

NFOA Bridge Episode One with JuliAnn Mazachek 1-21

KB: Welcome to the first episode of the NFOA Bridge mini bodcast. What and where is the NFOA bridge you might ask. N-F-O-A is the acronym for Not for Ourselves Alone, Washburn's motto. And the virtual bridge is located right here on Teaching Tuesdays, connecting Washburn with the Topeka community and beyond, through community-engaged learning also known as CEL.

Community-Engaged Learning is a broad term used to encompass a specific form of experiential education in which students engage in mentored activities to **address community needs** that are **intentionally designed to promote student learning and development**. CEL bridges the academic classroom with our greater community by encouraging civic responsibility and critical reflection, meeting academic student development goals, and advancing our community partners' missions.

In this series of 10-minute bodcasts, you will hear from Washburn administrators, faculty, staff, and community partners who support and practice community engaged learning. I'm Karen Barron, community-engaged learning coordinator for CTEL and the host.

It's a pleasure to begin our series with Washburn's VPAA, Dr. JuliAnn Mazachek. Welcome JuliAnn.

JM: (your response) Thank you so much, Karen. It's wonderful to be here today and to kick off your series and to talk about the very important activities that we do at Washburn in community-engaged learning. So, thank you.

KB: Thank you. So, I just wanted to start out with Washburn's motto, "non nobis solum," which means "Not for ourselves alone." How do you view community-engaged learning as an extension of our motto and the university's founding principles?

JM: That's such a really that's such a great question, and as many of you know, Washburn's founding principles have to do with serving and with education for all. From the very beginning, we've always admitted, and it seems odd to even talk about that today, but we've always admitted women and minorities since 1865 and our first classes. and we, we even can point to that in our history, how committed that we've been to making sure that we provide an education to all members of our community no matter their background, their religion, their socio economic status, their race, their gender, whatever it might have been at the time, and we have remained true to that through all of these years. And when you talk about community engaged learning, you realize that an institution, a university like Washburn University, doesn't exist just on our campus. We exist to serve, and one of the major constituencies, stake-holders that we serve is our local community, and our local business community, and our regional and in our state, but that we have a very important role to play in their success. And that when we partner together, we are able to achieve and improve our communities, and it truly does allow us to live our principles through our educational experiences that we provide for our students by showing our students what a wonderful gift they have to give to improve the communities in which they live and that they can learn from the communities in which they live.

KB: Thank you, Juli. Thanks for clarifying that and just talking about how our motto is still in play today. Most definitely. I'm wondering if there are any particular goals concerning CEL that you would like to see accomplished?

JM: So, the community-engaged learning, of course we've had it on our campus for, well, almost, almost two decades, and we've been, but I would argue that's been the formal time it that it has been on our campus. However, Washburn through its history has been very committed to being involved with the, the community, both our, our business community, our non-profit community, our public service part of the community because we live in the, the capitol of our, of our state and, and always looking for, to find ways for our students to give back and to become involved, and, and you may recall--I guess I would just love to bring this up-- is that one of our, of our most prominent folks recently that, that passed away was Senator Robert Dole, and he is actually probably our best example that people know about of service learning, and while he was still a student, he was serving in the, in the legislature, and that was something that has been a core part of Washburn since the beginning and we, we look to continue that as our students go through classes today, to connect them with the community in ways that they can make a difference, and, and you asked, Karen, are there very specific goals, and I, I don't have metrics to share with you today. It is more, it will be more general than that and it would be that we would develop more opportunities for our faculty, staff, and students to partner with our community, whether it be our, our YMCA, whether it be our YWCA, whether, whether it is a local bank, or a large, some of our hospitals, or a fortune 500 company that we have in our midst, that they would find ways to take the knowledge that they have here and partner with our community to be able solve some of the problems of the business, of the organization, or to solve some of the problems that need addressed in our community, to make the places that we live, and work, and play better, and we know that we can integrate these experiences with our educational content in our courses to be able to make a difference. That would be my goal, that we would develop more of those opportunities for our students and for our community to come together and that we would look for new ways--we've been so good at doing these experiences in the past-- but that we would find new ways to expand that effort going forward.

KB: Well, thank you, and I totally agree. I think it's an exciting time that we're living in, and I love the fact that you, that you brought up Senator Dole and his early experiences with Washburn and community engaged learning, and we are still developing those today, and I also appreciate how you pointed out not only in the non-profit sector but also in the business sector, we can reach out and make connections there that will benefit students, faculty, and community partners, so, so those are such important connections and I appreciate you pointing that out.

JM: Oh, you know, Karen, I'd add one thing related to Senator Dole because you reminded me as you were talking. That in his, whenever you talked with Senator Dole, he would always talk about the person that said to him, "You ought to think about doing this." He said, I would have never thought of that on my own if someone had not urged me to take the step and do something different than what I thought was my traditional education, and I often think that these community engaged learning opportunities give our students an opportunity to think beyond our borders of our campus and to realize that what they are doing has the potential to impact their communities and to make a tremendous difference in what the future looks like. And that is at

the foundation of it, that is so exciting, not only for our students but for the communities in which they're going to live and make a difference.

KB: I couldn't agree more and the reciprocity between the community partners and the faculty, staff, and students is really key to that, and I think it, it speaks to your point about kind of thinking outside of the box and you know we think together, maybe the faculty has certain goals they want to see attained and the community partner has certain goals they would like to attain, and we get together, and we figure out how we can work together. And so, I think, yeah, I think that is, is so important and again I really like bringing Senator Dole into this. It's, yeah, he has left a legacy, that's for sure.

JM: And, and, and you mentioned too, Karen, you know really, I focused on of course how our students grow through this process, but our partners, our community partners, grow through the process, too and, and become exposed to new ideas and fresh minds, and it makes our community partners, have, it includes different perspectives than they would normally be able to bring to the table and allows them to consider even more broad sets of options as they're looking to find solutions to their, to their situations or to their problems, and so it truly is a win-win partnership.

KB: Yes, I agree. So, I'm going to ask you a question here. Clearly, the university values community engaged learning. Do you envision CEL service, research, and teaching activities being included in the future for promotion and tenure?

JM: That is such a great question, Karen, and it would be my, my hope, and it would be my goal that that where it's appropriate-- now I know that all of our disciplines are a little bit different, and that the discipline determines what fits their promotion and tenure guidelines--but there is already conversation going on, on our campus about incorporating this formally and some departments already have incorporated this formally into their promotion and tenure guidelines, and I would expect going forward and will whole-heartedly support that this is incorporated as appropriate into, into different departments' tenure and promotion guidelines as a very important part of service and, of course, research depending upon the type of work that gets done. There can be a tremendous amount of scholarship that could come from this also.

KB: Thank you so much for your clarity on that and for your time and support of CEL at Washburn. It's been a pleasure speaking with you.

JM: Thank you so much, Karen.

KB: For more information on how you can get involved with Community-Engaged Learning at Washburn, please see the CEL Pillar on the Center for Teaching Excellence webpage, and contact me, Karen Barron, Coordinator of CEL for CTEL.

A special thanks to Tom Morgan for composing our bumper music and the Washburn jazz band for recording it, featuring Craig Treinen on sax. See you next week on the NFOA bridge!

Bumper music fade out