Preface

The Australian Journal of University-Community Engagement is a refereed journal published twice a year by Engagement Australia (formerly AUCEA - the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance), a not for profit organisation dedicated to enhancing the engagement capabilities of staff and universities by developing expertise, fostering collaboration and building their communities across Australia.

The Engagement Australia E-Journal strives to be inclusive in scope, addressing topics and issues of significance to scholars and practitioners concerned with diverse aspects of university-community engagement.

The Journal aims to publish literature on both research and practice that employ a variety of methods and approaches, address theoretical and philosophical issues pertinent to university-community engagement and finally, provide case studies and reflections about university-community engagement.

The Journal aims to stimulate a critical approach to research and practice in the field and will, at times, devote issues to engaging with particular themes.

All manuscripts will be subject to double-blind peer review by three (3) professionals with expertise in the core area. The three (3) reviewers will include at least one (1) editorial board member.

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Guidelines concerning the preparation and submission of manuscripts are available on the website www.engagementaustralia.org.au

Editorial Comment

The impact of university-community engagement in terms of social change and research outcomes continues to be strong. Federal Government initiatives mean that drivers for universities to connect, interact, exchange and add value in their communities are constantly changing. Collaborative engagement between universities and their communities has led to best practice in many areas not the least of which is building capacity in communities around aspiration and participation in higher education. In many universities specific appointments at Pro Vice Chancellor level are highlighting and supporting essential collaborations with community and industry to connect intellectual knowledge, experience and resources to produce mutually beneficial outcomes.

Readers of this journal know that the work and research being undertaken in the community engagement space is diverse. This journal provides an opportunity for authors to contribute papers to showcase case studies, provide examples of best practice, define methodology to underpin research in the area and provide direction for future research. In this edition, four very different papers showcase exemplary illustrations of university-community engagement.

In Paper One, Marina Carmen investigate at a macro level how well research for community and social benefit is recognised and supported in policy in Australia. She analyses the strategic and research plans of universities across Australia and finds stated commitment to research impact, but focussed almost exclusively on research income, publications and rankings in terms of implementation. Of concern, is that the findings of this study are consistent with reports in the broader literature that indicate a lack of value placed on community-engaged research in practice. Even amongst those institutions found to have a stronger policy commitment to research impact, systems to support and measure it were weak. Carmen suggests that resolving this gap between stated commitment and implementation systems in policy at both national and institutional level is imperative in meeting stated goals to maximise research for community and social benefit in Australia.

Clare Hanlon and Michael King, in Paper Two, highlight the importance of service learning-based units of study developed in partnership with community organisations to ensure benefits to all parties. The paper discusses the outcomes in terms of improved student learning and greater community awareness of university programs with consequent success in obtaining sponsorships. The authors suggest that the reporting of the results of the implementation of service learning in a teaching program may assist readers to draw upon existing knowledge and experiences when undertaking similar initiatives. It is suggested that the template of guidelines and strategies provided in the paper is

applicable to management units involving diverse student enrolments across organisations.

In Paper Three, Peter Howard, Jude Butcher and Tim Marchant, highlight the experiences of persons who completed a Clemente Australia community embedded university humanities course providing higher education opportunity in collaboration with social agencies for people experiencing multiple disadvantage. The responses confirm what is known from the literature regarding the complexity of the lives of people experiencing disadvantage, the immediate and short term value of humanities education, as well as the importance of structures and processes which support this learning. The findings highlight a shared pattern of Clemente students raising new possibilities, planning on these new possibilities and acting upon them. Together, these insights speak to increased personal self-determination, and offer significant practice and research learnings for Clemente Australia, the higher education sector and social policy.

Paper Four focuses on the importance of building aspirations in young people. Joy Penman and Kalpana Goel describe a regional campus initiative to increase university aspirations of high school students in a regional area through the introduction the First Generation UniReady Program.

The learning that transpired and the impact of the program on students' decision to pursue university studies were measured. Results of the post-program survey indicated that the majority of the students who participated in the program perceived the program as a valuable introduction to university. They found the program to be useful and influential on their decision to seek future university enrolment.

The four papers presented in this edition provide very interesting and informative examples of how universities and communities are engaging for mutually beneficial outcomes. We hope that you enjoy reading this edition.

Many thanks to the authors who have contributed their papers and to the readers, who all share a common interest in university-community engagement.

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Research impact:
The gap between commitment and implementation systems in national and institutional policy in Australia

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Abstract

This paper seeks to investigate how well research for community and social benefit is recognised and supported in policy in Australia at a national and institutional level. A desk-review of national policy since the late 1990s was conducted, including policy statements, reviews, and key public documents of the statutory bodies responsible for the national quality framework for research and national competitive grants program. The strategic and research plans of universities across Australia were also analysed. While there is a strong national commitment to research impact, the focus in implementation is predominantly on research quality (academic outputs and grant income). The majority of university strategic plans had a high-level stated commitment to research impact, but focussed almost exclusively on research income, publications and rankings in terms of implementation. Even amongst those institutions found to have a stronger policy commitment to research impact, systems to support and measure it were weak. Resolving this gap between stated commitment and implementation systems in policy at both national and institutional level is imperative in meeting stated goals to maximise research for community and social benefit in Australia.

Background

This study seeks to investigate whether and how well research for community and social benefit is recognised and supported in policy at national and university level in Australia.

Maximising the economic and social benefit of research is an increasingly common theme in policy discussion around higher education in developed countries since the 1990s. Bond and Patterson (2005) argue that factors such as the move from an elite to a mass system of higher education and an increase in public expenditure have led to more political scrutiny. There has been a shift in a number of

countries towards viewing higher education and research as needing to contribute to specific economic and social objectives. (Goddard & Chatterton, 1999; Furco, 2010) This opened up a broader discussion and promotion of the role of universities in economic and social development – often referred to as the 'third mission' of universities. This is described as follows:

… universities are playing – and according to some should play – a broader and more visible role in the educational, social and economic well-being of local communities and the nation. The third mission therefore consists of a knowledge transfer function as well as a more general community function. (Jongbloed, Enders, & Salerno, 2008, p. 313)

A significant focus within the 'third mission' of universities, beyond teaching and research, is the contribution of institutions to regional development. (Chatterton & Goddard, 2000; Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development, 2007) Winter, Wiseman, and Muirhead (2006) argue that in Australia, university-community engagement and partnership became a focus in policy discussions in the early 2000s, driven by a concern with social and economic development in rural and regional areas, as well as a focus on attracting university funding from non-government, predominantly industry-based, sources and collaborations.

Within this context, the focus of this study is research for community and social benefit, rather than economic development, or commercialisation of research, as this has been dealt with extensively elsewhere. (Godin & Gingras, 2000; Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000) In terms of defining research for community and social benefit, there is a large body of literature focussed on community-engaged research practices, with a focus on community empowerment and partnerships. This approach is most apparent in health-related research, but also in a range of other disciples and fields, including environmental health (Mansoureh & Meredith, 2006), education (McLachlan & Arden, 2009), and social work (Healy, 2001). Community-engaged research also has a focus on promoting change. This is addressed at the level of community (Ramsden, McKay & Crowe, 2010) and at broader practice, program and policy levels (Wallerstein & Duran, 2010). A range of terms are used in the literature to describe the 'transfer', 'exchange' or 'application' of 'knowledge' and 'evidence' in terms of change. In assessing the impact of research, the majority of studies have focussed on individual projects or collections of case studies or the development of evaluation tools. However, there has been a growing focus particularly in public health research on the translation of evidence into policy and practice change (See Kerner and Hall, 2008) and on ways to measure this either at the level of government or within research organisations (Lavis et al., 2003; Frank, 2009; Canavan, Gillen, & Shaw, 2009).

However, the literature reveals a range of problems identified by researchers in terms of valuing the process, outputs and impact of research for community and social benefit. Key issues raised are difficulties in receiving funding, perceived detriment to researchers' careers, the amount of unrecognised and unfunded time taken to build partnerships with community, and the lack of recognition or status given to the research and findings. (Walsh et al., 2008; Kennedy et al., 2009) In Australia, MacLean, Warr and Pyett found in their study of community-based researchers that academics were 'keenly aware that outputs from this research were not counted in academic performance metrics, are often difficult to publish in prestigious "high impact" journals and, as some perceived, are poorly valued within the university'. (2009, p. 410) In the United States, Calleson, Jordan, and Seifer (2005) argue that there is a gap between recommendations made by national commissions and national governing bodies from around 1990 onwards about the importance of community engagement, and the reality of promotion and tenure at a Faculty level in the health professions schools where peer-reviewed publication is prioritised and rewarded over community engagement activity. This study seeks to add to an understanding of this perceived gap between policy and practice through a detailed analysis of policy itself, at a national and university level in Australia.

Policy related to research impact is under-studied. Some have assessed existing national schemes that aim to capture and support research impact, such as the United Kingdom's Research Excellence Framework. Martin (2011) describes the approach taken, but also a range of problems identified with impact assessment, including the reporting burden and difficulties in defining and attributing change to a particular piece of research. In Australia, some authors have suggested that the national policy could be more supportive, for example, through dedicated funding streams, and a focus on measuring research outputs beyond peer-reviewed academic publication. (MacLean, Warr, & Pett, 2009) Only one paper could be found specifically addressing Australian policy related to research impact, describing the development of a Research Quality Framework that was announced in 2004 and later abandoned in 2007. (Donovan, 2008) There is a small body of literature addressing the evaluation of university policies to support university-community engagement. (Winter, 2006; Hart, 2010) Overall, however, no studies could be found focussed specifically on university policies in terms of valuing, measuring, and supporting research impact. Addressing the link between national and institutional policy is also a gap in the literature.

The focus of this study is to analyse policy itself, as a barrier and/or enabler to research impact. In doing so, implementation is

included as a focus within policy. In their seminal work on policy and implementation, Pressman and Wildavsky write:

Whether stated explicitly or not, policies point to a chain of causation between initial conditions and future consequences … Implementation, then, is the ability to forge subsequent links in the causal chain so as to obtain the desired results. (1984, p. xxii)

Others have continued to refine this description of implementation as what happens in the chain from intention on the part of government and impact in the real world. (O'Toole, 2000) Included within this is looking at how various actors and institutions pick up, interpret and act in relation to policy. Hupe (2011) expands on this to look at factors that produce 'incongruent implementation' and suggest that successful implementation is more likely where the design of policy involves goal clarity, a robustness of implementation structure and a simple set of actors and structures involved.

The focus of this study is to interrogate policy for clear statements of commitment and robustness of proposed implementation systems regarding research impact. In doing so, it looks at policy produced by key institutions in the 'causal chain' at both national and institutional level – the Commonwealth government, statutory research bodies at national level, and university governing bodies. The practice and effectiveness of implementation in the real world (i.e. the details of functioning systems to measure research impact) are outside of the scope of this study.

Methods

Research was conducted in two phases – a review of policy at national and at institutional level – both conducted in mid-2013.

A desk-review of national Australian higher education policy was conducted, including major government reviews and policy statements since the late 1990s. The starting points for this search were the websites of government departments responsible for higher education, research and innovation. In analysing commitments to systems of implementation, a review of the key public documents of the statutory bodies responsible for the national quality framework for research and national competitive grants program was also included. These initiatives are administered by the Australia Research Council and the National Health and Medical Research Council. The strategic plans of these bodies were chosen as key public policy documents, as well as national reports on research quality produced in 2010 and 2012.

The second phase of the study involved a web-based search of policies at university level across Australia, with a focus on university strategic plans. These were chosen as key public policy documents produced by each institution and profiled clearly on university websites, and subjected to content analysis. Fifteen of the thirty-eight

Australian universities clearly demonstrated a greater focus on the issues under review. A search for the research plans from these universities was therefore conducted. These were located from university websites or by follow up with university offices.

Australian policy

The results from the first phase of the study showed that, in Australia, from the late 1990s onwards there has been a strong emphasis on research impact across policy related to higher education, research and innovation.

In 1999, the government released a Knowledge and Innovation statement, which clearly linked the advancement of knowledge and understanding to its application for the benefit of the economy and society, for the first time. (Commonwealth of Australia, 1999) This was followed in 2001 by a five-year policy focussed on investment in science, research and innovation. (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001) Under the guidance of this new policy, the government announced four national research priorities in 2002 that would be applied to all commonwealth-funded research schemes. These changes were re-affirmed in a national review of the higher education system, resulting in the release of a new policy in 2003. The commitment to research for social benefit continues in later policy announcements (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003; Commonwealth of Australia, 2009), with higher education being put forward as central to achieving key objectives for the nation's future.

In terms of policy commitment to robust systems of implementation, searches of government websites revealed a number of government-commissioned reports considering how to measure and support the impact of publicly-funded research. These were related to the development of a Research Quality Framework for Australia, announced in 2004 as a means to assess both research quality and the impact of research, with the aim of ensuring that publicly funded research was delivering real economic and social benefits. A report commissioned on measuring research impact noted the difference between measuring the academic quality of research and its eventual impact (i.e. uptake by government or business), and the challenges involved in determining what data could realistically be collected to inform assessment of research impact. (Allen Consulting Group, 2005) Another report commissioned around this time considered the breadth of public policy support for 'knowledge transfer', identifying important gaps in terms of promoting, measuring, and investing in these activities. (PhilipsKPA, 2006) However, in responding to the report, the Liberal federal government clearly defined knowledge transfer as engaging with business, government or the community to generate knowledge for 'quantifiable economic benefit', and argued that this was part of the core business of universities and was therefore supported through existing

funding sources. Any specific funding scheme to support 'third stream' activities was specifically ruled out. (Bishop, 2006) Later, in a major review of higher education in 2008, the panel acknowledged receiving numerous submissions advocating for a separate funding stream for knowledge transfer and community engagement activities. The panel rejected this, as it is seen to form an integral part of teaching and research. (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008)

So, in terms of policy commitments to implementation, the key mechanisms have remained the national competitive grants scheme and the national quality framework for research. The key public documents of the organisations administering these initiatives include strong policy commitments to research impact. Particularly, in the area of medical and health research, there has been a strong focus over the last decade on the translation of research into policy and to improve health at an individual and community-level. The National Health and Medical Research Council has a strong stated commitment to research translation, and partnerships between researchers, policy-makers, and clinicians. (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2012) The NHMRC also has a stated commitment to consumer and community involvement in research and the translation of research. (National Health and Medical Research Council and Consumer Health Forum, 2002) An emphasis on research impact is also present in the most recent Strategic Plan of the Australia Research Council. The first key

performance indicator for research relates to improving impact and outcomes in terms of social, economic, environmental, and cultural benefits. (Australia Research Council, 2011)

In assessing the robustness of implementation systems, a key focus is the national quality framework, as this sets the benchmark for what is considered excellence in research. While the Research Quality Framework was discontinued with a change of government in 2007, the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) initiative was later announced in 2009. ERA is administered by the ARC, and has been conducted in 2010 and 2012. Outcomes are intended to guide research investment, and government funding to universities. (Australia Research Council, 2010) The scheme consists of reporting for research outputs, research income, applied measures and esteem measures. There was initially some scope to report on 'non-traditional' outputs (e.g. creative works), and in 2012 this was expanded to include outputs in the areas of Economics and Studies in Human Society, such as policy reports. However, reporting of eligible outputs is weighted towards peer-reviewed journal articles (62% and 69% of eligible outputs reported in 2010 and 2012 respectively) with non-traditional outputs making up only 4% of the total in 2010 and 2% in 2012. (Australia Research Council, 2010; Australia Research Council 2012)

In a national review of research funding delivered in 2011, the limitations of the ERA initiative were recognised in that it does not

measure the broader economic, social and environmental benefits of research. (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011) The review defined research performance primarily as publication and citation, while research productivity is defined specifically as research income, higher degree student output and research application (primarily in a commercial sense). However, it did recommend the development of a separate system-wide impact assessment mechanism. Efforts to track the impact of research in terms of broader economic, social and environmental benefits were outlined in the National Research Investment Plan released in 2012, and in 2013, a discussion paper was released describing options for this new assessment. It suggested the development of reporting systems for research engagement metrics, and a system of expert review of case studies of impact submitted by universities. (Commonwealth of Australia, 2013) However, with a change in federal government taking place in August 2013, the future of this proposed system is unclear. In the meantime, some efforts have been made to capture research impact within ERA. The ERA 2012 report included a new section on 'pathways to research impact, including a summary of data collected on industry and public sector funding for research, commercialisation, and research collaboration. However, the ERA evaluation is still defined as focussed on 'academic excellence and impact' (Australia Research Council, 2012) and the

expanded measures included in the discussion are limited in terms of assessing the broader impact of research.

The results of the policy analysis show that in Australia there is a strong national policy commitment to research impact (i.e. the application of research for community and social benefit). However, commitments to systems of implementation through the national quality framework are focussed on research quality over and above research impact. Overall, national policy commitments to robust systems that specifically recognise and reward research impact are weak.

University policies

In the second phase of the study, the websites of all thirty-eight Australian universities were searched. Thirty-three universities had strategic plans that were publicly available and able to be downloaded from their websites. The majority of the plans (25/33) included a commitment to research for community and social benefit as part of their vision, mission, values or purpose.

The University of Queensland positively influences society by engaging in the pursuit of excellence through the creation, preservation, transfer and application of knowledge. (University of Queensland, 2013, p. 6)

The University aspires to be a valued contributor to national and global deliberations on societal challenges. As a leading international university with a focus on being public-spirited, it is important that the University's researchers have an impact on resolving societal challenges. (University of Melbourne, 2010, p. 4)

Victoria University will be excellent, engaged and accessible and internationally recognised for its leadership in … engaging with industry and community to make the world a better place, through the creation, sharing and use of new knowledge. (Victoria University, 2011, p. 9)

Research was also included as a key goal, strategy or objective in most plans. Specific themes in the discussion of research were fairly consistent across the plans: improving research productivity and income; increasing research quality; specialising in key areas of research strength; promoting inter-disciplinary research, particularly through research centres, institutes and collaborative networks; building partnerships with industry, government and non-government organisations to diversify income and promote knowledge translation; improving research training and support services; and increasing higher degree enrollment and completion. However, some plans included a more distinct focus on research impact. For instance, Edith Cowan University includes a strategic priority to 'strengthen research

capability, capacity, translation and impact'. (2013, p. 2) Elsewhere, research impact is included within more general commitments to community engagement across all areas of work, e.g. Flinders University includes a 'commitment to social justice and human well-being... [that] runs through all of our learning and teaching, our research and our collaborations and is the passion of our staff'. (2012: p. 8)

The majority of documents (22/33) provided performance indicators to measure progress in research. These were almost exclusively related to national definitions of research quality (research income, academic publication and rankings). A small number of universities included partnerships and collaborations as performance indicators. Six universities included research impact in performance indicators. Two of these included research impact as an aspirational goal (Queensland University of Technology and University of Wollongong), while four others included the development of metrics for research impact at a Faculty level (University of Melbourne) or university level (Flinders University, La Trobe University and Deakin University). Deakin University's indicator to be in the top three in Victoria for innovation impact is stated as being subject to the development of a national system of metrics. (2013, p. 11)

Across the strategic plans, 15 universities were deemed to have included a significant focus on research impact. This is defined by a strong statement of commitment to research impact at multiple levels in

the plan (i.e. mission/values and goals/strategies or inclusion of performance indicators related to research impact). The majority of the universities (8/15) were located in Victoria. This is the second largest state in Australia in terms of population. Almost all universities in this state had an explicit and detailed focus on research impact and community engagement. The reason for the noticeable difference in emphasis on research impact and community engagement among Victorian universities is unclear. However, it may be related to a stronger tradition of union and social movements, and a greater concentration of medical and health research institutes.

The research plans from the fifteen universities with a significant focus on research impact were then sought for analysis, to see if these provided additional information on valuing, supporting or measuring research impact. Searches of university websites were conducted, and follow-up with relevant planning units. However, only seven of the universities had research plans that were publicly available. In some cases it was clear that these plans existed but were not public. This is most likely a reflection of the highly competitive research environment.

Key themes in the research plans are similar to those noted in the university strategic plans, but more detail is provided in terms of implementation. Specifically, research plans tend to focus on targets and strategies for increases in research income and output. The plans also include strategies for identifying and prioritising research strengths; details of investment in research infrastructure and services; plans for incentive funds and support for collaborative research grant applications, research centres and networks; details of workload planning for research staff; measures to attract and retain high-performing researchers; performance requirements for researchers; and plans for improving research training and student satisfaction.

Overall, in defining performance indicators the focus is on measuring research quality through academic research publications and national competitive grant income. However, in a small number of cases the consideration of research quality in these plans is somewhat broader than in the university strategic plans. For instance, Monash University goes further in its research plan to define its overall goal as 'impact through excellence and relevance'. (2010, p. 4) The plan notes that the external impact of research in terms of its effect on individuals and society is increasingly being utilised internationally as a key indicator of success. The plan notes a range of measures that could potentially be used to indicate impact has or will occur, including:

… the proportion of research users who continue to work with Monash over time (with the assumption that the research must be having some benefit if they choose to come back for 'repeat business'); indicators of benefits arising from the use of research outputs adopted in industry, government or the not-for-profit sector. Measures in the

second group may overlap with those relating to relevance, such as: the number of significant partnerships with non-academic partners; whether dissemination and adoption pathways are built into research plans; and the extent to which researchers participate in committees or advisory boards influencing policy decisions. (2010, p. 6)

La Trobe University writes in its research plan that it is committed to a University Analysis of Research Quality as 'a measure of the quality of applied research based on the impact it has made on the communities, partnerships, user groups or clients to which it is addressed'. (2013, p. 6) This is given the same weight as ERA in the plan in terms of striving for research rankings. However, no detail is provided about what metrics this system might use. A number of other universities included a strong stated commitment to research impact and community engagement, but no performance indicators specifically addressing these (e.g. Victoria University). Swinburne University had a strong stated commitment to research impact in its Strategic Plan but only outlined indicators for increasing government and industry funding, and using stakeholder surveys. (2010)

Overall, even amongst the small sub-set of universities with a stronger commitment to research impact, limited detail was provided on how to support and measure it, while detailed plans and systems for increasing and measuring research publication and income were included.

Conclusions

The analysis conducted here shows that there is a strong policy focus on research impact at a national level in Australia. However, policy commitment to implementation systems for measuring and supporting this are weak. Despite strong stated commitments to research impact on behalf of the ARC and NHMRC, and attempts to adapt the ERA initiative to include more impact measures, these are outweighed by a focus on research excellence defined as research quality (academic outputs and national competitive grant income). Proposals for separate funding streams or quality assessment schemes for these research activities have not yet come to fruition. At university level, the focus on academic outputs and grant income has also eclipsed efforts to define and measure research impact. Stated commitments to research impact in university strategic plans are inconsistent across institutions, and even where strong stated commitments exist, implementation systems for recognising and supporting research impact are vague, and given little weight within broader systems for measuring and supporting research.

The findings of this study are consistent with reports in the broader literature that indicate a lack of value placed on community-engaged research in practice. What this study adds is a view of important gaps in policy itself between stated commitment and robust implementation systems. In addition, this study indicates a strong

relationship between national and institutional policy, where weak commitments to systems for implementation are echoed. In particular, it appears that universities are slow to establish their own systems of measuring research impact, or are clearly waiting on national systems to be developed. Resolving the gap between stated commitment and implementation systems in policy at both national and institutional level is imperative in meeting stated goals to maximise research for community and social benefit in Australia.

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Service-Learning: A Case of Providing Benefits to all Parties

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Abstract

As a result of constrained funding community sport organisations are under increasing pressure to seek external funding to support their programs, equipment, athletes and even organisational survival. Sponsorship has emerged as a key income stream to support both operational and more strategic initiatives Since the pursuit of funding is now integral to many of the roles that are likely to play, it is advisable for students to enhance their sponsorship related skills. This article discusses a service learning-based unit of study that has been developed over four years in partnership with sporting organisations to ensure benefits to all parties. The unit combines blended learning and service-learning, thereby enabling teams of students and managers from community sport organisations to produce a sponsorship proposal and presentation intended to secure a sponsor. Improved student learning and greater community awareness has resulted and evidenced through surveys and verbal communication. Follow up telephone calls to managers five months after the experience indicate enhanced confidence and success in obtaining sponsorships. The prospective sustainability of the service-learning initiative has been provided with impetus through the interest shown by other community sport organisations and a request by a local council to the university to collaborate with five of their sport organisations annually.

The incidence of sport-related sponsorship ranges from the community level through to the upper echelons of professional sport Sponsorship revenue is a key income source for many sporting organisations (Independent Sport Panel, 2009). It plays an increasingly important strategic role as a result of reliance on external funding to support programs, equipment or athletes in community sport organisations. Management educators who are committed to the future leadership of community sport organisations have a responsibility to develop student knowledge and skills in the sponsorship field. It was

partially as a consequence of the interest of a particular educator that sport sponsorship was introduced as a core unit for management students undertaking a sport specialisation. The introduction of service-learning into the unit on Sport Sponsorship occurred with a view to applying theory to "real world" needs (Kenworthy-U'ren & Peterson, 2005) and allowing students to work with and learn from the community (Hains-Wesson, 2012; Kenworthy, 2010). The unit blends the delivery of block mode face-to-face teaching with on line and face-to-face discussions along with the experience of service learning in a community sport organisation.

Our article begins with a discussion of the need for sponsorship within community sport organisations, followed by an exploration of the value of service-learning. We then discuss how service-learning was introduced into the Sport Sponsorship unit and how theoretical foundations were incorporated within a four point guideline and into the unit design. We concentrate on the strategies that have been incorporated within the guideline and on the achievement of mutual benefits for all parties. We conclude with a reflection that should assist readers who are planning to implement similar service-learning guidelines and related strategies within their teaching units.

Sponsorship in Sport Organisations

The exercise of sponsorship involves the sharing of resources to achieve defined organisational objectives. It can facilitate mutually beneficial business relationships and networks (Copeland, Frisby & McCarville, 1996; Olkkonen, Tikkanen & Alajoutsijarvi, 2000; Olkkonen, 2001). Sponsorship contributes to improved organisational performance through knowledge exchange and relationship building (Parise & Casher, 2003). Relationship levers comprise communication, trust and commitment (Farrelly & Quester, 2005). Knowledge exchange is an active two- way process (Parise & Casher, 2003). An example of exchange relationships in sport sponsorship is where a sport organisation seeks sponsorship dollars to fund equipment by partnering with a sponsoring organisation that seeks tangible and intangible benefits and exposure to targeted consumers.

Sponsorship has applicability to sport organisations and individuals including individual athletes, clubs and teams, events, league, unions, federations, competitions, venues and special causes (Smith, 2008). Sport organisations have sought to market themselves more actively with a view to obtaining the necessary funds to support their program operations (Stotlar, 2009). Though organising and providing of opportunities for participation and competition is the primary role of sport organisations (Donaldson & Finch, 2012), stakeholders frequently view them as social organisations that are

promoting the social good, particularly in the case of health (Skille, 2010; KoKo, Kannas & Villberg, 2006). The focus has progressively extended to encompass the concept of a welcoming and inclusive environment whereby health promotion policies and practices provide a mechanism to leverage sport and participation in promoting health messages (Eime, Payne & Harvey, 2008). However the context is challenging as sponsors are providing less sponsorship overall and higher concentrations for targeted sport organisations (Seaver, 2004). Sport organisations are under pressure to be more aware of what they have to offer and what sponsors are seeking.

The benefits acquired by companies when sponsoring community sport organisations are numerous. These include exposure though advertisements on promotional media, opportunities to distribute company information to participants, enhanced brand awareness and company gift-giving, affiliation with an organisation dedicated to promoting health or fitness, tax advantages, goodwill generated by the effort to provide a return to the community and effective public relations and recognition (Obsniuk & Smith, 2012). Those who use the service of the sport organisation may appreciate the goodwill of the relevant sponsorship, thereby influencing attitudes and behaviors towards the brand and connections amongst consumers, their everyday community environment, and the sponsoring organisation (Mason, 2005). However community sport organisations

tend to be managed by volunteers who lack the knowledge, skills, confidence and experience of obtaining sponsorship.

Service-Learning

The concept and practice of service-learning is increasingly commonplace within the higher education sector and involves the pursuit of mutual benefits for communities, students and universities. Students are engaged in activities that focus around human and community needs. It promotes learning and development (Jacoby, 1996; Kenworthy, 2009), and provides students with opportunities to apply the theory that has been acquired in the classroom to "real world" needs (Kenworthy-U'ren & Peterson, 2005; Lee, McGuiggan, & Holland, 2010). It requires more work and greater adaptability than traditional case studies or assignments (Kenworthy-U'ren & Peterson, 2005) and supervision is time consuming (Kenworthy, 2010). The substantial literature on service-learning has highlighted a range of benefits for the university and for students (i.e., Boss, 1994; Kraft & Krug, 1994; McCarthy & Tucker, 1999). The interests of the university and students have been a common focus of such research (Cruz & Giles, 2000). There are many documented examples of Universities supporting research, teaching and learning through partnerships with community organisations (LeClus, 2011; Hanlon, King & Orbell, 2013). Elsewhere it has been shown that service-learning enhances student problem-

solving and leadership skills (Mumford & Kane, 2006; Friedman, 1996; Zlotkowski, 1996). It also improves learning and increases civic engagement, employment skills and appreciation for diversity (Mooney & Edwards, 2001), personal growth, self-esteem and personal efficacy (Primavera, 1999).

There have been few comprehensive studies on the impact of service-learning on community organisations (Blouin & Perry, 2009). The limited evidence indicates that community organisations value student commitment, skills and fresh ideas (Ferrari & Worral, 2000; Vernon & Foster, 2002), and that it advances their missions (Schmidt & Robby, 2002). The mutually beneficial outcomes for the university, student and organisation are indicative of the need for an equal focus on the learning and service provision (Furco, 1996; Prentice & Garcia, 2000). It is advisable for educators who instigate service-learning into their units to incorporate strategies catering to the needs of all parties.

Integrating Service-Learning into a Sport Sponsorship Unit

The literature reviewed indicates that the outcomes of sport sponsorship and service-learning are similar in that they cannot be achieved by working independently and that there is a need for the exchange of knowledge. This is an important rationale for the integration of a service-learning program into a Sport Sponsorship unit.

The method of teaching that was used previously within the unit was classroom-based and drew upon theoretical concepts, case studies and assessments with a view to focusing on mock sponsorship proposals. Service learning was subsequently introduced to enhance student learning, motivation and graduate attributes, to provide students with a purpose associated with their assignments and to address a community need (Lee et al., 2010; Prentice & Garcia, 2000). "Real life" practice was incorporated by engaging with community sport organisations to obtain mutually beneficial outcomes (Peters, 2011).

Williams and Lankford's (1999) three service-learning principles provided a theoretical foundation for the delivery of the unit. These principles involve: ensuring that service-learning experience relates to the academic subject matter; that it allows students to learn about contributing to the community in a positive way; and that students reflect on their service-learning experiences. To reduce the bias towards the student/university that has been noted by Williams and Lankford and to bring greater equality to the relationship, we were guided by Blouin and Perry's (2009) three major community related concerns with service-learning. These refer to inadequate communication between the educator and the organisation, poor student conduct and an inadequate fit between the course and organisational objectives. The researchers have progressively developed a four point guideline over a four year period that is tailored

to the needs of the unit. The four points include: service-learning that relates directly to the unit and organisational objectives; communication between all parties; positive student contribution to the community; and the enhancement of student conduct through student reflection. To assist in the success of this service learning unit a strong academic advisor is present to act as a facilitator to support and encourage critical thinking and reflection from students (Mumford & Kane, 2006). An overview of the unit is presented prior to discussing each point and associated teaching strategies with a view to setting the scene.

Unit Design

The sport sponsorship unit is a 12 week program for second year undergraduate students. The average number of enrolments in this core unit over the semester is 120. The unit is taught in block mode at the start of the semester over two days, followed by face-to-face or online sponsorship sessions that are conducted every second week over the 12 week period (Appendix A). Teaching in block mode involves introducing a component of sport sponsorship by providing a two minute video or media clippings, following by the theoretical concepts, related case studies and examples of excerpts from past student sponsorship proposals. Over the course of the block mode learning, students organise themselves into teams of four. Each selects a sport organisation from a list of managers who volunteered their organisation or from student's own organisational contacts. The student teams assemble twice during each day of block mode teaching to discuss their class notes for the content required in their sponsorship proposal. Timelines are established for the anticipated completion of each component, the assessments and the delegation of responsibility.

The primary purpose of the sponsorship sessions is student reflection. The sessions have a strong focus on student-led initiatives whereby five teams assemble under staff guidance and reflect on: the information provided by managers of the selected community sport organisations; their actions and experience; any concerns; provide advice to fellow teams on the sponsorship proposal; evaluate sponsorship proposal; and assess fellow team sponsorship presentations prior to the organisational committee meetings. As the sessions reach their conclusion, the students identify lessons learnt and apply them to their service-learning experience.

Relating Service-Learning to Unit and Organisational Objectives

Service-learning relates directly to the unit learning objectives (Appendix A) as follows:

a) Working with a real life organisation that relies on external funding for programs, equipment or the organisation itself to exist

reinforces to students the need for activating sponsorship and the associated objectives and benefits;

b) Directly applying the components of a sponsorship plan to a real life community need

c) Evaluating sponsorship plans by providing verbal and written feedback on existing community sport organisation and student team sponsorship plans, and

d) Communicating with managers in speech and writing incorporating meetings, phone and email correspondence, a sponsorship proposal and a student team presentation to the organisational committee.

To ensure that service-learning relates directly to the organisational objectives, the educator identifies the need for the service-learning in that organisation during the initial conversation between the educator and manager prior to the start of semester. An explanation is provided about why a sponsor is sought and how it contributes to organisational objectives. Teams of students also identify this information during their first meeting with the manager.

The selected organisations have ranged from larger scale operations (e.g. a metropolitan basketball club that comprises 22 teams) to a regional cricket club comprising of only four teams. These organisations are typically operated by a committee of volunteers whose sport sponsorship-related backgrounds and experience vary

substantially. As a result it is not surprising that sponsorship proposals range in quality from self-designed approaches that provide scant proposal outlines through to informal verbal sponsorship proposals that have led to written agreements. In these circumstances the offer of academic service-learning to tailor sponsorship proposals to the needs of sport organisations is warmly welcomed.

Communications Between the Parties

Experience has shown that regular communications are essential between all parties to ensure achievement of the service-learning outcomes. This is particularly so in the case of a unit with 30 teams of students, 30 community sport managers and one local council involved each year. The parties include the community sport manager, the educator, the local council leisure manager, the student liaison and the student team. The student liaison is a nominated representative from the team of students and communicates directly with the community sport manager. Figure 1 illustrates the two-way communications that occur between the five parties.
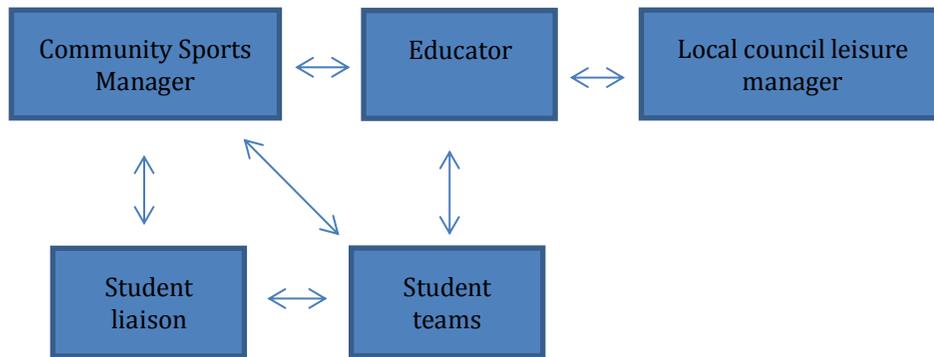
Figure 1. Two-way communication between all parties.

Strategies connecting the five parties are needed to support the communication process. These will now be discussed.

The community sport manager and the educator. Communication was established between the community sport manager and educator during the first year of incorporating service-learning into the unit. This occurred after students with industry contacts invited organisations to collaborate with a student team to design a proposal targeted at a potential sponsor. Once interest had been obtained we contacted the manager to discuss the unit, to explain why the organisation sought sponsorship, the intended student and organisational outcomes, the timelines and expectations from the manager. Communication channels were established immediately through the exchange of contact details, thereby instigating open communication between both parties, Word has subsequently spread among community sport organisations and respective managers have made contact to place their organisation on a list for prospective selection by students. The managers provide a written organisational overview and where applicable a website address to allow interested students to undertake research prior to determining their preferred organisation for collaboration.

The local council leisure manager and educator. Communication began between these two parties last year. Having heard about the academic program, the manager advocated involvement by the community sport organisations in the surrounding region. This led to the following communication strategies: a meeting between the two parties three months prior to the unit to discuss targeting community sport organisations; a collaborative university-council letter sent by the manager to organisations inviting involvement; the staging of a community sport information session; and a post unit meeting with the local council leisure manager. These communications led to the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in 2103. The contents of the MOU are guided by Blouin and Perry's (2009) recommendations for university-community service-learning relationships. These comprise a copy of the unit outline, the roles, responsibilities and commitment required from all parties, details of a protocol for addressing problems and an associated contact person.

The community sport manager and student liaison. Communication between these parties begins when the student contacts the manager inviting involvement by the organisation in the

sport sponsorship unit. The student then sends an introductory letter explaining the aim of the unit, student requirements, the roles and responsibilities of the manager, student and educator, the time commitment, timeline of the project, deliverables and expectations for communication (Blouin & Perry, 2009) and student liaison and educator contact details if any queries arise. Through the course of the 12 weeks, the student meets fortnightly either face-to-face or electronically with the manager to seek advice, feedback, content and to discuss the progress of the proposal specific to the needs of the organisation (Appendix A).

The student liaison and team of students. There is weekly communication between these two parties. The team of students meets weekly either face-to-face or online to discuss inputs received from the manager for the proposal, any problems encountered, and how the real life information can be applied to each component of the proposal. It is acknowledged that students come from a variety of backgrounds and range of experiences in sport organisations. Whereas one student had no experience in the related industry another worked full time at a football league. In the pursuit of balance, each team incorporates students with varied related industry experience, both experienced mentors and less experienced members. This diversity provides encouragement for experienced students about how to disseminate information and how to respect less experienced colleagues as well as

stressing the importance of team work over completion of the task independently.

The manager and team of students. Communication between these two parties occurs at the start and end of the semester. The team meets with the manager at the premises of the organisation to discuss the need for a sponsor, the process the organisation currently activates when approaching sponsors, what the organisation has to offer and prospective sponsors. The second meeting occurs when the team of students present and discuss the sponsorship proposal to the manager and committee members.

The team of students and educator. Communication between these two parties occurs fortnightly during the sponsorship session (Appendix A) and online on a needs basis. Online correspondence is initiated by us or by the team of students to ensure that students receive advice, objective feedback, that progress is evident according to the timelines and teamwork remains effective.

Positive Community Contributions by Students

The purpose of gaining sport sponsorship is for an organisation to invest in the provision of the sport, whether athlete, team, league or program, and to support the overall organisational business, goals and advanced strategies (Shank, 2005). Many smaller community sport organisations could not exist without sponsorship. During the block

teaching period students are introduced to a range of real life community sport organisation case studies that rely on sponsorship to survive. These case studies are discussed and students identify the benefits of sponsorship to the sport organisation, its users and the wider community. Experience has shown that explaining the 'need' for sponsorship and its benefits has enhanced student understanding of the learning outcomes and provided them with a stronger motivation for helping local community sport organisations. During the sponsorship group sessions students discuss the needs of the selected organisations, related benefits and the contributions that they can make to organisational development. As has been noted by Purdy and Lawless (2012) such approaches can enhance understanding of the value of service to the community.

Student Reflection Enhances Student Conduct

A number of strategies were employed to alter the widely held perception amongst community organisations that students lack motivation and commitment and are unreliable (Vernon & Foster, 2002). These initiatives included the introduction of fortnightly reflective sponsorship sessions; a mid-semester review of sponsorship proposals; student performance review by fellow students and an external consultant; and formal feedback by sport organisation managers. We have also found that when they feel accountable to a range of parties, students often engage strongly and successfully achieve the learning objectives (Purdy & Lawless, 2012).

Fortnightly sponsorship sessions. These are initiated by students and provide them with an opportunity to reflect on the benefits that they are obtaining from the experience (Tomkovick et al, 2008). A Student Liaison may for example comment on the lack of response given by the organisation's manager that has resulted in the stalling of the plan with the consequence of team member dissatisfaction. Fellow students then make suggestions and propose remedial strategies. These suggestions and more importantly the key learning from the experience are noted by all students so they can be applied to their own sponsorship proposal project thereby ensuring that the same situation does not re-occur or to rectify a similar challenge. Points are noted in the unit syllabi where students need prompts to reflect on their experience (Appendix A).

The sponsorship proposal. Experience has shown that students tend to be preoccupied by grades and are less attentive to the extensive written feedback that is intended to enhance their learning and improve the quality of their proposal. To address this potential limitation, students are asked to submit their mid semester proposal previously assessed when submitting their final proposal. This is on the understanding that the two proposals will be cross-referenced to ensure our feedback was reflected and learning was applied. The

approach has resulted in teams of students initiating meetings with us in order to clarify the various sponsorship components, deepen their reflection and learning and produce higher quality proposals. The final proposal is presented by the student team to the management committee when they conduct their sponsorship presentation.

Presentation to an organisational committee. Once feedback has been received on the final proposal, the student team presents a summation of the proposal to the organisation's management committee. To ensure student reflection and high standards, a preliminary presentation is conducted in front of the sponsorship group session members, the educator and an external sponsorship consultant (Appendix A). Each student and educator evaluates the team and provides positive and constructive feedback on an anonymous assessment sheet (Appendix B). These sheets are distributed to each team of students at the conclusion of the session so they can reflect on recommendations and amend their presentation accordingly. Verbal feedback is provided to each team by the consultant on performance and content whilst other students reflect on the comments made by the consultant and apply relevant learning to enhance their own presentation. The effectiveness of these preliminary presentations is evident from the responses to the management survey which was introduced two years ago where the quality of the proposals is rated higher (Avg 3 or 4) than in circumstances where no preliminary presentations were conducted (Avg 2 or 3).

Formal feedback by the sport organisation manager. Involvement by the manager in the assessment of students is important to increase student accountability (Blouin & Perry, 2009). After the sponsorship team presents to the organisational committee, the manager completes a survey that provides grades and written feedback (Appendix C). The survey is returned to the educator to allow evaluation of the success of the service-learning from the organisational perspective and to support the recording of grades. The completed survey is distributed to the respective student teams during their sponsorship group session where they reflect on the feedback and discuss the lessons learnt from the experience. Students are more likely to volunteer in future when they perceive that their work is valued by the organisation (Tomkovick et al. 2008).

Experience has shown that providing a copy of the survey to students during the block teaching period stimulates reflection on performance expectations and has increased student reliability and their commitment to achieving the unit outcomes. The survey is also distributed to the manager at the beginning of the unit so that all parties are aware of the criteria (Blouin & Perry, 2009).

Achieving Mutual Benefits for all Parties

To ensure that all parties benefit from their experiences, we believe that the interests of students, the university, community sport organisation and local council should be considered.

Students

Students complete two surveys at the conclusion of the semester. One involves a teaching evaluation and incorporates: effectiveness in communicating with the class; knowledge of subject matter; response to needs and questions; well organised; useful feedback; and creation of an effective learning environment. The second evaluates the content taught in the unit: the clarity of the unit and what was required; an understanding of what was expected; the usefulness, planning and management of learning activities; the planning and strong link to learning outcomes of the assessment tasks. Students are encouraged to reflect on each question and to provide comments in the allocated space so that the unit can be further developed the following year.

The survey results provide evidence of the benefits for students. On average, the ratings have increased and currently sit on 4.6/5. In particular, students have rated the question that refers to 'the assessment has assisted in my learning in this unit', an average grade of 4.7 over the past four years. Written comments include "the unit provided a stimulation to learn", "I could apply theory to practice that was meaningful", "I can now write my experience in designing a sponsor proposal to a sport club into my CV", and "I now have an industry contact who is willing to be my referee". Supplemented by the reflections gained during the sponsorship group sessions and the standard of the sponsorship proposals and presentations, these results reinforce achievement of the learning outcomes (Appendix A).

The service learning has sometimes resulted in employment or voluntary opportunities for students at the organisation. Evidence drawn from formal and informal feedback by students and managers has revealed that over the past four years nine managers invited students as members on the management committee, four managers invited students to work part-time to implement the sponsorship proposal on behalf of the organisation, 31 managers invited students to perform their 175 hour work placement in their organisation, and over the four years out of the 120 organisations 81 would like the students to volunteer their time to activate the proposal. As one manager wrote in her survey "The students spoke clearly. They were well dressed and acted in a professional manner. They had some great ideas which I would use. I would have all of them if I could pay them all. Work experience is welcomed to them all" (Sponsorship and marketing manager, soccer football club). This supports studies where service-learning increases student understanding and potential commitment to local communities (Kenworthy, 2010).

Victoria University

Victoria University is progressively advancing its reputation for servicing community needs. This was evidenced three years ago when a listing was produced of community sport organisations with an interest in collaborating with students in the sport sponsorship unit. Leisure managers from city councils have also heard of the service-learning opportunity and want the involvement of their sport organisations. In 2011 an email was sent from a leisure services officer at a city council who provided a list of clubs interested in the "Victoria University program where students can work with clubs to write sponsorship proposals". In 2012 the leisure manager from the local council requested collaboration with Victoria University to service five sport organisations annually within the local region. This collaboration has expanded the choice and range of prospective organisations for students.

The students who have participated in this unit have become valuable advocates for service-learning. In 2011, for example students were particularly excited to be involved in the unit when informed that the sponsorship consultant involved in reviewing the mock presentations was the sponsorship manager for a high profile Australian cyclist. One student wrote on Twitter about his excitement. We heard about this when the Commercial manager from a high profile Australian Rules Football Team who was on the student's twitter list, expressed his availability to present to these students on sport sponsorship and social media.

Community Sport Organisations

Our correspondence to community sport organisation managers states that the proposal is targeted to a sponsor and serves as a template for future sponsor applications. Over 120 sport organisations have benefited from working collaboratively with students from the Sport Sponsorship unit. Strategies are being continually improved to ensure that these organisations acquire benefits. When numerous positive verbal responses had been received from managers about the quality of the proposals, community surveys were administered to gather evidence-based responses to highlight the success of this service learning. Since the implementation of the surveys three years ago (Appendix C), results indicate that managers are on average most satisfied. Written comments such as "We were very impressed with the proposal put forward and plan on implementing it in the near future" (Manager, rural cricket club), and "The proposal was great and we would use it as a template to attract other sponsors" (Manager, women's Australian Rules Football club).

Last year, five months after students had presented to their selected sport organisations, we surveyed the respective managers via telephone to determine if the proposals were activated (Appendix D). Of the 30 organisations that responded 85% of the managers reported as

having used or adopted components of the proposal to seek sponsorship. Ninety percent of these were successful in obtaining minor or major sponsorship and on average $4,500 was received. As a result a total of $99,000 was gained in sponsorship for community sport organisations. The most successful example involved obtaining a major sponsorship from a food company for an Australian Rules football organisation. The deal comprised $6,000 annually for two years in return for signage to be placed strategically around the community oval.

Local City Council

The opportunity that this unit offers to community sport organisations complements the role of the local council leisure manager. In Victoria, Australia, this role involves engagement by the manager with its sport and recreation community, acting as an organiser, as a lead agency in securing funding, as a source of funds itself i.e., grants, as a source of information and advice, and as the operator of a recreation or cultural facility (Department of Planning and Community Development, n.d.). In this case, students who collaborate with community sport organisation managers to produce a sponsorship proposal that will act in future as a template for other sponsorship applications, assists the local council leisure manager in their service role to the community.

Reflections

This paper is intended to benefit educators by encouraging the adoption of evidence-based strategies into units and avoiding a 'trial and error' approach. This is particularly the case for units that involve large teams and organisations in service-learning. Five reflective points are identified as follows that may assist with adapting similar strategies in service-learning units, blended teaching methods; flexible assessments; monthly generic emails to managers; administrative support; and the four point service-learning guideline.

The most effective teaching method to achieve the learning outcomes of this unit and mutual benefits for all parties is an intensive two day face-to-face block mode seminar, blended online and face-to-face fortnightly reflective sponsorship sessions and on needs basis online educator guidance. Over the past years we have tried other teaching methods such as weekly lectures, online lectures and weekly group sessions. However the intensity and commitment to learning by students in the case of the current teaching mode seems to be most effective. Evidence has been gathered from student and manager surveys, educator reflection, informal student feedback and the quality of proposals and presentations. This supports the finding of previous research that has emphasised the need to design flexible courses that integrate techniques from both face-to-face and online methods (Delfino & Persico, 2007), and that the alternative methods play different and

complementary roles (Berger, Eylonn & Bagno, 2008). According to the student survey results, students appreciate the intense two days, believing that this provides an opportunity to aid their comprehension. Since all team members are present components in the proposal to discuss rather than waiting for team members to respond online. As was evident during the fortnightly sponsorship group sessions that were designed to enhance student discussion, reflection and application to learning face-to-face contact provides a useful means of motivating students (Alonso Díaz & Blázquez Entonado, 2009). It was found that the fortnightly approach stimulates teams to self-manage during the alternate week. These sessions provide a structure that help students to keep their proposals on-track, allowing the wide group to discuss common problems. The need for additional resources such as readings or case studies can also be identified where required. Online communication encourages teams of students to enquire about components or issues relating to the proposal. As another form of encouragement which promotes reflection and conceptual understanding this is valuable for both students and educators (Alonso Díaz & Blázquez Entonado, 2009). Though not all groups take advantage of online communications, student survey findings and verbal contact has emphasised the importance of corresponding with us as educators during unstructured hours.

In practice all teams do not work equally effectively, particularly where members contribute unequally to the ultimate outcomes. Problems associated with larger teams include unmotivated students, lack of team coordination and social 'loafing'. To overcome such challenges, teams of four are deemed to be more suitable (McCrea, 2010). Similar problems do occur in the case of four person teams, though not to the same extent. We have progressively refined strategies in an attempt to keep students on track including: fortnightly sponsorship sessions; continual reminders about the availability of online support; and flexible assessments. Students are given two assessments options applicable to the sponsorship proposal with grading either individually or as a team (Appendix A). Each year three teams typically select the flexible assessment. Our experience has shown that allowing the students to decide on team or individual assessment has resulted in a greater commitment, responsibility and for those that decide on the former assessment - teamwork.

Consistent with a concern expressed by Blouin and Perry (2009), strong communications are needed between the educator and the manager of the relevant community sport organisations. Sometimes managers take the initiative to make contact. Occasionally contact only occurs after we have received the manager evaluation survey about a lack of commitment on the part of the Student Liaison or team of students. Three mitigation strategies have been developed. First we

encourage the team of students to reflect on their communications during the sponsorship group sessions and to identify strategies to raise standards. Second if the communication breakdown is not discovered until the end of the semester, we discuss the situation with the manager and offer another team of students the following year. Finally, we activated a monitoring system whereby we receive copies of the fortnightly online communication instigated by the Student Liaison to the community sport manager. There is potential to do more. Due to the number of organisations involved, one recommendation is the dispatch of a generic monthly email to managers. This would update manager on student learning and application, the responses by teams of students on their experience and reinforce the invitation for managers to make contact with us if required.

Corresponding with the 30 community sport managers five months after the proposal proved to be worthwhile. This provided evidence that the proposals were activated in the community, that most obtained sponsorship, and that the content taught at university was relevant to the needs of community sport organisations and the sponsor. However this activity was time consuming. Previous research has noted that staffs are sometimes reluctant to become involved in service-learning because of the time and coordination related demands (Hammond, 1994) and the lack of administrative support (Stanton, 1994). To avoid a repeated request for administrative support from the

related College (Sport and Exercise Science), we are currently liaising with the coordinator of the third year undergraduate research program to activate a qualitative study research assessment that involves the five month follow up with community sport managers.

The involvement of local government has expanded the scope of this unit and its scale of operations thereby supporting the prospect of longer term sustainability. It is equally important to ensure that quality proposals are produced. The quality of outcomes that have been achieved by the unit are indicative of the effectiveness of the four point service-learning guideline and the associated strategies that are continually refined to enhance student learning and community benefits.

Conclusion

The application of service-learning within the sport sponsorship teaching unit has resulted in 30 teams of students working with 30 community sport organisations to produce 30 sponsorship proposals. Though the incorporation of service-learning has involved increase in the time, commitment and resources required to coordinate and teach the unit, the benefits for each party appear to outweigh these disadvantages. The success of the unit has been attributed to the blended teaching method, to the development of tailored strategies, and a commitment to ensuring mutual benefits for students, the university,

community sport organisations and the local council to the incorporation of a four point service-learning guideline. The four point guideline involve: service-learning that relates directly to the unit and organisational objectives; communication between all parties; positive student contribution to the community; and the enhancement of student conduct through student reflection. The reporting of these results may assist readers to drawn upon existing knowledge and experiences when undertaking similar initiatives. It is suggested that the template of guidelines and strategies is applicable to management units involving diverse student enrolments and organisations.

Appendix A

Condensed Unit Syllabi

_____

Introduction

This unit of study aims to introduce students to a variety of strategies that may be used to broaden the funding base of organisations. Students will be introduced to the processes and procedures in sourcing and servicing sponsorships. This shall involve learning about the theoretical concepts, being introduced to case studies and practically applying the concepts to design and present a sponsorship proposal to an organisation of the students choice.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit students will be able to:

a) Understand the need for sport sponsorship, its objectives and benefits
b) Identify the process associated with sponsorship packaging
c) Apply the components of a sponsorship plan to a selected sport organisation
d) Evaluate sponsorship plans
e) Communicate with the sport organisation using speech and writing, on the sponsorship plan

Core Graduate Attributes

All units at Victoria University are designed to develop students core graduate attributes. The attributes developed during this unit comprise:

1. Find, organise, critically evaluate and synthesise information on a broad range of topics
2. Communicate with others, using speech and writing, on a broad range of topics using appropriate language and demonstrating significant control over key genres/text types
3. Work individually and/or with others, as both a team member and leader in both formal and informal teams, to complete tasks,

evaluate and respond to own and others' performance using given parameters.

Required Text

Stotlar, D. (2009). Developing successful sponsorship plans. Morgantown, USA: Fitness Information Technology.

Assignments

Assessment 1: Sport sponsorship proposal- Part 1 (30%). From the knowledge gained on sponsorship components during block mode of teaching, readings and information you have received from your selected organisation, apply the first eight components of a sponsorship plan to your design of a tailored proposal.

Assessment 2: Sport sponsorship proposal – Part 1 & 2 (40%). In light of the feedback provided for Part 1, remaining sponsorship components, readings and learning gained over the past six weeks, you are required to submit the sponsorship proposal that shall be forwarded to your organisation. The proposal needs to be presented so the organisation can forward it directly to the sponsor. The components in the proposal may include:

- Introductory letter to the sponsor
- Table of contents

- Matching sponsor goals with organisational goals – table format
- Benefits of being associated with the organisation – table format
- Background of the organisation
- Moving forward with the organisation i.e., organisations aim over the next three years and recent initiatives
- Creating a win-win situation
- Sponsor package options
- Financial gains for the sponsor
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Other sponsors and benefits of being associated with these sponsors (if applicable)

Note: Flexible assessment is available for Assessments 1 & 2. Students have the option to receive a team assessment for the proposal (100%) or be individually assessed (90%) whereby the proposal is divided into four parts and team assessed (10%) for the overall continuity of information and presentation. Students need to inform the educator during block mode of teaching of their preferred option.

Assessment 3: Presentation of sponsorship proposal – Mock committee meeting (20%). The purpose of the presentation is to identify what the team recommends should be presented to the sponsor by the community sport organisation. This includes the key components and the length of time to present. The primary audience is the

sponsorship group session members, the educator and an external sponsorship consultant. This is an opportunity for students to reflect on their performance, content and amend any gaps identified by the mock committee in preparation for the 'real life' presentation to the organisational committee. Students will reflect, evaluate, grade and provide written feedback to each team using the assessment sheet provided by the educator.

Assessment 4: Manager evaluation forms (10%). Once student teams have presented to their 'real life' organisational committee, the manager who has been working with the student liaison and team shall complete the evaluation form and return it to the educator. Student teams will have the opportunity to review this form during the final sponsorship session.

Unit schedule

Teaching	Content	Resources, assessment dates
Block mode teaching		Teaching notes for each topic
Day 1	Unit overview	
	Sponsorship defined	
	Sponsorship principles	
	Identifying sponsorship benefits	Web review
	Student team roles	Teams formed, Organisation selected
	Identifying potential sponsors	Web review
	Identifying sponsor needs	Stotlar, Chapter 3
Day 2	Financial implications	Stotlar, Chapter 6
	Developing sponsorship proposals	Stotlar, Chapter 7
	Athlete sponsorship	Case studies
	Getting in front of your sponsor	Guest speaker
	Ongoing sponsor support	
	Evaluating the success of a sponsorship	Case studies

Teaching	Content	Resources, assessment dates
Block mode teaching		Teaching notes for each topic

	Content	Resources, assessment dates
	Renewing a sponsorship deal	Guest speaker
Sponsorship group sessions		
Week 2	Reflection: student contributions to the	organisation
Week 4	Reflection: role of student team members	Assessment 1 due: experience with
	the 'real life'	
Week 6#	Reflection: parties working together	
Week 8#	Reflection: format of presentation	Assessment 2 due
Week 10	Mock presentation of proposals	Assessment 3 due
Week 12	Reflection: learning outcomes	Manager surveys, student surveys

Student team/manager meetings	Content	Resources
Week 1	Need for sponsorship, potential sponsor/s,	Collect proposal if
	background of organisation, membership	applicable, annual
	& demographic breakdown, current sponsors,	report

Week 11	Presentation of sponsorship proposal

Student liaison/manager	Content	Resources correspondence
Day 2	block mode teaching	Introduce self, role, organise team meeting
Week 1	Introduce team	
Week 3 -7	Discuss potential sponsor, content for each component in proposal	Collect required information
Week 9	Organise presentation date	
Week 11	Thank manager, reminder to complete evaluation form	

# Denotes online group reflection session

_____

Appendix B

Confidential Student Evaluation: Team Sponsorship Presentations

_____

Completed by:

The purpose of team evaluations is to assist students in further developing their proposal and presentation to ensure a professional standard is achieved. Your valued input is based on the knowledge, understanding and experience you have gained during this unit to enhance your application to sponsorship packaging, proposals and communication. The rationale section is vital to complete as it justifies the grade and provides positive and constructive feedback.

Each topic is graded out of 3:

1 – Not satisfactory. This topic was not clearly presented

2 – Satisfactory. This topic was clearly presented

3 - Very satisfactory. This topic was clearly presented and innovative.

Team Name:	Grade
Strong introduction	
Objective of sponsorship clearly identified	
Clear match between sponsor and organisation	
Clear benefits for sponsor and organisation	
Innovative ideas to attract sponsor	
Achievable ROI	
Communication strategies to maintain sponsor satisfaction	
Strong conclusion	
Clear verbal presentation	
Professionally presented resources	

Total grade: /30

Rationale:

_____

Appendix C

Manager Evaluation Survey (Presented on university letterhead)

_____

Date xxx

Dear xxx

Thank you for working with the team of Sport Management students studying sport sponsorship. I hope the proposal that has been tailored for your organisation shall assist with gaining a sponsorship. As part of the assessment for this group, you are requested to complete the below evaluation. This shall assist the students to further develop their competencies in sport sponsorship. Please complete this evaluation prior to xxth[h] xx xxxx.

Circle one of the following on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 being least satisfied, 4 being most satisfied)

1. The students were:

Open to suggestions 1   2   3   4

Commited to the proposal 1   2   3   4

Regularly kept me up-to-date with the progess of the proposal

    1   2   3   4

Professional in their approach 1   2   3   4

Able to locate, access and manage information appropriately

    1   2   3   4

2. The proposal:

Was designed around the objective of the proposal

    1   2   3   4

Clearly identified a win/win for the organisation and the sponsor

    1   2   3   4

Identified key points required for the proposal

    1   2   3   4

Was professionally presented   1   2   3   4

Other comments

_____

_____

_____

Please answer yes or no to each question

Aspects of the proposal shall be incorporated into our sponsorship template   ___

The proposal shall be activiated to seek sponsorship   ___

As a result from working with this team of students, I (please circle):

• Am interested in employing one of these students part time to activate this proposal

• Have invited one of these students to work part time to activate this proposal

• Am interested in a field placement for one of these students to activate this proposal

• Have invited one of these students to conduct their field placement with the organisation to activate this proposal

• Am interested in a student from this team to volunteer their time to activate this proposal

• Have invited one of these students to volunteer their time to activate this proposal

Other comments_____

_____

Names of students in team

_____

Name, title and contact details of person completing this form

_____

_____

Name and location of organisation these students worked with

_____

Signature_____ Date _____

If this proposal is activated and a sponsorship successfully achieved, for the purpose of informing students on the success of the proposal, I would appreciate you contacting me.

(Educators's name and contact details inserted here).

_____

Appendix D

Telephone Survey: Manager

_____

1. Did you actively seek sponsorship using this proposal?

• If so, were you successful? ___

• If you were successful what did the sponsor provide? (Approximately how much cash or the equivalent to in kind or goods/services to what value?)

• What percentage do you believe the sponsorship proposal and student team presentation helped towards gaining a sponsor?

2. Is this proposal now a template for your club when seeking sponsorship? ___

3. Upon reflection is there anything you recommend to further develop:

• The communication process between the students, educator and yourself?

• The professionalism of the students?

• The content in the proposal?

• The student team presentation?

• The success of the university-community experience?

4. What was your view prior to and now after this experience with engaging with students from Victoria University?

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New Possibilities for People Experiencing Multiple Disadvantage:

Insights from Clemente Australia.

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Abstract

This paper provides insight into the experiences of six people who completed a Clemente university unit in the second semester of 2009 at the Mission Australia Centre, Sydney. Clemente Australia is a community embedded university humanities course providing higher education opportunity in collaboration with social agencies for people experiencing multiple disadvantage. Each person participated in a semi-structured conversational interview in early 2013 which explored their life journeys since 2009. The responses confirm what is known from the literature regarding the complexity of the lives of people experiencing disadvantage, the immediate and short term value of humanities education, as well as the importance of structures and processes which support this learning. Significantly, the interviews provide a vantage point from which former Clemente students reflected at some distance and considered how participation in Clemente affected their lives. These interviews provide detailed insight into the way each person wove what they encountered in their own way. The findings highlight a shared pattern of Clemente students raising new possibilities, planning on these new possibilities and acting upon them. Together, these insights speak to increased personal self-determination, and offer significant practice and research learnings for Clemente Australia, the higher education sector and social policy.

Introduction

Many people at some point in life face an obstacle or setback that hinders their participation in society. For most this is a temporary state of affairs. However, a significant number of people face ongoing adversity across a range of life areas which can compound to reduce their capacity to build the sort of lives they would otherwise choose for

themselves. At issue is what support is necessary for people facing ongoing adversity and how can this support be best provided.

This article explores how Clemente Australia, a particular example of higher education in the humanities, may influence the lives of people experiencing multiple disadvantage. Clemente Australia has a well evidenced track record of the personal efficacy of an educational approach that provides social supports and is embedded in the community (Howard et al, 2008; Howard et al 2012, Gervasoni, Smith & Howard, 2013). While Clemente is premised on purposeful engagement between university and community, the focus on this article is on the journeys of six students who successfully completed a unit in 2009 and how they look back on their participation. The authors together with the participants contribute to the growing body of research on Clemente Australia in particular. More generally, the article adds to the evidence-based case for an approach grounded in support for individual capability and capacity in which people are genuinely able to determine the future for themselves.

Disadvantage and the potential of education

In Australia close to one million people (5%) aged 18-64 currently experience at least three types of disadvantage *(How Australia Is Fairing*, 2010 Australian Social Inclusion Board). A common set of co-existing disadvantages are: low income and assets;, low skills; housing stress; unemployment or underemployment; and poor health. Factors such as substance misuse, mental illness, disability, family violence, discrimination and homelessness (and combinations of these) can also contribute to and further entrench multiple disadvantage.

Vinson (2007) who mapped disadvantage in Australia highlights that pockets of concentrated and severe social disadvantage have become entrenched across certain communities. These communities and many who live within them are experiencing long term and sustained social exclusion. Vinson notes "it is difficult to deny the centrality of limited education and its impact on the acquisition of economic and life skills in the making and sustaining of disadvantage in Australia" (2007, p. xiv).

While education has long been acknowledged as a key social determinant of health and wellbeing (Marmot & Wilkinson, 1999), some have investigated the specific impacts of education upon health and resilience throughout the lifespan (Hammond, 2004; Grossman & Kaestner, 1997; Hammond, 2002; Hartog & Oosterbeek, 1998; Ross & Mirowsky, 1999). Many of these impacts are related to psychological qualities which "may promote attitudes, practices, and life circumstances that are conducive to positive health outcomes" (Hammond, 2004, p. 552). A number of studies have indicated that relevant education can lead to improvements in: self-confidence (Carlton & Soulsby, 1999; Dench & Regan, 1999); self-efficacy (Wertheimer, 1997); self-understanding (Cox & Pascall, 1994);

competencies, communication skills, and civic engagement (Emler & Fraser, 1999; Parry, Moyser, & Day, 1992); a sense of belonging to a social group (Emler & Fraser, 1999; Jarvis & Walker, 1997); and substantive freedoms and capabilities (Sen, 1999).

Ken Henry, former Treasury Secretary, has argued for the importance of education in the Australian context of extreme disadvantage (Henry, 2007). Henry, following Sen (1999), sees education as both an instrumental freedom and a substantive freedom. In other words, while education can be a powerful means for addressing multiple disadvantage it also has significant value in itself and perhaps especially for multigenerational disadvantage. The psychological benefits noted above can be particularly relevant. Yet people experiencing disadvantage who are most in need of access to education and the critical pathway it provides to transformative learning are often those least likely to access it (Butcher, Howard & McFadden, 2003).

In *Breaking Cycles of Disadvantage* (Australian Social Inclusion Board, 2011) emphasis is placed on addressing the psychological impact of disadvantage if the cycle of disadvantage is to be broken. The Board, drawing on existing literature, notes that the experience of disadvantage has a significant psychological impact, 'Living in crisis and high stress situations can undermine an ability to plan or think long-term leaving people without a strategy for changing their circumstance.' This emphasis on lives 'of necessity' and where there is likely to be limited personal control over the immediate environment and few opportunities for self determination is well recognized (Shorris, 2000). Practical support, the Board suggests needs to address the psychological impact of disadvantage, be flexible, tailored and specific, and be provided for the long term. Further, the Australian Social Inclusion Board notes the role service providers can play as a force for good while acknowledging that there is also the potential to reinforce a sense of hopelessness or powerlessness that may exist. (Australian Social Inclusion Board, 2011). Three key principles are identified for addressing cycles of disadvantage that can be used to inform government work around service delivery reform: the way you treat people matters; continuity of support is essential; and a focus on addressing structural barriers must be maintained. The Australian Social Inclusion Board usefully warns against seeing any one thing as a solution to multiple disadvantage. However, appropriate and purposeful education has been shown to be a powerful pathway enabling people experiencing multiple disadvantage to make life choices that further enhance their social inclusion.

Clemente

Clemente Australia is sourced from Earl Shorris' Clemente program in the United States. Shorris (2000) sets out a vision for confronting the

reality of disadvantage, especially multigenerational poverty through studying the humanities.

'…poverty in contemporary America…is the life of necessity with all the violence the Greeks found in that word. To live in poverty, then, is to live according to the rules of force, which push people out of the free space of public life into the private concerns of mere survival' (p. 32).

According to Shorris, education in the humanities can help socially disenfranchised people out of the cycle of poverty and homelessness. Therefore, the program is different from 'life skills' or 'vocational' courses. It does not seek to train people directly for specific kinds of work, because work on its own is not seen as the "structural solution to poverty, particularly multigenerational poverty" (Shorris 2000, p. 63). Rather, it is premised on the belief that studying the humanities through courses such as philosophy and ethics serves to engage and empower people to think about and reflect on the world in which they live, so that they might become less likely to react simply to contexts and events and more likely to examine, question and contemplate. In doing so, learners would engage in "activity with other people at every level" (Shorris 2000, p. 127) and become engaged 'public citizens.'

Shorris (2000) has expressed the following as key pedagogical principles of the Clemente program.

1. It is generalist in content. The curriculum breaks down the substantive distinction between learning (for well off) and churning (for the poor), thus opening a regular routine of participation.

2. Dialogue is the purpose taking the place of a teacher-centred education.

3. The classes become a temporary public space, a public sphere to be involved in for its students to escape their private troubles and confront public issues. Clemente is a place and a time that students can break out of isolation.

4. While academic grades are recognised as of importance to the students turning-up and participation is considered to be the key indicator of success. .

The potential of the Clemente course was recognized in 2003 by Australian Catholic University (ACU) and the St Vincent de Paul Society (Sydney) with the establishment of the first site in East Sydney. Since then ACU, with other partner organizations and universities have collaborated in implementing Clemente across multiple Australian locations and contexts. In 2014, Clemente Australia is offered across nine locations nationally (Fitzroy, Ballarat. Canberra, Surry Hills, Campbelltown, Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane and South Brisbane) with a further three sites being developed for implementation within the next twelve months. After a decade of Clemente Australia, more than 800

Australians experiencing multiple disadvantage have accessed educational opportunities which have resulted in personal life choices from enrolling in this university-community program. The expansion of Clemente Australia has occurred through the collaborative ongoing sharing of initiatives, resources, skills and knowledge through purposeful engagement amongst universities, community agencies, government and businesses. Reporting the processes and impact of this community engagement continues to be a focus of Clemente Australia's ongoing research agenda (Butcher, J., Howard, P. & McFadden, M., 2003; Howard, P., Marchant, T., Hampshire, A., Butcher, J., Egan, L. & Bredhauer, K., 2008; Howard, P., Marchant, T., Saggers, S., Butcher, J., Flatau, P., Cherednichenko, B., Taouk, Y., Bauskis, A., Falzon, J., & French, G. , 2012; Gervasoni, A., Smith, J., & Howard, P. , 2013). In this paper, insights into the experiences of six people who completed a Clemente Australia university unit in the second semester of 2009 at the Mission Australia Centre, Sydney are shared.

Clemente was offered at the Mission Australia Centre (MAC), Surry Hills, Sydney, in 2005, and began delivering two units per semester at this site from 2009. MAC is a specialist homeless service offering a range of supports and services from a single location in an integrated model. In Australia, the basic requisites for students enrolling in a Clemente course are: a desire to learn; a willingness to commit to learning [initially to a 12 week unit]; a literacy level sufficient to read and discuss the contents of a newspaper; and a degree of stability in their lives.

Examining student journeys over time

There is a strong and growing evidence base for the effectiveness of Clemente education in Australia that stretches from 2005 (Yashin-Shaw, Butcher and Howard) to the 2012 Australian Research Council (ARC) Grant Report (Howard et al.). Existing research, most recently through the ARC Linkage Grant results (2009-2011), has provided a detailed understanding of the impact of participation in Clemente over the course of a semester and over the course of a year. It was evident from this research that more needs to be known about what happens to students in the longer term. This is a keen interest of practitioners and researchers alike.

This research project adds to the developing understanding of the journeys of students, drawing upon existing research and extending it through research undertaken at one site, the Mission Australia Centre (MAC), three years after the students had initially participated in a Clemente unit. It is anticipated that the findings can be used to inform service development and future research. The key aim of the research was to understand the life journeys of Clemente students three years after participation in Clemente Australia through an empirical study in which the voices of the students were primary.

Following from existing Clemente research, the emphasis was on a 'methodology of engagement' (Howard et al, 2008) which emphasized the role of participants as partners in the research. Conversational interviews were conducted with six participants who had completed a unit during Semester 2, 2009 at the MAC. There were 14 students who successfully completed a unit, either *Sacred Australia* or *Philosophy for Living*, at the MAC in the second semester of 2009. It was decided to limit the number of interviews to six to ensure depth of interviewing and analysis. All 14 were approached and the first six who responded and were willing to participate became the interview group. The interview focused on four aspects of the lives of participants: circumstances prior to entry to Clemente; participation in Clemente in semester 2, 2009; the period from the end of 2009 until the day of the interview; and, reflections on the influence of participating in Clemente in these past three years.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Methods derived from grounded theory, with an emphasis on a realist and inductive approach, were used to identify key categories and themes that emerged from a close reading of the transcripts. For validity and credibility the categories and themes were corroborated and refined by a five member Clemente research team as part of the data analysis process. The research project was approved by the Australian Catholic University's Human Research Ethics Committee on 14 March 2013 (protocol 2012 325N).

Student insights into the impact of Clemente on their life journeys

Below the results of the research are reported in four sections: first, what people telli us of themselves and their background, second, their personal circumstances immediately prior to entering Clemente, third, their experiences of Clemente, and finally, their life journeys since the end of 2009.

Participant data

Basic demographics and administrative data were collected as part of the interview process. This data showed:

- Gender: 4 male; 2 female;

- Age range: late thirties to late 50s (2 late thirties; 2 mid-forties to mid-fifties; 2 mid-fifties to late fifties);

- Housing: 3 live in public housing; 1 in parental investment property; 1 in family home; 1 in own home;

- Employment: 2 in part time employment (both studying); 3 on Disability Support Pension (1 unknown);

- Family: 2 indicated they had children;

- Education: 1 had a Master's Degree; 1 had an undergraduate degree; 1 had begun an undergraduate degree and completed 1-2 years; 2 have post school diplomas; (1 unknown);

- Means of referral: 4 came to Clemente through the MAC (3 commenced Clemente whilst living in the on-site crisis accommodation; the 4th learned about Clemente while attending counseling at the MAC); 1 learned about Clemente from a television program (and after initially considering that it might be useful for a family member realized it might be right for her); 1 heard about it from a fellow participant at a 12-step program.

- Clemente participation: 4 completed only 1 unit of Clemente; 2 completed all 4 units

The picture appears to be broadly consistent with the larger and more detailed demographic profile of Clemente students presented as part of the ARC Research (Howard et al, 2012).

Circumstances immediately prior to entering Clemente

The interviews confirmed what is already known from the existing body of evidence including the ARC research (Howard et al, 2008; Howard et al, 2012) with regards to the multiple and complex set of issues students generally face. All those interviewed had been through a period of considerable distress prior to beginning Clemente, often immediately prior, with 3 of the participants (Sam, Greg and John[1]) recently homeless and living at the Mission Australia Centre (short term crisis accommodation) and confronting mental health and drug and alcohol issues when they began '...bad everything...mental health, substance abuse, homelessness...' (Sam, p. 9). Two other interviewees while living in more stable accommodation had been through difficult periods. The first, Kerry, was experiencing intense health and grief issues '...I had a number of circumstances collide in my life...which floored me' (p. 2); the other, Paul, through drinking and depression, 'I would have said my worst case of depression' (p. 2) and with the former describing herself as 'lost' immediately preceding participation in Clemente. The sixth person, a refugee to Australia from Viet Nam (she left Viet Nam in 1975 first to Malaysia for two years), had worked consistently for thirty five years in Australia but saw the rewards disappear as a result of her husband's gambling problem, 'I lost everything in my life' (Jae, p. 2). She had been in hospital for an extended period with 'great depression' and after a period in crisis accommodation found herself in public housing which she found 'dreadful' and 'terrifying'.

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[1] All names used are pseudonyms

Experiences of Clemente

The interviews explored how people experienced Clemente and what if anything they gained from it at the time. It confirmed findings from the 2012 research (Howard et al) that people were able to learn specific skills, such as referencing, research and computer skills. It also reaffirmed themes common to the Clemente literature with respect to, for example, the way Clemente helped individuals to gain confidence (Kerry), develop their self-esteem (Paul), offer hope (Sam), and provide motivation (John). Once again, it reaffirmed much of what is known from existing research about 'what works': small classes, being in the community, the Socratic method, passionate lecturers, and the fact that 'no big commitment was required'.

However, there was greater emphasis compared to previous research (Howard et al, 2012) on the subject matter:

'Philosophy was very exciting...I was always very interested in it...and I think that was the clincher...the fact there was a philosophy unit' (Paul, p. 6).

'It's philosophy you know. I was at the crossroads wondering which path to take, what to do, the meaning of life...' (Sam, p. 4).

'When I saw what it was...I just went for it, I thought how lucky am I...I thought this is the one for me' (Kerry, p. 13).

The sense of achievement felt through completing an assignment or unit or number of units, while not a new theme in Clemente research, was strongly registered even after three years:

'I got a lot out of doing the assignment. It gave me a sense of achievement. The fact that I proved to myself I had the capacity. I'll never get rid of that...it's in the cupboard' (Kerry, p. 6-7).

'...I got a very high achievement for that' (p. 3)...'(if hadn't done) I wouldn't have known if I was capable of doing university again and I would have just gone out and done a labour job or something (Greg, p. 10).

'I got a high distinction for my paper' (p. 5). 'I'm still very pleased with the essay. I've posted it on Facebook' (John, p. 14).

Life journeys since the end of 2009

Centrally, the interviews explored key dimensions of participants' lives following completion of the second semester 2009. In stark terms:

a. Paul, Sam and Greg went on to study on a university campus. Paul and Sam who completed 4 Clemente units went to ACU, while Greg completed one unit and enrolled in a Bachelor of Applied Social Science at University of Queensland (UQ). Paul and Greg are still at university (Paul at ACU; Greg at UQ), while Sam has decided university is not for him.

b.	John went on to begin a Librarianship degree, completed part of it but struggled with the programming aspects, 'dropped out' and finished with a diploma.

c.	Kerry had become interested in tactile pursuits (making shoes) prior to entering Clemente. While deriving a great deal of satisfaction from the unit participation confirmed her decision to pursue crafts (machine knitting) especially after beginning a second Clemente unit and struggling with it. 'I've pursued other things' (p. 7).

d.	Jae tried a couple more units, involved herself more in her local community through volunteering and wants to return to Clemente studies.

Participants were asked about how they felt about where they were now in their lives. There was a strong sense of being in a better place:

'I'm working to try and balance my days. Sometimes it's more difficult than others. But I feel like I'm getting better… I feel like I'm managing myself pretty well in getting myself in that direction (of future plans)' (Kerry, p. 8-9).

'In the last couple of years I've discovered a…greater sense of being…my state of mind is good' (Sam, p.16).

'I'm very centred these days, very peaceful… In 2009, it (quality of life) was a 7. It's 10 now because I've got more of a hold on my own autonomy, self-determinism…then I was in Mission Australia accommodation , still waiting on the legal system to allow me the freedom to do what I want…now with self-determinism I feel more free, more relaxed…' (Greg, p. 9).

'I like the term a better person, more human, trying to get more human, be part of the human race and not a ghost…there's a real feeling you don't belong, don't fit in, that's slowly going now' (Paul, p. 23).

For John, this being in a better place was relative. He still referred to 2009 as 'my very worst year.' At the time of the interview he was experiencing a number of difficulties:

'I find it very hard to get motivated. My health is suffering, my blood pressure is up, I'm just not getting enough exercise' (John, p. 15).

Thoughts about the future, however, were yet more nuanced. Considering that it had been three years since completion of the unit (Semester 2, 2009) participants were asked where they thought they might be in another three years. Some found it a challenge to think in this way:

'Mate, I've got enough on my plate thinking about what the next day is going to be like…I kind of like, live in the present, I don't really live in the future or the past…it's a bit of a luxury to think along those lines…' (Sam, p. 15).

'…it's like I'm jinxing myself, because I'm not allowed to be optimistic. But I'll have a go. I'd like to think I've notched up quite a few units…I've

got few ideas in the air for short films and stuff I'd like to make. And to be more social with people I've got things in common with' (Paul, p. 16).

Others were clearer:

'I want to help people…I want to finish the course…I want to go back to uni' (Jae, p. 8-9).

'…really powering on with my knitting, sewing…and hopefully even more balance than what I am at the moment' (Kerry, p.10).

'…I would like to establish multiple streams of revenue. I'd like to be travelling and helping less fortunate people like say in PNG or East Timor…I'd like to have my own company established earning millions of dollars so I can put that money…we'd like to create a corporation through property development, trading in mining resources…' (Greg, p. 12).

Although declaring that he fully expected to be dead, 'pushing 60 with my lifestyle frankly I don't have much time left', John still had some ambitions for the future, 'I have projects I'd like to do. One of them is visualizing my poetry which is to put it into visual form and then perhaps I could exhibit in a gallery type situation…words and sculpture…I've had that idea for several years now' (John, p. 10).

Finally, participants were asked to reflect on the impact, if any, of Clemente in their lives. All participants looked back on the experience positively, one referring to it as a 'nice interlude.' However, the responses were nuanced. For Kerry it was about supporting a decision-making process which had been germinating:

'I was looking at directions …there really wasn't anywhere to go with my nursing…the experience with Catalyst just helped me really consolidate the fact that I just needed to let that go' (Kerry, p. 13).

For Greg it had helped to get him started again after writing off most of his twenties:

' I consider it as a springboard…yep, it was a springboard to allow me to know my strengths and weaknesses, and know that I'm capable of academic studies and you know sort of like just reconnect all those synapses' (Greg, p. 10).

From a current state in which he described himself as 'really tired' and lacking motivation, John looked back on Clemente as something of value:

'It was very exciting, very useful and very motivating…(without it) I think there's a good chance I wouldn't have done the librarianship course…' (p. 12).

He mused aloud:

'I think it probably would do me a huge amount of good to come back here and at least do the writing courses or something' (John, p. 13).

But he was careful to not over stress the role of Clemente in his life:

'…it was only a 2 month course and it was 4 years ago…I'd have to say my quality of life is better for having done it…but you know it wasn't an epiphany' (p. 13).

For Sam the impact of Clemente was more complex in that he had had hopes which at the time of interview were not fulfilled:

'…that I'd be able to use it to turn my life round. But what I found was that was going to be more difficult than I ever expected…because of society's attitudes to people like me' (Sam, p. 10).

And again:

'Catalyst was good…I thought I could use university to change my life but it wasn't going to work out for me. Just too many things stacked against me' (Sam, p. 18).

Running through the interviews and around the questions was the centrality of creative pursuits. Most of the interviewees were very serious about and committed to these pursuits. John, for example, identified himself as 'a poet and video-artist by inclination if not by fame… (laughs)' (p. 5) and swore the interviewer to secrecy about the detail of his artistic plans. Kerry saw a future focus on machine knitting (and had previously made shoes) and showed the interviewer examples of both. Paul had pursued film-making through courses and some volunteer work in the industry and intended to pursue it further. Jae had a business in laser cosmetics and was both knowledgeable and interested in presentation, revealed most keenly in the story she told of

using her professional knowledge, skills and resources to help a fellow classmate turn her life around, giving the advice 'you wear junky clothes, you pick up junky people…change your life' (p. 8-9), Sam is an artist and takes his art very seriously which was part of his struggle with art subjects at university, '…the next unit was going to be art history, and I just looked at it, and I know the guy, the man who is in charge of that…I couldn't take him seriously' (p. 7). Only Greg did not express artistic ambition, although the scope of his ambitions, it could be argued, reveal a powerful creativity. Interestingly, when asked about what stuck in his mind about Clemente Greg said, 'The assessment was doable. It wasn't test based, like exam based, it was assignment based, essay writing and creativity, like we had to make our own art…it was just great overall' (p. 5).

Discussion

Following Guarnaccia and Henderson (1993), it is apparent from the interviews that people who experience multiple disadvantage are not passive victims for whom things need to be done. Each person wove what they encountered through Clemente in their own way to their own ends in a manner consistent with their own capacities and capabilities For most, involvement in Clemente lead directly to their enrolling in a further course of higher education, for others it helped to support decisions to pursue particular creative and community interests. Across

the interviews, however there is a larger, shared pattern of raising new possibilities, planning on these new possibilities and acting on them. It is clear from the interviews that participation in Clemente was only one step in the journey that people were undertaking and needs to be considered as part of and against a range of contexts. For example, Greg on entry to Clemente was 'at the crossroads'. He had been released from prison (again), had tackled serious addiction issues, was living at the MAC and trying to pull his life back together. While at the MAC in addition to participating in Clemente he attended Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, saw the psychologist, had some dental work done, passed his driver's license and did some part time laboring work. Clemente therefore sits together and as part of a range of supports that he was able to access. It is also clear that individuals such as Greg had often begun a process of preparation that was underway before entry to Clemente.

All those interviewed expressed strong motivation for initially enrolling in Clemente whether simply wanting to go to university (Jae) to wanting to change their life around (Sam). Often these expressed motivations stretched back in time but Clemente may have afforded the first opportunity for a long time, if ever, where they might be realised. Attached to this was a strong theme of grief and loss that people were prepared to speak about and carry with them, where individuals felt that they 'have kind of lost everything, started with nothing' or that

'Clemente would have been very good for me if I'd done it like twenty years before'.

However, Clemente did often play an important role in people's lives beyond the specific academic skills learned or increased self-esteem or confidence that they might have felt initially. One participant, as noted above described Clemente as 'a launch pad and a springboard' and which made new possibilities possible. From these interviews a much more granular understanding of how these new possibilities looked for each person emerges. It is clear, however, that these new possibilities always need to be situated in the context of individuals continuing to manage significant ongoing challenges, which may include issues such as poor housing and unemployment, as well as drug and alcohol, mental health, alcohol and other personal issues. Of particular note, are the legacy effects of issues which people may have been confronting across most of their lifetime. Participants are very aware of these legacy effects ('some died' Sam, p. 13, referring to other Clemente students he knew and knew of) which include how others in 'mainstream society' may perceive them. A couple of those interviewed spoke frankly of their age and their own mortality. Sometimes these individual challenges or a number of challenges together proved to be too great an obstacle to realising new possibilities that they had identified for themselves.

New possibilities

A pattern of new possibilities in the lives of Clemente students emerges from the data. Table 1 reports and explores these across time from prior to entry to Clemente to the time of interview.

Table 1: New possibilities

	2009 >>>>>>	>>>>>>>	>>>>>>>	>>>>>>>>>
	Circumstances prior to Clemente	Raising new possibilities	Planning for new possibilities	Actioning new possibilities
Kerry	'Lost'	No longer need to maintain nursing registration. Creative options possible	Enrolling in machine knitting course	Buying new knitting machine
Paul	'Dead end job': couldn't move boxes forever	University study as an option	Completing four Clemente units	Enrolling at University. Keep pushing along with interest in film
Jae	Trauma/ Mental health/ Depression	Linking to University study	Finding ways to help others	Volunteer work in community with elderly
Sam	'Bad everything'	Always wanted to go to University; change was possible	Completing four Clemente units	Enrolling at University. Finding that it didn't meet his expectations and walking away.
Greg	'At crossroads'	Could return to University; could turn life around	Getting parole moved to Qld	Moving to Queensland; enrolling in University; getting part-time job
John	'My very worst year'	Further study	Considering librarianship course	Enrolling and completing part of librarianship course

It is clear from the interviews that these six individuals continue to face disadvantage which can be of a deep and entrenched kind. There is evidence of recent experience of adversity subsequent to 2009 by a number of participants through being homeless or in hazardous living conditions. There is also a sense in many of the interviews of the experience of trauma which stretches back to the past, to being a refugee, the strictures of parents (imaginary or otherwise) or family abuse. From the literature it is known that 'There is a huge body of evidence that our early childhood experiences combined with subsequent exposure to adversity explain a very great deal. This is dose dependent: the more maltreatment, the earlier you suffer it and the worse it is, the greater your risk of adult emotional distress. These experiences set our electro-chemical thermostats' (James, 2013).

Those interviewed may have inheritances which are not of their own making. However, there is good evidence from the interviews that individuals are moving from a situation in which their life may have been out of control to finding some degree of self-determination or at

least a greater degree of control. This is most directly expressed by Greg but also evident in the interviews with several others. This can be seen in choosing to do something but equally in deciding something is not for them. Even where original motivations might not have been fulfilled learnings were often able to be drawn. As Sam says of his time attending university on campus, 'I was glad I was in a place where I could try that academic thing but it fell short of my expectations.' (Sam, p. 5) The evidence from these interviews suggests that Clemente in conjunction with other supports and services appears to assist in supporting people to gain more control over their lives and become more self-determining in making decisions that suit them. The evidence from the interviews suggests that participating in Clemente may act as a springboard for people to raise, plan and action the wants that exist within.

Conclusion

The interviews in this research study highlight the complexity of the lives of people experiencing multiple disadvantage, confirm what is known from the literature about the value of education and humanities education in particular, as well as the structures, processes and content which support this learning. In particular, it speaks to the strength of purposeful university-community engagement. Significant in this study, however, is the insight into the life journeys of Clemente students with respect to how they looked back on Clemente and their recent lives. A new perspective of the influence of Clemente has emerged from listening to students three years after they completed a unit. This process of looking back at their life journey is significant for the ways in which each student raised, planned and acted upon new possibilities. Clemente was recognized as a valuable experience in supporting people in their personal life choices and in that respect was recognized as beneficial by participants, even where it had raised hopes that were not realised.

The Clemente course respects the dignity of the individual in a non-judgmental way. It brings together university and social agencies to support the students in their studies whilst recognizing that such issues as housing, employment, financial support, mental and physical health need to be continually addressed. This research supports the key principles of service delivery outlined by the Australian Social Inclusion Board (2011) in *Breaking Cycles of Disadvantage* in that: the way you treat people matters; that support needs to be ongoing; and that the emphasis on structural issues must be maintained. In so doing, it reaffirms how practitioners can best proceed as a force for good rather than reinforcing hopelessness.

It is the belief of the authors that the evidence from the interviews supports an approach, exemplified by Clemente, which acknowledges people's capacities and capabilities and which supports their own self-determination. In the words of Greg:

'…it's a bit like you know like natives to our country, if you allow them to determine their own future then they are more willing to accept responsibility and consequences of their choices…if there's a legal system hanging over them, laws, etc paternalistic choices saying you should do this or that then you take the freedom away from making choices and accepting responsibility and that is something I've got a really good hold on' (p. 9-10).

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Increasing university aspirations amongst high school students: Impact of the First Generation UniReady Program

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Abstract

This article describes a regional campus initiative which set out to increase university aspirations of high school students in a regional area. Through the introduction of the First Generation UniReady program conducted in 2009 for six weeks, two hours per week, at the Whyalla campus of the University of South Australia, forty-eight (N=48) local Year 10 students from three secondary schools were introduced to university and given opportunities to explore pathways to university.

The learning that transpired and the impact of the program on students' decision to pursue university studies were determined through surveys. Results of the post-program survey indicated that the majority of the students who participated in the program perceived the program as a valuable introduction to university. They found the program to be useful and influential on their decision to seek future university enrolment. In fact, 27% of the program Year 10 participants enrolled in various academic programs of the University in 2012 following high school graduation. Subsequent percentages of student enrolments were 21% and 34% for years 2013 and 2014, respectively. The initiative is worthwhile continuing on a regular basis.

Keywords: *school-university partnership, first generation program, higher education, raising aspirations, high school student university experience*

Introduction

In 2009, the inaugural First Generation UniReady program was conducted at the University of South Australia's (UniSA) regional campus in Whyalla. The program grew out of the UniReady Orientation program developed by the Participation and Community Engagement Unit of the University and was modified to engage regional students from various backgrounds. The aim was to immerse local high school

students in university for a period of time with a view to raise university aspirations of students.

Year 10 students self-selected for the six-week program, attending the campus for two hours during those weeks with their school teacher. The program included an orientation, information on pathways to university study, program-specific sessions, inspirational speeches from past graduates, a celebration lunch and awarding of certificates at the conclusion of the program.

Though this program has been conducted annually since, involving various local regional schools, it is the inaugural program that is reported in this paper as it focuses on whether or not the school students did in fact enrol at the regional University. The objectives of this paper therefore are: 1) to describe the inaugural First Generation UniReady program delivered at the Whyalla campus in 2009; 2) to report the pre- and post-evaluation of the program conducted; 3) to examine the impact of the program on students' decision to pursue university; and 4) to explore ways by which the program might be improved to better assist students in planning for their future career.

Background

The geographic reality of Australia is that it is a huge country with a small population relative to its size, and with the majority of its citizens residing in major city centres. As a resource-based economy,

the provision of quality education in rural, regional and remote schools is an important part of the national social and economic infrastructure (Stevens, 2009).

The Bradley Review of Higher Education in Australia (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR], 2008) has recommended a massive expansion in the level of domestic education in Australian universities. The Federal Government and the Higher Education sector need to address the imbalance in university representation (Skene & Evamy, 2009). There is a need to increase the numbers of rural, regional and remote students attending university through increased funding and institutional targets (DEEWR, 2008). Birrell and Edwards (2009) after examining the review conclude that there will have to be a major expansion in university campus construction in the outer suburban regions of all Australian metropolises.

It is well known that those from higher socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to attend university (Pearce & Down, 2011; Bowden, 2010; Skene & Evamy, 2009). While interest in university education is strong across all socio-economic groups, particularly for students who do not speak English at home, there is a considerable gap between aspirations and enrolment levels. This gap is larger for students from low socio-economic background (Bowden,

2010). Wilks and Wilson (2012) investigated the aspirations of primary and secondary school students about access and participation in higher education in low socio-economic rural and regional areas of north-eastern New South Wales. They report the importance of demographics, financial factors, and cultural and social capital in forming students' perceptions, choices and decisions about participation in higher education.

The obstacles to students' university aspirations and expectations are many and complex and certainly not confined to financial factors. Barriers extend to personal and social issues, including apprehension and fear, attachment to home, work and educational opportunities (Alloway & Dalley-Trim, 2009). Other considerations that influenced students' journey to university include family difficulties, gender, being first in family to enter higher education, migration, and experiences of schooling. The decision to enrol was not primarily the effect of perspective transformation, but rather the result of other aspects of their lives (Benson, Hewitt, Heagney, Devos, & Crosling, 2010). For instance, increased parental expectations were positively associated with educational expectations among individuals of various socio-economic levels (Schmitt-Wilson, 2013).

Munro (2011) extends the educational challenges to other non-traditional students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those not conforming to the conventional Australian university student. Under non-traditional are a diverse cohort consisting of full-fee-paying international students, older, mature-age students studying part-time by distance education, and domestic students who only recently aspired to attend university. These self-supporting students, who are part of the widening participation agenda of the Federal Government, are experiencing study–work challenges themselves. Equally important are disadvantaged students in communities experiencing prolonged drought and those from areas that have restricted employment following locally restructured timber and farming activities (Franklin, 2010).

Moreover, Skene and Evamy (2009) emphasise that Indigenous students and students from rural and remote Australia have been perennially under-represented. Geographic location is a critical consideration (Wilks & Wilson, 2012); in fact, the effect of location is a much stronger factor than socio-economic status or achievement (Moodie & Wheelahan, 2009). Byun, Meece and Irvin (2012), using data from the United States National Educational Longitudinal Study examining disparities in educational attainment by rural and non-rural students, show that rural students lagged behind non-rural counterparts in achieving a bachelor's degree.

Declining university enrolments have serious repercussions. It compromises the ability of certain regions to meet future industry

labour needs. Skills shortage is a problem in many areas of regional Australia. Also, declining enrolments have placed a considerable strain on many of the universities servicing these regions, creating further challenges for regional sustainability (Bell, 2010). What is offered for rural, regional and remote students is vocational education, but this does not provide a ladder of social opportunity for them (Curtis, 2011). The alternative – distance education – is not always an attractive option for those from low socio-economic backgrounds (Robinson, 2012).

Brook (2011) and Curtis, Drummond, Halsey and Lawson (2012) suggest various strategies, involving raising aspirations and familiarising with programs, to increase the enrolment share of low socio-economic students. They stress being inclusive and open to diverse personal and cultural identifications, and the use of peer-mentoring to influence students. Other recommendations include: flexible learning options (Msapenda & Hudson, 2013); expanding selection strategies (May, 2011); focusing on students' relationships with academics (Pearce & Down, 2011); university lecturers and school teachers working together in the delivery and assessment of high school subjects (Rissman, Carrington & Bland, 2013); and improving curriculum and information technology (Welch, 2010).

University presence in rural, regional and remote Australia is essential (Drummond, Halsey & van Breda, 2011). The benefits for greater university presence include increased community capital, greater retention of youth in rural areas, and greater equity between rural and urban spaces. Robinson (2012) argues that often the local university becomes the only possible provider of face-to-face higher education for rural communities. The physical presence in the region of a university campus has created the realisation that higher education is achievable (Penman & Sawyer, 2013; Penman, 2010).

UniSA has a strong commitment to providing equal opportunities for students to study at university. UniSA's Whyalla campus is particularly interested in increasing participation opportunities for rural and regional students. It's teaching and learning framework (Lee, 2007, p. 3) highlighted its "[commitment of] access to, equity within and quality throughout its programs". The teaching and learning academic standard framework states that the University is committed to providing tertiary education to the wider community and ensuring that pathways are available for all cohorts and meet "the needs of those who have faced educational disadvantage" (UniSA, 2009, p. 1).

The First Generation UniReady program aligns directly with UniSA's mission to create and disseminate knowledge, while engaging with communities to address major issues, as well as promoting its core values of scholarship, engagement and social justice. It responds directly to challenges laid down in the Bradley Review (DEEWR, 2008). With universities across Australia being challenged by reduced public funding for tertiary education, UniSA's answer is to extend its reach to

include all potential university students including rural and regional students. With the bulk of funding to universities now coming through collection of fees from students, universities such as UniSA need to be responsive to market demands, position themselves as world-class universities to attract large number of students, and at the same time generate new pathways into higher education (Biggs & Tang, 2007).

The First Generation UniReady Program

Expressions of interest to participate in the First Generation UniReady Program were sought from the principals of the three local high schools in Whyalla with Year 10 classes. All principals agreed that this program was an important initiative to engage young people in thinking about university early. All schools were provided with a program plan outlining expectations and areas of responsibility. A local UniReady Coordinator, who had good knowledge and experience of the local community and strong interest in working with high school students, was nominated to ensure the smooth implementation of the program.

The roles played by UniSA, schools and students were clarified and are outlined as follows:

The university campus was responsible for providing a customised program that focused on young South Australians who might have the ability to be the first in their families to attend university and for evaluating the extent the program had raised aspirations for university. Also, the Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning and Coordinator worked with the schools to document and provide to the SACE Office innovative teaching and assessment strategies, exemplars or models that support First Generation students in the context of SACE studies.

The local schools through the principals were to select key individuals who would provide leadership, promotion and facilitation of the program in their respective schools. These key individuals (e.g. Year 10 Coordinators, Counsellors, Deputy Principals) were to identify up to 20 or more Year 10 students from their school who would be the first generation in their family to undertake university. Focus was also given to Indigenous students as well as those students who had not decided what they wanted to do after high school. The key individuals were responsible for obtaining parental consent and supporting students with their Personalised Learning Program (PLP) subject.

The students were expected to regularly attend the campus on one afternoon a week for up to six weeks in the scheduled term. They were to enrol in a Stage One SACE subject under the Integrated Learning Framework which was developed as part of this program. This subject would allow students to explore their learning at the

University. Moreover, students were to participate actively in the activities, reflections and post-program evaluation.

Profile of students who attended the inaugural program

The First Generation UniReady program commenced at the beginning of term two, the first cohort consisting of 48 Year 10 students. Of the participants, 19 (40%) were male and 29 (60%) were female. There were 5 (10%) from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Indigenous, African and Filipino). Table 1 shows the participant profile.

Table 1. Characteristics of participants

Name of school	Number of students	Sex M	F	Cultural background (CALD only)	Number of Students
Government Junior High School 1	21	13	8	Indigenous	1
Catholic College	23	6	17	African	3
Government Junior High School 2	4	0	4	Filipino (Philippines)	1
Total	48	19	29		5

Also, 20 students were working on a part-time basis. The majority of these students worked in the food industry, local supermarkets or retail stores. The hours spent on paid work ranged from 8 to 20 hours per week.

Program organisation

The Associate Dean and the Coordinator implemented the program in consultation with the University campus Unit Heads and the representatives from each of the three schools. Regular contact and meetings were conducted to plan the program and discuss progress and outcomes.

The program was designed to run for six weeks to familiarise the students with the campus and to provide a variety of learning experiences. The students visited the Whyalla campus on a predetermined day each week for two hours. The six-week program was as follows:

Week 1: Orientation

Welcome; Introduction of mentors and staff; Housekeeping; Grouping of students; Campus tour with mentors; Going through the workbook and PLP with students; Reflective activity; Final word

Week 2: Health/Nursing unit

Welcome and recapitulation of previous week's activities; Introduction to Health/Nursing; Health session involving related sciences; Nursing session involving vital signs, assessment, mobility and nursing-related activities in the skills laboratory

Week 3: Business unit

Welcome and recapitulation; Introduction to Business; Lecture on business decision-making; Group work activity

Week 4: Social Work unit

Welcome and recapitulation; Introduction to Social Work; Survivor skills test

Week 5: Engineering unit

Welcome and recapitulation; Introduction to Engineering; Designing of paper airplanes

Week 6: Celebration

Career Shop; Inspirational talks; Evaluation and conclusion of program; Awarding of certificates; Pizza lunch

Sessions were conducted by UniSA academics and professional staff. The sessions were planned to mirror those of a first-year university student experiencing a range of typical teaching formats, such as lecture, tutorial and practicals. The nursing, science, computing and engineering laboratories were opened to the school students for use.

An educational resource booklet was also designed and printed for distribution to participating students and staff at the first session. The booklet outlined the Schedule of activities, UniSA program options, Other South Australian Universities, Why go to Uni?, Whyalla Campus Map, Personalised Learning Program, Lecturer Profiles, Campus Quiz, Group Work Guidelines and the 3-2-1 Group Reflection Activity (3 most important things learnt for the session, 2 facts learnt and 1 question to ask).

Four mentors, recruited and trained by the Associate Dean and Coordinator, were given a program orientation. Two mentors were second-year undergraduate social work students while the other two were from nursing. Their roles were to provide a student perspective of university and facilitate the sessions by working with small groups of students who were completing tasks. Mentors were also rotated between groups and were available to answer questions about university study. They were encouraged to share their personal stories about their decision to pursue university and reflect on their lifestyle as a student.

The process to attract mentors was managed through the Unit Heads. Initial contact was facilitated by the Coordinator with a brief outline of the program and expectations. Mentors were awarded book vouchers for their participation. Some of them were first generation

students themselves, one having gained entry through the university's Foundations Studies program.

Each academic unit was requested to plan their own session activities. The schedule of activities was disseminated after the Unit Heads had provided information about their plans. They were requested to speak at the orientation about their programs by way of introduction with the campus Director formally welcoming the students, teachers and mentors. At the conclusion of the program the Unit Heads and the Director celebrated with the students, awarding them their certificates of participation. This involvement was essential to show the students the importance placed by the university on engaging with them. Media coverage and show bags were also organised.

Method of program evaluation

Pre- and post-evaluations were conducted to determine the impact of the program on students. The program organisers wanted to examine the effectiveness of the program in increasing knowledge and building aspirations in relation to university study, and, at the same time, measure individual school progress in relation to the PLP. Quantitative and qualitative data from the students were collected by means of a questionnaire distributed to all participants. Questions were developed in conjunction with professional and academic university staff and were focused on measuring whether attitudes had changed as a result of the program. The university student database was consulted in order to determine whether the participating students did in fact enrol with UniSA (Whyalla campus in particular) in 2012. TAFE enrolments were also monitored.

Pre-program survey responses

The majority (n=30) of the students stated that they would be either at university or TAFE (n=5) in three years' time. The likelihood of pursuing university study was rated as "definitely" by 22 students and "probably" by 18 students representing 46% and 38%, respectively. A small number (n=4) were undecided, while 3 reported that they had no intentions of pursuing university study. Six students chose to work after completing school.

The students' perceptions about university life and people who could go to university were related to their affiliation, meaning people known to them. Thirty-six students out of 48 had known someone in the university. They believed that university was for people who were "smart", "intelligent", "hardworking" and "with self-determination". Those who wanted a good job, better opportunities and future for themselves would go to the university as in the following quotes:

People who want more to life than just a job
People who want to learn

Striving people who want to go far in life and who want to have a good job

Only 3 of the participating students had visited the university campus in the past three years and the majority had had no idea about university studies. There was a general perception amongst students that there were several reasons for people not to go to university, including: "hard work"; "too much study demand"; "satisfied with their job"; "lazy and slack"; "no family support"; "want to do apprenticeship"; and/or "have other interests and choices". (Responses have been altered for better text readability without compromising the meaning of the participant.)

Post-program survey responses

Thirty-two (n=32) students submitted the final questionnaire: 18 students from one government high school, 12 from a private high school and 2 from another government high school. Eighteen students (n=18) out of 32 (56%) expressed their definite desire to go to university and revealed that the sessions held had been informative, increasing their knowledge and awareness about how to get into university. The reasons that they would go to university ranged from "having fun" to "having a good job and good future".

Attendance at different sessions was valued by students as it gave them better ideas about each profession and prepared them to opt for a particular program. It also helped them change their perceptions about university study. Below are some insights shared:

It [university] sounded easier than I originally thought.

I never wanted to come to University to study but after the sessions and the understanding about University, I would like to go to university when I have finished school.

I first thought that University would be extremely hard and a bit daunting because of all the workload but after hearing some of the university students talk about their experiences, it has enlightened me that University is one of the best experiences.

Students commented that they felt comfortable to know that there are many supports available to students when they go to university. One remarked, "I may want to go [to university] knowing that there are lots of support." The support was a huge relief to them and it helped them change their decision to come to university. Moreover, participation in fun activities on campus also changed their perception about university studies. "It isn't all about studying. There are other enjoyable stuff too, and the campus is comfortable," one student summarised. Students also felt encouraged by learning of other study options. One of them declared, "Engineering is something that I am also interested in," while another volunteered, "Overall it gave me great outlook on the stuff you can do at the Whyalla Uni."

However, there were some students who felt attendance at different sessions did not help change their perceptions and they continued with their previous decision about study or no study. Comments such as "I think it is harder than I thought" and "It hasn't really [helped]" were noted.

Achievements of the program

When asked to rate the sessions, the students' preferences were as follows:

Table 2. Ratings of delivery of program sessions

Sessions held	Number of participants who liked the session
Week 2: Health/Nursing	21
Week 4: Social work	21
Week 3: Business	19
Week 5: Engineering	14

Week 1: Orientation	11
Tutorials	10
Careers advice session	20
Week 6: Celebration	13

The nursing and social work sessions were most popular as shown by the table and the following quotes:

The session I enjoyed the most was the nursing program which was a lot of fun and also a great learning experience. I enjoyed the practical task and learning about the blood pressure, BMI, asthma and developing cultures.

I thought the Social Work session was enjoyable as we got to work in groups with other students. … I felt really interested in the social work session where we learnt a little about Psychology and I think it is something I might want to study further in my years left at high school.

As could be expected, one student expressed ambivalence with all the career options offered stating, "I think I'd like to do nursing because I found it fun; or perhaps be a medical practitioner or social worker, however, I really want to be an electrical engineer."

In addition, 11 students found the lectures and tutorials helpful in gaining an understanding about a particular profession. The students also learnt valuable skills such as "keeping time", "speaking in public", "working cooperatively", "teamwork", "group skills", and "life skills and listening skills". One student clearly expressed the learning that transpired: "I enjoyed mixing with other people from different high schools and learning about different concepts to other subjects. Some parts were beneficial."

The experience built their confidence and provided knowledge about different professions. It changed perceptions about university to "not being so hard" and "not scary". Coming on campus provided many opportunities "to look at career choices", "how to get to uni", having an exposure of "what uni is like", courses that are offered, "what it is like to be a uni student", "health stuff", what to expect from lecturers, and "hands on things" in nursing.

Students also felt that the program helped them prepare for PLP and they got better grades because of the program. They explained how the program assisted them: "Putting all the things I have done/achieved during the program in my PLP folder" and "I used the orientation program by considering options that the orientation offered as a career in the future and I applied this to my PLP to evaluate my options."

Fourteen (14) students felt that the undergraduate mentors helped them clarify their goals and assisted in their learning. They found the mentors to be a valuable resource, playing a significant role during the first session when they provided informal but insightful speeches about what made them decide to come to university and provided icebreakers which made them relaxed and comfortable. The following excerpts revealed their appreciation of having mentors: "… better organised and [doing] different student mentor things" and "Getting together in group with one of the mentors and getting to know them [the group and mentor] better."

Suggestions for improvement

Students appreciated the practical activities and thus suggested more experiential and hands-on activities in future sessions. Recommendations to have more student involvement and outdoor activities were made, as well as to shorten some sessions. These sentiments are expressed:

Make it more hands on work. It would make it a lot [fun].

I enjoyed some parts of this program but believe that it could have been more entertaining.

Discussion

From the 2012 student database, it was found that 27% of those who attended actually enrolled in various programs in UniSA, which

was very encouraging; other students would have enrolled in other universities. Eight (8) enrolled in Foundation Studies, one in Psychology, two in Engineering, one in Nursing, and one in Education. The majority of these students however enrolled in the Adelaide campus; only four (4) enrolled in the regional campus. The program was instrumental in modestly increasing enrolments through the campus, but it has increased the enrolment in other UniSA campuses, TAFE, and other universities.

Subsequent identical programs were offered to Year 10 cohorts in 2010 and 2011. Following Year 12 in 2013 and 2014, 21% and 34% of students who participated in the UniReady program enrolled in various programs of the University, respectively. These figures do not reflect those who enrolled in other universities or TAFE colleges. While the enrolment in the regional campus has been modest, there are many benefits gained from undertaking this project including increasing aspirations.

Outcomes for the Whyalla regional campus

The First Generation UniReady program had a positive influence on students' views about university in general. There is evidence presented in the evaluation that after completing the program student attitudes reflected a positive change in their perceptions about university study and perceived abilities to attend university. This change may be attributed to the opportunity presented to university staff to clarify entry criteria and specific subject requirements for program entry, as well as assessment requirements to pass courses. There was also the opportunity to highlight the profile of support provided by the University to help students become successful learners and high quality job applicants. The change could have originated from the strong message to students that attending and completing university was achievable and not remote as many believed. In short, the program increased students' confidence to pursue university entrance.

The campus benefited also from the strengthening of relationships in the community as it engaged with students over an extended period of time. The program allowed a connection with the university and facilitated the opportunity for students to become comfortable with a university environment. It helped raise aspirations and familiarised students with the programs (Brook, 2011). Involvement with past graduates, school teachers, counsellors and other school staff members also extended university links and increased the community profile of the university and local campus. The mentors and past graduates honed their mentoring and public speaking skills, while the academics were able to promote their programs and had the chance to engage with the community (Fitzgerald, 2012).

Outcomes for the schools

The program also linked with the SACE PLP, a compulsory 10-credit subject which helps students plan for their future by making informed decisions about the subjects they will study in Years 11 and 12, and/or outside of school. According to the teachers, the PLP objectives were achieved and the program provided the schools the opportunity to increased aspirations to attend university and allowed their students to have a better understanding of tertiary disciplines and career options. Moreover, the program resulted in further collaborations such as the Research Ready program that would help the schools deliver the new compulsory Research Project subject (Penman & Oliver, 2012).

Outcomes for secondary students

Students were given the opportunity to experience the university culture and environment and become aware of the opportunities a university education offers to graduates. The following is a reflection of one student who attended the six-week program:

The first generation orientation project is a success and I believe that it should be continued … I thoroughly enjoyed the sessions such as … I have learned much about the insights of the university life, facilities, schedules and the different types of courses offered by the UniSA. … there are slight improvements that I can suggest such as more hands-on activities, more visuals when lecturing about academic courses, … The project also helped me explore my options for my career pathways and opened my mind to new opportunities and helped me gain new abilities and improved my social skills. I am very thankful for this opportunity as it helped me think about my future goals and career and organise which pathway I would like to take …

Other student reflections on the outcomes of attending this program are encapsulated in these quotes:

… what I believe I have learned that I wouldn't have learnt at school was knowing about all of the career choices available at the career shop, and the many programs that were available.

When I went to the Uni to do first generation program, I found it fun because we got to interact with the other schools and make new friends along the way.

Outcomes for the wider community

The UniReady program was used to raise the aspirations of regional high school students and link the university with the schools. With the media releases, the community learnt more about the university, the academic programs it delivered and the benefits of going to university, amongst others. Ellis, Watkinson & Sawyer (2010) and Letven, Ostheimer and Statham (2001) emphasised the need to forge

university–community engagement for mutual benefit, i.e. meeting educational and future labour needs of the community.

The program took into account the unique needs of regional high schools. It was tailored toward students from low socio-economic groups, 'disadvantaged' students, students whose family members had never attended university, Indigenous students and students from diverse cultural backgrounds. The program also targeted male high school students in an attempt to redress the male/female imbalance in university enrolments. School students from government high schools, who have perennially low university participation rates, were given priority. This is important for capacity building because students who study in regional areas are likely to stay and work in regional areas (Penman, Oliver & Petkov, 2003).

Future plans

The subsequent programs since then have been informed by the results of this inaugural program. Improvement of the UniReady program is an ongoing process; this will be extended to other programs involving other disadvantaged students. Future directions for this program include: follow-up of students who conveyed interest in university; revision of program delivery; and search for funding support for future programs.

Follow-up of students who identified that they were interested in pursuing university is paramount. This means closer collaboration with teachers and additional engagements with the students to sustain their interest. The Coordinator will arrange an additional program with the local high schools involving ready access to student counsellors and study advisers to support identified students.

Program content and format will be reviewed. It was noted that some sessions failed to capture some students' interest. The program was scheduled to provide an experience that mirrored that of a first year university class; however, considering the format of a high school timetable, Year 10 students are not used to sitting and listening for an extended time. Also, highlighting what the regional campus can offer and involving greater interaction and variety will be emphasised.

The development of the University Orientation First Generation Program was made possible through the support of funding from the SACE Office. New funding sources will have to be explored as the initial funding has now ceased. Involving industry is a promising option.

Conclusion and recommendations

The inaugural First Generation UniReady Program of CRE was valued by participating schools and students. Students were introduced to the university environment, challenged as to their pre-conceived ideas about university, assisted with their SACE studies to set goals for

the future and provided a taste of the range of opportunities available at the Whyalla's regional campus. With these outcomes, the authors recommend that:

- The program be offered on a regular basis;
- There be provision for program changes to address areas for improvement;
- There be partnership and collaboration with industry in increasing university aspirations of high school students;
- Adequate funding be made available for the program; and
- Further research and evaluation be conducted to ascertain the impact of the program.

The authors acknowledge that a limitation of this study is that only one program was exemplified in this paper, however, other subsequent programs conducted point to similar findings.

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