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A Quarterly Publication of Diversity Abroad

SUMMER 2021 EDITION

EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT WITHIN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

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Diversity Abroad is the leading organization dedicated to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in global education & cultural exchange and increasing the diversity among professionals in the field is one of our key objectives.

PUBLICATION **INFORMATION**

The Global Impact Exchange

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The Global Impact Exchange quarterly publication serves to advance domestic and international conversations around diversity, inclusion, and equity in global education with respect to the thematic focus identified each quarter.

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Summer 2021 Edition:

Exploring Opportunities for Global Engagement Within Local Communities

Published July 2021

As technology and globalization continue to connect people all around the world, opportunities to connect with people of different backgrounds and cultures have become much more accessible. It is no longer necessary to go abroad to have a global experience. Global engagement can occur at "home" by connecting students, faculty, and staff with the diverse people, groups, businesses, and events within their local communities. What partnerships can be developed by faculty and staff with local businesses and leaders to advance global diversity, equity, and inclusion? How can technology be leveraged to connect students from around the world to learn from one another and foster deeper connections? Are there ways to connect the benefits of global education to opportunities to serve one's local community? How can understanding diversity, equity, and inclusion within one's local community assist in understanding those topics within the wider global community? In what ways can engaging with the global community at home be a stepping stone to pursuing a global engagement opportunity abroad in the future?

INTRODUCTION LETTER

Exploring Opportunities for Global Engagement Within Local Communities

By **LIZZY MONROE**
Associate Director of Learning & Development, Diversity Abroad

If my work in diversity, equity, and inclusion has taught me anything, it is that we must go beyond the idea of "normalcy." Many implicit bias trainings center critical reflection of our internalized construct of "normal." Whether that's unconsciously assigning a generalized archetype of a student studying abroad or an employee impacted by a policy, ascribing to the idea that there can be a "normal" student, colleague, friend, etc. implies the existence and exclusion of one that is "abnormal" or "other." Part of our work toward a more equitable future is to disrupt the notion that there can be a normal when discussing people, our identities, and our lived experiences. Therefore, as our doors reopen, let's extend this skepticism of the word and take pause before determining that "back to normal" is the goal. If the pandemic has shown us anything, it is that we cannot go back to normal. It is becoming increasingly acknowledged that based on our identities, we may experience the same cities and even neighborhoods with entirely different realities, requiring us to understand the different lived experiences of our neighbors. There is heightened awareness of issues within public health and the fragility of public infrastructure, offering opportunities for increased awareness of and empathy for conditions of others that were previously overlooked and ignored. Now that we have spent the past year in these discussions, how do we keep this focus and center it in our creation of a "new normal" in global education?

The Summer issue of the Global Impact Exchange offers new visions for global education, moving beyond mobility and exploring opportunities for global engagement within local communities. Colleagues from the field provide insights, best practices, and frameworks for what constitutes global engagement. What does it mean to have global engagement at home? How can we connect with people of different backgrounds and cultures "at home"?

Several articles explore how and why global education can and should interact with one's local community. Continuing to center issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, this issue also grapples with the potential benefits and dangers of technology as a tool for global engagement opportunities. For example, as virtual programs and hybrid models are brought into our new normal, how might these formats increase opportunities for certain populations, and conversely, what inequities are we at risk of creating and reproducing when leveraging technology as a tool for global engagement?

We hope these articles help and inspire you to continue to disrupt our constructs of normal in imagining this new normal, and we look forward to continuing this discussion online or in person in Atlanta in October at Global Inclusion 2021—the annual Diversity Abroad conference.

We look forward to your engagement with this edition of the Global Impact Exchange and want to hear your thoughts. Please share your reflections and ideas with us at @diversityabroad and members@diversityabroad.org. Diversity Abroad members are invited to join the conversation on the online community forums.

Going Global Without Going Abroad

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This essay is rooted in the belief that thinking "globally" does not always mean "internationally" and that global awareness begins with self-awareness. Often the idea of "global citizenship" remains abstract to students, and previous efforts to create global curricula suggest that students need more than theoretical knowledge to "develop their own agency as responsible actors in the world" (Sperandio, Grudzinski-Hall, & Stewart-Gambino 2010). Our National Endowment for the Humanities funded project, "Building Global Perspectives in the Humanities'' (2018-2020), intentionally brought these ideas together to expand the quantity and quality of our institution's global learning opportunities.

Our model demonstrates the benefits of training faculty in experiential learning focused on developing global citizenship through local engagement. The research-based methods we suggest can make global experiences more inclusive by making them more accessible, especially for economically disadvantaged students. Such an approach—what we call "going global without going abroad"—can provide the transformative experiences students need in order to see themselves as global actors with the potential to effect change in the world. In designing similar programs, we encourage institutions to reflect on their students' unique needs within the context of their geographical locations and limitations.

The Building Global Perspectives program came about in part because of the unique situation of our university, from demographics to curriculum to geographic placement. Texas Woman's University (TWU) is the largest public institution primarily for women in the US and a minority-majority, Hispanic-Serving Institution. Most of our students are first generation; many are considered non-traditional: they have full-time jobs, are returning to school at a later age, and/or are parents or caregivers. Such student populations face unique challenges in their quest for academic success (Blankenship, 2010; Dolan, 2008; Kirby, White, & Aruguete, 2007). The factors behind these challenges also affect our students' willingness to consider study abroad opportunities. Lack of awareness about opportunities and benefits of study abroad, familial responsibilities, and (perhaps most important of all) financial implications are clear barriers to minority and first-generation student participation in education abroad (Brux & Fry, 2010; Kasravi, 2009; Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009).

While our short-term, faculty-led study abroad programs are one successful approach to helping students make space for global learning, we also wanted to provide another accessible curriculum-based option. As our mission at TWU is to cultivate engaged leaders and global citizens, all students must complete one Global Perspectives (GP) course in order to graduate. Global Perspectives

refers to "skills, knowledge, and attitudes in areas such as global dynamics, non-western worldviews, international systems and events, and global cultures." We chose to enhance our university's global education by providing GP-designated courses that emphasize the idea that global learning begins at home and cultivate students' awareness of their own place in overlapping global networks. As a result, we developed a "going global without going abroad" model that promotes learning in the same dimensions emphasized by many study abroad programs.

In designing our program, we drew from the American Association of Colleges and Universities' Global Learning Rubric, which defines such learning as "a critical analysis of and an engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies (such as natural, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political) and their implications for people's lives and the earth's sustainability." Local experiential learning with a global focus has enormous potential to help students meet the goals of "1) becom[ing] informed, open-minded, and responsible people who are attentive to diversity across the spectrum of differences, 2) seek[ing] to understand how their actions affect both local and global communities, and 3) address[ing] the world's most pressing and enduring issues collaboratively and equitably" (AAC&U). The key to such experiences is engaging students directly in communities and fostering their ability to reflect on their own actions and those of others in ways that inform their future decision-making.

Our program built on TWU's Quality Enhancement Plan, which centered on experiential learning because it can create a positive impact on minority student persistence and graduation rates, workforce readiness, and pursuit of advanced degrees (Dolan, 2008; Espinosa, 2011; Eyler, 2009; Kelly, 2011; Lee, 2007; Stocks, 2011). To ensure the highest standards in creating learning experiences, we based our faculty training on the National Society for Experiential Education's "8 Principles of Good Practice." Perhaps the most important of these practices for global learning are authenticity—the need for real-world outcomes—and reflection. Not only did we encourage faculty reflection in the process of creating course outcomes and designing assignments, but we also emphasized the critical role that reflection plays for students in transformational learning.

The core of our program was an interdisciplinary group of faculty fellows that created or revised GP courses with a GP designation to include at least one significant experiential learning assignment. We held five workshops for each of our cohorts in both 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. In our three fall workshops, we explored theoretical topics related to global learning, global citizenship, and applied humanities, providing the foundation for our faculty to meaningfully apply these ideas to new or revised student learning outcomes for their courses. During two spring workshops, we shifted to the theory and practice of experiential education and developing experiential opportunities for their curricula. Central to our success was ensuring that the faculty in our workshops (and, eventually, the institution) had a network of potential partners. To do this, we created a list of some 300+ organizations and cultural events that faculty can use to research potential partners for their experiential learning opportunities.

Our own program takes advantage of our position near a major metropolitan area. TWU is less than an hour from the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, which allows us to capitalize on the presence of international corporations and organizations and the diverse international population in North Texas. Of course, one need not be situated closely to a metroplex in order to take advantage of a "going global without going abroad" model. We encourage other institutions to look first among their staff and students to find organizations and affinity groups that represent diverse perspectives and faculty with

research and teaching experiences in topics that address global systems. We also encourage a broad understanding of diversity in seeking local organizations and businesses to collaborate with. Finally, we encourage colleagues to consider broadening their radius for potential experiential learning opportunities to include faculty-led travel within the broader United States.

The most significant outcomes of our program were an increased awareness of the benefit of interdisciplinary collaboration in defining global citizenship and increased opportunities for students to have global experiences on a local scale. Not only do these curricular interventions make global learning more accessible and more inclusive, they also help students see beyond the purely theoretical to the ethical and pragmatic values of a global outlook. Just as global learning begins at home with each student's own awareness of their place in the world, each institution must begin by looking within (see Table 1 for a recommended institutional self-assessment). Based on our experience, we believe that similar projects could be highly successful at a broad variety of institutions, as long as they include explicit training in experiential learning best practices, especially critical reflection; open, interdisciplinary dialogue about the values and characteristics of global citizenship; and a willingness to promote internal and external partnerships.

Table 1: Institution Self-Assessment

Foundational questions:

- How does your institution define global learning?
- What does global learning mean to you?
- How might you reconcile these definitions?
- What are 2-3 student learning outcomes that can be drawn from these definitions?

Contextual inclusivity questions:

- Who are your students? What are their unique needs?
- What are your barriers to inclusivity?
- What activities can help your students work towards learning objectives connected to inclusivity?

On-campus global connections questions:

- Which faculty are already teaching globally focused courses?
- How might you add experiential learning to those courses?
- What departments are already engaging in experiential learning?
- How might you add a global component to those experiences?
- What resources already exist on campus to connect students to different cultures?

External global connections questions:

- What international groups or organizations have a local presence in your area?
- What local organizations represent or connect diverse cultures?
- Who do you already know that may be connected with these organizations?
- What connections may faculty or staff have to other similar groups or organizations outside your immediate area?

Partner collaboration questions:

- What are your goals for this partnership?
- What does your partner stand to gain?
- Who will manage the relationship?
- How will expectations be communicated and evaluated?
- What risks are involved?
- What part will the organization play in the assessment of the program?

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Back to Basics in Education Abroad: A Case for Language & Culture Programs

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Education abroad is currently in a unique position to examine where it's been and where it's going. It's not often an entire professional area shuts down and has an opportunity to reflect and plan for a reboot. The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting standstill of global student mobility forced international educators into this unexpected hiatus. It has also given us unusually ample time available to reflect; there is significant soul-searching happening. One potential opportunity that presents itself is the return of language and culture programs in education abroad.

Many of us know that language and culture programs are the earliest iterations of education abroad. There was a time when language learning was synonymous with study abroad. Unfortunately, participation in language acquisition and cultural programs abroad has decreased significantly due to a variety of reasons, including a growing emphasis on shorter terms, an increase in faculty-led programs, and an overall decline in language teaching at the university level. Including language acquisition and intercultural knowledge as learning outcomes in education abroad prioritizes the application of vital cross-cultural skills and opens the door to developing innovative teaching/learning models to meet the student learning outcomes. Here are several reasons why getting back to our education abroad roots may be one of the best options forward.

1. **Technology & Language Learning Pedagogy** – Online learning has been normalized during the pandemic and become a familiar teaching modality for both students and teachers. Both synchronous and asynchronous online learning lend themselves quite well to language acquisition and show promise to increase language learning for individual and/or group settings. For universities faced with reducing teaching staff due to low enrollments, online classes present a potentially cost-effective option to continue offering foreign language courses. Additionally, pre- and posttests, taken online, can provide important data to assess language learning successes.

2. **Global to Local Emphasis** – This pandemic proves our global interconnectedness. Now more than ever, students need to not only see this connection firsthand, but also develop the vital global skills of language acquisition and cultural knowledge, to increase local impact. Education abroad shares high-level goals with community engagement programming at most universities, and by participating in campus service-learning, students returning from study abroad can keep their language skills sharp through involvement with local, non-English-speaking communities. Language and

cultural skills acquired through study abroad should be seen by students as opportunities for enhanced interaction with local immigrant communities and increasing social impact. Many students put education abroad on their proverbial "bucket list," seeing it as a one-off undergraduate activity unconnected to their major. Supporting language and culture learning outcomes for education abroad connects overseas study to future academic and career goals.

3. **Career & Professional Development** –There are not many career fields left in the US in which a bilingual employee would not be of added value and benefit. Despite companies experiencing both a shift towards more global business and the workforce becoming increasingly multicultural and diverse, the teaching of foreign languages has, unfortunately, decreased substantially in the past two decades. Encouraging students to focus their education abroad goals on language learning will double the value of their overseas experience with future employers. Another area worthy of emphasis is the promotion of language acquisition for "specific purposes." Many universities offer medical Spanish to healthcare majors. Both students with basic knowledge of a foreign language as well as heritage speakers, already with bilingual proficiency, would be well served to increase target language fluency in healthcare, education, or business, through education abroad.

4. **Intercultural Communication and Knowledge** – Being fluent is much more than just knowing the words to the language; understanding the culture behind the language is vital to mastery. Culture learning has a two-fold value, in that as you unpack and experience another's culture you are also evaluating and assessing your own culture by comparison. Students always report a tremendous increase in self-awareness as a key take-away from their education abroad experience. This increase in intercultural knowledge can be applied directly to cross-cultural situations not only while abroad, but also within our own borders. It is a critical component integral to everyday interactions in a multicultural society, yet it is the most undervalued skillset in the academy.

As we explore options to bring education abroad back, we should challenge ourselves to set goals for our programs that prioritize vital global skills, such as language and culture learning, that will enable better and more impactful engagement with local communities.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals as a Bridge Between Global Learning and Local Action

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The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aims to foster a better, more sustainable planet by the year 2030 (United Nations, 2015). At the heart of this ambitious agreement lie the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 17 goals that seek to address the world's most pressing challenges including: ending poverty and hunger, protecting the environment from climate change, ensuring prosperous and fulfilling lives, and fostering peaceful and inclusive societies. The SDGs are universal goals meant to be achieved in both developed and developing countries.

Beyond their policy implications, the SDGs are a powerful tool for the field of global education. Using the SDGs in the classroom enables educators to bridge global and local learning and encourage globally minded and locally grounded civic engagement. By *global* I refer to processes, relationships, and ideas flowing through unbounded and multidimensional spaces, transcending national borders (Kearney, 1995; Appadurai, 1990). This notion of global is inextricably tied to unique localized conditions, interpretations, and understandings, thus embodying what de Sousa Santos refers to as a dual process of globalizing localisms and localizing globalisms (2006). The SDGs introduce challenges on a global scale and a shared global vision for addressing them. Yet, to fully understand and analyze the goals, and to develop action towards them, attention must be given to their daily manifestations at the local level.

Exploring the SDGs Through the Inquiry to Action Project

In the fall of 2020, I used the SDGs as a guiding tool in a virtual course about sustainable development. Through a semester-long Inquiry to Action Project, each student identified a social, economic, or environmental issue to research and a specific geographic location in which to study the issue. After conducting research on the topic and exploring its connection to the SDGs, students took action to address it. Given that students would conduct their action projects without traveling abroad, I encouraged them to consider indirect forms of action, including advocacy, philanthropy, and awareness-raising. To prepare for this project, we discussed the dangers of white saviorism and American exceptionalism, reflected on the ethics of community engagement, and analyzed our own positionality.

While the final action projects ranged greatly in shape and form, they all represented locally grounded actions towards global issues. What emerged from these projects is a framework of four ways that the SDGs can be used to facilitate and understand global learning and local engagement, which I share below.

Four Approaches to Connect the Local and Global Through the SDGs

Local as Part of the Global. The first way that the SDGs can facilitate both local and global learning and action is by serving as a global lens to analyze

and act on a local issue. Students may study and address an issue in their local community and use the SDGs to view that local challenge through a global lens. For example, four students in the course collaborated to produce a series of podcasts about clean water in Bloomington, Indiana. Through recorded conversations among their team and interviews with local government and NGO leaders, they discussed the challenges to accessing clean water in our town and how the issue is being addressed. By using the language of SDG 6, students connected the challenges of clean water in Bloomington to a larger, global framework. This enabled them to take global action that was locally grounded.

Localizing the Global. In contrast to the approach above, where students began with a local issue and tied it to a global framework, another approach to locally grounded global engagement is to begin with the global issue and then connect it to a local context. For example, several students in my course focused their research on broad trends and challenges of a specific global issue and *then* looked at how that issue is addressed or impacted in a local context. One student centered her project on forced migration. Her research placed the issue in historical context and highlighted contemporary challenges related to forced migration. Her action project then situated this global issue, which she tied to SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, in a local context by interviewing three young women who came to the United States as refugees. Through the interviews, she explored their experiences of migration to the United States and then tied those experiences back to the global trends she identified.

Local for the Sake of the Global. A third approach involves actions in the local community in order to address a global issue. Through this approach, students took action from home that was connected to issues overseas. For example, one student created a campaign to raise awareness about the rise of early marriage among Syrian refugees. This action targeted her peers in our local campus community in order to address a global issue which, in this case, was based in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. In a second example, a student researched human trafficking in Italy and created a series of Instagram posts to raise awareness of this phenomenon among her Instagram followers. In both of these instances, the students took locally grounded action to support a global issue by raising awareness of the SDG 5: Gender Equality.

The Local Implicated in the Global: A final approach to breaking down the local-global binary is by understanding how the local and global are intimately tied together and impact each other. For instance, in some Inquiry to Action projects, students addressed the problematic ways that local actions impact global issues. One student researched the negative consequences of oil dumping carried out by America-based companies, focusing on the Chevron oil company's work in the Ecuadorian Amazon. She learned about the environmental impacts of such actions, with a focus on SDG 13: Climate Action as well as its implications for individual and community health and wellbeing (SDG 3). Based on her research, she wrote a letter to the oil company explaining the damage they are causing and advocating for a change in policy.

In a second example, a student focusing on SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities had intended to develop a virtual museum exhibit highlighting art of Indigenous women in Argentina; yet she changed her project approach after realizing that the project itself might perpetuate a western gaze upon the Indigenous community. As she wrote in her final reflection:

> *While I had originally meant for this project to be solely an exhibition…It became hard for me to not feel like I was contributing to the uneven power dynamics in museum spaces, and I did not want to further the feelings (and reality) of surveillance and captivity of Indigenous people.*

These two projects illuminate the ways that local actions—of corporations, organizations, and individuals—are implicated in reinforcing global inequities and neocolonial power dynamics.

Researching and taking action towards the SDGs empowered students to act locally within a global framework. The goals highlighted the inextricable link between the local and global, thereby breaking down the binary between the two, and led to civic engagement and action that was simultaneously local and global.

Resources to support incorporating the SDGs into higher education

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Approaching Virtual Exchange from an Equity Lens

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An Introduction to AIDE in Virtual Exchange

As virtual exchange becomes more common (Stevens Initiative, 2020), it is imperative to contextualize this practice in terms of access, inclusion, diversity, and equity (AIDE) while providing educators and administrators examples of virtual exchange programs using promising AIDE strategies.

While a direct comparison of virtual and in-person exchange is not always useful, when considering AIDE, some issues overlap or offer an opportunity for a place to start. In-person exchange programs have long considered access to exchange when working to diversify their participants or serve communities who have traditionally been unable to study abroad for a variety of reasons including cost, family support, inflexible programs of study, etc. There are multiple other barriers, perceived as well as real, that impact access to traditional mobility programs (Loberg & Rust, 2014). Virtual exchange programs don't confront many of these traditional access issues, but other challenges certainly come up. For example, not all young people have equal access to a reliable internet connection or sufficient hardware to participate in a virtual exchange. This "digital divide" can create new inequities or reproduce or perpetuate those that already exist (Ragnedda & Muschert, 2013). Importantly, the fact that a program is mediated by technology does not eliminate inequalities or power imbalances that exist offline (Helm, 2017). So although a virtual exchange might present a lower cost program to access, not all underserved populations are able to participate, or participate equitably, in a virtual exchange. This example is just one AIDE challenge that should be considered in the virtual exchange context.

In this article, we will connect effective AIDE practices, with an emphasis on equity, in virtual exchange to efforts we have seen implemented in Stevens Initiative programming, pointing towards specific virtual exchange programs or Initiative-led efforts that model these effective practices. While we focus here on three general themes, the Stevens Initiative has taken steps towards developing and improving in these areas going forward in collaboration with others in the virtual exchange and study abroad fields.

Developing equitable institutional partnerships for virtual exchange programming

Long cited as an area in international education where good practices can start, developing equitable partnerships in virtual exchange programs looks different than partnerships for traditional mobility opportunities. Practices include engaging partners that reach underserved youth and planning for mutual benefits from the project inception for all partners and youth participants.

Virtual exchange programs must redefine partnership portfolios to include partners that reach all demographics. Including Minority-Serving

Institutions and community colleges in the US and institutions in other countries where the main language of instruction is not English is one way to do this. The Initiative encouraged this practice in our recent grant competition, prioritizing the inclusion of participants from these institutions through our application review criteria. Institutions were given additional points if their programs committed to serving communities that included young people of color or of different abilities, for example, and monitoring that inclusion.

Equitable partnerships don't end at engaging with institutions that reach underserved communities. *Those partners need to be meaningfully included in project development and implementation*. This means providing space for all partners to share goals for their participants, develop programming that meets unique needs, and ensure that the benefits of participation are not one sided. This type of partnership development takes time, effort, and good faith on all sides to arrive at a space where all stakeholders in a program feel heard and seen.

Acknowledging and disrupting traditional power dynamics

Power dynamics that cause marginalization and underrepresentation can be reproduced through program structures and learning content. Acknowledging that those power dynamics exist and creating opportunities to disrupt them can be a powerful opportunity for change. The versatility of these programs and the multidirectional learning and connections possible in virtual exchanges create multiple ways to improve equity and inclusivity.

For example, as participants become more comfortable sharing with their international peers during an exchange program, implementers should *prioritize the inclusion of activities that explore social issues and justice topics* as a part of the exchange dialogue. Creating space for participants to discuss issues of privilege and oppression in their local context is an invaluable learning opportunity for all sides of the exchange that can increase empathy, solidarity, and ultimately action. These conversations should be appropriately planned and facilitated to ensure a space that is conducive to the sharing of diverse perspectives and equitable participation. Multiple Stevens Initiative awardees include these topics as a part of their exchange activities, including Soliya's Connect Global: US-MENA. This dialogue-based exchange includes conversations on global and social inequality, religion, stereotypes and cultural misunderstandings, and more. These conversations empower participants to confront inequities in their communities.

When virtual exchange programs use project-based learning pedagogies, they can be designed to *serve all participating communities, rather than the community of the leading or funding partner.* This can happen by finding common issues to confront or customizing projects for local realities. IREX's Global Solutions Sustainability Challenge selects an issue that is relevant to all participating communities and encourages participants to discuss how those challenges manifest in their local communities. For example, one team of participants created a sustainable lifestyle brand that recycles used clothing into garment options customized to the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, and homeless people while supporting employment opportunities. World Learning's The Experiment Digital builds enough flexibility into their small grants program that funds can be used to solve unique local problems, rather than an issue framed from a US-centric perspective.

As virtual exchange programs are developed and become more common at an institution, it is important for leadership to *prioritize the creation of resources, training, and support for program implementers and exchange facilitator*s. The Initiative is committed to supporting the field in these areas by sponsoring research to investigate AIDE issues in the field and creating resources

that practitioners can use in their programming. One concrete step the Initiative is taking is to track data on the diversity of our participants and inclusion in our programs.

Confronting the digital divide

One very tangible equity issue in virtual exchange programming is the digital divide, or the lack of access some participants might have to software, hardware, or internet connectivity. In our grantmaking, the Stevens Initiative helps support grantees to confront this challenge by supporting equity focused practices: use of stipends to support connectivity, purchasing hardware and software when necessary, and thinking about what tech to use to ensure equitable access as implementers plan for exchanges. As international educators turn to virtual exchange to connect young people and assume that tough AIDE issues go away because no one is traveling, the digital divide and ways to confront it should be top of mind.

Conclusion

While virtual exchange can be an accessible global education tool, there are still significant gaps in AIDE practices. Education and exchange leaders must design and implement programs that consider all areas of AIDE, including the issues of equity outlined above. Doing so will ensure that every young person has the same opportunities for a meaningful virtual exchange experience.

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Seeking Global Equity and Engagement in Community With Our Newest Neighbors

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In 2011, Uwe Brandenburg and Hans de Wit wrote that the internationalization of higher education had lost its way as its focus had shifted from the "why" to the "how." A decade later—during a global pandemic, when international mobility has been severely restricted and higher education institutions have made herculean efforts to accommodate students in time zones that span the globe—global educators can benefit from re-investing our energies in the "why." As Bryan McAllister-Grande and Melissa Whatley suggested in 2020, now is a valuable and necessary time to take stock of things like the "unintended consequences of mobility" and "access to and outcomes of participation...that do not involve international mobility" (p. 2).

Meanwhile, a lot has changed in the United States and the world since 2011. There is room to frameshift, even and especially during the challenging days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Keeping perspective helps. As the number of displaced persons has increased over the past decade due to wars, natural disasters, and climate change (UNHCR, 2019), populism has grown around the world (Hazelkorn, 2020), and the Biden administration has proposed to significantly increase the cap of refugees coming to the United States (Hauslohner, 2021). I have moved multiple times, domestically and internationally, as I have worked on international programs. Expanding my own worldview and supporting individuals in navigating cross-cultural experiences are my professional raisons d'être. So, in 2019, when I moved back to Richmond, Virginia, after living and working in Rome, Italy, I was excited to reacquaint myself with my increasingly diverse hometown.

In a certain sense, as a global educator-global learner, I have been returning to the "why" since I moved back to the United States. Through the non-profit organization ReEstablish Richmond, in November 2019 I began tutoring ESL one-on-one to newcomers in Richmond and helping plan an annual volunteer summit in collaboration with a resettlement agency and other community organizations. Although my family and I have again relocated, a silver lining is that I continue to volunteer virtually through ReEstablish Richmond and now through Literacy Pittsburgh. I have found that staying connected to and establishing roots is important, as this grounds me both personally and professionally. Facilitating intercultural learning has been a common thread throughout most of my career path. Also, community engagement was an area that I wanted to focus on as I transitioned back to the United States and have sought both to give back to and to (re-)learn my community. Therefore, I have felt that I have something to offer through these experiences, but also something to gain.

We can all learn from each other, locally and globally, as I was humbled to share through co-presenting with my ESL student about building community and learning together at this year's volunteer summit (Adli & McSweeney, 2021). This is especially true and necessary during a pandemic. As I have witnessed one of my students complete her ESL program at community college and another be accepted to graduate school, I have learned a great deal about the perseverance of my newest neighbors and the apparently not-so-foreign concept of icebreakers during orientation in Afghanistan.

It turns out that taking a hyper-local approach to my own "get out of your comfort zone" project, which began pre-pandemic, has offered a really valuable way to discover how community-university partnerships can serve to strengthen intercultural and global learning in an inclusive, just, sustainable, and ethical way, not only for mobility-based programs (Hartman et al., 2018). Students who may not have the means or desire to spend a period of time in another country may be more incentivized to actively engage in a curricular or co-curricular project-based learning experience in their local community, especially if it helps prepare them for a career. At the same time, pathways that offer students opportunities to support marginalized populations, for example, through which they share equitable roles and acknowledge asset-based contributions, can lend themselves to impactful relationship building where both groups have an investment. Exposing students (as well as faculty and staff) to global issues "at home" has the potential to spark an interest in pursuing a global engagement opportunity abroad in the future, whether through traditional study abroad, research abroad or with international colleagues, an internship (virtual or abroad in-person), a service-learning experience (virtual or abroad in-person), or a partnership. Virginia Commonwealth University, in fact, offers these types of opportunities through their living-learning program (Virginia Commonwealth University Global Education Office, n.d.).

Civic engagement can also be a component of local engagement with global issues. For example, while Radomir Ray Mitic (2019) has found that participation in education abroad increases first generation students' voter participation, I would propose that the cultivation of civic dispositions is also possible locally, based on my own experience preparing a newcomer for her citizenship test. MetroLab Network (n.d.) offers additional inspiration about how local engagement might promote civic engagement, such as through Carnegie Mellon University's Metro21: Smart Cities Institute (2021). Another outcome of the type of local engagement mentioned above is that students may choose to pursue an AmeriCorps position after graduation.

Oftentimes, what I have observed while supporting students on-program, while abroad, is that if the program component does not connect in a tangible way to the requirements of their program, or if it is not a checkbox that might help them get a job, they usually will not invest in authentically engaging the community. It is our job to connect the dots intentionally and to model these types of pathways. For instance, Marcy Sacks (2020) at Albion College has demonstrated that exposing underrepresented students to research archives in the United States can be a powerful way to effect structural changes. This could be tailored to a global learning opportunity in a local or virtual context, since sources and exhibits often include topics that are globally relevant and accessible online. For example, a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) course between a professor in the United States and Italy, or a guest lecture series by NGOs that focus on migration in different parts of the world, could add rich exposure to global issues that deepen students' understanding of their engagement with the local community. Such

place-based exposure to local-global issues, therefore, can open up the possibility for global engagement to be more diverse, inclusive, equitable, and accessible, and therefore more enduring and impactful.

As Amanda Sturgill (2020) explains, understanding our own environments can help us recognize barriers within our own communities, and this kind of border crossing "at home" can lead to an increase in equity. Perhaps even more powerful than crossing oceans to study in another country, where students' stays are temporary, the kinds of local engagement mentioned here can support opportunities for even deeper shared learning, which can lead to what Dawn Michele Whitehead (2017) frames as shared understanding of essentially shared problems, and in turn can lead to shared futures. I, for one, am hopeful for the opportunities that had already existed but that were not fully recognized prior to the pandemic, and I am inspired by the possibilities that are out there as we chart the future of global education together.

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COVID-19: A Catalyst for Rethinking Global Engagement

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The COVID-19 pandemic forced a reimagining of global engagement opportunities and reminded us that global education should encompass not only student mobility but also an internationalized curriculum at home with an emphasis on community engagement, cultural diversity, and interdependence (Agnew & Kahn, 2014; Caruana, 2014; Hartman, 2020). At our institution over 80% of students study abroad, and we are also deeply committed to local civic engagement and community partnerships. As travel ceased we were inspired to augment these partnerships. Rather than reducing or eliminating opportunities, enterprising faculty instead redesigned their offerings to further diversity and global learning goals through local community engagement.

We describe redesigned global experiences in three programs, Multifaith Scholars, Periclean Scholars, and a graduate international service-learning course, in which the goals align with broader University emphases on engaged learning and high-impact practices (HIPs), particularly undergraduate research, global learning, and community-based learning (Kuh, 2008; Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013). Research indicates that participation in these HIPs correlates to student engagement, retention, and enhanced learning outcomes, including those related to diversity (Boyer, 1998; Johnson, 2010; Johnson et al., 2015; Lopatto, 2006). We highlight programmatic aspects we retained and those we modified, delineate our rationales, and analyze the effects on our students.

Elon's Multifaith Scholars program engages students in intercultural learning through academic coursework, faculty-mentored undergraduate research, and community partnerships. Each scholar majors in Religious Studies or minors in Interreligious Studies, undertakes a two-year research project focused on religion and society, and participates in a sustainable partnership with our local mosque. Founded in 2017, the program aligns with research suggesting that intercultural learning is catalyzed through active engagement and immersive experiences, as students undertake research, pursue partnerships, and develop relationships within diverse communities locally and globally (Banks & Gutiérrez, 2017; Deardorff, 2009; Engberg, 2013; Hovland, 2014). Given the prominence of global education and

the values of global citizenship at Elon, many scholars integrate study away experiences into their undergraduate research projects and conduct fieldwork in local and international global settings. As the pandemic accelerated and travel restrictions took effect last Spring, several Multifaith Scholars were in precisely this position, poised to conduct summer research with sex workers through an NGO in India, among refugees in Tanzania, with communities on a sacred mountain in Cambodia, and with resettled Muslim immigrants in a small city proximate to campus. Their carefully scaffolded research studies were upended as global partners headed into lockdowns, study abroad programs were suspended, and IRB approvals were rescinded. In the ensuing months, mentors collaborated to activate local networks so scholars could shift their research to cognate global communities in local contexts, while students incorporated scholarship on diaspora populations into their literature reviews and trained in survey methodologies. Although these pivots relied in most cases on existing local contacts, in others they demanded that we establish new associations with communities where we now see the potential for nourishing abiding, sustainable relationships. At every stage in developing these networks, we have deliberately sought to build collaborative, inclusive relationships that are reciprocal, ethically sound, and equitable.

Elon's Periclean Scholars initiative facilitates immersive engaged learning experiences that span students' sophomore, junior, and senior years. Throughout its 18-year history, the Periclean Scholars program has primarily focused on the development of international community partnerships in a diverse set of countries. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic froze our ability to travel to partner locations, and a lack of consistent high-speed internet access made remote work with our international partners untenable. As such, we had to rethink the way in which the Scholars program operates, and this ultimately resulted in a re-centering of our work within local and regional spaces. The pandemic provided our Scholar cohort groups with an opportunity to intentionally incorporate local/regional partnerships into their work. For example, the Class of 2023 (current sophomores) took the topic foci they intended to work on in Sri Lanka and identified partners in local organizations to engage in these efforts. The Class of 2024 (current first-year students, recruited to the program during the height of the pandemic) was able to leverage the challenge of not being able to work abroad to nimbly transition from planned experiences in Morocco to a deep engagement with DEI and racial justice efforts within the University's local community. To be clear, the program's forced shift to work within local contexts isn't simply a "Band-Aid" for pandemic times that will be discarded once travel abroad is again viable. Rather, the pandemic has pushed us to think and act more deeply to integrate meaningful local partnerships as a component of a broader student experience, particularly in relation to advancing community racial, social, and economic justice efforts. In this unexpected way, the pandemic has actually been a positive force in our programmatic development. We have become more aware of the many ways in which working with global populations and issues from within a local context substantially increases student inclusivity and access to programming.

Elon's Interactive Media graduate program includes an international service-learning course taught during our January term. The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to make significant changes to how we delivered the course this year: First, we shifted delivery to May to buy time for redesigning portions of the course; second, we made the decision to teach the course within local communities instead of abroad. This required reexamining the cross-cultural and global learning opportunities afforded by the course, ones that we may have taken for granted when it was offered internationally. Previously, faculty often relied on the international context to partially achieve global and intercultural learning

objectives; we were able to focus less on setting them up and more on helping students reflect on and process their experiences. Teaching the course locally requires that we be intentional about how community engagement in this context can still meet these goals. Doing so is a challenge but also presents opportunities: to specifically determine what global culture looks like and where we find it around us; to infuse ideas of diversity, equity, and inclusion into our practices such that we are mindful of injustices and inequities within our own communities; and to create ways to sustain partnerships proximate to the university so that they can be continued and strengthened over time (a greater challenge abroad). These adjustments, while clearly in response to the pandemic, have encouraged us to think more carefully about ways to infuse community-based learning into the curriculum beyond this specific course. Incorporating community engagement into fall semester courses may allow us to scaffold learning objectives for the international service-learning experience by more intentionally connecting local issues to global contexts. Facilitating students' abilities to analyze learning experiences they have "here" and "there" so that they can synthesize the two, rather than mentally segregate them, will allow us to graduate more ethically and culturally aware citizens.

As seen in these case studies, the pandemic catalyzed our immediate pedagogical redesigns but also enabled us to consider longer-term modifications that include global issues closer to home and ways to deepen community mentorship opportunities. We will strive to cultivate global citizenship closer to campus and to invest in local partnerships that align with faculty scholarship, student interests, and the challenges of diversity-focused and equity-minded liberal education.

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Global Student Projects as a Catalyst for Social Engagement: Findings from a Brazilian-American Collaboration

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As higher education institutions increasingly recognize the need to prepare students to be successful global citizens, Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) projects represent a gateway to facilitate the process of Global Citizenship Education (UNESCO, 2015) by internationalizing the curriculum and incorporating innovative learning approaches across borders, nations, and cultures. This paper shares outcomes from a COIL environment between Brazil and the US on online gender violence: Online spaces increasingly replicate discrimination of and violence against vulnerable populations that exist offline, particularly against women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and members of Black and Brown communities. Students at the Center for Women's and Gender Studies at Florida International University in Miami, USA and students of Digital Media Design at Fatec in São Paulo, Brazil research, compare, and contrast forms of online gender violence with the goal to cultivate social engagement. Collaborations such as these reinforce the recognition that online gender violence is not culture-specific, but instead, a global challenge that needs to be addressed through global problem-solving strategies.

Online Gender Violence

Gender-based violence is a pervasive human rights violation at the intersection of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and ability (Crenshaw, 1989). The Internet, computer technologies, and social media have significantly accelerated the scope of gendered violence in online spaces: Increasingly, we observe that offline discrimination and oppression of women and sexual and racial minorities is replicated in diverse online spaces (Backe, 2018; Dhrodia, 2017; Madden et al., 2018; Vickery & Eberbach, 2018), thus forming a "continuum of violence" (Kelly, 1987, 1988, 2012). Violence against women, girls, and gendered minorities constitutes a global epidemic (Krug et al., 2002; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002), with women particularly at risk from men they know (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2006; Rose, 2013; UN Women, 2019; WHO, 2016), targeted for specific forms of digital abuse because of their gender (Citron, 2014; Henry & Powell, 2016). Technology-facilitated gender-based violence is defined as:

> *Action by one or more people that harms others based on their sexual or gender identity or by enforcing harmful gender norms. This action is carried out using the internet and/or mobile technology and includes stalking, bullying, sex-based harassment, defamation, hate speech, exploitation and gender trolling (Hinson et al., 2018).*

In other words, we are talking about willful and repeated harm inflicted on people based on their gender or sex with the help of technology, regardless of geographical location, which is

prevalent across the globe (Henry & Powell, 2015). The critical assessment of gender and social justice conflicts is a central tenet of the women's and gender studies classroom. Thus, the idea was born to incorporate global student collaborations into my curriculum to research and address cyberviolence which disproportionately affects women, girls, and LGBTQ+ young adults.

The Importance of Global Citizenship Education

Global awareness and engagement are at the center of an ongoing Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) partnership: Within the context of my course Gender Violence and the Law,, study groups composed of Digital Media Design students from Fatec in São Paulo, Brazil and Women's and Gender Studies students from Florida International University in Miami, USA apply quantitative and qualitative feminist research methodologies to analyze and address global instances of online gender violence. This comparative framework enables students to acquire knowledge about issues that are local in scope and global in reach: For example, one cohort of students examined gender violence in their local media, including commercials, advertisement, video games, and music videos, comparing and contrasting the way in which different media forms globally reinforce harmful gendered and racialized stereotypes. Synthesizing their research allowed students to get a sense of a common humanity, based on shared values and respect for difference and diversity. Another cohort was tasked with the design and implementation of a global survey on experiences or observation of online gender violence based on gender identity and sexual orientation, particularly spotlighting the self-censorship and silencing of diverse voices. Through a critical assessment of social and gender justice challenges in the online environment, students from both Brazil and the US developed a more in-depth understanding of the pervasiveness and global problematic of online violence. Moreover, participation in COIL projects cultivates students' sense of responsibility to address global incidence of social injustice: Global student cooperation and collaboration resulted in the creation of Facebook groups, Instagram sites, and awareness campaigns to provide a safe space for information about and exchange of ideas about online gender violence. All of these processes are reflected in the learning outcomes: Students have to demonstrate knowledge about the interrelatedness of online gender violence, compare and contrast global experiences of online gender violence from multiple perspectives, and demonstrate competence in global and intercultural problem solving.

Conclusion

As long as gender-based violence is normalized in societies across the globe, online hate, threats, and violence against women, girls, and sexual and racial minorities will be posted, tweeted, and blogged. And we should be concerned: Online gender violence constitutes a global public health concern, resulting in sexual, psychological, physical, or economic abuse. Survivors report to suffer from fear, anxiety, depression, exhaustion, PTSD, and even chronic illness (Citron, 2009, 2014).

Higher education plays a central role in Global Citizenship Education (UNESCO, 2015), for which COIL projects in the feminist classroom serve as an effective tool: Collaborating across the globe to address gender-based violence, online and offline, generates a sense of connection, cooperation, and agency in students. Students' willingness to engage in advocacy for a more inclusive, tolerant, and just world reinforces the notion that cultivating respect for and engaging with global communities constitutes a transformative framework towards global recognition of gender equality as a basic human right.

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Transatlantic Virtual Exchange and Collaboration: Examining Diversity

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Summary

The diversity challenges faced by specific groups vary between communities, countries, and cultures. Students in international education gain a deeper understanding of diversity issues by examining these variations within these different contexts, and ideally gain firsthand experience via international mobility. As the COVID-19 pandemic closed off borders and shut down campus activities, higher education institutions had to look for new approaches to providing their students with opportunities for intercultural exchange.

Given the above context, a new partnership was established between Hochschule Fresenius in Germany and Adelphi University in the United States. Business school student groups from both schools came together to research and compare the cultural, historical, and legal contexts of diversity issues in their respective countries. Doing so forged new international contacts and established relationships at a time when physical social activity was at a minimum. Against the backdrop of an increasingly polarized social and political environment, this partnership also provided students with a vital opportunity to gain diverse perspectives on global issues and trends.

This article outlines the process and outcome of the collaboration, as well as includes student insights from both the German and American participants.

The demands of a globalized society and economy have led higher education institutions to focus attention on the development of international and intercultural competencies (Deardorff 2006; Islam & Stamp, 2020). These competencies are promoted by periods of study abroad, which exposes students to new cultural environments (Williams, 2005); however, with COVID-19 restrictions limiting international travel, international higher education institutions have had to look for new ways to support students in developing these critical skills.

One approach is the expansion of collaborative learning between institutions, where intercultural skills can be developed by students working within a framework of interdependency towards a common goal (de Hei et al., 2020). An example of such an undertaking is the Trans-Atlantic Virtual Exchange and Collaboration (TAVEC) project between Hochschule Fresenius University

of Applied Sciences in Germany and Adelphi University in the United States, which brings international students together in a collaborative and fully virtual co-teaching format.

With TAVEC, students developed their intercultural communication and digital competencies by coming together for a virtual academic collaboration embedded across four different courses in the faculty of business at both universities. The virtual medium of the project provided access to cross-cultural experiences for a broader target group of students. The collaboration results were presented during a virtual transatlantic student conference at which students presented their team projects to a larger audience.

In one of the sub-projects, students taking undergraduate Human Resource Management (HRM) courses formed inter-institutional groups and built on the diversity content of their module by jointly researching a selected dimension of diversity in their respective countries. They examined issues such as the historical context, legal framework, and societal impact, and the final deliverable was a short group project presentation with all team members.

For students at Hochschule Fresenius in Germany, the relative course sizes meant that most project groups consisted of a single Fresenius student, which the students were initially hesitant about, as they were wary of being outnumbered, while also having to communicate in a foreign language. Although all Fresenius students had a good working knowledge of English and used it as the language of study, only some had had the opportunity to use it hands on, in order to establish the kind of intense cooperative relationships that the project would entail. However, once engaged in the project, the foreground of language concerns was replaced by an awareness of cultural differences. These centered largely on communication and project management styles, such as the establishment of a project plan and fixed milestones. Some Fresenius participants reported adapting their approach, as they were wary of conforming to a perceived negative stereotype of "overly organized" Germans, in accordance with Hofstede's cultural dimension of uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede Insights, 2021).

The students at Adelphi University in the United States had the benefit of having the project work conducted in English, which for the vast majority is their primary language. In addition, due to the larger number of students in the HRM class at Adelphi, none of the students were the sole Adelphi representative on their team. These two factors created the possibility of ethnocentrism becoming an issue for the student teams. To address this, the instructor spoke explicitly with the Adelphi students about being understanding and respectful of the fact that the Fresenius students were not working and communicating in their first language, and also to be mindful of the fact that there were more Adelphi than Fresenius students on each team. The instructor asked the students how they might feel if they were the only Adelphi student on an all-Fresenius team to help with perspective taking.

The Adelphi students experienced valuable opportunities for learning with reference to communication competencies. For example, one Adelphi student found that the Fresenius student on her team did not contribute sufficiently. The Adelphi student reported researching German culture and learning that Germans tend to be more reserved than Americans. With that knowledge, the Adelphi student adapted their behavior and gave the Fresenius student more time to "open up" and contribute, which is what ultimately occurred. Another example was the texting app of choice for the Adelphi and Fresenius students. While most Adelphi students were not familiar with WhatsApp, most groups used this app due to the recommendations of their Fresenius teammates. From the instructor's perspective, this was an indicator that the Adelphi students were not being ethnocentric about doing

their work "the American way." In addition to learning about diversity regarding their project topics, the students were also learning how to function as part of a culturally diverse team.

With the concern that diversity issues are not prominent enough in Human Resource Management education (Bierema, 2010; Hite & McDonald, 2010), the TAVEC project provides a valuable opportunity to enhance this component of the curriculum. By strengthening the formal diversity content with an international collaboration, the project also contributes towards addressing the gap between diversity education and diversity training (King et al., 2010) as well as allowing students to deepen their understanding of *positionality*, which highlights that identity changes according to the social context (Bierema, 2010).

The combination of diversity education in Germany and the United States also brought together different cultural and historical perspectives on the subject. Although diversity covers a range of interpersonal and inter-group differences, a contextual prioritization of dimensions in different countries is evident: in the USA a significant proportion of the discussion is devoted to issues of race and culture, with dimensions such as religion and sexual orientation present to a lesser degree (Bierema, 2010; Rubin, 2018). In contrast, the diversity agenda in Germany has a stronger emphasis on gender and the development of measures to address structural sex-based inequalities in the economy and society (Page Group, 2018). The individual project groups were free to select which dimension of diversity they chose to address, and an interesting result was that none of the groups chose to examine race or culture and only one group chose gender; the most popular dimensions were age and physical ability. In other words, the students largely avoided projects that risked being controversial by dividing group members, and instead selected "safe" topics in which all students identified within the same category. One cause of this could be that the time devoted to the project did not allow for many diversity education sessions to be held with both Fresenius and Adelphi students together, thereby limiting the awareness of common reference points that the project work was building upon.

In conclusion, the TAVEC project provided an opportunity for intercultural exchange during a time when international mobility was limited. Students working virtually on a team project allowed them to learn about how diversity is viewed in different countries and gave the students firsthand experience being part of a culturally diverse team. In many cases, the established rapport between group members enabled them to exchange perspectives on a range of cultural, social, and political issues. Against the 2020 backdrop of the global health crisis, Black Lives Matter movement, and the US presidential elections, students valued the opportunity to discuss current events across cultural boundaries and gain insights and deeper understandings. The opportunity for the students to participate in a virtual conference, and possibly a mobility component, extended the opportunity beyond a one-semester classroom experience, which should provide a more enriching experience for the students.

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‘Connecting Globally while Grounded at Home’: The ASC Experience

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Global Learning at Agnes Scott College includes a week of cultural immersion travel, which allows participants to “explore and engage with the world” through exposures to vastly different people, places, cultures, and perspectives, and through learning activities that build intercultural competencies.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing travel restrictions, the college was compelled to look for alternative global learning opportunities, including new teaching strategies, digital educational tools that are resistant to disruptions, and local global resources. Simply put, the pandemic made us rethink and reimagine our pedagogy for effective instruction and sustainable learning.

Like many institutions, Agnes Scott College went virtual for all educational activities, including the required week-long global cultural immersion travel. This shift entailed a tremendous amount of creativity, flexibility, adaptability, and resilience in the face of various uncertainties that threatened to disrupt learning. Going virtual meant creating meaningful virtual programs that would help achieve the learning outcomes of global learning by “connecting globally while grounded at home.” Indeed, if there is a silver lining to these challenging times, it is the growth of virtual programs which has increased access to international education and global learning (Yavich, 2021).

It is within this framework that students of *Journeys – (Post)Colonial Legacies (Martinique & New Orleans, LA)* participated in a virtual global cultural immersion program March 8-11, 2021, as an alternative to the traditional week-long study tours of the destinations. The French Caribbean island of Martinique and New Orleans, LA were selected to provide opportunities for virtual explorations of (post)colonial legacies.
In order to gain some of the advantages of in-person study tours, and in consonance with Li Ling Apple Koh (2021)’s belief that “[t]he key to a virtual tour is to increase student involvement through engaging activities and meaningful interactions [and to create] an engaging virtual tour experience that is an alternative to in-person field trips,” the program included engaging presentations, tours, recorded talks, discussions, reflections, collaborative tasks, and other learning experiences that provided meaningful immersion experiences. All of the sessions were led by experts with specialized experience in their respective fields.

During the first sessions, participants learnt about Martinique’s precolonial and colonial histories, the consequences of the abolition of slavery, and the social structures in contemporary Martinique, as well as the complex history and cultural diversity of New Orleans, a melting pot of European, African, and American cultures.
A multimedia presentation, interspersed with breakout room activities and engaging discussions, allowed participants to realize that for four centuries, almost all aspects of life in Martinique were deeply influenced by the sugarcane-based economy, with production organized on plantations that depended on

slave labor. They also listened to a pre-recorded audio tour and watched a photo slideshow that walked them around the grounds of the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana to learn about the history of slavery on a sugarcane plantation.

Another multimedia presentation on *La Savane des Esclaves*, a reconstructed village, provided an opportunity to discover Martinique's history and traditions through the lens of slavery. "New Orleans Music Tour" spoke to the African roots of this culture and contextualized its connections to the Caribbean. The presentation allowed participants to learn about jazz and brass bands, as well as rock 'n roll, and how each genre has contributed to the unique cultural identity of New Orleans.

Participants learned to make local Martinique dishes under the instruction of a Martinican chef, who weaved the history of the local cuisine into the lesson. The hands-on and collaborative activity allowed participants to realize that Martinican cuisine is a mixture of African, French, Caribbean, and South Asian traditions; the recipes often reflect the complex history and diverse cultural heritage of the island. They also followed along with a chef from the New Orleans School of Cooking to learn to make classic New Orleans dishes, which are a blend of West African, French, and Spanish cooking techniques.

At the end of the virtual program, students exceeded expectations in several learning outcomes, including identifying and describing (post)colonial legacies; i.e., how slavery and colonization have shaped and are still shaping the relationships between marginalized cultures and dominant culture; and engaging across differences and in meaningful intercultural communication.

During the post-program reflection session, participants listed the following keywords that best captured their virtual global cultural immersion experience: "thought-provoking," "eye-opening," "connectedness," "impressive," "expansive," "well-rounded," "chaotic good," "interesting," "informative," "intriguing," "engaging," "bonding," "connected," and "immersive." This positive feedback confirmed that the learning outcomes of the program were achieved. It also validates Seifan, Dada, and Berenjian's idea that active learning—especially in the forms of collaborative tasks, team-based and project-based learning, and hands-on activities, even virtual—enables students to make meaningful connections between concepts and real-life experiences (2019). Zoom interactivity and the fact that most of the participants are digital natives also contributed to the success of the virtual global cultural immersion experience because participants were able to easily connect, interact, and foster community among themselves. In this way, they gained some of the benefits of in-person learning experiences.

In order to enhance students' virtual learning, the institution also availed itself of the local global learning resources provided by Atlanta, a global metropolis that offers a rich ethnic and cultural diversity, by participating in the Global Communities Internship Program[1], a collaborative project funded by the Atlanta Global Research and Education Collaborative (AGREC). This project facilitates global learning and intercultural understanding in a local context by providing unique opportunities for connection with immigrant communities, cultural exchange, and service-learning from local global perspectives. Representatives of the partner institutions and community organizations attended the mandatory

[1] I am thankful to Dr. Gundolf Graml, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of Curriculum & Strategic Initiatives, and Professor of German, for inspiring me to write this article. Special thanks to Johannes Kleiner, Associate Director for Civic & Community Engagement at Emory University and Dr. Ruthie Yow, Service Learning & Partnerships Specialist at Georgia Institute of Technology, for spearheading the Global Communities Internship Program. Thank you also to Jongdae Kim (Re'Generation), Amber McCorkle (Clarkston Community Center), Kenja McCray (Atlanta Metropolitan State College), Whitney Morgan-Jackson (Georgia Piedmont Technical College), and Monty Whitney (Morehouse College) for participating in the project.

virtual pre-global cultural immersion classes, and their active participation and engaging conversations provided enriching experiences for Agnes Scott College students. An Agnes Scott College student is currently interning with one of the community organizations, with the goal of taking advantage of the transformative power of virtual, local global, experiential learning.

Overall, the virtual global cultural immersion program was a truly transformative experience. This innovative way of teaching global learning broadened the cultural horizons of participants: they were immersed in Martinican and New Orleans cultures through the lens of (post) colonial legacies, and they demonstrated global awareness and intercultural understanding. The virtual program was a literal transposition of the in-person experiences participants typically get at the physical destinations, with the advantages that participants did not have to leave their homes, travel leaders did not have to worry about in-country and international transportation challenges, there was minimal carbon footprint, and there was plenty of time to focus on the content, as long as participants knew how to manage online (Zoom) fatigue. Thanks to this virtual learning, students successfully "completed the program's learning experiences and assignments" while grounded at home (Toner, 2020).

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How Necessity Creates Opportunity: Equalizing Transnational Higher Education

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As most higher education institutions worldwide pivoted quickly to online learning due to the pandemic, some began to see an opportunity to innovate through partnerships. Very little has been written about the connection between transnational partnerships and greater access to international education. This article seeks to fill that gap and mentions some examples of transformative projects that will provide unique and long-lasting collaborations that increase equity and accessibility to and from U.S. higher education. The pandemic has paused most international activity, and many are using this time to lay the groundwork for innovative new models. The examples mentioned in this article are in the planning stages and expect to be rolled out later this year or next.

Partnership structure

Direct international partnerships are a relatively new model in the US, and our thinking about them is evolving (Buck Sutton, 2020). Changing needs and emergency situations like the 2008 financial crisis and the current COVID-19 pandemic have exposed the weaknesses in the traditional direct exchange model in which the extent of a partnership involved the mobility of a small number of students. Comprehensive partnerships have broader and deeper connections through multidisciplinary collaborations that involve both leadership and faculty (Gatewood, 2020b). Inviting faculty to actively participate in the development of programs provides creativity and buy-in and greater integration into academic programs, which in turn gives more students access to international education as it is woven through the curriculum. Thoughtful development of deeper partnerships that encourage varied collaborations between partners can include traditional direct exchange and incorporate new models.

As we strive to recover from the current crisis and are finally becoming more aware as a nation of racial and economic inequalities, there is ever more recognition of the importance of global interconnectedness. As A. Gordon (2020) points out, international education is a high-impact practice that can foster transformative experiences, but it is traditionally not accessible to many students. Transnational partnerships can offer a greater depth of interaction through joint research, meaningful Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), traditional direct exchanges, community engagement, and sharing of resources.

Partnership Models

Transnational Education (TNE) has been practiced by UK institutions for many years, but it is a relatively new practice in the US. TNE differs from international education essentially in location. As defined by Caruana & Montgomery (2015), citing the Global Alliance on Transnational Education, international education involves student mobility to a partner institution, whereas transnational education involves students staying in their home country and receiving an education from an international institution. The latter is achieved through online education, branch campuses, or

franchising. However, this is an ever-evolving field and new models combine aspects of both.

One example of this diversified collaboration is being planned out by Hilbert College in Hamburg, New York. Hilbert's President, Dr. Michael Brophy, has set up partnerships with institutions in Poland, Romania, Lithuania, Turkey, Portugal, and other countries for progression articulation, micro hubs, and dual degrees[1] (personal communication, March 25, 2021). Hilbert students are also encouraged to study abroad at the partner institution. Because it's a partner, Hilbert can cover the students' room and board and travel costs. Marketing and outreach efforts to communicate advantages and affordability will encourage Hilbert students, many of whom are first-generation students, to study abroad. Since faculty have the greatest influence on students, their involvement in projects develops the buy-in needed to promote programs. In addition, these are true partnerships that foster "equality in decision-making, mutual influence, and mutual benefit" (George Mwangi, 2017, p. 36) in that they equally benefit both institutions and their students.

An example of a new model that involves creative collaboration is being planned between Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York and the Royal Agricultural University (RAU) in Gloucestershire, England (P. Delaney & N. Ravenscroft, personal communication February 22, 2021). In their Mobility Entrepreneurship program, faculty will teach connected courses in which students will work collaboratively online to develop a project. In January of 2022 the U.S. students will travel to England and both groups will go together to Berlin for an international experience that will involve networking with entrepreneurs. Throughout the semester students will continue to collaborate and have virtual lectures. At the end of the semester the English students will travel to Hartwick and the groups will present their work together. Both institutions largely serve local students who would not traditionally travel abroad, and while the travel portion of the linked courses is not mandatory, there will be financial support for travel. Students who choose not to travel will have the chance to participate in the virtual part of the collaboration and will host the other students on their own campus. Both institutions plan to make this the basis for broader collaborations.

Community colleges are also beginning to participate in international partnerships. College of the Canyons in Santa Clarita, California and Universidade Fernando Pessoa in Porto, Portugal are creating a Canyons micro hub on UFP's campus that will provide UFP students the opportunity to earn an Associate's degree in one of ten majors (J. Cheng-Levine & N. Trigo, personal communication March 30, 2021). Students can transfer to a four-year program at UFP or at a U.K. or U.S. institution, or go directly on the job market. As part of the agreement, there will be faculty and student mobility in both directions, facilitated by institutional funds. This opens opportunities for community college students to travel and for European students to gain a shorter, more affordable degree with an intercultural component.

How this helps students and communities

The most effective international experiential learning is transdisciplinary and occurs throughout an education. This can be best

[1] In progression programs, students begin their studies at their home institution and complete their degree at Hilbert. Dual degrees include some travel and some online education, and credits are accepted by both institutions so that the student receives two degrees. Micro hubs involve an entire Hilbert online degree being taught at a host institution that provides campus life, tutoring, and a physical space that is a Hilbert College hub within their campus. For the micro hub, in consultation with the host institution Hilbert hires a local person to head up this office, and revenue is shared between the institutions.

achieved through embedding international experiences in the curriculum in diverse combinations (in person, online, hybrid). Short exposures such as guest lecturers and longer experiences such as semester-long collaboration, as well as faculty-led programs and dual degree programs, have a greater impact when there are multiple global connections. As C. Duncanson-Hales (2014) points out, supporting students to become global citizens involve developing their skills over their entire higher education experience (p. 93). With a variety of experiences students from the US who couldn't afford or hadn't considered the possibility of study abroad benefit from multiple intercultural experiences. Even those who can't travel, such as students with family obligations or undocumented students, can benefit, and students in countries with lower average incomes can better afford a U.S. education.

Conclusion

Traditional international partnership models are being reconsidered, and institutions are heading toward more strategic and creative connections (Gatewood, 2020a). In order to better serve all students, we must engage in more meaningful and equitable international partnerships.

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Developing a Globalized Localism Model and Practice for Social Justice

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Social justice work through international education curriculum can be deeply catalytic, generating impactful and reciprocal collaborations between local communities, communities abroad, faculty, and students to develop voice, agency, and the skills to organize and work with others to bring about change so that we can all live in empowered and self-directed communities. Too often in international education, local and global work are considered to be opposing poles of activity, as if they exist on two ends of a single strand. We argue that these ends should be pulled together, woven into a whole where the local and global, theory and practice, and pedagogical models and applications are knotted together. For us, social justice moves the hands that tie this strand of opposites into a dense intersectional practice. Through social justice-focused means and ends, local communities, communities abroad, faculty, and students are all empowered to generate change at small and large scales, both here and abroad.

This article explores a framework for pursuing this woven knot of globalized localism and presents overviews of three large-scale, local/internationalized, student/community-based initiatives. Starting from a position that generating power is the ultimate aim of organizing by and with communities for economic and social justice ends (Chambers, 2004), we proceed in flat, reciprocal, deeply collaborative ways that foreground community organizing theory and practice to work with and identify tangible projects and goals that the community itself seeks to achieve.

Eric Hartman and colleagues have persuasively argued for global community-based learning that is "applied, reflective, connected, visceral, integrative, and engaged; it is locally contextualized, historically informed, and theoretically grounded" (2018, 3-4). We agree with Harman's arguments and framing but also seek to fundamentally ground this work within local communities here at home. Neal Sobania (2015) has edited a volume on local community-based service learning for international ends. With *globalized localism* (adapting de Sousa Santos, 2006; see also Charles, Zhou, & Scarnati, 2021), we bring Hartman and Sobania together to focus and situate our work both at the local and global levels so that engagement with our local community here connects with our community-based work abroad.

By using a model that weaves local and global work together concurrently, reciprocal, flat collaborations are developed and deepened over time. Through ongoing, multi-year projects, our students collaborate both in person and virtually with local diasporic, indigenous, international, and undocumented communities here and also with various communities abroad. At its heart, this reciprocal and collaborative work between our students and community members—locally and abroad, in-person and virtually—is grounded in social justice concerns focused fundamentally on issues of power, equity, health and healthcare, development, and climate justice.

So, how can we tie this knot, weave these powerful community connections through social justice work? We present brief overviews of three strands of practice that bend toward one another and, in similar contexts, could be integrated and tightly woven so that their efforts are mutually supportive and reinforcing. The first is a large-scale locally based community engagement initiative to build community power and democratic capacities, the second is an internationally based program that fosters social justice skills in the energy sector through collaborations abroad that are then returned to the local region, and the third is a virtual program that works through the global community-based development efforts of a major non-profit that also expands access of impactful, hands-on learning experiences for our students.

Northern Arizona University's First Year Seminar-Action Research Team Program saw 600 first-year students each year work in collaboration with more than 40 diverse local community collaborative partner organizations on social justice, grassroots democracy, and sustainability issues identified by these community partners. Organized into numerous themed collaborative Action Research Teams (ARTs), each ART was multigenerational and diverse, including K-12 students from the local community and their parents, various community members and organizations, local and regional political leaders, business entrepreneurs, and elders from the Diné (Navajo) nation. All came together in the ARTs to work on social justice projects that, while being rooted in the local region, were continually pointing outward to articulate with issues that were international in scope, including immigration motivated by issues of economics and community violence, food and water justice, healthcare access, and the rights of those who are undocumented. Based in community organizing theory and methods (Coles & Scarnati, 2014), the Program grew exponentially, helped anchor most community and regional social justice projects at the time, and whose efforts were showcased at the Obama White House in 2012.

Our second practice highlights local and global social justice work within the energy sector. NAU's Leaders United for Positive Energy (LUPE) project addresses the need for inclusive leadership and reciprocal relationships between the global extraction industry and local communities where extraction occurs (Lencina, 2018). Social justice for indigenous communities is foregrounded in LUPE, with students and faculty from Argentina, Mexico, and the US joining together, all from regions with long histories of colonization and mining practices that disproportionately take

place on indigenous lands (Vallejos et al., 2020). The interdisciplinary LUPE field course, supported by a grant from the 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund, is delivered virtually, followed by an in-person fieldwork experience taking place, in part, on the Navajo Nation in Arizona and New Mexico. This group of international students and professors collaborated closely with Navajo Nation community members and organizations to ground the discussion of social justice and mining in real-world examples. LUPE seeks to establish a tri-national network of students, faculty, and institutions to begin to achieve a just and sustainable future in the energy sector.

Our third practice is a virtual-based partnership with Global Brigades (globalbrigades.org), a platinum-level *GuideStar*-rated (www.guidestar.org) non-profit organization that brings 16 years of international community development experience and a network of 525 partner communities in multiple countries into collaboration with over 83,000 students over the years to work on tangible and impactful community-based projects that are identified by the community members themselves. Global Brigades has raised nearly $150 million and invested it in-country and, working with its community partners, enabled 1.5 million medical clinical visits, invested nearly $1 million in local community banks and in microloans, built infrastructure to enable more than 32,000 people to have access to safe drinking water, and trained more than 600 health workers.
Their in-person student collaborations with community committees and groups have been greatly expanded through virtual meetings, which now bring students into collaboration with community members to achieve real impact, gain significant disciplinary or community development and social justice-community empowerment experiences, and develop transferable intercultural competency skills, while limiting time away from school and their carbon travel footprint. The very low cost of these virtual non-profit educational student programs (literally, for the cost of a textbook) opens opportunities for students traditionally underrepresented in study abroad to actively engage in these international development experiences.

Conclusion

Through a *globalized localism*, we advocate for a model and practice that deeply integrates reciprocal local-global community-based collaborations among our faculty, students, and communities both at home and abroad on impactful projects identified by the communities themselves to build capacities and power and enrich the lives of all. Through local community work that can be internationalized, through local-global collaborations whose scope can continue to expand, and through virtual collaborations, we seek to weave together the local and global, theory and practice, and pedagogical models and applications. We must allow the hands of social justice to guide this fruitful knotting of passion, power, potential, skill, and capacity-building to meet unmet aspiration.

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