

## **ITF Workstream Monthly Report: Community Engagement**

October 25, 2024

### **Workstream Leads:**

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### **Executive Champions:**

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### **Monthly Report:**

Workstream Meeting: 10/8/24

- **Discussion on the College's role in intellectual, cultural, and community development**
  - Brings people together on campus for events in their own community—especially those who don't have a student or parent connection to the College
  - We need to start developing relationships with the institution rather than one individual.
  - There is no office or foundational system at the College for engaging with the community.
  - This is one instance where being near a major city is a detriment: People have many choices. We need to create Lake Forest College as a first choice.
  - We have the space, the people, and content. If we think about it in those three buckets, we'll get a lot closer to what we have to offer.
  - Don't lose sight of athletics and Forester team spirit that already exists. – which is part of “content”. The Athletic center is a big entry point to connect to the College.
  - Community members have audited courses and enrolled in MLS since 1977. Currently 15-20 people in MLS seminar. Can we grow this? Is that a priority of the College?
  - Have offered mini-lectures off campus on Rhetoric of the Election in the past that go beyond auditing classes on campus and draw in more community members.
  - Different audiences: retired residents and newer, younger families moving into the area with kids.
  - All these ideas take resources for marketing, promotion, and staff time
  - Have had most luck: where we ask people in the area to network and bring people to the College for specific events. – e.g. Laura Wilson photography show.
  - Lacking a campus entrance on North Campus: need a physical way to welcome and invite people from the community
- **Key ideas to define "who we are" and "who we want to be"**

- Become first choice in area for content
- Area's only college-level DIII sports teams
- Area's only baccalaureate- and graduate-level college courses
- Offer lectures for the community by faculty members
- Do things to help people get across the threshold onto campus. Let the community know that we want them here. Don't always have to register.
- **Next Step: Workstream participants respond to the prompt "What does it mean to be an intellectual, cultural and community asset?"**

Workstream Meeting: 10/22/24

- **Key Discussion Points:**
  - **Community Engagement Vision:**
    - How to position the College as the community's first choice for cultural and intellectual events.
    - Critical thinking, liberal arts education, and the richness of the curriculum as selling points.
    - Emphasizing that local community members don't need to go to Chicago for valuable experiences.
    - Encouraging collaboration between the College and local organizations (e.g., History Center).
  - **Campus Accessibility and Presence:**
    - Lack of a clear visual entry point on campus.
    - Importance of being a consistent and trusted resource for the community.
    - Leveraging unique spaces on campus for events.
    - Emphasizing partnerships that benefit both the College and the community (e.g., internship opportunities with local organizations like CROYA and parks & rec).
  - **Ideas for Increasing Community Engagement:**
    - Passport program for community members to attend multiple campus events, with incentives for participation.
    - Hosting community service projects involving student groups (e.g., Greek organizations).
    - Expanding Relay for Life to include community groups.
    - Potential community radio involvement.
    - More promotion of College events (e.g., posters downtown, using Patch and community newsletters).
    - Using a central community newsletter for better event communication and ticket registration.

- **Transformational Student Experience (TSE) :**
  - Focus on how community involvement aligns with maintaining the College's TSE.
  - Enhancing student experiences by connecting them with local engagement opportunities.
  - Building trust between the College and the community through consistent involvement and messaging.
- **Suggested Future Action Items:**
  - Draft a one-pager on the philosophy of community engagement.
  - Assess and review the College's offerings in terms of community engagement.
  - Continue building relationships with local organizations and explore further partnership opportunities.
  - Establish a council that includes both community and College voices.
  - Develop a visual point of entry at campus for the community.
- **Next Step: Linda and Lindsay create a draft document outlining the key elements of being an intellectual, cultural and community asset based on meeting discussions and invite workstream participants to review, revise and give feedback**