Abstract of The Dissertation of:


Abstract approved

Signature redacted for privacy. Sam Stern

Although community colleges have emphasized service-learning programs for traditional students, by in large, non-traditional students from post-secondary remedial programs have not been involved. This lack of reaching post-secondary remedial programs may be of particular interest to college personnel who may not be aware of the need to include service activities for non-traditional students in ways that will help them become caring individuals and strive toward a positive future.

This study was guided by the following research questions: 1. What are the perceptions of Skill Center completers who were involved in volunteering and community service? 2. What are the opportunities for connecting their service involvement to the community college? The study examined the perceptions of 15 former post-secondary remedial students involved in community service and volunteering. All of the participants in the study were persons of color, 12 of the 15 were identified as African-American, one as Latino, and one as Asian. The data were collected through in-depth interviews conducted by the researcher from a participant-observer position and focused on service interactions and the types of understandings each participant developed in relation to the people they met.
Voices of post-secondary remedial students who successfully complete volunteering or community service activities on their own and without any college sponsorship are rarely heard. Participants in this study described a variety of service experiences that provided insight into the social connection among a community of people. The most often cited themes were the participants' personal service reflections, their relationship with others, community building, and their motivation for service.

Critical benefits to the participants were how service involvement helped clarify their life and allowed them to learn more about themselves. Participants told of the advantages of working together and being committed to the community, which gave them a sense of connection. Participants also revealed that volunteering actually opened doors for employment opportunities. These experiences were beneficial both from the viewpoint of the acquisition of skills and a feeling of personal ownership and pride. Another benefit for participants engaged in service was to transform their feelings into an ethic of caring, social capital, and personal transformation.
Perceptions of Volunteering and Community Service: Voices of Post-Secondary Remedial Completers

by

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I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.
Acknowledgements

This dissertation has benefited greatly from the detailed and constructive comments of my Major Professor, Dr. Sam Stern, and from my Minor Professor, Dr. Warren Suzuki. I am grateful to both for helping me through this arduous endeavor.

Conversations with Dr. Stern helped me come to understand how community service and volunteering interactions of remedial students can be genuinely important to colleges, and also helped me clarify my ideas for the dissertation. He especially guided me through the process of revising and reworking the manuscript many times over, which both taught me how to write (i.e., helped form my expressive style) and also showed me the immense value of a case study in this humane endeavor.

Dr. Suzuki was very helpful with personal and extended e-mail conversations concerning qualitative research theory in many of its aspects, and the epistemological content of the dissertation in particular. He critiqued my ideas in terms of his long experience in the field. His epistemological approach to research, which he on occasion pointed to “Critical Theorist” perspectives, helped me focus and clarify my own ideas about community service and volunteering.

I am also pleased (relieved!) that this document proved acceptable to complete my Ed. D. requirements. Even if that had not happened, the conversations with my professors would have had tremendous value as conversation; and with my professional goals, they may still have more to offer.

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I have learned about community service and volunteering of post-secondary remedial students from those voices of persons with whom contact was brief but nonetheless propelling. It is not fitting to acknowledge by name these participants who contributed to this dissertation by providing massive evidence of ways service interactions can be beneficial for human transformation. But it seems likely that I would not have devoted the last two years to philosophical inquiry into the nature of service from the perspective of those less fortunate, had I not had the exhilarating experience of working with and hearing their voices.

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Chapter 1 Introduction and Overview

_A decent society is not based on rights; it is based on duty. Our duty to one another and to all should be given opportunity; from all, responsibility demanded._

-Labor Party Prime Minister Tony Blair

Every year in Oregon, as in each state of the U. S., there are adults who do not graduate from high school. Many of them have found their way into a post-secondary remedial or adult basic education program to acquire skills through coursework, study experiences, and experiential learning at a local community college. These special training programs allow adults to develop academic abilities that further personal growth and well being. In 1998, about 51,840 adults were involved in Adult Basic Education and Developmental Education programs at Oregon community colleges (Office of Community College Services, 1998a). These colleges contribute to the nation’s 1.8 million adults who have enrolled in adult basic education (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997). At Portland Community College, Oregon’s largest provider of remedial services, 27,617 adults entered into post-secondary remedial and basic skills programs in 1999. This compared to the 27,006 adults who enrolled in 1998, as well as the 25,600 who enrolled in 1997. The enrollment rate proportionally increased from 24.1% to 25.4% of the total student population (Portland Community College, 1999).

These adult basic education programs have responded to this growth and remain the far-reaching force for many post-secondary remedial efforts, workforce initiatives, student-support services, experiential learning, and increased research
attention. Besides creating an environment that increases the students' respective level of literacy and occupational skills, community colleges are in a necessary position to address the issues of personal and social development. This is necessary because the non-traditional student may often times not know how to make and carry out important personal, career and educational decisions that will dramatically affect their future. Therefore, community colleges can facilitate the need in how one's self-concept, social interaction, and sense of caring are formed. Robert Rhoads (1997) writes:

Increased interest has been directed toward rethinking higher education around more caring and democratic forms of education. Scholars are talking endlessly today about education, but between the hysteria and the cynicism there seems to be little room for civic learning, hardly any for democracy” (p. 9).

OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM

In recent years, many citizens throughout our communities have found it difficult to obtain employment for the purposes of fulfilling daily needs and responsibilities. This difficulty complicates self-actualization. One of the reasons for the difficulty of obtaining employment is that a substandard share of individuals 25 years of age and older have completed high school. With nearly one-third of the population without a high school education (US Census Bureau, 1998), literacy becomes the real issue. The need for basic skill development must be addressed before the undereducated within society can acquire any technical skills for employment. David Allen, of Research and Statistics Department of the Oregon Employment
Division, noted in a presentation to the Jobs Committee of the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Inc.

Limited access to education and skill training is now making an education the great stratifier rather than the great equalizer in our society. By all measures, for labor force participation, unemployment earnings, upward mobility, etc., education is the key to labor market success” (Allen, 1993).

Moreover, Michael E. Porter (1993) observed that one could pinpoint improved education as a major component to the remedy of workforce participation in the United States. He notes, “Productivity... determines the prosperity of any state or nation.... The microeconomic foundations for competition will ultimately determine productivity and competitiveness... they must ensure the supply of high-quality inputs such as educated citizens and physical infrastructure” (p.7). Clearly, the major force that impacts the delivery of education and training will involve human and physical resource development, as it may be encouraged in community colleges for the purposes of boosting economic productivity in the years to come.

North and Northeast Portland, one of many “target communities” for basic skill and workforce training at Portland Community College, is the area of highest unemployment concentration in the Metropolitan Portland area (US Census Bureau, 1998). Being able to find jobs for able people is not the challenge for the college. The challenge is to educate the socially disenfranchised and low skilled urban residents in ways that will help them become trained and productively employed. Therefore, the social and educational needs of the target population must be inextricably linked. Each influences the other and cannot be separated when considering the delivery of education and training.
Substantial numbers of the potential workforce hardly participate at all in the shaping of their futures. Many are faced with the ever-widening gap between progress found in modern communities and the levels of poverty, drug-related crime, and psychological despair located within their less modern communities. Because of this politic-economic schism, social inequality is rising; polarization is inevitable and is leading to conflict-laden differences in the quality of life for many residents (Wandner, 1999).

For these citizens, developing a sense of community and commitment to others is important. Yates and Youness (1996) assert that what must be emphasized throughout the development of urban communities is the role each individual plays in the shaping of his or her environment as they strive toward a positive future and the kind of people they desire to become. Community service is one activity that may be used to foster a caring community that is grounded in an ethic of care. It involves more connected ways in learning about ones' circumstances.

A new direction for learning at community college campuses is the notion of community service, referred to as “service learning,” and has been viewed as one solution to this inability of many people to acquire activities that lead to self and social fulfillment. The idea of service learning within education often involves the proposition that the campus should expand its mission. This would mean extending its traditional model of academic development and apprenticeship in ways, in which the individual would experience a sense of caring, raise his or her conscience level, and become an involved citizen. The question, then, is how can educators restructure their service learning process and ensure legitimizing individual and social identity through
a dialectical relationship with others? The answer put forth by community service proponents is that educators can both broaden their mission and become more effective provided they engage students in cooperative and interactive relationships that lead to benefiting from, as well as providing for people from different situations (Barber, 1992; Strickland, 1997). In short, the idea of community service rests heavily upon colleges fostering an individual’s sense of obligation as it may be shaped through formative experiences, which lead to the recognition of personal meaning and individual identity.

Consider the definition of service learning as community service, provided by Seitz and Pepitone (1999):

Service learning is a special form of community service designed to promote student learning and development. Proponents of service learning believe that it stimulates academic performance, increases student’s understanding of the responsibilities of living in a democratic society (p. 115).

In addition, there is growing attention on how we develop students at the community-college level within the context of different cultures and identities (Hurtado, Kurotsuschi, & Briggs, 1997; Piland, 1998; Purdie & Hattie, 1996; Senter & Senter, 1998). Taylor and Howard-Hamilton (1997) suggest that the importance of identity underscores the potential for reshaping culture. Furthermore, they believe the re-positioning identities leads to the transformation of the self. However, the importance of identity and self-concept will have to move beyond their general understanding by traditional program students who are learning about others through coursework and ephemeral community service projects. It necessitates the intention of representing all audiences familiar with learning and service including special
program students. That includes those students enrolled in post-secondary remedial and basic skills training at community colleges (Piland & Barnard, 1998).

One major area of educational research interest is “...how we might rethink and ultimately restructure higher learning around more caring and democratic forms of education” (Rhoads, 1997, p. 9). Many researchers believe higher education must be reformed (Freire, 1970, Collins-Hill, 1986, Barber, 1992, et al.) in ways that should better prepare adults for life in a democratic society, interdependent global community, and multicultural society.

Today many people experience a world that is fragmented and more diverse than ever before. The success of a democratic society requires interconnectedness on our community college campuses that not only builds caring communities through traditional academic disciplines, but also the collective desire to strengthen our identity with other post-secondary programs (Jun, & Tierney, 1999). Understanding others through interdependence of education and community service and recognizing volunteer activities by those enrolled in special academic programs are considered solutions to this fragmentation. The approach of valuing volunteer activities as part of special academic curricula is viable because it seeks to make community college educators aware of the importance of connecting life experiences to those related to formal education for the purposes of furthering educational goals.

FOCUS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study is to understand the community service and volunteering activities by students who were once enrolled in a special academic
program on an urban community college campus. This study is also about how college officials might rethink and ultimately restructure service learning around non-traditional students. It will describe the service activities and sense of caring for persons involved in volunteer settings and sketch personal attitudes with “meaning-perspectives in which it makes sense to learn" (Erickson, 1986, p. 127) through personal growth for adults who have previously experienced failure. It is this sense of caring among the study participants that will be examined. The following questions are central to this investigation: **1. What are the perceptions of Skill Center completers who were involved in volunteering and community service?** 2. **What are the opportunities for connecting their service involvement to the community college?**

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study offers insight and awareness of non-traditional students who entered into a volunteering or community service activity without any guidance or instruction from the college environment. The findings specifically address the issues of how a sense of self and caring for others through service can transform the lives of those providers who dropped out of school early or never participated in a formal setting. It also discloses how such service impacts community building and offers testimony of how and why people enter into relationships with those of the same commonality. The hope is that the voices of post-secondary remedial students portrayed in this study reveal a service culture in a way that allows the reader to share in the values, expectations, and optimism of people who want a better way of life for themselves and their community.
Through this study I provide insight into how former students from a post-secondary remedial program respond to the needs of others. I present observations of how they are able to make use of certain service opportunities that enable them to have a better sense of connection, be a role model, advocate for social advancement, restore past transgressions, and gain work experience.

One important result that this study may provide to education is the value of including non-traditional students in the service-learning environment of the community college. The detailed description of how the students immersed themselves into service activities could possibly be understood by other educators and help reshape their existing service learning structure so those students from special academic and training programs can benefit from service learning as well. This information may help encourage college administration, faculty, and student service professionals to advance service activities by non-traditional students to the center stage.

SETTING FOR THE STUDY

The setting for this study is the Portland Community College Skill Center located on the Cascade campus. All faculty, and staff work under the auspices of the Portland Community College district, which enrolls nearly 97,000 students annually in its five counties (Portland Community College, 1999). The Skill Center is an archetype of Oregon legislation first funded in 1989 (Emergency Board [EB] 29, Oregon Laws Chapter 693) to serve unemployed and underemployed residents throughout rural and urban Oregon.
In its eleven years of operation, the Center’s primary goal has been to actively recruit, support, and provide short-term workforce training to adult residents who wish to obtain economic self-sufficiency through employment (OCCS, 1991). The Center has also been mandated to serve high-risk youth and integrate an alternative learning environment toward high school completion. The Center assures cognitive skill development, applied technical training, and counseling that handles critical life needs (Oregon Revised Statute, 1997).

Instruction at the Skill Center is centered on technology skills curriculum needed by job seekers for family wage jobs. The two major instructional strands are Skills for Technology, designed for individuals with interests in technology based on jobs such as manufacturing and Computer Applications, which targets people interested in careers that focus on information processing.

The students are in training from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., five days a week, for twelve weeks (one term). Students are enrolled in application classes such as Principles of Technology, Applied Mathematics, Computer Applications, Office Skills Update, and Applied Communications. Each week, all the students attend a workforce workshop in which different employers (at least two per week) present employment opportunities. This gives the students a broad outlook on what kinds of jobs are available. At the end of the twelve-week intensive training, all students attend a weeklong, highly focused Workforce Transitions class. Students in the Transitions class put the finishing touches on their interviewing skills, portfolio of qualifications, job seeking strategies, and workplace expectations.
At the time of this study, the Skill Center worked with more than 150 employers who were actively participating in the instructional process. The high involvement of employers is a key element to the Skill Center's success. Through an external evaluation report, the program was reported as exceeding State standards for training programs to special populations with a student employment or college placement rate of 80% (OCCS, 1998b).

QUALITATIVE APPROACH TO THE STUDY

In order to allow for the most authentic information relating to the field experience to be presented, a qualitative research approach is the appropriate choice of context. Robert Bogdan and Sari Biklen (1998) state that the goal of achieving quality fieldwork in educational research involves establishing relationships, whether the research methodology is derived from participant observation, case study, or ethnography.

This study illustrates four characteristics of research: 1) purpose and reality within the environment; 2) the nature of the respondent relationship; 3) thick description about the context; and 4) the value of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). David Fetterman (1984) adopts the following definition of qualitative research: "Qualitative research is rooted in the belief that reality is a socially constructed phenomenon and the researcher sorts out realities by understanding the emic perspective" (p.23). Rigorous efforts were made to present the study participants' interpretation of volunteering in their local community. The participants are the
“stakeholders” who create service as education. These stakeholders determine which populations in the community college setting fail or succeed.

Qualitative research can be viewed as a descriptive and interpretive activity whose purposes are to develop contextual understanding of individuals and events in their natural state, as opposed to the discovery of laws that lead to reliable prediction (Borg, Gall & Gall, 1993). Stanfield (1993) describes most quantitative research regarding special academic populations as being constructed categorically through negative fixed and systematized psychosocial attributes, which lack in thick and authentic relevant description about their individual, unique experiences. This study hopes to accompany the scholarly awareness around post-secondary community service by describing the successful outcomes of each student involved in service within their environment.

The approach of qualitative research is value-laden. The researcher uses literature and previous studies to fully develop the vision and values of research. Qualitative researchers have come to understand the practical and ethical implications of the inevitability of the value-driven consequences of their inquiry, that is the effects of theories and facts not being independent as proposed in quantitative research. In fact, it can be argued that “theories are themselves value statements” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Guba, 1990; Denzin & Lincoln 1994; Hitchcock & Hughes 1995). How can the researcher know the limits of his or her perceptions about a specific inquiry without the relativism of the participant’s perception and participation? How can the participant be involved if his/her value is not known?
DEFINITION OF TERMS

Post Secondary Remedial Programs: Represents enrollment in post-secondary remedial courses and is usually offered as non-credit. These courses are offered free of charge to students committed to upgrading their basic reading, writing, computational, and computer skills. These programs are usually financially supported through state and federal funding. (Portland Community College, 2000b).

Post Secondary Remedial Population: Students enrolled in post-secondary remedial programs who need to develop basic academic skills that enable them to receive a high school diploma or equivalency, move into post-secondary programs, or obtain employment (Friedman, 1999).

Disadvantaged Students: Any student that comes from an environment that has inhibited the individual from obtaining the knowledge, skill and abilities required to enroll in and graduate from an educational institution or comes from a family with an annual income below a level based on low-income thresholds according to family size published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census (Gruber, 1998).

Short-term Workforce Training Program: All training modules that can be adapted and customized to meet specific teaching, learning and training requirements. (Portland Community College, 2000a).
Volunteerism: A person or group who voluntarily undertakes or expresses a willingness to undertake a service for a particular purpose; offer of one’s accord to perform a task or give a supply or thing on one’s own initiative (Ellis & Noyes, 1990).

Service Learning: The process of integrating volunteer community service combined with active guided reflection into the curriculum to enhance and enrich student learning (Kendall, 1999).

Special Academic Population: In academic preparedness the terms "vulnerable" or "special academic needs" populations are often used to define groups whose needs are not fully addressed by the traditional educational service providers (Grants Information Center, 2001).
Chapter 2 Review of the Literature

Social exclusion is a problem of which the main victims are the socially excluded themselves.

-Pamela M. Clayton

This study sought to understand the nature of participants' volunteer activities and experiences that create a sense of caring and community in which students from a post-secondary remedial program though willing, are unable to function within society because of a lack of basic academic skills and self-sufficiency. It also examines the opportunities for connecting those accomplishments to community college activities.

Through poor choices or unfortunate circumstances, these individuals have become dependent on others for basic material needs and have little hope of becoming self-sustaining and contributing members of society. Furthermore, the disconnection of their lives from a productive society is the cause and the result of the need to search for personal meaning and self-respect. To break the dependency cycle, there is a need for a process in ways that can better prepare disenfranchised adults for life in a democratic society.

The first step in looking at possible ways to prepare these adults for such a life transformation is to look at the current literature around educational, social, and personal connection. Four major areas of previous research will guide this effort: 1) research involving the educational needs of post-secondary remedial students; 2) social disconnection; 3) volunteerism and giving; 4) and investigations into service as learning at community colleges.
The passage of the Adult Education Act of 1966 and its subsequent amendments represented the first major effort of the federal government to reduce adult illiteracy in the United States (Grede & Friedlander, 1981). Original authorization was given to public schools to bear the responsibility of developing adult literacy education programs. Delker (1984) emphasizes however that the 1978 amendments to the Act contained several critical policy changes. The most significant requiring that services to adults be expanded throughout the public and private sector, including community colleges, instead of relying so heavily on the public schools as had been done previously.

Cross and McCartan (1984) pointed out that in several states, the use of community colleges, with their open admission policies and active recruitment of adult part-time learners, has fostered innovative and comprehensive remedial programs that are clearly more feasible for adults than were secondary school models. The identification of class schedules and the availability of facilities in which classes are taught are the leading reasons for this distinction. Flexible scheduling, both day and evening, with the potential for students to advance through the program at his or her desired rate of completion, is characteristic of adult basic education in the community college.

With the ever-accelerating speed of change in both knowledge and technology, it is clear that adults, who are already behind in literacy, must either take the first step
toward basic skills and life-long learning or suffer consequences associated with low levels of literacy. As a corollary, there is little hope of ever acquiring "functional literacy" and the ability to perform certain tasks representative of those in daily life such as completing forms to obtain medical emergency services (Nafziger, et al., 1979). Results from a study entitled, Adult Basic Education: Strategies to Increase Returns on Investment (Sticht, 1994), revealed that adults can and do experience significant personal growth, often time during "midlife."

According to Sticht, community colleges are seen in his research as functional in terms of developing adult literacy due to two major objectives. The first objective includes approaches that are "skilled based," that is, a set of structured, formal, learning purposes. The second objective relies largely on approaches that are "learner centered." Learner-centered approaches evoke a teaching-learning relationship from the learners themselves. The key factors found in community college adult basic education programs that stimulate adult development are:

1. An environment where students feel safe and supported, where individual needs and uniqueness are honored, where abilities and life achievements are acknowledged and respected.

2. An environment where faculty treats adult students as peers who are accepted and respected as intelligent experienced adults, whose opinions are listened to, honored, and appreciated. Such faculty members often comment that they learn as much from their students as the students learn from them.

3. Self-directed learning, where students take responsibility for their own learning. They work with faculty to design individual learning programs, which address
what each person needs and wants to learn in order to function effectively in their environment.

4. Pacing, or intellectual challenge. Optimal pacing is challenging people just beyond their present level of ability. If challenged too far beyond, people give up. If challenged too little, they become bored and learn little.

5. Active involvement in learning, as opposed to passively listening to lectures. Where students and instructors interact and dialogue, students will try out new ideas and techniques in the lesson plan. Where exercises and past experiences are used to bolster facts and functions, adults grow more.

6. Regular feedback mechanisms for students to tell faculty what works best for them and what they want and need to learn, and faculty who hear and make changes based on student input (Sticht, 1994).

Sticht’s findings support the thinking of Malcolm Knowles (1986), who is recognized as “the father of adult learning,” his trailblazing work underlies many of community college’s most effective adult education programs. He proposed that in meaningful adult learning programs, where adults learn best, both students and faculty have fun, for it is exhilarating to all when learning takes place.

Experiential Learning

Many textbooks on adult education practice affirm the importance of experiential methods, such as games, simulations, case studies, psychodrama, role-play and internships (Reed, 1996; Ried & Gulob, 1995; Kaagen, 1999). Moreover, two 1999 special reports by the National Council for Occupational Education reference metropolitan institutions such as Seattle Central, Tacoma, Clark, and Portland
community colleges as currently granting credit for adults’ experiential learning (Mundhenk & Burger, 1999; Mishler, 1999). That is why it is often argued that gradual knowledge, skills, and abilities accumulated through experience across the contexts of life are the primary difference between learning in adulthood and learning at earlier stages during the life span (Sticht, 1994). The emphasis on experience as a defining feature of adult learning was expressed in Lindeman’s frequently quoted expression "experience is the adult learner's living textbook" (1926, p. 7) and that adult education was, therefore, "a continuing process of evaluating experiences" (p. 85).

This emphasis on experience as learning is central to the concept of “life-long learning” (Merriam & Cunningham, 1989) that has evolved to describe adult education practice in countries such as the United States, Britain, France, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Estonia, Czechoslovakia, Finland and Yugoslavia (Savicevic 1991; Vooglaid and Marja, 1992). Of all the experiential learning models that have been developed, David Kolb has probably been the most influential in prompting theoretical work among researchers of adult learning (Jarvis, 1987; Keeton, 1990). Adult educators of all areas currently cite the belief that adult teaching should be grounded in adults’ experiences, and that these experiences represent a valuable and crucial resource.

As regards to the participants of this study, their volunteering experiences came as a result of the experiential learning incurred in the Skill Center training programs. The programs use experiential learning to enhance the education and training process. Experiential learning links coursework with job shadows and
internships at designated businesses and organizations. Students at every level and in every training program area are encouraged to participate. Experiential learning courses at the Skill Center also satisfy work experience requirements for students who have bridged to degree programs on the college campus.

The Social Self

Another component to understanding the educational needs of post-secondary remedial students is related to the social self within those who are involved in developmental education on college campuses. To Meyers (1996), the social self is viewed in the context of self-concept. He submits that our behavior arises from “the interplay between what’s going on inside our heads and what’s happening outside, between our sense of self and our social surroundings (p. 38) ... the traffic between the self and society runs both ways.” As Denzin (1989) noted, “Because symbols, meanings, and definitions are forged into self-definitions and attitudes, the reflective nature of selfhood must be captured” (p. 8). It is this type of significant social surrounding that is the reality that many of us find within ourselves as we interpret and read others in our everyday lives.

The social self is also the way of thinking that Goffman (1959) introduced and associated with the theater. He adds, “the self”, then as performed character is not an organic thing that has a specific location, whose fundamental fate is to be born, to mature, or die (p. 28). The critical concern is whether it will be credited or discredited. Goffman’s perspective provides insight into how the self is formed and reformed within the social context, that is, in a way paralleled to the theatrical stage.
One promising approach by Rhoads (1997) integrates current research with an explanation of the perspective of situating the self through the social self, caring, and sense of community. Included in this approach is the conceptualization of the self as one experiences intellectual growth in education. Rhoads begins by basing his perspective on research around situating the self and looks to Eric Erikson's psychological and social contexts that rest on the epigenetic principle, which may be described as follows:

Epigenesis [theory] suggests that certain psychological characteristics related to biological forces must be in place before the individual can move to higher levels of development, which for Erickson involves eight stages in the human cycle: trust versus mistrust, autonomy versus shame and doubt, initiative versus guilt, industry versus inferiority, identity versus isolation, generativity versus stagnation, and integrity versus despair (Rhoads, 1997, p. 44).

Erickson (1968) asserts that certain social and cultural factors must exist, aside from psychological readiness, before an individual can take the next step in his or her development. From a psychoanalytic point of view of healthy individuals, he has identified essential stages of growth that we go through socially and during the development of our personalities. Erickson found that if we fail to complete a stage successfully, then it is a hindrance to our growth in succession. In addition, Erickson is credited with coining the phrase “identity crisis.” This phrase describes a period approximately coinciding with adolescence, in which individuals seek to resolve critical issues of their lives.

The above psychosocial factors attributed to Erickson reveal how cultural experiences throughout one's lifetime contribute to his or her identity and self-
concept. Identity is based on situated experiences people have within their culture, family and gender. Identity is something that gives one a feeling of self-centeredness.

Another theoretical perspective on the social-self holds that various social models can influence a person’s self systems through the observation of others. This is known as “social cognitive theory.” Bandura (1986) defines it as learning through the observations of models that can influence an individual’s cognitive development. Marsh and Richards (1990) stressed the roles of the observed may be influenced by the model’s credibility and performance. Having a three-way relationship with the person, environment, and model leads to influences on their perceptions and actions. Bandura adds, “The problem of performance ambiguity arises when aspects of one’s performances are not personally observable or when the level of accomplishment is socially judged by ill-defined criteria so that one has to rely on others to find how one is doing” (p. 398).

An additional factor, which completes a person’s social cognitive development, is a person’s sense of “self-efficacy” (Bandura, 1977). This is a person’s belief that they can execute complex skills successfully. The appropriate selection of a variety of observable models can strengthen a person’s determination to succeed. “A person’s self-efficacy can be increased if an individual is provided with opportunities where they can vicariously learn from the experiences of others” (Relich, Debus, & Walker, 1986; Boggiano & Pittman 1987).

As post-secondary remedial staff utilizes the processes for identifying personal needs and delivering services to meet those needs, they come to appreciate the critical role of the social-self in student performance and overall well being of
students. In particular, they come to understand the close relationship between the social self and educational achievement. They also become very concerned about the negative influences on the social self that are experienced by many post-secondary remedial students due to widespread economic hardship and its attendant problem of social anomie due to drug/alcohol abuse, violence, and depression.

Leadership team members and stakeholders in post-secondary programs such as the Portland Community College Skill Center have developed and refined programs aimed at enhancing student self-concept and its relationship to the social self. At the same time, they have specified measurable academic, behavioral, and affective indicators of the social self in order to be able to monitor progress toward each student’s goal.

Caring Students

In keeping with the evidence that support the efforts of adult education programs that meet the educational needs of post-secondary remedial students, many studies have been published to reflect the social context of growth through education in the form of caring learning communities. Noddings (1992) argues that schooling, like other social institutions in our time, fails to care for people to address their real needs and nourish their growth. She asserts schools do not nurture students’ diverse interests, talents, and abilities. Even the venerable notion of the liberal arts embraces only a limited intellectual portion of the spectrum of human possibilities. Noddings (1992) continues:

If schools are to serve humane and moral ends, they must expand from their narrow focus on academic discipline and instead involve
the student in multidimensional “domains of caring”. We need a scheme that speaks to the existential heart of life, one that draws attention to our passions, attitudes, connections, concerns, and experienced responsibilities” (p. 47).

In the article, Sociocultural Psychology and Caring Pedagogy: Exploring Vygotsky’s Hidden Curriculum Tappan (1998) analyzed the value assumptions implicit in Vygotsky’s and Nodding’s perspectives as they are articulated in an approach to ethics and moral education which highlights the primacy of caring in human life. Tappan analyzes Vygotsky’s sociocultural perspective of his “hidden curriculum” and Noddings’s ideas about caring pedagogies and argues that both perspectives have moral and caring commitments embedded in their work.

Vygotsky has care as one of his critical outcomes for an informed learning experience. He advocates a caring, relational, and dialogical process as the core element for learning. Associated with Vygotsky’s caring in a learning environment are Nodding’s respective insights on how schools can promote the development of care by assisting students as they engage in a wide range of caring activities. She suggests that these activities can range from caring for self, to caring for others, to caring for ideas. For Noddings and Vygotsky, “To care and be cared for are fundamental human needs we need to care for others in order to live a full and fulfilling life” (Tappan, p. 24).

Battistich, Solomon, Watson, and Schaps (1997) described an examination of ongoing research on schools and how a caring community in the classroom meets the student’s fundamental need for autonomy, competence, and belonging. Although the article is directed toward secondary schools, the Battistich, et al, writing did reveal how students in caring classrooms have close ties to one another and experience the importance of fairness, responsibility, and caring in a democratic society.
They intensively looked at a small number of elementary schools that were successfully implementing the concept of a “caring community” and examined the program effects on sense of community. The researchers found that there was a strong relationship with positive student outcomes and cooperative behavior with friendly support. They then applied the program to those schools that were not involved in a caring environment and discovered that the intervention was very effective at enhancing students’ sense of the classroom as a caring community.

According to Schultz (1992), perspectives on caring have become increasingly widespread in the educational literature, which informs a range of practical and conceptual projects. Because “care theory” represents such a broad range of material, his article focuses on the work of Noddings. Citing that she has limited tools with which to conceptualize collective action or collaborative activity for caring, Shultz nevertheless agrees with her and concludes that educators must encourage multiple practices in schools if they hope to empower students to both care and resolve issues of oppression in a democratic society.

SOCIAL DISCONNECTION

Looking into our national social system at the time of this study, we find a system that is often perceived as putting people in an atmosphere of disconnection from a productive society and who find participating in a democratic society a painful and frustrating experience. This disconnection impels one to search for personal meaning and self-respect. In Disabling Professions, Illich (1977) and The End of Work, Rifkin (1996a), the authors speak to the existing problem in two major
categories, which concerns the illusions of current paradigms involving human
disconnection in an economic and social world. These categories are discounting of
use-value and technological displacement. They are instrumental in understanding the
nature of the problem.

Discounting of Use-value

Research related to the problem of discounting the use-value in an economic
world is centered on institutions, including education, and it defines and ascribes
values that eschew personal importance. Through our present day institutions a person
is nurtured to accept service in place of value. Medical treatment is often mistaken for
health care, social work for the improvement of community life, police protection for
safety, military poise for national security, and the rat race for productive work. These
institutions are all faced with how to determine what values are important, when to
label a value, membership for the value, and controlling which value to use as a
rationale for more resources (Illich, 1977).

In the context of institutions devaluing human value, there are efforts currently
underway with educators and government officials to standardize value definitions
within our urban neighborhoods through such euphemisms as “empowerment zone,”
“enterprise zone,” and “urban renewal” (Todaro, 1983). This is occurring at a time
when the old adage of “history should teach us something” appears to have fallen on
deaf ears. For example, government officials tried to promote urban development in
the past by expanding educational facilities and opportunities. The expectation was
that these actions would elevate the performance level of social economic groups
through empowerment to combat economic inequalities. They spent huge sums of money on establishing a social contract and supplying it with educational curriculum, modern equipment and social services partnerships, only to also result in an unintended social contract with an outside management hierarchy.

Illich (1977) claims that the traditional answer to this problem of disabling others is clear: we must go to the heart of the matter and reconstruct the property and power relationships. However, the question confronting us for the future is whether alternative systems of property and power relationships will be available to us and if they are worth the cost of implementing (Milner, 1972; Fuchs & McAllister, 1996). As Robert McMaster and John Sawkins (1999) expressed:

All too often, we persuaded people to go into new social contracts by promising them that they could quickly grow rich there, or that government would give them services and equipment, which they could not hope to receive either in the city or in their traditional communities. In very few cases was any ideology involved; we thought and talked in terms of greatly increased output. What we were doing, in fact, was thinking of development in terms of things, and not of people. (p. 2.)

As a result, there have been many cases where heavy capital investment has resulted in no increase of output where the social investment was needed. People become prisoners of these paralyzing social contracts and in most of the officially sponsored or supported schemes, the majority of people who were involved in social modernity lost their enthusiasm, and even left the scheme altogether. Moreover, many failed to carry out the orders of the professionals who were put in charge and who were not themselves involved in the success or failure of the community. Illich reminds us, “Only up to a point can commodities replace what people make or do on their own. Beyond this point, further production serves only the professional” (p. 31).
Attempting to equalize the resources available to pay for education and economic opportunity through government oversight is less important than the negative effect this paradigm has on community values and livability.

In the context of education, Illich (1977) feels a prescribed curricular content may have absolutely no effect on how people perform, yet its intended form metamorphoses individuals into needy people who the institution knows that they have now satisfied for education's sake. The latent function of education, that is the hidden curriculum, the divided class levels, and the social labels given through the diploma or degree process, is much more important to the professional than the overall well being of students. Therefore, it is possible that people have had some of their educational needs awakened or created, then satisfied, only to learn that they have less than others. Education, which we engage in and which supposedly creates equal opportunities, has become the unique, unprecedented way of dividing the whole society into labeled classes. According to Illich, education in this country has had a history of devaluing the majority of its people.

The research on discounting the value use in our society points out three major factors for students in education. First, there's a possibility of no relationship between curriculum content and what people actually do satisfactorily for them or society in life. If the 1980s are remembered as the decade of mergers and acquisitions, the legacy of the 1990s was the decade of downsizing and reorganization. According to the Department of Labor 1999 statistics, the trend toward downsizing began in the late 1980s and increased substantially in the 1990s, then widened its focus from blue-collar jobs to include white-collar jobs. The result has been a virtual epidemic of job loss and
forced career changes, as due to downsizing across all industries especially among professional and white-collar workers. This situation caused a huge gap between the skills of those who were released from a long-standing job and the skills needed in new jobs that also were created during this period.

It has been estimated through a survey by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, that two-thirds of all large firms in the United States, and more than 5000 employers, reduced their workforces in the latter half of the 1990s. From 1995 to 1999, approximately 4.3 million U.S. workers were displaced from jobs they had held for at least 3 years, with 2.7 million (57.8%) resulting from plant closings. While 57.8 percent of those workers displaced lost or left their jobs due to plant closings, 22 percent cited insufficient work as the reason for being displaced, and 19 percent reported that their position or shift was abolished. There was no indication of workers being displaced due to lack of skills. In addition, 3.3 million persons were displaced from jobs they had held for less than 3 years, combining the short and long-tenured groups of displaced workers to a total of 7.6 million (United States Department of Labor, 2000).

Grimsley (1995) suggests that the majority of companies who are forced to downsize may be put in a position of deciding whom in their workforce to keep or let go based on criteria beyond educational attainment. Many displaced workers mentioned above had learned new skills to work with more advanced production technologies during the 1990s, but their higher productivity was not reflected in advancement, higher wages, or retaining employment (Howell, 2000). If the explanation of a gap between skills provided and wages paid is correct, improvements
in education and training programs per se are unlikely to have much effect on the problem of job displacement. American workers might need to acquire better skills, but a purely human capital approach of "high skills, high wages" may do little to reverse the downward shifts in company lay-off norms of the last decade (Acemoglu & Jorn-Steffen, 1999).

Second, discounting the value uses of education is presented by asking what proportion of first year students remained at the same post-secondary institution to complete a degree or certificate. Findings of the National Center for Education Statistics (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997) shows there was a substantial difference between post-secondary educational retention and overall persistence and attainment rates for people who started in the two-year sector. For example, the completion rate at the first two-year institution attended was only 29% (see Table 1). Students who do not remain there may either leave post-secondary education permanently or transfer to some other institution before completing a program (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997). In either case the students have not been retained at the intended institution.
Table 1.

**Percentage distribution of 1989-90 beginning post-secondary students seeking bachelor's degrees, by highest degree attained as of spring 1994 and level of first institution attended.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of First Institution</th>
<th>Highest Degree Completed</th>
<th>Total Any Degree</th>
<th>Still enrolled bachelor</th>
<th>No degree, not enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor's</td>
<td>Associates</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>54.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-year</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Some scholars, such as Thomas (1991) and Illich (1997), would maintain that this shows the systemic nature of the problem, the factory mentality of a human assembly line used by education. Thomas (1991) cynically suggests that attrition is good for post-secondary schools. Since the “baby echo” generation is flocking to community colleges, it ensures success for revenue by increasing the odds for recruitment of new students.

Third, indexes from the NCES found declining retention rates in the first-year, post-secondary enrollment of low income and non-traditional students. This is indicated by the percentage of 1992 high school graduates and beginning post secondary students who enrolled or were already enrolled as of spring 1994 according to level of first institution attended and by persistence risk factors when they began post-secondary education.
Following this approach, a persistence risk index consisting of the sum of six risk factors was assigned to each of the 1992-93 beginning post-secondary students as part of the analysis. The results, which are shown in Table 2, indicate that as the number of risk factors increase, the overall likelihood of attaining a degree or maintaining enrollment five years after beginning post-secondary education decreases. Approximately three-quarters (74 percent) of the first-time beginners with no risk factors when they began post-secondary education had attained a credential or were still enrolled as of spring 1994, compared with less than half (48 percent) of those with one or more risk factors. Without more definitive qualitative data to accompany the risk levels, the quantitative evidence is not nearly as clear, but the central point is this: even though non-traditional students are in social circumstances that foster community college involvement, aggregate attrition appears to be present.

Professional attempts to help individuals through oversight and academic fragmentation have unintentionally devalued personal meaning and weakened the ability for many to help themselves and others (Illich, 1977). If the models for upward mobility, which every society puts forward, lose their validity over time, goal-directed action through education and social support becomes improbable for certain individuals to achieve. This troubled path toward individuals reaching self-actualization leads to destabilization in particular communities. Uncertainty and loss of orientation are among the consequences for many parts of the society, especially those who may be devoid of functional literacy or, are nearly literate. The potential for social and cultural conflict grows among certain groups, and long-term reproduction of meaning cannot be guaranteed for those who are marginalized.
Table 2

Among 1992 high school graduates who enrolled in post-secondary education by 1994, the percentage who had strong persistence indicators by risk and type of first institution. Percent with strong persistence indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type(1) of first Post-Secondary institution</th>
<th>No risk(2) factors</th>
<th>One or more risk(2) factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public 2-year</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other less-than-4-year</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>38.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (1) Based on an index that measures the probability of being academically qualified for a 4-year college. A student is considered minimally prepared if he or she met at least one of the following criteria. Ranked at or above the 54th percentile in one’s class, had a GPA of 2.7 or higher in academic courses, had a combined SAT score of 820 or above, or scored at the 56th percentile or above on the 1992 National Education Longitudinal Study Math and Reading composite aptitude test.

(2) Risk factors include low Social Economic Status (SES) quartile, average grades of C’s or lower from sixth to eighth grade, had one or more older siblings who dropped out of high school, or held back a grade by 1988. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (1997),

An increasing tendency for crime, violence, and disconnection is evident.

Technological Displacement

The literature related to technological progress of individuals within work and community is concerned with identifying the characteristics of technology and suggesting the underlying reasons for its devastation. Much of the research has focused on automated machinery and the undermining of the economic system.

Jeremy Rifkin (1996a) argues that automation is now destroying waged work and
undermining the basis for the consumption of its own products. He is once again raising issues that were last widely discussed in the automation debate of the 1960s (Reina, 1995).

The paramount issue behind Rifken’s assertion relates to the trends at the time of this study of increasing marginal jobs and salaries, while income and wealth continue to balloon for the 20 percent of the mentioned "knowledge workers" who have acquired this confining technology. Walton (1999) maintains that poor Whites, African-Americans, Asians, and Latinos have been buffeted by the vagaries of technology and an economy they do not control. He adds that those disenfranchised from technology have historically participated in its economy only as consumers, which exacerbates the problem. “There are technological developments in the making that could permanently affect the destiny of certain Americans, and as global citizens” (Walton, 1999, p. 16).

Rifken (1996a) argues that the nation’s third sector of not-for-profit service is the core of a civil society. He diagnoses the profit sector's problems that we're going to have to confront as a society with a critical question: when the market doesn't generate enough jobs to sustain a workforce on its own, what happens to our traditional assumptions about work? Additionally, Manderville and Macdonald (1983) warn that a proposal to strengthen the fabric of the economic and civil society through a partnership model of institution-not-for-profit relations must include those disenfranchised from the commonwealth. “This is the case in part due to fragmentation of social and organizational unity in a postmodern era that challenges the legitimacy of the status quo paradigm” (p. 182). It is necessary to reexamine the
dominant institutions, powerful groups, and privileged places and join the margins in an effort to weave a new, more humane and inclusive organizational contract.

Manderville and Macdonald (1983) give rise to a misemployment situation associated with the union and management of many office departments within profit driven organizations. The union-management sub-system of the department requires possibility of technology investment: effects on jobs and jobs without technology, numbers of jobs changed, negotiation on jobs, willingness to assure training in technology. There is interaction between both of these sub-systems, and in many cases the union may value the importance of technology to the point that some workers may suffer the loss of employment in order to continue the profitability of the department. As a result, lack of skill and job opportunity within the restructured sub-system may lead to organizational fragmentation.

Moreover, lack of success in the negotiation for the union-management sub-system increases the likelihood of reduction in the workforce. Manderville and Macdonald (1983) conclude that many technologists predicted that the future would offer material abundance and mass leisure, made possible by new, fully automatic organizations. It didn't turn out like that, not because the control technologies of the electromechanical age were not up to the job, but because of competing economic factors of technological cost and human capital.

Rifken (1996a) argues that a high technological global economy, corporate downsizing, and government offering fewer employment opportunities that will displace millions of workers are likely to make education and current economic development a hapless situation. He argues that this demands a renewed education
model to lead civic engagement through various volunteer and nonprofit organizations, which can serve as the community’s guiding force. “What is needed is a new coalition of educators and community-based organizations to rebuild communities and create a new mission for American education” (Sax, 1997, p. 37).

Rifken (1996b) concludes that the single most significant task for educators in the coming century is to prepare the next generation of students for potential work in both the market place and civic sector. He believes the community college can be in the best position to make this transition and states:

Community colleges will likely play a critical role in reshaping American education, and laying groundwork for the renewal of the civil society. Most community college students were raised in the local community and have deep roots in the neighborhoods. Many work at least part-time, and some volunteer in local civic activities. Their ties are extensive and provide a ready-made resource for transforming the mission of the community college (1996b, p. 22).

VOLUNTEERISM AND GIVING

Philanthropy

The term “philanthropy,” as used here, is indicative of literature that depicts the history of America as, to a large extent, one of a giving, caring nation. It is a history of strangers opening their pockets, their homes and their hearts to aid those in need. Philanthropy, voluntary giving, voluntary action and voluntary association are evident, beginning with indigenous cultures. The concepts of stewardship as a wise use of resources for communal rather than private property, and of intergenerational sharing and mutuality are basic giving concepts (Nordgren, 1998). In their book, By
the People: A history of Americans as Volunteers, Ellis and Noyes (1990) illustrate that, in early colonial times, when America lacked any formal governmental structure, people relied on interdependence and cooperation to solve community problems.

All community members were welcome to discuss town problems and to propose solutions. Most public officials were unpaid and accepted the positions out of a sense of moral duty and a desire for a local prestige. This system of self-government was dependent upon citizens willing to volunteer (p. 29).

A study by Long (1994) attempted to identify and compare volunteer issues of Presbyterians. Elders, pastors, specialized clergy, and members were asked to indicate volunteer participation and experiences in impoverished communities. Of the 1200 Presbyterians, the congregation revealed that such work is likely to be done by elders (95%), pastors and specialized-clergy (82%), and members (75%).

Long (1994) made a particular effort to explore organizational practices and individual attitudes about volunteering and whether or not any feelings of disappointment that rose during the process. The findings provide a good indicator regarding the intrinsic nature of congregational volunteer practices, where 26% of those interviewed said their congregations currently have volunteer coordinators or directors of volunteer services. In contrast, 74% of the members said they belong to congregations that did not have volunteer coordinators. This difference may be related to the supposition that some members belong to larger churches and larger churches are more likely to have volunteer coordinators. The finding that “coordinator” status had little effect on participation is significant in that it essentially reflects each church member’s intrinsic need to cooperate and serve in other communities.
Many congregations (somewhat more than half) used only sign-up sheets to recruit volunteers. Only 10% to 20% of each sample said their congregations distribute a volunteer opportunity booklet, so those members can indicate interest in such opportunities. Serving as a volunteer in impoverished communities was a positive experience for almost all who had served, and over 90% said that, at any given time if they were asked to do it over again, they would.

Two other large philanthropic organizations who have also opened their pocket book on behalf of others are the Masons and Shriners (McIntyre, 1988). Throughout their history these two organizations have played a key role in the aiding of others in need. Since 1870, members of these organizations have from their inception, until the present, had an opportunity to contribute to the serious causes in their local communities (McIntyre, 1988). In 1872, the number of Mason and Shriner fraternity members grew in its home state of New York from 43 to over 400 in 13 Temples. They continued to gain in popularity until in 1888 there were over 7,210 members in 48 Temples located through the United States and one in Canada.

These were primarily social organizations in the 1880's, however, because of their Masonic principles, the members came to the aid of those who most needed assistance. Those who suffered in the 1888 Yellow Fever epidemic and the Johnstown flood victims were all helped by these organizations. 

In his book, A Perspective on Brotherhood, Miller (1999) reveals that there are now over 750,000 Masons and Shriners, who are members of 191 Temples and Lodges, ranging from locations in Alaska, to Panama, to Nova Scotia. Each temple and lodge within these sanctuaries donate approximately $500,000 annually. The
Shriners Hospitals for Children and the Burns Institutes are the major manifestations of their philanthropic efforts. Among the notables who have joined this fraternity are Presidents of the United States, several Presidents of Mexico, and a Canadian Prime Minister.

**Volunteerism and Adult Learning**

Today, volunteerism reflects close association with adult education. No longer do full-time homemakers constitute the majority of volunteers. Opportunities for service draw senior citizens, students in service learning projects, and full-time professionals. (Geber, 1991). These changing demographics propel changes in the practice of adult learners and the volunteer pool.

One study of first-year college students by Astin and Erlandson (1997) reveals 71% of college students who have performed voluntary service, either through a course or in a non-curricular setting, indicated higher levels of civic responsibility than non-participants. With the cooperation from the Institution Research Program of the American Council on Education, the University of California at Berkley presented these findings utilizing longitudinal data from over 200,000 students and 300 institutions. The most dramatic differences in this study were in the areas of commitment to serving the community, planning to conduct volunteer work in the near future, and committing to participate in community action programs.

Some emergent themes from the University of California study were similar to the findings in a study at the University of Miami, which brought off-campus reality into the educational experiences of students (Hardy & Cull, 1973). The University of
Miami study showed that students in a volunteer program called, “SUMMON” received more intrinsic (than extrinsic) value from their volunteering experiences.

Hardy and Cull (1973) concluded that charitable experiences may have value relative not only to academic achievements concerning volunteering, but also in terms of providing “commitment, innovation, and the intense awareness of one’s obligation to human life” (p. 59).

Yet another study of a sample of disadvantaged students and remedial population was a report on the findings of a Census Bureau survey regarding volunteering participation (McCarthy, 1994). On the basis of findings already presented, several important principles emerged which may contribute to making a big difference in the quality and effectiveness of community service in adult basic education programs:

1. Most important, disadvantaged adults know what is lacking in their personal and social lives, and the volunteering component is to enhance the person’s need to help himself and keep his own dignity about his community in the process.
2. Volunteers should develop good relationships with forward-looking community programs and agencies, which have minority-group management.
3. Volunteers should develop close relationships with adult educators, especially adult basic-skills instructors.
4. Volunteer programs aiming to serve the needs of educationally deprived adults should recruit volunteers from a wide cross-section of the community.
5. Volunteers should create a flexible framework for action that will point toward social relevance, educational competence, and keep the volunteer free to learn and grow (p. 169).

The conclusion of this research proposed that even with great attention paid to the structure of providing remedial students with volunteer experiences, the true indicators of success are the students themselves. “People who are
from different parts of the community; who have different educational levels, different backgrounds, and different aspirations. People just like everybody else” (p. 67).

SERVICE AS LEARNING IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Community Service

There have been several investigations of community service issues in academic settings. Perreault (1997) produced three approaches that compare and contrast charity, service learning, and community service options for college students. He argues for community service activities as the preferred approach because it emphasizes reciprocal learning for all involved, which seem fitting in terms of an egalitarian value system and the skills it takes to be productive in a democratic society. Perreault found that the charity approach is seen as occurring in a casual or random manner while service learning activities occur in terms of academic growth, both of which are ultimately by-products of community service. On the other hand, community service uses a citizen model that focuses directly on educating for changes that shape a common future for students to engage in the effort of solving their own community problems.

Rhoads (1997) proposes a “citizen politics” in which ordinary citizens are at the center of public problem solving. Citizens are active and creative, define their own problems, and engage with others to seek solutions in the public arena. Citizens, not the government, provide the basic resource for addressing social problems.
Professional politicians and government agencies are “supplements and adjuncts” to the work of the citizens (p. 151).

Perhaps the most powerful aspects of Rhoads perspective are “…its conceptualization of the self as utility for making sense of students’ explorations through community service” (p. 26) and the fact that students meet community needs and receive positive feelings that have an effect on their sense of self.

The college years are key times for the development of a sense of self because so many decisions about one’s future and past come together and so much thought and learning typically are given to identity matters. A set of outcomes that has long concerned higher education faculty and practitioners is the idea of developing students as whole persons. A more holistic view of students is rooted in the long history of liberal education and the role of schools and universities in preparing citizens (Rhoads, p. 34).

Other educators, scholars, and writers call for a focus on community service. For example, Bryant (1995) asks for a broader view of community service through citizenship. He argues “Redefinition of community must come as a priority for man, who has been aided by a public institution to acquire an education and to exert his talents for the public good” (p. 291). Worsfold (1997) makes similar arguments in an article entitled, Teaching Democracy Democratically. Colleges and universities have an obligation to develop “…critical citizens in a pluralistic democracy in which individuals know how to get along and how to go along with what each other may think” (p. 410).

Service Learning

In the research article Problems, Politics, and Possibilities of a Progressive Approach to Service Learning in a Community College: A Case Study,” Burr (1999)
used Oklahoma City College as a case study on how service principles can be used effectively to meet career development and community involvement learning. He supports the notion that students progressively develop learning through activity as a result of interaction of environmental and collaborative characteristics. Burr has extensively analyzed experiential learning theories for insights into the benefits of authentic learning experiences. He maintains that current research in this area is grounded in the concept of progressive service learning principles that promote students' awareness, learner centered structure, learning outside of classroom walls, off-campus realistic environments, problem-solving, and collaboration. Burr also points to research data from scholars who describe essential elements of service as one of positive interdependence, interaction, developmental, accountability, and evaluative process of which will occur in a collaborative environment.

Unfortunately, this progressive learning approach is not fully utilized in the traditional community college setting. Burr writes, “Typically, community colleges today are not structurally organized to accept the flexible learning methodologies incorporated in progressive service learning principles. Bureaucracies cannot adapt quickly enough and are not free enough to expand their learning realms to incorporate progressive methods of learning” (1999, p. 14). Community colleges should look for a new structure that encourages students to acquire concrete and transformational experiences, which create a sense of real meaning for learning.

The proposition that a gap exists between current community college structure and potential learning capabilities of community college students is supported by the finding that there appears to be a realistic and meaningful work environment in
progressive service learning that provides an opportunity to problem solve as part of the learning process. Burr found that students had a rich experience of gainful knowledge that was global, connected, and which differed from the knowledge completed through a series of finite traditional courses. He suggests, “The traditional method that is mostly theoretical in nature, is not realistic in application, and does not connect the various aspects of the field of study” (1999, p. 16). Being involved in service learning gives these students a chance to encounter more effective learning experiences in their career education studies and better prepares them for job training experiences.

Burr asserts that there is a mis-match between the way community colleges are structured for learning, interaction, and accountability and the methodology many students implement in order to be successful. Progressive service learning is an excellent method that can be added to or replace the traditional model. “The benefits of this tool are to have information similar to this study brought to the attention of all educators, especially those who are in the position to make decisions.” (1999, p. 17).

Research into the service-as-learning aspect of strengthening education looks at the college and university systems. There are many educators who suggest that service learning is a vital function of higher education, including community colleges. Serow, Calleson, Parker, and Morgan (1996) point out “One of the main functions of service learning is to strengthen the ties between service and course work” (1996, p. 11). Community colleges are in such an intricate relationship with its local citizenry, one would be hard pressed to think that their education mission does not touch on community welfare.
Articles such as Education for Empowerment: Creating a Community Action Scholars Program (Folkman & Percy, 1998) and The Two-year College Student and Community Services (Lombardi, 1994) take a more “grass-roots” approach to service learning. They are action-plan articles that guide the reader through a series of programs geared to promote neighborhood revitalization through economic development, employment skills training, and refurbished housing. Checkoway (1997) organized the need for colleges to connect with the community into seven categories:

1) Making knowledge about service learning more accessible.
2) Mobilizing internally for external outreach.
3) Involving faculty.
4) Modifying the reward structure for staff.
5) Integrating service learning into the curriculum.
6) Involving the community.
7) Changing the college culture.

Rhoads and Neurer (1998) agree that it is important to connect with the community through a deliberately structured service learning program. They profoundly make their point pertinent by relating:

Learning through service is not something that administrators provide for students but something that students construct for themselves with the guidance of peers and college staff. Administrators must, therefore, be aware of the educative potential of service opportunities and seek out community sites where students may do with others. Insights about self, others, and community must be nurtured by staff members. This can be done through group sharing and a willingness to take emotional risks. (p. 116)
These aspects of service to the community are a viable link to student learning and success on college campuses, and they encompass the connection between adult education and occupation training programs. Lombardi (1994) supports this assertion by stating, “A strong trend toward embracing continuing and adult education programs under the concept of community service will probably develop. Underlying the expansion is our sensitivity to the changing demographic, sociological, and economic conditions affecting our community” (p. 33).

The literature examined can be viewed as identifying single factors related to the study of service to the community. Wanberg (1996) points out that most studies do not collectively include research involving the uneducated, unemployed, disillusioned, or disenfranchised that is counter-intuitive to being involved in non-paid service activities. In 1987, Shwab, Rynes, and Aldag (1987) proposed a conceptual model and stated that “…substantial evidence suggests job involvement is a function of two factors: high self-esteem and financial need” (p. 139). This assertion limits the information to antecedent knowledge available for determining the significance of the decisions made by people who volunteer without wages.

In the ensuing years, researchers such as Caplan (1987), Gowan and Gatewood (1992), and Blau (1994) proposed the importance of other variables while unemployed. However, no studies have combined these variables into a coherent framework around notions of authentic psychological, economic, and social benefits of voluntary services projected from those seeking re-entry into mainstream society.
Chapter 3 Research Methodology

A population can handle social change as long as it possesses interpretive frameworks, which enable it to accord meaning to continuously changing realities.

-Jon A. Breslaw

METHOD OF STUDY

As described in Chapter 1, enrollment of post-secondary remedial and adult basic skills programs at Portland Community College is increasing at a notable rate. The review of the literature in Chapter 2 revealed that professional efforts to help disenfranchised students may have had unintended side effects. That is, attempts to help individuals through oversight and devaluing personal importance have weakened their ability to help themselves and others. Secondly, Chapter 2 showed that academic fragmentation, along with technological and economic displacement is only exacerbating the problem of disabling human potential. Finally, the chapter pointed to the potential for building self-concept and relationships with others through community service or service learning that can meet one’s fundamental need for autonomy, competence, and belonging in a democratic society.

This chapter will present the study design used to describe the volunteering experiences of former Skill Center students involved in community service and their perspectives, as represented by descriptions of service as a studio for understanding themselves, others, and their community. I draw speculations based upon analysis of participants’ responses to questions from individual interviews and through triangulation of their responses during a follow-up focus group.
In The Handbook of Research on Teaching, Erickson (1986, p.199) describes a number of approaches to conducting qualitative research. He uses the labels "participant observational" and "interpretive research" to include ethnography, case study, qualitative, constructivist, symbolic interactionist, and phenomenological types of work. Their similar focus and intent unify these methods that may differ slightly. "In this style of work, the researcher focuses on the participants in a social situation. The intent is to build understanding (of) the social phenomenon from the actors' perspectives" (Firestone, 1987, pp. 16-17). Many researchers claim they are developing rich descriptions and "social science patterns" (Kaplan, 1964, p. 330).

This research attempted to understand service related issues from the perspective of students as they describe and explain "immanent truths" (Roth, 1987, p. 19) of an educational problem in need of attention. To appropriately explore this unique issue of volunteer service, the research "opens to scrutiny" (Thomas, 1993) the interplay between the structural characteristics of the community college and its latent impact on community service participation from those peculiar to special programs that seek personal growth.

Qualitative research, particularly interpretive inquiry, is becoming recognized as a more appropriate perspective for educational research. Educators have become increasingly dissatisfied with the limits of traditional research (Fetterman, 1984). Teachers point to the mounds of positivist research that try to quantify classroom life by standardizing actions and responses. The result often does not illuminate the issues surrounding teaching and learning. At the same time, a few skilled researchers and anthropologists have begun to study the cultural aspects of schools and to demonstrate
the usefulness of qualitative research. Wolcott (1984) writes that one reason for the interest is because this form of research offers a significant alternative to traditional research techniques. It provides "a descriptive and interpretative activity whose purposes are to understand rather than to judge and to examine acts of human behavior as part of larger cultural systems" (Wolcott, p.179). It stresses the actions in a setting, actions as behavior plus the apparent meaning underlying the behavior.

Denzin (1989) writes about the characteristics of interpretive research. First, the interpretations are contextualized within the cultural framework, and its conceptual structures can produce meaningful descriptions of the social process. Equally as important is the process of securing biographical experiences. This method throws the researcher directly into the social world under investigation to see the world and its problems "...as they are seen by the people who live inside them" (p. 42). The fieldwork is time consuming and extensive, usually generating voluminous notes. Recurring structural interaction and patterns of meaning are sought. Thirdly, the aim of the interpretive researcher is to understand the sociocultural knowledge of the indigenous by paying close attention to the history, power, emotions, and knowledge of the participants. This understanding is viewed as an unfolding process. The researcher allows the interaction to occur rather than predetermining possible responses.

The frameworks of interpretative inquiry were many years in the making and involved the development of concepts from several branches of the human sciences. In their work, Husserl (1917), Weber (1926), and Schutz (1973) provided warrants for many concepts that later became important, including the social construction of reality.
Their ideas continue to exert great influence on nearly all of the human sciences. The approach itself has many descriptions: interactionist (Fisher & Strauss, 1978; Silverman, 1985), humanistic, phenomenological, naturalistic (Walster & Walster, 1978, Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) or, simply, qualitative sociology.

Interpretive studies generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them and interpretive methods of research are aimed at producing an understanding of the context. Interpretive research does not predefine dependent and independent variables, but focuses on the full complexity of human sense making as the situation emerges (Kaplan & Maxwell, 1994).

Traditional methods such as experimentation are governed with a predetermined hypothesis and variables are defined in terms of what one intends to manipulate and measure. Variables are controlled either physically in a laboratory environment, or statistically to decide its significance. This is in contrast to interpretive research, which instructs the researcher to allow the phenomenon to reveal itself in its fullness. Unlike other methods, qualitative fieldwork does not use tightly controlled variables or the creation of structured situations. Qualitative research should be holistic, environmental, contextual, be inductive or dialectical, pluralistic or relative, and involves participants in the research (Bradley, 1993; Fidel, 1993)

To fully understand my interpretive framework, it is necessary to understand the perspectives of phenomenology and social constructivism, which are the underpinnings to investigating the service activities of participants in this study. Edmund Husserl (1917) introduced the term “phenomenology” in his book, Logical
Phenomenology is dedicated to describing the structures of experience as they present themselves to consciousness, without recourse to theory, deduction, or assumptions from other practices such as the natural sciences. The methods of interpretive study can take on Husserl's (1917) phenomenology, which advocates a return to the "things themselves" (Farber, 1940). That is, the researcher can be more direct: he or she can ask. The researcher can ask them for their views, ask them if they understand, ask for examples, and so on. These approaches are grouped under the rubric of qualitative methods and are used in anthropology, social sciences, humanities, and education. They seek to interpret through in-depth understanding rather than cause-and-effect.

Martin Heidegger (1927/1962) and Max Scheler (1958) assert that phenomenology should reveal what is hidden in ordinary, everyday experience. They contend that the structure of "everydayness", or being-in-the-world, is found to be an interconnected system of active social roles and purposes. Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1945) also stressed the role of the active, involved body in human knowledge, thus supporting Heidegger's (1927/1962) and Scheler's (1958) insights to include the analysis of perception.

Traditionally, students in formal research were taught to use theory to establish hypothetical expectations and to create the categories and dimensions with which to measure these expectations. It is the measurements themselves that draw concern. Conversely, a phenomenological approach suggests suspending the theories, expectations, categories, and measurements and going to the source (Bruzina & Wilshire, 1982). In the case of participant perception, this means opening to the
participants' communications of meaning, and in doing so, the researcher will at least approach an understanding of their perception.

Phenomenological research has assumed that, despite many differences, "...[the researcher] is similar enough to the participants of the study that if he [sic], calmly, non-defensively listens to them, he can in fact understand" (Burrell, G. & Morgan, G., 1979, p. 46). However, I believe that this is not just an assumption. The participants are right there, interacting with the researcher, perhaps calmly, non-defensively, and can confirm or correct collective understandings. The essence of the phenomenological method is this: Examine the participants' perceptions carefully, without theoretical prejudice; discover the essentials of those perceptions; and communicate what you discover to the participants for verification (Spiegelberg, 1972). Whatever we choose to do as researchers, we must begin with the participants' own view of things. What do they know, or think they know, about their experiences? What differentiations do they make, and what values do they place on these differentiations? We must adapt not only to the participants' understanding of the experience, but to their understanding of the world.

Another area in understanding the interpretive framework of this study is social constructivism. This particular epistemological emphasis leads to defining principles that maintain the social nature of knowledge and the belief that knowledge is the result of social interaction and language usage, and thus is a shared, rather than an individual, experience (Gergen, 1995; Friere, 1998). Doolittle (2000) reveals four essential epistemological tenets of social constructivism:

1. Knowledge is not passively accumulated, but rather, is the result of active cognizing by the individual;
2. Cognition is an adaptive process that functions to make an individual's behavior more viable given a particular environment;
3. Cognition organizes and makes sense of one's experience, and is not a process to render an accurate representation of reality; and
4. Knowing has roots in both biological/neurological construction, and social, cultural, and language based interactions (p. 1).

Furthermore, Vygotsky (1978) proposes that this social interaction always occur within a socio-cultural context resulting in knowledge that is bound in social processes and psychological tools that mediate them (Cole & Wertsch, 1996). This position is exemplified by Bakhtin (1984), "truth is not to be found inside the head of an individual person, it is born between people collectively searching for truth, in the process of their dialogic interaction" (p. 110). Truth, in this case, is not the positivist view of truth that ignores the subjective experience and espouses to absolute causes (Goode, 1994), but rather is a socially constructed and agreed upon truth resulting from "co-participation in cultural practices" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 111).

In utilizing social constructivism as a scaffold for the methodology of this case study, it has become apparent that one of the most important processes in developing my knowledge and understanding of interactions with participants has been by explaining and exploring experiences through dialogue. I have noticed, on reflection, that a great deal of my own interpretation of the social processes during individual interviews was fostered by participating in ongoing dialogue and creating "texts" for others to answer back to.

The requirements for interpretive research are demanding. They dictate that I become knowledgeable about the subject for understanding the complex interrelationships within the study, but become open to acquiring an insider's perspective. "The researcher becomes the primary instrument and relies on listening,
communication, and interpretation skills. The amount of time required, and amounts of data generated are massive” (Yin, 1984, pp. 21-22).

A qualitative design is particularly appropriate to this study. In the case of education programs that deal with marginal populations, it is often times inadequate to utilize quantitative designs. In the case of adults who are returning to school after dropping out of high school, there is no method of ethically establishing control groups; there is not sufficient baseline data; and the purpose is to “study real life situations with all their interconnections” (Fetterman, 1984, p. 29-30). The purpose of this investigation and the constraints for the volunteering activities and population, then, fit into the descriptive or exploratory type of qualitative research discussed by Yin (1984).

My concern for designing the method of this study is driven by the notion that the community college may not be aware of the rich diversity of students who are available for volunteering and community service experiences. Ignoring these students may mean the college still does not understand the multifold of learners and their impact on campus. Therefore, the college might fail to plan for a comprehensive service learning environment; the college might fail to place the development of caring citizens at the core of post-secondary education.

By way of this study, I am providing a vehicle so that voices of post-secondary remedial students can be heard in the hope that it can inspire improved leadership on the issue of service learning and non-traditional students. The two questions guiding this study are 1) what are the perceptions of Skill Center completers who were
involved in volunteering and community service? 2) What are the opportunities for connecting their service involvement to the community college?

In interpretive research, the questions are beginning points to give the researcher focus and the latitude to investigate new areas or questions as the study progresses and patterns develop. Erickson (1986) describes this as "crocheting back" the research questions. That is, as the research proceeds, the researcher goes back, checks the question, builds on it to see if the question still seems appropriate, and goes on to pick up new data and possibly formulate new questions.

The two questions guided the collections of data that described the activities of the study participants who were involved in community service as former students of the Portland Community College Skill Center Program. The program participants chose to volunteer in the community even though they were unemployed and at the same time looking for work or other forms of education. It is important then, to know and understand this unique unofficial activity created through self initiated advancement that made service meaningful to them.

THE CASE STUDY APPROACH

The case study approach has a rich and varied history validating its use in looking at particular phenomena. Stake (1995) posits that a case study is a research strategy that employs gathering primary data of “particularity and complexity,” coming to understand its activity within important circumstances. For the most part, the cases of interest in education and social services concerns people and programs.
They draw from naturalistic, holistic, ethnographic, phenomenological, and biographic research methods.

Case study methods also continue to be extensively employed in thesis and dissertation research in psychology, sociology, political science, planning, and economics (Yin, 1984). This not only confirms that the case study approach is adaptive and flexible, but also validates its position and potential in conducting scholarly research in diverse fields.

Case studies can be categorized by the epistemology of the researcher and his or her research framework. The case study method can be applied to interpretive inquiry, consisting of post-positivist, post modernist, and critical theorist approaches to research. The epistemological orientation of most case study researchers is interpretive (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Understanding the meaning of a process or experience constitutes the knowledge to be gained from an inductive, hypothesis- or theory-generating mode of inquiry, rather than a deductive, hypothesis- or theory-testing mode (Merriam, 1987).

This case study aims at an analysis of social processes in order to reveal the underlying processes and provide a holistic picture of service practices by listening to participants about their experiences. It then explores the theoretical explanations that fit the data. The intent is to seek and utilize “thick,” “rich,” and deep data, thus the greatest contribution of such a case study approach is in the descriptive data it produces. Of particular importance to this case study is the idea of thick description. Unraveling the meaning behind multiple data sources requires thick analysis. This process is one in which documents and other information are analyzed and reanalyzed
in a series of continuing iterations. All iterations are then viewed critically and with instinctive insight, hence building a description that captured all nuances under the study. According to Stake (1995):

We are interested in cases for both their uniqueness and commonality. We seek to understand them. We would like to hear their stories. We may have reservations about some things the people tell us, just as they will question some of the things we will tell about them. But we enter the scene with a sincere interest in learning how they function in their ordinary pursuits and milieus and with a willingness to put aside many presumptions while we learn (p. 1).

A case study can be a qualitative, diagnostic tool to develop a range of possibilities that could occur. Some researchers see significant value in the ability of case studies to suggest a range of possibilities for a future, which cannot be assumed to be a projection of the past. A quantitative research tool, of course, may also be a diagnostic tool for future analysis. But its quantitative nature is apt to provide a more superficial view of the phenomena despite the number of units measured. Thus, such educational research, which assumes that the future will replicate the past, will not permit educators to be attuned to the possible unknown patterns that may arise in education during the 21st century.

Case studies of various strategic groups such as the ones in this study could provide insight into social change going on or below the surface and among subgroups that may shape future events (Sjoberg, 1991). This particular case suggests that volunteering or community service can provide non-traditional community college students the opportunity to give time and energy for an important cause while engaged in educational growth. It looks at former Skill Center students who believe they can make a difference in the lives of others through the application of their special talents
and efforts. Therefore, the case study approach is appropriate and was used for this particular investigation.

SITUATING THE RESEARCHER IN THE STUDY

I come to this study as an actor in the research setting. Lofland and Lofland (1984) wrote:

... much of the best work in sociology and other social sciences--within the naturalistic tradition and within other research traditions as well--is probably grounded in the remote and, or current biographies of its creators (p. 8).

I have served as an educator for more than 16 years, working almost exclusively with populations whose access, persistence, and completion represent continued challenges to higher education. Most of these students are from impoverished backgrounds, are first in their family to attend college, and have had unsatisfactory pre-college experiences. Moreover, these students represent the ordinary majority that community colleges were established to serve. In regard to the Skill Center setting introduced in Chapter One, I have served eight years as the Skill Center Director and have maintained a primary leadership role within the college administration for the past twelve years.

Furthermore, I have come to realize an oversight in the planning and implementation of a comprehensive service learning program at Portland Community College for those impoverished students, particularly ethnic-minority students. I find myself increasingly concerned with the very things that Swigart and Ethington (1998), Friedlander and MacDougall (1992), and Mckay and Kuh (1994) found in their assessments of community college barriers toward campus inclusion of ethnic-
minority students. Their research reveals that although many campus leaders developed commendable strategies to increase the retention of students, few have considered plans to break down systemic and institutional barriers for ethnic-minority students to becoming socially and academically involved in community college, thus increasing the likelihood of growth and development. My investigative questions and service view are informed through critical viewpoint as well as personal and professional experiences over the past 16 years. I bring to this study what Glaser and Strauss (1967) called theoretical sensitivity. That is, I have earned the "attribute of having insight, the ability to give meaning to data, the capacity to understand, and capability to separate the pertinent from that which isn’t" (p. 42).

I grew up in the inner city of a predominately Black neighborhood in the metropolitan area and until the age of 18 had few experiences that encouraged me to think about what it meant to be part of the mainstream. In recent years since then, however, I have been blessed with an exceptional number of formal and informal opportunities to be with and learn from a pluralistic environment of people, including community college students.

Additionally, since 1970, I have participated in many community service activities, serving from a few to forty hours a week and providing volunteer services to many organizations including the Salvation Army Youth Center, Portland Public Schools, local area hospitals, nursing homes, soup kitchens, libraries, and fund-raising projects. More specifically, I have transported cancer patients to and from the local hospital; tutored alternative high school students in mathematics and English; answered phones during a telethon drive for the United Negro College Fund; helped
As a community college administrator, I have worked extensively with domestic populations of Latinos, African-Americans, Asians, and Caucasians. My administrative assignment with the Skill Center affords me the opportunity to work closely with international students from China, Japan, the Philippines, Laos, Iran, and Indonesia. I also work with students from Mexico, Honduras, South America, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Ghana. Although working in such a diverse environment is fulfilling, I find myself repeatedly reminded of the exclusionary practices, both intentional and unintentional, within organizational structures. I also find myself increasingly comfortable with my own culture and race because developing a pluralistic philosophy of inclusion has, as an African-American, become a critical part of my life's work.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The constant comparative method of data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to shape the methodological facets of the study. In this study, instead of viewing the student participants as “subjects,” the researcher invited them to be engaged as colleagues. Engaging the students as colleagues is consistent with social constructivist epistemology (Gergen, 1985; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Wertsch, 1991). This interpretive study is based on the interactions that took
place between the students and the researcher as both construct understandings about their research questions. The colleagues are the experts in relation to their own lives and perceptions (Denzin & Lincoln 1994) and are the "...only authentic chroniclers of their own experience" (Delpit, 1988, p. 297). There are five major activities of data collection used for this research: purposive sampling, call for participation, semi-structure interviews, a focus group interview, and triangulation.

**Purposive Sampling**

Glaser and Strauss (1967) assert that:

> Theoretical sampling is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his [sic] theory as it emerges. This process of data collection is controlled by emerging theory, whether substantive or formal (p. 45).

The study employed purposive sampling to select information from rich cases (Patton, 1990). The sample of students selected for this research included males and females representing widely diverse achievement levels and different degrees of internal and external motivational alignment. Criteria for inclusion in this study also were defined as students who were admitted to the Skill Center training program during the academic terms from 1992 through 2000.

As mentioned in Chapter 1 and 2, the focus of this particular case study is former Skill Center students who engage in community volunteering. The Center serves a hidden population (i.e., homeless and ex-offender) that normally avoids rules and formal organizations. It is necessary to maximize individual anonymity in order to obtain access to program students. Informed consent forms help to protect
individual's anonymity and confidentiality, and therefore, findings are freely reported with this in mind.

Call for Participation.

Sample selection began with a master list of students from the Skill Center's mandated Tracking Oregon Programs and Students (WIA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy, 1999). This master list provided information on the program attended. At the time of this study there were 1,595 students in the Skill Center electronic data files and their average training period was approximately three months. In order to ensure that students are stable and have a good grasp of their personal or occupational goals, the selection was limited to the 790 students who completed the training programs while at the Skill Center (Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, 1999).

It was then necessary to utilize a filtering process for the 790 graduates from the training program as a manageable sample during the study. Therefore, this process began with a Call for Participation (see Appendix A), initiated as a preliminary process that attracted potential research participants. The Call for Participation was distributed to the 970 Skill Center students who had attended training at the Center. Fifteen respondents volunteered to participate in the telephone survey, which ensured that major characteristics of the community service providers were represented.

A telephone questionnaire (see Appendix B) was used by the Center's Client Advocate following responses to the Call for Participation and inquiries about participating in the study. The Client Advocate volunteered to call the respondents,
since his normal duties entailed making follow-up inquiries. The purpose of the questionnaire was to survey and qualify individuals for the research. A coding system was also used for identification and tracking purposes.

There were five generic qualifying questions: actual service involvement, type of service, hours completed, what year the service took place, and time period. Selection of key participants were based on meeting the criteria of having provided sustainable volunteer services within a social context, with no less than 15 hours of service rendered, and within a time period of no more than three months prior to entering training. The components of the survey included the following questions:

1. Are you now, or have you ever been a volunteer?
2. What types of volunteer services did you provide?
3. How many hours did you participate?
4. What year did the volunteering take place?
5. Over what time period did it take place (e.g., every week, or once a month)?

A written invitational letter was sent to the prospective interviewee two weeks prior to their involvement (see Appendix C). The letter explained the research, encouraged participation and consisted of the following information:

1. An explanation of the survey and the purpose of the survey.
2. A statement as to why the respondent’s reply is important.
3. Assurance of confidentiality.
4. A contact person to answer questions they may have.
The letter also stated that student participation was wholly voluntary, and the results were not to be used in any assessment of them and that there would be no consequences for non-participation. The Skill Center Client Advocate at the Skill Center was instructed that appointments for the interviews were to be made directly with those individuals selected for the given study.

Although the Call for Participation announcement and telephone survey produced eight responses, a second call had to be distributed three weeks into the interview process that produced three more participants for the study. Additionally, the Skill Center Client Advocate contacted four participants who had not responded to the first announcement after consulting with other students in the Skill Center who knew where to locate those who had moved out of the Center’s service area. As a result, 15 former students were identified for the research. The Skill Center Client Advocate also made a follow-up telephone appointment reminder two days before each interview.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used to discover useful data on the program participants involved in this research. The participants were eager to participate in the interviews. Bruner (1996) argues that it is the educator’s job to produce an account of how participants of educational programs see the situation, and the analysis then goes beyond this point to produce analytical concepts, which transcend the meanings ascribed to them by the participants. Empathy with the participants depends on the researcher’s knowledge of the social setting.
The semi-structured interview process was initiated and posed guided questions to all participants. The process was an open-ended interview format as situations permitted and entailed in-depth questions based on the participant's responses. An interview guide was devised to elicit the information sought from each individual. The guide contained the following questions:

1. Can you describe the type(s) of volunteering or community service activities that you are involved in?
2. What does volunteering and community service mean to you?
3. How have your past experiences helped you in your service activities?
4. What do you hope to gain from volunteering in the community?
5. Is there something that you can reveal that will enable me to better understand your involvement in volunteering?

The interview guide allowed the researcher to access the different perspectives of the person being interviewed (Patton, 1990). For instance, questions were posed which elicited information about personal views of providing service in the community on volunteer bases. Other questions were posed in reference to the relationship between the provider of the service and the recipient.

The interview transcripts were supplemented by interviewer comments and notes made at the time of the interview, as well as during analysis of the transcripts. Before the interviews began, the nature of the research was explained to the participants. There was also an explanation that any quotations used from the interviews would be used in such a manner that anonymity will be protected. Interviewees were assured that no one at the Skill Center or anywhere else would have access to the interview transcripts.
Each interview lasted between 30 minutes and an hour. Most of the interviews took place at the Skill Center, in a private setting. The only exception came when one interview had to be held at the former student’s place of employment. No participant was interviewed more than once. All interviews were audio taped with permission, and verified with an informed consent form (see Appendix D) previously approved by the university’s Human Subject Research Committee (see Appendix E). The form disclosed the intended purpose of the data collection, the voluntary nature of participation, and protection of privacy for the participants.

Characteristics of Participants

All of the former Skill Center students interviewed shared information for this study about their volunteer community service experiences. Thirteen participants identified themselves as African-American; one participant was identified as Latino and one as Asian, as shown in Table 3. To help the reader better understand the participants, a code identifying ethnicity, gender, along with an assigned number has been given to each individual. Also, 13 of the 15 participants were active in a community service or volunteer project, while two of the former students were not currently involved. There were no former students that declined to participate in the study. Had a former student chosen not to participate, a third call for participation would have been placed to reach the desired number of respondents. Another demographic characteristic noted in Table 3 is that of the 15 study participants, 8 (53%) were male, while 7 (47%) were female. Although reverse, nearly the same proportion is true for the total population of the Skill Center: of the 857
Table 3
Interview Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity/Gender</th>
<th>Student Code</th>
<th>Current Service Activity</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Skill Center Completion Date</th>
<th>Certificates of Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. African-American Female</td>
<td>AAF-1</td>
<td>Hughes After School</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>10/98</td>
<td>Office Information Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. African-American Female</td>
<td>AAF-2</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12/97</td>
<td>Office Information Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. African-American Female</td>
<td>AAF-5</td>
<td>Sabin CDC</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11/98</td>
<td>Office Information Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. African-American Female</td>
<td>AAF-6</td>
<td>Multnomah Library</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>12/95</td>
<td>Office Information Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Asian Male</td>
<td>AM-7</td>
<td>Red Cross</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>12/98</td>
<td>Skills for Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Table (Continued)</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>African-American Female</td>
<td>AAF-8</td>
<td>Vacation Bible school</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>6/00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>African-American Male</td>
<td>AAM-10</td>
<td>Habitat for Humanity</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6/99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Latino Female</td>
<td>LF-11</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>9/98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>African-American Male</td>
<td>AAM-12</td>
<td>Collins Center</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>12/98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
students attending the Skill Center in the 1999-2000 academic year, 454 (53%) were female and 403 (47%) were male (TOPS, 2000). Therefore, the gender sample ratio for the study seems similar to the Skill Center population ratio. Additionally, eight participants of the study, or a little more than 53%, are over 40 years of age. Four (26%) are between the ages of 18 and 30 and three (20%) are in the 31 to 40-age category.

All but two former students during the time of the interviews stated they were currently involved in volunteering activities. As indicated in Table 3, volunteer activities vary among the participants and range from de-toxicity and crime intervention to vacation bible schooling and volunteering in non-profit organizations. There were also those who spent time at community centers. The participants revealed that they volunteer in spite of being unemployed or having busy schedules.

Among the 15 former Skill Center students described in Table 3, there were 10 (66%) participants who enrolled and successfully concluded their three-month (11 weeks) training program during the 1998-99 community college academic year. The other five study participants completed training in their respective years of 2000, 1997, 1996, 1995, including one former student who graduated from the program in 1992. As cited in Chapter 1, the Skill Center has been in existence since 1989.

All of the participants identified in Table 3 completed their training in one of the four Skill Center programs: Workforce Literacy, Construction Technology, Skills for Technology, and Computer Applications. There are four primary training programs in the Center. These are the training programs offered at the Center.
Workforce Literacy is a basic skills program designed to help students acquire the necessary reading, writing, and computational skills they will need to fully utilize their training and permit them the greatest possibility for success in the workplace. All Skill Center students are required to complete this program prior to entering the other training curriculum. The length and time students spend in these basic skills depends on which job or industry area they wish to enter. Occupation-specific math, technical reading and communication skills are built in the Workforce Literacy program. An involved team of student, instructor, and social case manager determine the point in which a student can enter the more comprehensive training areas at the Skill Center.

The Construction Technology program is a competency-based program of training in the skills basic to all construction trades. It is designed to be pre-apprenticeship training for individuals who aspire to access family-wage apprenticeships in some 32 different construction trades. Power and hand tool use and safety; methods and procedures for measuring, cutting, and fabrication; terms of the building trades; applied communications, blueprint reading and free-hand sketching; and hands-on experience at a work site are all part of the curriculum.

Skills for Technology (Skill Tech) is a training program based on a curriculum developed by the Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD) in Waco, Texas. It is a modular structured program, which endeavors to teach technical literacy to students in an intensive 11-week format. Skill Tech includes applied physics, computer applications (including computer-aided drafting), spreadsheet uses, and word-processing. Other elements of the Skill Tech curriculum are applied
hydraulics, applied pneumatics, and electronics. Applied communication, in the form of technical writing, is also part of the Skill Tech program.

Office Information Systems is a program specifically designed to help students acquire the basic computer skills for entry-level employment in office occupations. The curriculum is primarily in an instructor driven format, with provisions being made for those students who wish to engage in self-paced instruction as additional support. Skills acquired from the training are in the area of word-processing, database, spreadsheet, and computer application programs, including Internet use. In addition, students learn the use of ten-key adding machines, general office procedures, and business mathematics.

As shown in Table 3, eight of the 15 study participants, (53%) received a Certificate of Completion from the Office Information Systems program. Four participants (26%) received certificates of completion in Skills for Technology, and three (20%) in the Construction Technology program.

Focus Group Interview

In order to conduct further sampling of the categories and properties, it was necessary to hold a small focus group interview session in which eight students in the study participated. In focus group interviews of about eight members (Patton, 1990), students may express their ideas on questions central to the study. According to Morgan (1997), "...a focus group is a selection of five to ten persons who concentrate on a given topic that the individuals have experienced in common" (p.1). Morgan noted that focus group interviews allow elaboration of quantified data and are
unusually rich in meaning. "A group interview is often superior to an individual interview because of the supportive and synergic interpersonal dynamics that are fostered in groups" (p.1).

Procedure was established for the follow-up focus group by calling and contacting all 15 participants two weeks before the focus group. Of the 15 participants contacted, eight agreed to participate at the Skill Center. Two days before the focus group, a follow-up telephone reminder was made. While the aggregate responses from the individual interviews provided a deep understanding of the areas under study, there needed to be a way to strengthen the analysis of the data. Conducting a follow-up focus group allowed me opportunity for triangulation to tease out certain themes from the interview data.

The focus group was held at the Skill Center on February 7, 2001, and lasted approximately one hour. A colleague from another department at Portland Community College facilitated the focus group and the Skill Center administrative assistant recorded responses on an easel pad. As with the individual interviews, participants were told that the information given to the researcher was entirely confidential and no one’s name would be associated with any of their responses. The focus group was then asked an overarching question: What are the primary reasons for your participation in volunteering and community service?

Several interesting comments and themes came out of the focus group that helped the researcher better understand the reasons for participation. For example, group members talked openly and agreed about their perceptions and experiences when aggregate responses were revealed as the theme of “A Sense of Connection”
emerged and was associated with the notion of “having personal connections and relationships with others” (See Appendix G). Although the focus groups constituted a tertiary level of data analysis, its approach as a mutually reinforcing method greatly enhanced the data analysis.

Study participants though not being paid for their participation, expressed positive comments about the study’s question and intent. This hinted to the researcher that program participants were pleased that “others” sought and valued their beliefs. Moreover, since it is standard practice at Portland Community College to offer some motivating incentives to attract the greatest number of participants to the focus group, light refreshments were served. Because non-traditional students have minimal free time due to child-care and awkward work hours, the focus group was scheduled at a time convenient to the participants.

In following interview protocol, it is necessary to draw on the work of Rubin and Rubin (1995) to ensure that the interviews are answered in depth, and if not, try to determine the reason. This was done at the end of each interview through examining the relevant themes and concepts of the interaction, including areas of redundancy, intimidation, impatience, boredom, and topics that are too broad or narrow. The respondents are referred to as “participants” in this research to protect their anonymity. In the case of the focus group, they will be referred as “focus group members.”

Interviews were scheduled and arranged for times convenient for the participants.

The samples used in this case study were based on the "saturation of categories" (Glaser and Strauss 1967). These were the conceptual elements of the theory and provided the means of classifying data. Categories were preferred at a more
abstract level than codes or theoretical notes used to describe data. All data were grouped within the categories according to their “fit” (Corbin and Strauss 1990). Categories were saturated when no additional information could be found to develop them further.

Trustworthiness of the Study

As described earlier, data collection via in-depth interviewing and a follow-up focus group interview was centered on the recording of field notes that support qualitative interviewing (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Straus, 1967; Lofland & Lofland, 1984; Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Graduate training in systems thinking was also utilized. The primary emphasis was on developing the ability to appreciate feedback in organizational systems (Capra, 1996; Wheatly, 1994) by repetitive communication loops (Prigogine, 1980) and understanding systems archetypes (Senge, 1990).

The primary concern for research trustworthiness rests in the accuracy of the interpretation of the reported data. One’s interpretation is trustworthy if it accurately represents the features of self that are intended to describe, explain, or theorize (Altheride & Johnson, 1998). To that end, trustworthiness was the first concern in reporting data. The social world in an interpreted world, interpreted by the narrator and the researcher, assumes meanings and definitions brought to actual situations and are produced through a communication process. Therefore, the processes by which the interviews were obtained and interpreted must be revealed.

The matter of trustworthiness concerns itself to aspects of accounts for which the terms of the account are not themselves problematic. The goal is to grasp the narrator’s point of view, his or her relation to life, and to realize his or her vision of
self. Trustworthiness, then, is never by direct access to the participants, but is always a construct by the researcher from the accounts of informants; a matter of linkage between the participant and researcher.

The criteria of credibility and confirmability encompass the application of qualitative methods to develop the trustworthiness of the research. Credibility means that the findings of triangulation will be believable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility was established in (1) introduction meetings between November 20, 2000 and December 9, 2000, thus, allowing for an understanding of the research purpose and process and (2) semi-structured interviews from December 11, 2000 through February 2, 2001 thus allowing for interviews and record review. Credibility was reinforced through follow-up telephone calls and personal meetings.

Confirmability traces the process of collecting and reporting data recorded (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Interview notes and tape recordings were transcribed concomitant to individual interviews. Subsequently, emergent themes were inductively developed from review and reflection of data recorded. These themes were then synthesized and connected to the research questions.

Triangulation of the data sources was employed during a pilot interview and transcription of the data recorded on August 6, 2000. The pilot interview was helpful in shaping the data collection protocol and remainder of the study. The thrust of the study was then governed by findings from the individual and focus group interviews.

Triangulation means that one is able to double-check and crosscheck using a variety of data sources and different perspectives of the subject of inquiry. Triangulation serves as one means of validation for the information reported (Lincoln
Debriefing was used after each individual interview to strengthen the triangulation method and to maintain trustworthiness. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985):

The debriefer is essentially a noninvolved professional peer with whom the inquirer(s) can have a no-holds-barred conversation at periodic intervals. The purposes of the debriefing are multiple: to ask the difficult questions that the inquirer might otherwise avoid ("to keep the inquirer honest"), to explore methodological next steps with someone who has no axe to grind, and to provide a sympathetic listening point for personal catharsis. During implementation the inquirers must arrange for and carry out such debriefings, and develop a record (with entries from both the debriefer and the inquirers) that can be consulted later (p. 283).

These methods were repeated until, according to Lincoln & Guba (1985, p. 188), "redundancy is achieved, the theory is stabilized and the emergent design is fulfilled," consequently, grounding the description of the participant's service experiences through analytical induction (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In addition, member checking was also conducted (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Corbin & Strauss, 1990) during interviews. It involved reviewing the interview transcript with each former student about the themes and patterns that were emerging from the study to ascertain what was said.

Merriam (1988), Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Bogdan and Biklen, (1998) argue that since qualitative research is based on different assumptions about reality, it should have different conceptualizations of validity. They propose using internal validity and external validity. These two areas will be addressed separately. Internal validity deals with how one's findings match reality. It addresses the concern of whether investigators are observing and measuring what they think they are measuring. Merriam (1988) stated that an assumption underlying qualitative research
is that reality is holistic and changing. Reality is "a multiple set of mental constructions...made by humans" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 295). What is being studied is how people understand the world. Lincoln and Guba (1985) continue:

Therefore, judging the validity or truth of a study involves the investigator showing that he or she has represented those multiple constructions adequately, that is, that the reconstructions that have been arrived at via the inquiry are credible to the constructors of the original multiple realities." (p. 296)

I used three internal validity strategies in the study. The first strategy was member checks. The researcher took data and interpretations from the interview notes back to the people from whom they were derived and asked them if the results were plausible. The second strategy involved peer examination through the focus group interview. A colleague of the researcher asked study participants to comment on the findings as they emerged. The third strategy dealt with researcher bias. Here, the researcher disclosed his personal life experience, particularly as it pertains to volunteering, working, and living with the population so that the reader would be aware of the researcher's views and assumptions. These assumptions are described in the preceding section.

I also applied the concept of external validity in the study. External validity is concerned with how generalizable the results of a study are (Merriam, 1988). External validity deals with the question: To what extent can the findings of one study be applied to other situations? Traditionally the ability to generalize to other settings or people is ensured through using standard sampling procedures. This is not possible in qualitative research that deals with the study of a particular case or setting. Since external validity in the traditional sense cannot be applied to qualitative research,
Lincoln and Guba (1985), suggested thinking about the "transferability" (p. 288) of the results obtained from qualitative data.

Merriam (1988) suggests three ways a researcher can improve the generalizability or transferability of findings, which were employed in this study. They are:

1) Provide a "rich, thick description" so that anyone interested in transferability has a basis of information to make this judgement; 2) establish the typicality of the case, that is, describe how typical an individual is compared with others in the same class so that readers can make comparisons with their own situations; and (3) conduct cross-case analysis, that is, analysis across multiple cases that builds an integrated framework (p. 177).

To this end the researcher used the following procedures for verifying the internal and external validity of the research as shown in Table 4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps for Internal Validity</th>
<th>Steps for External Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Triangulation - Multiple data collection methods</td>
<td>Thick, rich description was used in describing the data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Informant Verification - Each participant was shown a copy of the data analysis.</td>
<td>Multiple methods of collecting the data; Multiple methods of data analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Explicitly clarifying the researchers bias through personal disclosure</td>
<td>Review by a researcher's peer who helped verify the interpretation of the data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Expert review by my major, minor professors, and doctoral committee members.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Format was taken from "Teaching Chemistry on the Internet", by Daonian Liu, 1996. Copyright by Author.
Chapter 4 - Findings

Reason, or the ratio of all we have already known, is not the same that it shall be when we know more.

-William Blake

To better understand the questions, what are the perceptions of Skill Center completers who were involved in volunteering and community service and what are the opportunities for connecting their service involvement to the community college, this study examined former student volunteering experiences and meanings through both in-depth interviews and a focus group. In analyzing the data generated from the fieldwork, certain themes and patterns were uncovered in the service activities. These themes and patterns were revealed through participant responses and interpretations. This study also investigated what types of community service activities occurred, how the participants spent their time, the areas of concentration, and what they felt needed to be changed in their community.

What emerges from this analysis is a reflection of student perceptions related to the individual’s emerging self, social connection and the value placed on the meaning of the service encounters. The community service and volunteering described by the participants of the study gives voice and substance to understanding why students who are unemployed and enrolled in a special academic program on an urban community college campus become volunteers from surrounding communities. The findings outlined in this chapter interpret the various, and sometimes unique, service and volunteering relationships encountered in an urban community. Fifteen former
Skill Center students responded to a survey instrument. All who were contacted volunteered to participate in personal interviews.

For the last two decades, there have been several investigations of community service and volunteering issues in academic settings. Many steps have been taken to strengthen service as learning in community colleges and make such knowledge accessible to traditional students. Indeed, at this point in its history, references to civic education are commonly found in the course offerings of post-secondary education (Pierce, 1996; Howard, 2000). However, in my review of the literature, there are few studies to assist us in moving beyond strengthening service as learning toward a deeper understanding of those non-traditional students who undertake community service and volunteering that result in successful efforts.

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

Each interview was transcribed, with the ongoing thoughts and interpretations of respondents collectively put in the form of a case study. Transcription was a methodical process, as each hour's worth of a single one-to-one interview took six to seven hours to transcribe. By having actual interview transcripts, I was able to do a more thorough content analysis (Patton, 1990). To that end, a critical set of issues was identified and data systematically scanned for instances of particular themes and categorized in a matrix format (see Appendix F).

The interview transcripts were stored directly into a personal computer and an Access database program was used to group like interview responses once themes were coded. The coded and thematic data were then linked to other relevant thematic
segments and stored in the personal computer. The files in the format used by the Access database were converted manually into the dissertation and linked by the narrative of the researcher through word processing.

The initial stages of actually getting to know the data and identifying what were the key issues felt more intuitive than systematic. As Bryman and Burgess (1994) have noted, "... much of the work in which investigators engage in this phase of the research process is as much implicit as explicit" (p. 12). Continuing analysis was necessitated by re-reading data both in complete transcripts and in categorized chunks, over and over again, to develop an analysis with acceptable depth.

As the data collection progressed, four major themes emerged as keys to understanding the service context and interpretations of volunteering and community service by former students. These themes are personal service reflections, relationships with others, community building, and motivation for service. The researcher uses the term "context" to include those aspects of community volunteering related to the service and the term interpretations as the background, feelings, and events described by the participants.

In describing both the context and interpretations, it is necessary to state the meanings and the values placed on those elements of service interaction by the participants associated with the major themes. Those service elements are sub-categorized as:

- Participant Reflections
- Self Exploration and Discovery
- A Sense of Connection
• Service as a Role Model
• Interdependence as a Way of Caring
• Building a Quality Community
• Service as an Advocate for Social Change
• Being Together as one Community
• Service as an Intrinsic Reward
• Service Training
• Restorative Service

All of the elements are connected to each emergent theme and related to the adult learning experiences, caring community, and need for social connection discussed during the review of the literature in Chapter Two. Each of the patterns shows evidence of its existence in the service encounters or in the time frame of the activities.

Data, themes, and color-coding categories were developed and then finalized (see Appendix G). This allowed recurring themes to be identified and defined. This detailed and time-consuming work was valuable for understanding the depth and complexity of individual experiences, as well as the very significant differences between the participants' narratives.

The resulting findings are organized into categories describing the service encounters and the participant's view of their interactions. Before revealing the participants' voices, a glimpse into the background of specific participants might help the reader grasp a sense of who they are as individuals and how they interact
collectively. All of the participants shared similarities in depth, while at the same time each disclosure was individually unique.

PERSONAL SERVICE REFLECTIONS

The former Skill Center students in this research offer insight into some of the self-expectations and motivations people have when volunteering. I want to add to the discussion of volunteering and community service by introducing personal accounts of past struggles and experiences that lead to the study participants' respective service activity. These selected participant descriptions and their personal insights of responsibility for and contributions to the community illustrate the theme that emerged as expressions of personal service reflections. Data which primarily addressed this theme were most numerous, salient, and powerful.

Participant Reflections

One participant grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, and is an ex-offender, as well as a recovering drug addict. He was raised in a single-parent household and never knew his father. Neither his mother nor older brother and younger sister were involved in narcotics, alcoholic abuse, or crime. From doing several inventories since being released from prison, this individual knows today that he was an addict long before ever indulging in his first fix, pill, or drink. All of the addict behavior and thought patterns were already in place. The participant states:

I was always selfish and self-centered. I was never satisfied and always wanted more. I never felt like I really belonged anywhere. And of course there was never the understanding and love that I was constantly seeking. Growing up, the only feeling we really
knew was anger. We were a very poor family so I was constantly looking for anything materialistically. In fact, I learned at an early age how to con and manipulate to get what I wanted. Everything except what I really wanted that is... love and understanding. I learned early on that I could be the center of attention by doing "bad things" as well as "good things" and it seemed to be more fun that way. But getting back to this disease, it had me see and hear all the negatives in life and around me... not the positives. (AAM-13)

There are several elements in this participant's life that communicates identity confusion. The individual's past experiences focus on the lost of self-esteem and family connectivity as a child. He was at a point in his life where a multitude of negative forces influenced his sense of self; thus putting him in a midst of a period of heightened self-discovery and identity confusion. The participant explains the negative encounters with his mother:

I would come home after being away in a camp sponsored by the Boys Club in Missouri, for the summer. I would hear "Boy, it was sure nice and quiet when you were gone... when are you going again?" I just knew that I wasn't wanted. A lot of things happened during my youth in my family too countless to even mention. [pause] But I caused a lot of grief in my family. [pause] My mother would say that I was going to give her an ulcer or be the death of her yet. (AAM-13)

For this former student who is still seeking employment, the involvement as a volunteer rehabilitation counselor on the weekends is an opportunity to learn more about himself while at the same time doing something to serve others. "I found that working not only with drug addiction, but those who are homeless on top of it was difficult for me at first. But, now I can handle it and now know where I fit in all of this" (AAM-13). His involvement in service to those who need recovery and
support represented a chance to explore his life and the kinds of things he is coming to value: friends, community, understanding and caring:

_**Learning slowly how to live life on life's terms. Learning how to feel my feelings and know that they won't kill me, only my reactions or actions behind them might. Learning how to be comfortable in my own skin. It's about taking the steps and learning the spiritual principles and trying to practice them in all my affairs. It's been about volunteering my time for other people and letting people in and building a support system. It's about growing up finally. It's about giving and not taking for a change. Working with others and passing on what's been so freely given to me.**_ (AAM-13)

This participant challenges himself to think about his own life and role in society. His new, found sense of meaning evokes values and therefore a commitment to alter past behaviors. Moreover, this participant is not alone in his transformation of the self. Many of the former students interviewed revealed that throughout their volunteer experiences, they sought deeper meaning and confronted personal issues relevant to their life transformation.

Another former student that was interviewed for this study was actually a graduate of the Oregon Institute of Technology when he enrolled at the Skill Center to regain his personal and career aspirations. At the time of the interview, he had come back to the Skill Center to assist in the recruitment effort and to testify on behalf of the program. During the interviews he talked about his past experience with drugs and how others gave him insight and helped him back on his feet.

_I attended Oregon Institute of Technology back in 1988 and received my Bachelor of Science in 1993. I'm not your stereotypical, African-American who everyone thinks of when a person has had problems. I grew up in Eugene and went to Churchill High School where both my mother and father were_
professionals. My father taught ... at the University of Oregon and my mother was ... at Pacific Northwest Bell and later ... at Sacred Heart Hospital. They are both retired now, but when I was growing up in the eighties and until I graduated in 1988, my family life was pretty well intact. (AAM-3)

He continues to reveal a life bifurcation:

It wasn't until I left for college that I began to experiment with drugs and alcohol. Well, I did OK, until I graduated and came up here to Portland in 1995. I guess that I got mixed up with the wrong crowd again and started drinking and smoking weed and was at the wrong place, at the wrong time and got busted with three other brothers on a possession charge in '96. I went to court and had Okeema Black who was the new Oregon, U. S. Assistant Attorney there on my behalf, and to make a long story short, I got to work in her new program, which was the Alternative Sentencing. And I worked there for a while and she referred me to the Skill Center in their Life Skills and Computer Applications classes. This changed my attitude and disposition about life. And so much, that I am now giving back to the community. (AAM-3)

Although the life this former student had growing up was pretty normal and stable, he had to face his addiction, personal fears, and grow from his transgressions. This eventually led him to the Skill Center where there was a means provided to foster a sense of connectedness, which offered him an opportunity to participate in community service.

Another former Skill Center student who participated in the study currently teaches for Portland Public Schools after coming to the Skill Center in 1994, completing basic skills training, continuing on at Portland Community College, and eventually graduating from the University of Portland in the Spring of 2000. He is now a homeowner for the first time, and his current goal is to become involved with his local school to help solve the social and educational problems within his community. He articulates his beliefs in a concise and
passionate manner. His commitment for the community’s well being is related to his past. Thus, for this participant, service is not only an act of serving the needy; it is a way of life in a close-knit community striving for social and economic betterment. He talks about his upbringing:

*We lived in the North and my mother and father were both from the South. And they were raised with that village concept: everybody is raised by the whole community. That’s how they brought us up. When we moved to the East Coast, the village changed, but it was still a village. The people that raised me were the teachers from the community, our minister, the one or two cousins, and the few close friends that my mother got in the family. If they became her friends, they became our friends and we could get whipped by all of them. So if you got a spanking you got a spanking by the whole chain and if one person knew, they all knew. They were concerned about our success. I mean a whole community, people who didn’t know me, know of me by virtue of my folks and they were concerned about how well we did. I came out here though, and this was before I ended up coming to the Skill Center... for a program called Teach for America. I was ah, disillusioned with college; I was actually tutoring at a college, but I wasn’t really thrilled with their attitude about the student. My computer skills were not there. So, I entered the Skill Center and got very proficient with those skills, got my AS degree, and went on and received my Bachelors in Math at the University of Portland. Two things have happened since then, I landed a teaching position and got back into the Teach for America program because I wanted to share some of the skills that were developed during my college education.* (AAM-9)

**Self Exploration and Discovery**

We all have a sense of self that we bring and have deeply textured social histories, all of which contribute to who we are as a person. For the following participant, the experiences she had with drug addition are leaving
an indelible impact on the person she is today and the self she brings to
community service and reaching out to others.

This individual's drug counseling came about through her work at the
Miracles Clean and Sober Center here in Portland, Oregon where at one point
during her involvement as a volunteer she replaced a full-time staff member
who had left the organization. One of her roles, as now a lead volunteer, was to
work with existing program adult and teenage clients who were recovering
from drug use and get them involved in volunteering to help others in their
community as part of their treatment.

The participant found that most often the client-volunteers were less
than enthusiastic about doing community service, including her own reluctance
to serve. However, she also knew, like herself, that a degree of interest might
be fostered in many of the clients once they experienced the satisfaction of
helping others. She recounts her experience:

*Ah, a lot of the volunteers that I talk to are reluctant to do
something like this just like I was. But, you know, I knew that just
getting them out there, and once they experience the satisfaction as
I did of helping others, they would come around, and they did.
Working with the volunteers helped me seriously think about my life
and how others think about me. I began to think about what kind of
person I was and what I needed to be in helping other recovering
addicts such as myself get back into the community and learn how
to live a clean and sober life. (AAF-14)*

This study participant has given serious thought to the kind of person
that she is and the kind of person she wants to become for her community.
Community service plays an integral role in the exploration of her identity.
Moreover, service work provides her with the mental model in which she is able to learn more about others in similar situations and about herself as well.

Take the following two study participants for examples, who expressed their regret of the things they did in the past, but look to community service at their local community centers as a way of wanting to be better people.

*Well, I look at myself and see some of the things in the past that I have done that...that have not been the right thing to do, you know. At one time I sold drugs, Ok? Well, marijuana to put it plainly and that was wrong. I don't want to try to give justification for doing what I did in the past, It was wrong. But to tell you again, it's the look on their face, just to have someone to talk to, man. And to... to share just a few minutes out of their day. It makes me feel like I am a better person. Not trying to ease my conscience, mind you. I do feel like I'm doing some good. I believe that every thing works for a reason.* (AAM-14)

*Ah, It's [community service] the right thing to do. I believe in God, you know, I used to be saved. So, now I'm trying to get back there. I'm not doing this [the volunteering] for points or nothing like that. It's still in me. That's my foundation. I've just been backsliding. And I want to still do the right thing, but like I tell them, I've got work to do. I'm caught in the middle too. I had a past, and regardless of what I do, I'm going to be judged of this past. So, I'm caught in the middle...I'm caught in the middle. I'll tell them as well, I need your help, too, man. And, ah, when I tell them that I see a sense of unity there and they see that I'm being humble then they become humble. They like say, "OK, all right, partner's cool."* (AAM-4)

Other students who may have not had such a tarnished past described their community service experiences that transcended change for the better.

*Well, I feel like I am giving. I feel like I'm serving the purpose that I might have been put here for, in part. Because, you know, volunteering is not my whole life of course, but I feel in order to be well rounded and grounded that it is an integral part of life.* (LF-11)

*This way you can get a handle on yourself and who you are and when you are experiencing things ...creates a more, well rounded*
understanding of who you are and where you are coming from. And I think everybody needs to go back and discover your history, and volunteering does that for you. It makes you realize where you came from and you can get grounded sort of speak. You’re out here with all these distractions in life and you are so bogged down with responsibilities of raising your family, working, etc. and it important to say, “OK, let me go back and give my time to my community where I grew up.” And this gives you time to get grounded. (AAF-2)

While my experience and abilities helped the kids learn and grow, their enthusiasm and increased motivation helped me to discover myself. Being part of the program unraveled the rat-race type of life that I was involved in. As I said earlier, I approach life much differently...and not just with the acknowledgment of giving to others, but also with the gratitude of receiving their lives as children, which makes me appreciate my own life and give even more. (AAF-1)

Clearly, the majority of the participants felt that community service allowed them to change for the better. They felt a strong sense of self-discovery and identification. In particular, their self-reflections on breaking with the past and the way they now see the world was definitely tied to their involvement in service work.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

A Sense of Connection

“I know that I will continue to volunteer because we in this community have to create our own organization of service. Volunteering has helped me find the intimate connections” (AAF-2). This comment reflects a sense of connection, which was a common theme among the research participants. Clearly, one element of connecting to
the community during volunteering activities is related to the self-exploration and discovery aspects discussed in the previous section.

The personal interviews of the research participants are full of comments regarding the way people feel about connecting with others from their community. "It helps me get close to the person, the individual and also branch out to get more information, to get more educated through that individual" (AAF-14). "The other thing that volunteering does: it gives you an opportunity to meet all kinds of people, and to... to this day, a lot of those people are still my friend" (LF-11). "I am able to network with people and become close to the people in the community. People trust me... because I'm in the community, I am a visible person in the community" (AAM-13). Many participants told of the advantages of working together and being committed to the community, which gave all involved a sense of connection. They talked of both provider and recipient as "jelling into a cohesive community" (AAF-1). Former students reflect on their experiences and the importance of connecting:

I kind a...ah, feel that I need to extend a helping hand to others in the community in the same way I was helped when coming to the Skill Center. I feel very confident that I can do something for people, especially for those from my community. And somehow I know that I did make a difference. Because I did give something back to the community and that keeps me connected. (AM-7)

That's one of the reasons why I like working with folks. I'm a technical person, I could probably sit on the computer all day and not deal with people, but people make what I do worth doing. I can become linked to them. They help me see things and come away with things that education never did. (AAM-9)

I try to put myself in the other person's position before I speak [laugh], you know. Now, I didn't always do that before, but I find myself trying to connect with the other person now. I didn't like to think that way before, no, no way. I am different now. I am now quick to say I'll take you here or there. I used to didn't do that. In
fact you would have to pay me if you needed a favor, especially a
ride somewhere. (AAF-8)

Volunteering is seen as having “a sense of connection” in itself, and for some
of the study participants, becoming involved in a service activity allowed them to be
firmly established in an environment where previously they may not have had any
connection at all.

They may not have the prominence, if you will, or that voice, so it
is really good. I think that is [volunteering] what keeps me
grounded to the community in terms of just kind of, you know, the
ear to the streets and find out what the average man or what
women are thinking, particularly those that you know. Knowing
that in your position, at least in my position, I may be able to kind
of, you know, bridge a gap or articulate or even change some of
my strategies to make sure that I don’t get too far afield from
where I came from. (AAM-12)

It [volunteering] makes you realize where you came from and that
you can get grounded to your people sort of speak. You’re out here
with all these distractions in life and you are so bogged down with
responsibilities of raising your family, working, etc., and it is
important to say, “OK, let me go back and give my time to my
community where I grew up,” and this gave you time to get
grounded. (AAM-3)

There is another element of personal connection that is evident in the
interviews of the research participants, but it is more subtle and woven within the
fabric of the community. It has to do with the volunteers’ reception and provision of
emotional empathy from those they serve. Moreover, how they define the negativity of
their life experiences and the answers needed with the certainty that trusting each other
will not be violated. The following comments were by the participants:

Talking to them, seeing how it was back in their day. How rough it
was and how blessed I am to have it now knowing that those things
happen, but not as much today. You know a lot of people of our
generation think we got it rough. No, ah... ah brother, we don’t have
it rough. We got it made compared to what they had. I have never had
a water [fire] hose squirted on me... I have never had dogs sicken on me. Never had... never had, couldn't look up in someone's face. I like talking to seniors and see if they had any animosity toward, excuse me for saying so, Caucasians of their same age. Because there, the seniors that I talk with, they are the ones that used to have to be called the "N" word. You know, and couldn't do anything about it. Now they got laws and what have you about [how] you can't [use] racial violence and stuff [and] now they kind of penalize [you]. So now there are things that one can do to prevent such a situation. (AAM-14)

And it's a situation where individuals can really relate and connect with me because I'm not unlike them. But, also, the ability to connect and relate in a real valuable way. You know, we are all kinds of people. It is taking somewhat those intimidating and complex ideas for that particular situation when there doesn't seem to be a way out, or that it is limited. And actually being able to trust each other and help people recognize that one, you do have the experience, the ideas, the courage and the answers. (AAM-03)

This type of engaging a sense of identification and understanding seems to be an example of Winnicott (1958) and Goleman's (2000) concept of "mirroring" as the capacity for empathy. According to Goleman, "...that capacity, the ability to know how others feel, comes into play in a vast array of life arenas, from cultural and social identification to compassion and political action" (p. 96). Through the social relationships from one service experience to the next, the provider and beneficiary are able to embrace empathy for one another from the emotional synchrony of being deeply acknowledged, understood, and trusted.

Service as a Role Model

As the voices that follow describe relationships between volunteers and recipients, I find it useful to reveal the underlying, critical role that behavioral modeling plays in community service. Without question, modeling affected the way in
which the participants interacted or talked about serving others. The responses to the
question: How do you (participant) define volunteering or community service? The
answers were:

- Being an example or role model for children, friends, family, and others in the
  community. (AAM-13, LF-11, AAM-12, AAM-10, AAF-14, AAM-15).
- Being able to help others; to extend a “helping hand” to others in the community in
  a way that reflects them as a role model in the same way they themselves were
  helped (AM-7, AAM-4, AAM-9, AAM-13).
- Feeling positive and competent, as one participant put it, knowing that I am doing
  the right thing as a role model (AAF-6, AAF-8, AAF-5).
- The ability to reflect positive images and develop the cause for action without any
  other conditional acceptance or approval (AAM-12, AAM-9, LF-11, AM-7).

According to the 105th U.S. Congressional Black Caucus (Bragg, 2000) community
service is envisioned more as an inward responsibility than that which comes from the outside:

The needs of the African-American community are to be met by acting as an advocate for its community. Demonstrating effective community relations through exemplars and modeling, maximizing community resources and services, building a network that represents its voice on issues; providing or facilitating the delivery of mental, social, physical, and culture services to the African-American community (p. 7).

For the most part, the definitions of service by the study participants as being one of a role model are congruent with the 105th Congress Black Caucus Foundation. In terms of “being an example” or “role model,” one participant states: “Your role models in the community reflect its values. I’m a role model to my son, a role model
to my nephew, and a role model to my friends” (AAM-10). Other participants in the study specifically commented on this status:

*I see myself in relationship to my family and the community. We are all part of a big family. I’ve learned from early on that those who cared about my well being did so by setting an example and I must do the same.* (AAM-9)

A participant also expresses her feelings as a result of volunteering in a Hospice environment:

*An inspiration to me [while in community service] was when I met an AIDS patient while working at Providence Hospice House a couple of years ago in Los Angeles. She was outgoing and funny. What struck me most about her was how comfortable she was with her disease. She knew she didn’t have a lot longer to live, but she was still a happy person and was able to talk freely about her disease. She passed away August 24, 1998, at the age of 26 as a result of complications due to the AIDS virus. I spoke with her grandmother at her funeral and she told me how much I had touched this person, and how she [the person] felt that I was such a role model for those young women who are troubled and lost. That meant more to me than anything ever will. The fact that I touched one life made me want to do everything I can to help others.* (LF-11)

The preceding comment describes the level of commitment and caring in terms of what this individual gained when she chose to bond with an AIDS patient. This remark also suggests that the volunteer did not necessarily enter the relationship thinking that she would be considered a role model. Indeed, the benefit she derived was unexpected. Two other participants comment on their feelings on being a role model in the following manner:

*I read in a report that in our neighborhoods, right here in Portland, crime committed by our young people is growing faster than most other types of crime. I can see it myself and maybe that’s a stereotype by society and on my part. And you know that perception is reality to a lot of people. Young folks see less and less reason to play by the rules. If young people are not engaged in...*
society then we won't be able to build the prisons fast enough. That's why I'm out here. To set an example so the Brothers and Sisters can see that they don't have to go that route. (AAM-13)

There are more students like myself who have become more of a role model than most people suspect. Gone are the days of being prostitutes, welfare mothers, [pause] hoes [whores] and bitch's. You know what I'm saying. Unfortunately, people's thinking is slow. And I do believe that there are people who are actually threatened by the fact that being a woman, African-American, and intelligent demands something more. The cold-blooded thing is that the stereotypes we face in our efforts to become role models are coming from our own people. But if there's one thing I've learned, it's that rather than getting caught up in fighting with words, we need to continue setting the examples by our work and focus on the people who need us. (AAF-14)

Given the nature of the above comments, it is important to reveal the participant's powerful feelings engendered by the personal need to break down the cultural stereotypes that even indigenous people have about the community.

In the excerpts below three male participants think about being a role model while volunteering and its connection to their children and other individuals in the community:

And so in terms of my own family, I have a young son, and I have sort of matured and have to think of what kind of legacy I may have for an opportunity to leave. And it is real important to me that my son and other individuals see me in this volunteering light. Not as an unreal person, but as a common ordinary man out there that is struggling just as they are, but have taken that next step. (AAM-12)

I think that children should be taught to think and to understand why things happen and to know their history. As a parent, I've being able to help my kids with the skills and knowledge that I've received through training at the Skill Center and my volunteering out here. Especially, the knowledge of who I am as their parent and where they came from. Helping others has given me a better understanding of who I am and I can demonstrate that to my kid so they know who they are and where they came from. Not only their
recent past, but also the history of their race and culture. This is one of the most important things. (AAM-15)

Well I hope that I am a model for both the children and the adults because I was also raised in that a teacher or anybody with any kind of authority has moral and social obligations to the people that they work with. Not to go and do things immoral, not to use profanity, to be a good role model. And that is something that I actively try to do. (AAM-9)

A female participant shares a recent experience, also related to children; in this case, those that she assists as a volunteer:

Some of the kids end up so courteous and one in particular who learned from the others is so respectful and will say things like, “Thank you Mam,” and they are learning well. And I think that is really good. And I find a lot of them doing this. When they say things like, “Thank you, I really enjoyed what we did today, thank you Mam,” that makes you feel like you’re really doing a good job. It’s the way that they look up to you that is really something. It’s like you always want to set a good example. (AAE-8)

Another female participant shares a situation in the past that left an indelible influence on her daughter:

I worked for the doctors, and I worked with administration. And, my daughter just happened to be there. She must have been about twelve and we were going to lunch. And this man had just come out of emergency. He was an elderly Black man. And he just keeled over in the flowerbeds. He stumbled off into the beds and for what I just... in fact, I had to go home and take a shower. But, instead of trying to run and find someone else to help, I just walked in the mud and ran over there to see if I could help him immediately and then go find someone. And there I was kneeling in the mud trying to help this gentleman and my daughter standing saying “Mom, you’re getting dirty.” I could have stood out in a safe place and called for somebody, but he needed immediate help. And my daughter said to this day, she’s thirty-three now, and she still remembers that you really should help people in need. (LF-11)

The former students in this study answered the guided question of defining community service or volunteering in much the same way: that being a volunteer
meant being a role model. While an analysis of the interview data reveals that the participants feel volunteering gives them the necessary intimate connections and relationships, it is quite evident that efforts to help others in their community also gave them pride in knowing that those they served looked to them with respect and admiration.

**Interdependence as a Way of Caring**

To better understand the roles of the participants and how their service encounters might inform an understanding of deep connections and relationships within the community, I introduce a perspective from Nel Nodding’s (1992) work in schools which involves caring as a way to introduce findings of interdependence derived from the study. Her work led her to conclude: “I do not put myself in the others shoes, instead, I receive the other unto myself” (p. 30). She points to a lack of discussion about the “self” as it fully emerges as a caring being through “feeling with” the person. Nodding calls this process, “engrossment.”

Engrossment is different from the “symbolic interactionist” idea of projection or taking the role of the other (Mead, 1982). That is, the concept of “role taking” (Blumer, 1969), putting oneself in the place of another, or walking in someone else's shoes. Rhoads (1997) agrees with this interactionist perspective and uses the term “otherness.” He posits that there are large groups of people with whom we have nothing in common and he further suggests that students “…develop community service projects that help them confront otherness while at the same time challenge them to see the complexity and diversity of the other” (p. 125). But if they are the
“other,” it may be easy to accept the notion that other people receive different treatment. This notion may be the direct opposite of the emotional connectivity and interdependence by both giver and receiver found in this study.

For Noddings (1984), the self may more fully emerge as a caring being by “feeling with” the other. It reflects more on an emotional appeal. For example, when one witnesses another’s negative consequences we do not project ourselves into the person and ask, “How would I feel if I were in their shoes, we react with the individual and feel that something is wrong. This is their feeling and ours. We receive it and share it.

Like Noddings, the data from the participants illustrate a very different picture than the “interactionist” approach. Participants of the study were both empathic and emotive, and they indicated a sense of interdependence amongst themselves and those served. There was an understanding of caring through personal experience of the situation, not through projection of the other’s feeling. This is done, as one interviewee expresses, “…by the outstretched hand, the understanding that there is no ‘other,’ that all of us are at bedrock the same, wanting a hug, a kiss, a sense of commonality and connection” (LF-11).

Service to another by these volunteers who experienced the same circumstances as those they serve reflects the engrossment that Noddings addresses. This is because volunteers revisit their own past through the persons’ current experiences and understand that persons’ situation, which they as service providers must try to help alter. Another participant expresses his encountering, “and really what I find out is their situations are similar to mine and we have kind of a mutual
relationship and I think we both gain from the experience” (AM-7). The participants’ stories, in essence, indicate a sense of interdependence, as well as service contexts, which clearly expressed this type of feeling. The following comments offer insight into some of the thoughts and feelings the participants had throughout the research:

Many of the experiences I had that lead me to become involved in crime and eventually number...at the Oregon State Penitentiary haunted me the first week I spent at Hoopers Rehabilitation Center. I was there to help assist... I can’t stand the thought of people going hungry or freezing in the streets the way I did. And especially when I had a family. I remember what my life was like when I had to live that way, and it pushes me to have to do something to help change the other’s situation. (AAM-13)

We learned that when volunteering at The Success Academy we relate better with those we are helping than if we were to meet up in the streets over some women, or gang bang, or drugs, or just plain kickin’ it. The place has many people from different parts of the city, but it is small enough here where you get to know one another real well and everybody has basically the same goals: to get off that stuff and make something of themselves. Everybody works together to become one big family. (AAM-4)

In these service situations, the two participants speaking are not only helping others as a way of social obligation but are involved in a way that helps others take care of their own personal needs. In order to have a chance at changing some of the plight within their community, volunteers had to feel good about themselves for giving time and energy toward serving others or nothing would change for the better.

Additional examples of voices are provided wherein three participants expressed mutual benefit from serving those in their community:

We both get an unbelievable high experience. That is why I like doing it [volunteering] so much. I don’t want you to think that I do this just to disseminate information, but one of the things that makes it enjoyable to me is that the people that I work with, or who I interact with get a chance to share their experiences with me. They give to me as much as I give to them. They give as well as receive. I may be showing them or telling them specific skills
during tutoring, but they actually do the same thing for me. They may show me something or tell me something that I never knew. That’s one of the reasons why I enjoy doing it. It develops me as much as it develops them. (AAM-09)

There are so many different people out there who are different, yet bring so much richness from their lives that I know that I receive even more than I give. I think you get more out of giving back to your community because you gain so much. I think getting a chance to work with your community is a reward in itself. (AAF-5)

I also think that by working with people I seem to get more out of it then they have... Well, ah...not only do I get to work on the skills that I have gained through training at the Skill Center, I meet different people and their lives are so packed with a history that is beneficial to me. (AAM-10)

Throughout the interviews, participants expressed the benefits of a service experience based on interdependence for a caring community. Their voices emphasized that in giving one must also be able to receive. Otherwise, the service encounter becomes an artificial act driven by charity, which is likely to be ineffective in addressing the needs of the community.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Building a Quality Community

One very common theme that reverberated through the interviews was the emphasis on community building. For the participants in service to their community, a strong sense of giving back to ensure quality of life for the community was mentioned as both rewarding and needed. The ability to help build the community was important to the majority of participants and a central component of volunteering.
It's part of your foundation; it's your roots. You're away from the community and it doesn't mean that you're never going to give back. I mean it's part of your nature to give back. It's needed, it's part of your history; you need that. When you give back it brings not only joy and happiness to the person you are giving, but it helps you understand your community better because it is still your community. It's part of your history and you can pass that on to your children and for a better community. (AAF-1).

And that's why I volunteer, to show people that there is someone out there that cares, number one. Number two, to assist in building the community. By working in the Boys and Girls Club, I was able to assist them in raising money. They would give more in turn to the community. (LF-11)

I'm just in a position now when an opportunity comes by, I'm always looking at how can I engage, exploit, and utilize this for the benefit of that community that served me. To make it better, have it survive, have it survive me, and have it available for others. Not just my family members, but also my friends and acquaintances and those people that I'll never know. They deserve the same break that I figured that I got, too. (AAM-12)

One former student seems to embrace the notion that community is built around a common environment. She describes this environment as a village: “I think that there is one thing to talk about, and that is the village; and it's the village that raises the child, the life of the community.” (AAF-5) This person continues to describe her feelings in deeper terms:

It's part of your foundation. Being a part of the community is important and will keep the community intact. When I was growing up we had our parents always there for you. And if they weren’t around, you would have other members in the community making sure you were safe and didn’t get into trouble. In the summer evenings, we had to be on the front porch before the streetlights went on or you were in trouble. And if the parents weren’t at home, your neighbor guardians had the authority to get after you when things weren’t right. This made you respect the community, and that is why I want to help bring that way of life back to our community by getting involved with it again. That is the only way
our community will survive in this day and age, if everybody gets involved. They can help the elders and the kids. (AAF-1)

Another participant also expresses the notion of community, although in this context, the exhortation is focused statewide:

We talked about community and how we can put community back into Oregon, you know, statewide, if we all pull together. Black, White, or whatever, we all [need to] come together and stick together and express this issue that it is very important for young kids to stay on focus, you know, and lend their hand out there to help others, and not only just young kids either. If you are 24, 25, just trying, take advantage of the program because it’s never too late. (AAM-4)

Service as an Advocate

The majority of participants felt a strong sense of advocacy in their volunteering experiences. For most of the participants, being in service for the community is a great opportunity to embrace an important social cause and allowed them the opportunity to work with others to permanently change negative human conditions.

I did a lot of a work during the United Way campaign when working to raise money for the youth gang prevention associations, where I was working to get people to sign on from various companies. And you know, companies who had blue collar workers, companies with white collar, high professional workers, educators, and really be able to go in there and talk about this hot political issue about gang violence. You know, that made us look like it was ethnic minority and just African-American, Hispanic, or Asians that we were concerned with. And to let them know there were a lot of right-wing gangs and there were a lot of, let’s call them upper class gangs where there were credit-card ah, theft, and there were high level expensive drugs or gambling tips being booked. So I was able to kind of re-frame that whole notion of what gang violence looked like. (AAM-12)
Another participant shares an atypical perspective of relationships between the Chinese community and its youth:

*We need to get the Chinese community together. Why not offer more at our community functions by involving the youngsters so it gives them more reasons to show up at the functions, and in fact, have them participate in the planning and with putting the activities and events on. I think I bring things to the table for them to think about. Things like that. I bring a different voice to the same meeting. And I can see that they kind of welcome that. And maybe the people do these projects so many times that they don't see it in a different way. They think we do this every year, so let's get the thing done. And I kind a think I bring a different perspective to it.* (AM-7)

This particular male has had frequent contact with many of his Asian community members and is greatly respected by them. His remarks are concomitant to other participants who raise questions and seek answers to transform an atrophied community:

*Well, I can tell you some things that I want to do. I've just moved into a house and one of the first things that I plan on doing is to make myself available to the school, which is down the street, and get active in my immediate community, the activities and processes here, and become more politically active. Because, everything that we have done so far have been grassroots. If we are not politically suave and politically active, we can't effect policy. When I say, "We" I'm talking about the community, when I say, "We" I'm talking about individuals because we need to get to being a suave citizen, a citizen that is aware of the mechanics of their community, so we can build that community to its full potential.* (AAM-9)

*By helping and speaking for those in need who are confronted with difficult issues such as drug addiction, homelessness, and economic despair, is really rewarding. I know from the people who come up to me when I go around the community to talk about drug addiction, how appreciative the families are that I work with or the work I do.* (AAM-6)
A lot of people have a lot that’s going on as far as, I’ll use the word problems in their lives and they want to just give up. You know, but what I’ve done over the last few years is to help them help themselves. That you have to ... you have to collect resources or data, you know, in order to be able to help that person come through. And if that... that piece doesn’t help them, then you move on to another piece that might open the door for them. Maybe help get them involved in the Skill Center or help them with getting a job or even talk to their caseworker to let them know that I can help them. (AAF-14)

In these instances, setting an environment where there is hope for community transformation through reciprocal and contested relationships seemed to affirm that community advocacy is a needed and important part of the participants’ service-activity.

Being Together as One Community

For many of the study participants, the most exhilarating experience was personalizing and bonding with the service recipients. They were indeed comrades of their world and nearly every participant commented on the importance of coming together as a unit or group. That is, they presented awareness that intimate connections and personal relationships had a bonding impact on both the provider and the recipient, which transcended each service. The participants spoke of “creating our own world” (AAM-4). One striking thing I found during the study was the unbounded knowledge the former students had about those whose lives were similar to theirs:

I hate looking back, but to know that I can help keeps me going. I get sick and tired seeing our own people in the community turn their backs on their own people. Volunteering here with those who are in need of treatment helps me to remind myself of the pain, yet pushes me to become more committed. (AAF-1)
...to know that I may make a difference; to know that I can learn something different, something new. I really get a lot out of working with the people. It seems like at times that I come away with more than I expected because I get to understand other people's situations. And really what I find out is their situations are similar to mine and we have kind of a mutual relationship, and I think we both gain from the experience. (AM-7)

Other participants recollect the experiences they had of both giving and receiving, which created a sense of mutual responsibility and respect in the community-service exchange:

There are so many different people out there who are different, yet bring so much richness from their lives that I know that I receive even more than I give. I think you get more out of giving back to your community because you gain so much. I think getting a chance to work with your community is a reward in itself. (AAF-5)

I am someone who is just human, who has gone through problems just like theirs, who sometimes need the kids as much as the kids need me. Or who would need the elderly people just as much as the elderly people would need me. And seeing that I am a part of them and they are a part of me. And that we need each other even thought they are not asking for it. I'm reaching out to them and it is helping me as well as helping them. So all of this is a part of... of the community and what the community has instilled in me. (AAF-2)

For me, it also helps me grow and it helps...it helps me to find out what an individual might need in the community. Because I don't know all the needs everyone has, they are different you know... each situation. And it helps me get close to the person, the individual and also branch out to get more information, to get more educated through that individual...to communicate more with different people in different walks of life. (AAM-10)
MOTIVATION FOR SERVICE

Service as an Intrinsic Reward

For most members of the middle and upper class sectors in this country, issues of wealth, status, and power are the cornerstones for success (Sklar, 1993). For those traditional students who have reaped benefits from their parent’s success, service to others may send an unconscious message of “patronizing charity.” On the other hand, markedly absent from the responses in this study was the need for participants to acquire pay, recognition, or the feeling of charity when volunteering. “Community service isn’t about temporarily gaining something, it’s about a commitment of hope and improvement” (AAM-3) is a response to the suggestion that service leads to personal reward.

Most participants felt that the act of giving was a motivational factor in itself during their community service activity. As one participant states, “It means giving in a way beyond monetary. Because giving of self, giving of time, giving emotionally is more important than money. Money fades, where as all those other things, emotional things live on” (LF-11). For most of the participants, simply being involved in a service activity to give back to the community was far more rewarding than any tangible reward such as power over someone or personal recognition and gain:

The other day while working in the drug and alcohol treatment center, I seen a man that I went to high school with, and he like "perked up" when he saw me. We talked for a while, and he um, talked about the good times we had growing up in high school. While he was talking, I was thinking like when I was living in the same condition. Till this day, I don’t know how I survived. Helping those folks that need help is not about charity or feeling sorry for
somebody. It's about helping and going forward yourself. You ain't got to have a lot of money to care about somebody. "Cause" it ain't about the money. It is about how you feel about yourself. Feeling good about where you are in life and where you're going. (AAF-14)

My dad told me something. He said, James, you will make money, and you can make a lot of money. But, you have to be happy with what you are doing first. If you consider money what it is, a tool, you'll have it. But if you pursue it, it will be elusive. I've done things before moving here that have paid me more than I am making now, but I always follow the edict that if I can't enjoy what I'm doing, I don't care how much money I'm making, it is not worth doing. I could have stayed back East and taught at the university level and probably would have been a professor by now. But they weren't doing things... they didn't make it meaningful. Here at least I could see a vision, I could see it clearly, and the money will come. (AAM-9.)

Um, volunteering is less stressful because you do something that you want to do. The motivation is always there. You don't work for money, or... the reason is much more pure than money in what ever you do. You realize that the reward is much more than getting something that is material. People volunteer because the motivation is out there because they want to do it. I think being a volunteer gives me more flexibility, more freedom and to choose the assignment that I want to pursue. That's what I think. If you get a paying job, you cannot negotiate as much. Being a volunteer, there is so much I can offer to a company, as I am able to negotiate for some meaningful work. (AM-7)

Service as a way of personal reward, or rather, being able to help others without accruing individual effects, was mentioned less than the other major themes above. It was the theme woven into the fabric of participant discussion in more than half the interviews. Surely, the study participants feel selfless when volunteering, and this unconditional relationship is motivated by a sense of their social responsibility to others. One participant states:

That is, to take the future in your own hands and taking personal responsibility for myself. Doing for others without any
Service Training

One of the themes most often repeated was the individual gaining work experience (needed to obtain employment) while volunteering. For most of the former students who were enrolled in the Skill Center training strands mentioned earlier, having the opportunity to actually work in an organizational setting, was revealed as a key element in their service experience. This experience was beneficial both from the viewpoint of the acquisition of skills and a feeling of personal ownership and pride. Participants stressed that for many of them, the service activities that they did as volunteers actually opened doors for employment opportunities and proved to be relevant to futures in ways that would later manifest itself on service sites.

I've had an opportunity to use volunteering and people will say here we are, here is what we do and ask, what is it that you feel with this project that you can apply your skills and impact the community? When there is an opportunity to do that, I have found some great situations that created permanent employment in that organization. (AAM-12)

To be honest with you I did not just do this volunteering for just to be helping people, but I needed the work experience to get a job. I did not have the skills. Some of the skills of most jobs they asked. So my intention was to get a volunteer job and I came back to the Skill Center to get computer and technical training. (AM-7)
Besides, my volunteering has put me in positions where I’ve gained experience without pay that has led me to working for other organizations because of the experience. Like my bookkeeping experience landed me a job working in accounting for KATU [a television station] here in Portland. (LF-11)

Although all of the participants were employable upon completion of skills training, their successful job search effort suggests that the volunteering and community service opportunities incurred before or during training may be a keystone to entering the workforce.

Restorative Service

An interesting subject that surfaced during the interviews was the effect that volunteering had on the participants in helping to re-socialize and undo damage made to the community. It appears, from the data, that volunteering gave the participants opportunity to make amends and meaningfully right the wrongs, rather than just wallow in regret and despair. This allowed the person to once again become capable of resuming life with dignity and pride. As one interview participant states:

I believe we who work at Hoopers have been chosen. We have been led here by a higher power much greater than addiction. The understanding and unconditional love that I sought since I was a child, I have found in the rooms where I interact with those who are in the same room of despair and hopelessness as I was. They are indeed my "family"... I try to stay instructive to those in need, while willing to continue to grow. I have been taught that in order to win I must surrender my selfishness and in order to keep what I have I must give it away. I am grateful to be serving others and, as they remind me, it is still the same out there. I am grateful to those who came before me and continue to serve, to show me hope for the future. Despite what harm I did to others and to myself, I do care. Serving at Hoopers to me, is more than just an experience. It is a way of life. The one thing that I have to remind myself of on occasion is that I will never get well, only better and the
involvement of helping others is not merely a destination, but truly a journey. (AAM-13)

The following participants offer an explanation about their unlawful situations and reveal the opportunity available through volunteering with regard to the restoration of their self-respect.

I felt justified by doing this little marijuana thing on the side in order to get more income. Hiding it from all of my family members. I was pretty much ashamed of myself. And it goes against every thing I believe in all my life, you know. No drug use, I don’t drink, I don’t use drugs, my daddy don’t drink or use drugs unless it is prescribed by a doctor and we fight over my prescription because I don’t want to take it in the first place [laugh]. But I had a lot of animosity. I think that’s why I went ahead and did it. That maybe a bad excuse, but that is why I went ahead and did that marijuana thing. But, as far as gratification, it’s self-gratifying to do my thing at Loaves and Fishes and anytime I can help somebody. (AAM-15)

When I began my work with the Restorative Justice Inc. program in 1996, I had already started my recovery process. I knew where my up-hill battle had to go because I had a criminal background. But what really affected me was that I learned the awful effects that the drugs, especially the alcohol had on my family and me as an individual. I was blown away when I come to realize that I was benefiting personally in ways I had not expected from working with people in the program. Letting folks know about the difficulties and consequences of alcohol and drug addiction was the thing that was important in my ongoing recovery. (AAM-3)

Other participants spoke of the opportunity volunteering gave them concerning the recognition of the real human consequences of their offense:

I look at my community like for a number of years, for over twenty years, I used. And I took from that community, ...when I say I took from that community, whether it would be to go into a store and steal something, or to go into my family member’s house and take something from them. I took from that community. Volunteering is like one person helping another. It’s like you come to a new situation, and you don’t know anything about it, and nobody there to help you learn then you’re still lost, you know. So it is helping a person you know come out of that wilderness. Come out of that
place of confusion and let them know and showing them that there is a better way of life. (AAF-14)

I got hooked up in gangs and drugs to a point that I ended up, you know, in the penitentiary. And then when...when I began my volunteer work with the Success Academy program in 1998, I had already started my recovery process. I knew where, you know, my up-hill battle had to go because I had a long criminal background, you know what I’m saying. But what really effected me, you know, was...was that I learned the awful effects that my crime and drug dealing had on my family and me. (AAM-4)

Wouldn’t listen to my mom, you know. There were programs back there then and people were trying to help me left and right. I wouldn’t listen, you know. I just kept on, kept on and ended up in jail. Today, I look around, and there are a lot of little kids just like me crying out for attention. So, when a child is crying out and I see that, I say, wait a minute, That young cat is just like me so I feel that it is my duty to help him. (AAM-3)

Now, I am free from the drugs and alcohol and I feel I have to take time to give back to the community that I took for granted. I mean I stole from that community; I abused my family and friends. Now I have been able to work with men and women who are just people like me. (AAM-10)
Chapter 5 - Discussion and Implications

*We must see students as whole human beings with complex lives and experiences rather than simply as seeking after knowledge.*

-bell hooks

The purpose of Chapter 4 was to provide data around the questions, “what are the perceptions of Skill Center completers who were involved in volunteering and community service? What are the opportunities for connecting their service involvement to the community college?” In this chapter, I discuss and draw implications of those particular service experiences and interaction patterns, which describe volunteering and community service. From this chapter, a reader may better understand the opinions, values, definitions, and goals of individuals who voluntarily serve in their respective community. Further, the reader may be able to compare that understanding with descriptions of other community service or service learning programs.

Janet Ward-Schofield (1993) has suggested that all research of a similar nature as this study, which attempts to add to the understanding of students in an educational setting, seeks to deepen the understanding of a social phenomenon. She maintains that this can be achieved by conducting an in-depth and sensitive analysis of the articulated consciousness of actors involved in that phenomenon.

...at the heart of the qualitative approach is the assumption that a piece of qualitative research is very much influenced by the researcher's individual attributes and perspectives. The goal is not to produce a standardized set of results that any other careful researcher in the same situation or studying the same issues would have produced. Rather, it is to produce a coherent and illuminating description of and perspective on a situation that is based on and consistent with detailed study of the situation (p. 202).
The use of relatively freely structured open-ended interviews generated a large body of information and allowed insight into a “community building culture,” which is one common factor shared by all of the participants. That culture of community building transcends all economic, social, political, and religious characteristics and customs. The interview process also gave the study participants a voice to an audience who may have the power and authority to transform some of the social circumstances in which the participants experience.

If Portland Community College officials better understand the community service elements, which contribute to all students as whole persons and models we hope to see reflected back to society, they may be able to enhance and improve educational structures that allow participants to succeed at a greater degree during and after training. Both student and college win at such an opportunity. Those intrinsic participant aspects of volunteering in one’s respective community as related to personal service reflections, relationships with others, community service, and motivation for service may very well be an important extrinsic indicator for institutional success.

In this chapter, I will move away from the specific data of the study and look at the discussion and implications that are drawn from the experiences of the research.

DISCUSSION

The interviews with the fifteen participants resulted in a large quantity of data from which emerged several common themes. There are three areas from these themes
An Ethic for Caring

Each participant in this study was able to identify, with firm conviction that volunteering in their community gave them unique opportunities to explore their self. Specifically, they came into contact with members of their community in the context of a caring encounter. The participants had numerous accounts of serving members of their community and the positive feelings and attitudes from others (as in the case of being a role model and advocate) were reflected back to them as a result of their service encounter. Throughout the interviews, the significance of participants' interactions with others was readily apparent; their emerging self was strongly influenced by those caring interactions.

Carol Gilligan's (1977) "ethic of care" is central to understanding the self and that the connection with others is inextricably linked to self. Her contribution is especially important for providing powerful feminist critiques of traditional ethical theories of rights and justice. She also recognized an ethic of care for sustainable social relations.

Gilligan asserts that an ethic of care and responsibility develops from an individual's feeling of interconnectedness with others. It is contextual and arises from experience and is characterized as nurturing, with an emphasis on responsibilities to others. An ethic of justice, on the other hand, is proposed by Gilligan to be an expression of autonomy. It is formulated in terms of universal, abstract principles and
is characterized by rationality and an emphasis on individual rights. From this, she
describes an ethic of caring as a "female approach to morality." She considers an ethic
of justice to be a "male" approach.

However, I found that the participants in this study blurred this gender chasm
described by Gilligan. Participants expressed, and some with great depth of emotion, a
perception of service being both a supportive, caring environment and a restorative
justice process. They felt service was a way of reclaiming respect and honor through
making amends for past transgressions. Through this commitment to care at both
levels, they are helping to improve their relationships and build a stronger community.
Further, service with an ethic of care laden with self-prudence has altered the way
these individuals see the world. Their service experiences leave them with a real sense
of purpose and commitment to the social and moral good. They are continually
examining their donation to the well being of others: the kinds of induced reflections
on their commitment to others and how responsive they see their selves to the
community around them.

What gets emphasized throughout schooling contributes to the possible selves
envisioned by students as they participate in post-secondary education. Also, how they
anticipate their futures and the kinds of persons they desire to become. It appears that
experiences gained through the different types of relationships are linked to changes in
one's conception of responsibility and thus, their development toward an ethic for
caring is both influenced and encouraged.
Social Capital

The growing body of research that looks at society and the people in it through a social capital lens is in the process of being better understood and expanded. Robert Putnam (2000) has pointed out that "We desperately need an era of civic inventiveness to create a renewed set of institutions and channels for a reinvigorated civic life that will fit the way we have come to live" (p. 401).

Putnam (2000) extended the concept of social capital in his conclusion from many years of studying this newly coined phenomenon. The measures of civic engagement used in his research were a variety of contexts such as voter turnout, newspaper readership, membership in the Boy Scouts, churches, community organizations, and the like. He feels improvements in social capital by definition will contribute to the inclusion of more people and thus contribute to reducing the number socially excluded.

However, it is necessary to recognize that there is a potential downside to this process: those who remain socially excluded will have their exclusion deepened as social capital grows, according to Putnam (2000). Health and social services have long recognized the need for advocacy groups to assist those who are potentially powerless. Pressure for an extension for advocacy is likely. Putnam (2000) goes on to assert that "education" is usually the most important predictor of political and social engagement. However, over the last half-century, although educational levels in the United States have risen sharply, levels of political and social participation have not.

He maintains that our challenge now is to reinvent our Twentieth-Century service ideals and be just as inventive as we were years ago, with the
willingness to err, and then correct our aim, which is the price of success
within social change. This seems especially advisable since our community
colleges are organized around diverse groups of people with different social
and political perspectives.

Such interchange of diverse ideals was evident in the research when several of
the participants, who found particular strength in serving their community in a way
that enabled recipients to enhance the relationship with their own political and social
views. Participants described this relationship as being extremely educational and
enlightening. They perceived their service experiences with the older, more
experienced generations to be interesting, focused, and relevant. They discovered an
opportunity to learn about their own heritage in the context of what was truly needed
for social change.

If Portland Community College officials and staff allowed for more social
capital to flourish in its educational programs, students should be better able to
participate in the interaction of social change in their communities, since “social
capital” can be simultaneously a “private good” and a “public good” (Putnam, 2000, p.
20). For instance, everyone interviewed expressed the feeling that the persons
receiving the service were not only approachable and personal, but knowledgeable and
sagacious as well. Based on the nature and passion of the interview responses, it was
clear that while involved with service to their community, many participants were able
to balance giving time and energy with receiving encouragement and wisdom. It was
this human connection with others that enabled many, if not most participants to
continue and succeed in volunteering.
Personal Transformation

As revealed in the description of the individual interviews, community service and volunteering are reflective actions, which are linked to individual behavior. The goal is to effectuate personal transformation. This sense of personal transformation underpinned all service activities and projects. For example, participants credited their service activity to their own motivation and intrinsic interest. They were quite proud of their achievements with respect to their giving to the community.

Many participants equated their ease of service involvement with what they perceived as an environment of intrinsic reward, rather than one for money or extrinsic reward. In interview after interview, participants called into question the widespread belief that money is an effective and even necessary way to motivate people. They stated that their service activity occurred because they had a personal commitment to their community and felt more focused and self-determined than if receiving some type of reward or compensation.

Many participants valued volunteering and community service as an experience, which, once accomplished and cherished, could not be taken away. They talked about how their involvement helped them clarify their lives and how it allowed them to learn more about themselves. Some participants discussed a deeply felt transformation that was an inward journey, which demonstrated a power of personal healing. They felt like volunteering and community service afforded them a time to begin anew, to make changes, to know themselves more fully, and to experience deeper levels of joy and love.
A number of participants also disclosed that the value of service could be perceived as a way to help them obtain and even retain a job. For some, there was this great sense of opportunity and fulfillment in setting an employment goal and feeling highly successful once hired after volunteering. They felt their service involvement contributed to securing employment during or after volunteering because employers saw a specific service activity as valuable work experience. Participants clearly appreciated the apprenticeship nature of their service involvement. The willingness of the participant to demonstrate to the employer the skills they learned in the training program was critical; they truly experienced a real world of work while volunteering.

**IMPLICATIONS**

Overall, participants in this study offered a number of extremely positive and informative comments revealing volunteer and community service activities. They affirmed the worth of such service as a common ground from which to build community. Many implications for fostering the development of caring citizens for Portland Community College students were revealed as part of the interview process. Former students talked about how service to their community was important to and successful for them.

More might be done to address the divide between service learning programs that include students from remedial programs who independently seek service opportunities. Service learning success criteria for Portland Community College campuses are more likely to be met if all students are included in its formula.
Students from non-traditional backgrounds are aware, as indicated in this study, of a deep, continuing, and largely frustrated need to function and to be valued as productive citizens rather than just for the roles they play as students. This is why the students from this study found their way to positions of service without any assistance from Portland Community College. With facilitation from the college, many more non-traditional students could be involved in service activities. They would begin to care about the well being of others as well as caring about their own well being. Therefore, the college in its approach to program design might want to rethink its current practices and create conditions that allow non-traditional students enrolled in special-academic programs to also experience service interaction.

Foremost, the divide between traditional students, non-traditional students, and the college must not be situated to become so wide that opportunity is denied to the people who truly are in need. Although classrooms may play a large role in shaping our educational experiences, so do a variety of other factors such as student government, athletics, work experience, and certainly service as learning. Variety prevails in this type of environment.

Furthermore, the relationships between the community college and its remedial students must become transparent. For example, college officials can raise the issue of including non-traditional students by publicly challenging academic deans at the beginning of the school year to include special academic populations in course-related service activities. The challenge, which has been pointed out in this research, is for college officials to acknowledge the plurality of voices, differences in backgrounds,
and to foster programs that forge caring relations that will pave a path for true citizenship.

This means that both college administration and faculty might engage demonstrably in enlisting non-traditional students. They might also participate in service efforts. It is hard to imagine a major type of service related activity course for which a non-traditional student could not participate. College officials and faculty can use the creative abilities they often apply to their curriculum development to create strategies for connecting non-traditional students.

The very elements that helped the 15 former Skill Center students perceive themselves, as successfully contributing to their community should also be realized in the community college setting. Moreover, the community college might become more interested in understanding how remedial students feel about giving, since their feelings, which are driven by intrinsic values, often translate into extrinsic benefits for the college. Such benefits include the adding value to the faculty’s area of scholarship, bridging different academic departments through the joint involvement of service activities, and instilling a lasting impact that recognizes the college’s relationship with its local community.

A spirited, compassionate, college and remedial program partnership in service learning may well be established in all areas and maintained throughout training. Service as learning informed by a critical view of participant inclusion offers opportunity for college officials to foster an ethic of care among students as well as for themselves.
This study of community volunteering by former post-secondary remedial students is a snapshot of one group of individuals. In that way it may illustrate a shortcoming of interpretative research as not being static. On the other hand, it gives the reader an understanding they could not have acquired any other way. Readers have a glimpse of how individuals who volunteer in their community reflect on themselves, demonstrate caring, create a mutual relationship, become self-motivated, and help build community.

After the experience of conducting this study and interviewing research participants, the following impressions arose from the conclusions:

1. College officials may need to recognize that service is essentially linked to an individual’s sense of self and connection with others. Administrators could possibly encourage faculty to develop creative ways of incorporating voluntary and community service components in their curriculum. They can use the creative ability they often apply to their teaching and learning environment to develop strategies for connecting learning to the larger community’s social good through service opportunity.

2. The need to include non-traditional students in service merits that college officials involve a wide range of remedial and training programs as part of the campus’s service learning initiative. Administrators and other organizational leaders have many opportunities to contribute to the vision of their institution. They can do this by raising the issue and challenging program deans and directors to work with the service learning entities to include all students.
3. Community building can be recognized as a critical need of volunteering and community service and therefore, college officials might engage in demonstrable service efforts. For administrators and other leaders to articulate the importance of service to the community, they themselves can participate in such activity. However, they should not call too much public attention to this cause, else it resembles a publicity stunt, rather than a true act of caring.

4. College officials might work to bridge the gap separating college campus service activities and community-based organizations through joint involvement with non-traditional students sponsored by these agencies. College and community leaders may need to work together to coordinate community service options for non-traditional students. For example, One-Stop Career Centers in the community can serve as such a bridge by coordinating campus service learning courses with a variety of agency activities. Concomitantly, agencies can become more involved with campus course curriculum involving service learning. A course could be created that combines service learning with personal development and career exploration and might easily be taught by the agency staff. In fact, their knowledge and experience of the community might make them the best candidate for the undertaking.

5. A service-oriented perspective involves college officials and staff to continuously study those service elements that are hidden. It implies that the individual be studied in a way that is understood and has influence on that particular person. Action research seems to be a tool that could be particularly beneficial to teachers and students. Therefore, college officials might formalize expectations of faculty
to improve and enhance community service learning through qualitative research tools such as observing, interviewing, and interpreting service actions by students. They can use it to study their actions for personal growth and help improve the service learning program. Remedial students often lack opportunities to reflect on their actions. Perhaps having tools that help them put their service into context would lead to better self-understanding or increase understanding of specific life options.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

As the use of service learning on community college campuses continues to grow, there is a pressing need for research on the issues and successes of post-secondary remedial students involved in service to their community. This study underscored the need to study such interaction. As educators, there should be more understanding of the connections that these students have with their community. We know little about their perceptions, difficulties, and possibilities.

From the interviews, it is known that many of these former students have been sponsored throughout their training and job-search efforts by community based agencies. Do we know what role these agencies play in the student’s community service and volunteering activities? Do the agencies provide or assist in the community service positions? What role can the college play that will enable students to have significant interaction with the participating agencies?

Although the theme of helping impoverished neighborhoods may be the same, there is a great deal of diversity in the individuals who utilize each agency. Students
who work in their own community as volunteers have the opportunity to work with child care, tutoring, senior citizen programs, free clinic patients, and others. This is a rich source of data for the study of community service learning. By researching a variety of perspectives, the college may be able to match more closely a student's aspirations and career plans more closely with the needs of the sponsoring agency.

Gaining insight into the perceptions of instructors who facilitate volunteerism and service in local communities could be a solid contribution to the literature of service learning. What teaching experiences in the area of service learning do instructors have with non-traditional populations? What do instructors find most valuable in helping employ service learning with non-traditional students? What are their reasons for using service learning with this population? What are the rewards and challenges of service learning in local communities? How crucial is support from college officials?

At first glance, it may seem that research of this magnitude is very expensive. However, bringing together many partners from different areas of the community, with support of the college’s leadership might be a cost-effective way to achieve study results. Working with instructors, students, and community agencies in the design and implementation of service learning research provides fertile ground for the seeds of commitment for service to grow throughout all community college programs.
As the director of the Skill Center, I did not develop any service learning activities prior to this research. However, after conducting this study and discovering the many successful service experiences by Skill Center completers, I have now made several modifications that allow the Center to include community service and volunteering activities as part of its outcome. They are: adding service components to various training curriculum, supporting and fostering agency participation in community service, and devoting administrative attention to the role of post-secondary remedial programs to service learning.

Adding Service Components to Various Training Curriculum

Service combined with training may be a way to connect students to the college and help them gain a sense of community. To this end, the Skill Center has moved into a curriculum that offers a more substantial role that faculty can play in making community service and volunteering an in-class experience and part of the individual’s personal development.

The first community service experience in the classroom took place in the spring of 2000 after I contacted the City of Portland and was able to integrate a community service-training component into the Albina Beautification Project. It was a project sponsored by the Portland Police Bureau and King Neighborhood Association to address the need for a healthy and revitalized neighborhood. The service occurred on Saturday mornings for 11 weeks. Students worked in crews to pick up garbage, remove graffiti, and collect recyclable items from various areas in the community. Sixty students from the Skill Center contributed a total of 240 hours to the project.
Skill Center instructors used this service experience as a way to enliven mastering life skills by having students realize how they can help others and make a difference to themselves and others.

**Supporting and Fostering Agency Participation in Community Service**

In September of 2000, the Albina Community in Portland designated a “Weed and Seed” program for the community to achieve broad public safety, attain economic stability, and meet social goals. Skill Center staff and faculty were invited to attend meetings with various community based organizations and public agencies to discuss the implementation of the project. It was agreed that the community deserved some return by residents who committed low-level misdemeanor crimes that had an overall effect on the community.

Through the help of Skill Center input, the project members also recognize that the offenders of these crimes are often in need of help. Another objective was added to the project that allowed the Skill Center to work with its partnering social agencies and provide immediate help with drug and alcohol counseling, housing information, and pre-employment training, which included volunteering and community service as part of the curriculum.

**Attention to the Role of Post-Secondary Remedial Programs to Service Learning**

During the fall and winter terms of the 2000-01, the Skill Center staff joined a small group of faculty members at the college and began meeting to talk about the benefits of providing campus focus for a comprehensive service-learning program for both traditional and nontraditional students. As a result, Portland Community College received a $390,000 “Learn and Serve America” grant, awarded by the Corporation
for National Service. The grant provides $130,000 a year over a three-year period that allows Portland Community College students to tutor and mentor for schools in the low-income areas of north, northeast, and outer southeast Portland. The college hired a coordinator for the program and placed her office at the Skill Center to specifically work with the remedial programs housed in the Center.

Subsequently, four Skill Center completers received "Learn and Serve" scholarships in the spring of 2000 that allowed them to improve their basic education and training and also be involved in the community. They were placed as volunteers in a flexible after-school program at the Margaret Carter, Betty Campbell, and Franciscan community centers, located in northeast Portland. The volunteers provided an enriching environment with tutoring activities specially designed to enhance the academic development and self-esteem of disadvantaged school-age children. As volunteer coordinators, they organized learning activities that included games, puzzles, computer challenges, writing exercises, and an opportunity for children to work on homework.

These former Skill Center students through tutoring were able to gain additional hands on experience with writing and computer skills, as well as develop a sense of connection with the children and their community. Moreover, they are scheduled to enter a two-year Portland Teachers Associate Degree program at Portland Community College in the fall of 2001 and upon completion will enroll at Portland State University to earn their bachelor degree in Education.
References


Erickson, F. (1986). *Qualitative methods in research on teaching: Handbook of research on teaching.* N.Y.: Macmillan.


Appendices
Appendix A – Call for Participation Flyer to Former Graduates

Invitation to Participate:
Skill Center Graduates
On Volunteer and Community Service

I'd like to issue the preliminary call for former Skill Center graduates to participate in a telephone interview that will be held during the week of June 25-30, 2000. The telephone interviews are intended to give former and present Skill Center students an opportunity to describe their experiences volunteering or involvement in a Community Service project in their respective community. The results from this short telephone interview will be used to select a few people to participate in a dissertation study proposed to look at distinctive volunteering and community service activities of students enrolled in basic skills and workforce training at the Skill Center.

Dissertation title

Perceptions of Volunteering and Community Service: Voices of Students in a Post-Secondary Remedial Program, proposal submitted to Oregon State University.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of the proposed study is to investigate the distinctive volunteering activities of community college students enrolled in Basic Skills and Technical Training at the Skill Center of Portland Community College. Also, this study hopes to explore the opportunities for connecting this service to Community College activities. The significance of this project is to understand the service activities and sense of caring for persons involved in volunteer settings who have previously had unsuccessful experiences.

Participation Requirements

To participate, contact the Skill Center at 978-5341 or by e-mail at rblakely@Pcc.edu, indicating your interest.


Selection of the participants and final decisions concerning the telephone interviews will be made shortly after response to participate.

Individual responses in this short interview will be kept confidential. Only the researcher will see these responses. Instead of using your name, Skill Center personnel has numbered each survey response sheet to keep track of those interviewed.
Appendix B – Telephone Questionnaire

Doctoral Candidate
Oregon State University
Number

Telephone Script

Good Morning (First name of potential participant):

I am conducting a study on voluntary and community service activities. This brief question and answer period will provide some data on the participation by present and former Skill Center students. The results from this short telephone interview will only be used to select a few participants to participate in the study. Therefore, individual responses will be kept confidential. Only the researcher will see these responses. Instead of using your name, I have numbered each survey response sheet to keep track of individuals interviewed. Are you willing to participate in this short survey?

Telephone Survey Questionnaire

1. Are you now, or have you ever been a volunteer?

2. What types of volunteer services did you provide?

3. How many hours did you participate?

4. When did the volunteering take place?

5. Over what time period did it take place (e.g., every week, or once a month)?
Appendix C – Letter to Former Skill Center Graduates

August 22, 2000

Donna Kelly (Pseudonym)
3006 N. E. 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97212

Dear Donna,

Thank you for responding to the Call for Participation flyer.

There appears to be little research on the volunteering and Community Service of students involved in Post-Secondary Remedial and employment training programs. While this may not be very startling, what is surprising is that many unemployed and underemployed students are able to find time to volunteer while faced with personal barriers and other responsibilities during their time of training and seeking employment.

My dissertation study proposes to look at the distinctive volunteering activities of students enrolled in Basic Skills and Vocational Training at the Skill Center and what are the opportunities for connecting this service to community college activities.

Your name has been selected from 790 students who attended the Skill Center program. The intent is to interview a small number of graduates as part of this sample in a way that the conclusions drawn from this study may be valuable. While your participation is this study is strictly voluntary and confidential, you are an important part of my research. Interviews will be conducted between July 17 and August 10.

It should take you about thirty minutes to complete this interview survey.

Again, thank you for your response to this effort. I will contact you sometime during the week of July 10 to set a convenient time we can meet. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 978-5341.

Sincerely,

Randall G. Blakely
Appendix D – Sample Informed Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Perceptions of Volunteering and Community Service: Voices of Students in a Post-Secondary Remedial Program

Investigator: Randall G. Blakely
Doctoral Candidate
School of Education
Oregon State University
Contact Phone: 503-978-5341

You are being asked to participate in a project conducted through the Community College Leadership Program at Oregon State University. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project.

The investigator will explain to you in detail the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of participation. You may ask him/her any questions you have to help you understand the project. A basic explanation of the project is written below. Please read this explanation and discuss with the researcher any questions you may have.

1. The purpose of the proposed study is to investigate the distinctive volunteering activities of community college students enrolled in basic skills and technical training at the Skill Center of Portland Community College. Also, to explore the opportunities for connecting this service to community college activities. The significance of this project is to understand the service activities and sense of caring for persons involved in volunteer settings through personal growth who have previously experienced failure. That is, to facilitate the need in how one’s self-concept, social interactions, and sense of caring are formed. It is this sense of caring among the study participants from an urban community college campus that will be examined.

2. Sample selection for the project will begin with a telephone survey. A master list of students from the Skill Center’s database will provide information on those who are, or were students of the program. The researcher will ask potential participants their volunteer involvement. There will be five general volunteer questions: actual involvement, type of service, hours completed, when the service took place, and time period.

The researcher will send a standard letter for introducing and inviting current students and graduates to participate in the study. Participants will be selected based on criteria the following criteria:
Having provided sustainable volunteer services within a social context,

(ii) No less than 15 hours of service rendered, and within a time period no more than three months prior to entering training.

The researcher will conduct semi-structured interviews. The interviews are of two types. The structured interviews will pose the same questions to all participants. The open-ended interviews will be conducted as situations permit and follow a pattern of in-depth questions based on the participants’ responses.

The researcher will hold one small focus group session and an associate will conduct the session. The session will have eight members in which all students in the study participate. Because non-traditional students have minimal free time due to child-care and awkward work hours, the focus groups will be scheduled at times convenient to the participants.

3. There are no apparent risks or discomforts associated with any interviewing, focus group activities, or other personal interaction such as member checks and triangulation.

4. An introduction letter will be sent to participants, along with a self-addressed envelope for administration. Anonymity will be used, as there will be no space for a name on the survey, letter, or self-addressed envelope. Instead, a coding system will be used for identification and tracking purposes. Moreover, all letters sent for participation of persons involved in the project will assure individuals that any information given will be held in strict confidence and there will be no consequences for non-participation.

If you then decide to participate in the project, please sign on the bottom page of this form in the presence of the person who explained the project to you. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on any future services you may be entitled to from the University. Anyone who agrees to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

I understand also that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and I believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risks. I understand that my participation in this study is completely voluntary and that I may either refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled.

My signature below indicates that I have read and that I understand the procedures described above and give my informed and voluntary consent to
participate in this study. I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.

Signature of subject (or subjects legally authorized representative)  Name of Subject

______________________________  ____________________________
Date Signed                      

______________________________  ____________________________
Subject’s Present Address        Subject’s Phone Number

______________________________  ____________________________
Signature of Principal Investigator Date signed
Appendix E – Human Subjects Form

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF THE OSU INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

Answers to Review Questions

1. A brief description (one paragraph) of the significance of this project in lay terms.

The purpose of the proposed study is to investigate the distinctive volunteering activities of Community College students enrolled in Basic Skills and Technical training at the Skill Center of Portland Community College. Also, the purpose is to explore the opportunities for connecting this service to community college activities. The significance of this project is to understand the service activities and sense of caring for persons involved in volunteer settings through personal growth who have previously experienced failure. That is, to facilitate the need in how one’s self-concept, social interactions, and sense of caring are formed. It is this sense of caring among the study participants from an urban community college campus that will be examined.

2. A description of the methods and procedures to be used during this research project outlining the sequence of events involving human subjects.

- Sample selection for the project will begin with a telephone survey. This will serve as a filtering process for a manageable interview sample from the 790 graduates of the training program who will be selected for the study. A master list of students from the Skill Center’s database will provide information on those who are, or were students of the program. The researcher will ask potential participants their volunteer involvement. There will be five general volunteer questions: actual involvement, type of service, hours completed, when the service took place, and time period.

- The researcher will send a standard letter for introducing and inviting the selected sample of current students and graduates to participate in the study. Participants will be eligible for the sample selection based on the following criteria:

  (iii) Having provided sustainable volunteer services within a social context,

  (iv) No less than 15 hours of service rendered, and within a time period no more than three months prior to entering training.
The researcher will conduct semi-structured interviews. The interviews are of two types. The structured interview portion will pose the same questions to all participants. The open-ended interview portion will be conducted as situations permit and follow a pattern of in-depth questions based on the participants’ responses.

The researcher will hold one small focus group session and an associate will conduct a follow-up session. The session will have eight members in which all students in the study participate. Because non-traditional students have minimal free time due to child-care and awkward work hours, the focus groups will be scheduled at times convenient to the participants.

3. A description of the benefits (if any) and/or risks to the subjects involved in this research.

There are no apparent risks or discomforts associated with any interviewing, focus group activities, or other personal interaction such as member checks and triangulation.

4. A description of the subject population, including number of subjects, subjects characteristics and method of selection. Include any advertising, if used, to solicit subjects. Justification is required if the subject population is restricted in one gender or ethnic group.

The sample of participants selected for this project will include males and females representing widely diverse ethnic, achievement and motivational areas. Criteria for inclusion in this study will be defined as students who are or were admitted to the Skill Center training program during the academic terms from 1997 through 1999. There are currently 1,595 students in the Skill Center electronic data files and their average training period is approximately three months. In order to ensure that students are stable and have a good grasp of their personal or occupational goals, the selection will be limited to the 790 students who completed the training programs or employed while at the Skill Center. It will be necessary to utilize a filtering process of the 790 participants from the training program. This will be done through a telephone survey.

5. A copy of the informed consent document. The informed consent document must include the pertinent items from the “Basic Elements of Informed Consent” and must be in lay language.

See attachment

6. A description of the methods by which informed consent will be obtained.
A scripted statement explaining the research and participation protocol will be revealed to all individuals contacted during the telephone sampling process. Additionally, selected persons for the individual interview will be sent an introduction letter. Both the scripted statement and letter will cover the following information:

- An explanation of the survey and its purpose.
- A statement as to why the respondent’s response is important
- Assurance of confidentiality.
- A statement that participation is wholly voluntary, and the results will not be used in any assessment of them.

7. A description of the method by which anonymity or confidentiality of the subjects will be maintained.

The introduction letter to participants will be sent and a coding system will be used for identification and tracking purposes instead of the participant’s name. Moreover, all letters sent for participation of persons involved in the project will assure individuals that any information given will be held in strict confidence and there will be no consequences for non-participation.

8. A copy of any questionnaire, survey, testing instrument, etc. (if any) to be used in this project.

See attachment for telephone survey script and questions.

9. Information regarding any other approvals, which have been or will be obtained (e.g., school districts, hospitals, cooperating institutions).

Not applicable
### Appendix F – Data Matrix Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes and Patterns (cont.)</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Recurring Outcomes (Quotations)</th>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Total # quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working for social change and a better community (cont.).</strong></td>
<td>AAF-14</td>
<td>A lot of people have a lot that’s going on as far as, I’ll use the word “problems” in their lives and they want to just give up. You know but what I’ve done over the last few years is to help them um, you know, help themselves, you know, Um, that you have to ... you have to collect resources or data, you know, in order to be able to help that person come through. And if that... that piece doesn’t help them then you move on to another piece that might open the door for them. Um, maybe help get them involved in you know the Skill Center or help them with getting a job or even talk to their case worker to let them know, you know, that I can help them.</td>
<td>Service as an Advocate For Social Change</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beyond Income, Security, and Charity</strong></td>
<td>AAM-6</td>
<td>By helping and speaking for those in need who are confronted with difficult issues such as drug addiction, homelessness, and economic despair, is really rewarding. I know from the people who come up to me when I go around the community to talk about drug addiction, how appreciative the families are that I work with or the work I do.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beyond Income, Security, and Charity</strong></td>
<td>AAM-3</td>
<td>It ah, seems, ah, to me, that people mainly look at their family, ah, job, and community based on money. You know, a new home, or a job that makes a substantial amount of money, or, ah, trying to, you know stock up on skills to get a better job. But, that’s not what community service is about. It’s ah, about more complete ah, concept than financial gain or knowledge. It’s ah, based on having relationships with each other, to ah, share a part of each other, and ah, to be productive together</td>
<td>Service as an Intrinsic Reward</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G – Concepts Supporting Major Themes

Notions and Concepts

Notion: Describing one's history or circumstance that led to volunteering.
Concept: Participant Reflection.

Notion: Seeing oneself change for the better.
Concept: Self Exploration and Discovery

Notion: Giving back to ensure quality of life for the community.
Concept: Building a Quality Community

Notion: Having personal connections and relationships with others.
Concept: A Sense of Connection

Notion: Having those that you serve look up to you.
Concept: Service as a Role Model

Notion: Working for social change and a better community.
Concept: Service as an Advocate for Social Change

Notion: Appreciating service that is beyond income, security, and charity.
Concept: Service as an Intrinsic Reward

Notion: Gaining respect and knowledge from each other.
Concept: A Feeling of Interdependence

Notion: Working together in a service setting.
Concept: Being Together as One Community

Notion - Gaining work experience needed to obtain employment.
Concept: Service as Training

Notion: Owning up to past transgressions and restoring what was taken.