for Human Capital Development and Professor, Cultural Foundations of Education and Women's and Gender Studies, Syracuse University, and IA Board Member
2. Carol Bebel, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Ashé Cultural Arts Center in New Orleans, and IA Board Member
3. Bruce Burgett, IA Board Chair, and Dean, School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, University of Washington, Bothell

4. Adam Bush, Director of Curriculum & Academic Advisor, College Unbound, and IA Board Member
5. Harry Boyte, Director of the Center for Democracy and Citizenship, Augsburg College, and Former IA Board Member
6. Dudley Cocke, Artistic Director, Appalshop/Roadside Theater in central Appalachia, and Former IA Board Member
7. Timothy K. Eatman, IA Faculty Co-Director and Professor, School of Education, Syracuse University
8. Julie Ellison, Professor, American Culture and English, University of Michigan, and Founding IA Director
9. Eric Giordano, Director, Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service Institute
10. Jamie Haft, IA Assistant Director
11. Donald Harward, Director, Bringing Theory to Practice, President Emeritus, Bates College, Senior Scholar, AAC&U, and IA Presidents' Council Member
12. Gladstone "Fluney" Hutchinson, Associate Professor of Economics, Lafayette College, Former Head of the Planning Institute of Jamaica, and IA Board Member
13. Amy Koritz, Director, Center for Civic Engagement, Drew University, and IA Board Member
14. Brian Murphy, IA Presidents' Council Co-Chair, President, De Anza College, and Co-Founder, The Democracy Commitment
15. Ajay Nair, Senior Vice President and Dean of Campus Life, Emory University
16. Scott J. Peters, IA Faculty Co-Director and Professor, School of Education, Syracuse University
17. John Saltmarsh, Co-Director, New England Resource Center for Higher Education, and IA Board Strategy Committee Chair
18. George Sanchez, Professor of American Studies & Ethnicity and History, Vice Dean for Diversity and Strategic Initiatives, Director of the Center for Diversity and Democracy, University of Southern California, and Former IA Board Chair
19. Prentice Onayemi, Director of Communications, ArtPlace America
20. David Scobey, Professor and Former Executive Dean of the New School for Public Engagement, Chair of IA Transition Committee and Former IA Board Chair
21. Jeffrey S. Vitter, Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor, University of Kansas
22. Bjong Wolf Yeigh, Chancellor, University of Washington Bothell, and IA Presidents' Council Member

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