

# Activities for Community-Academic Partnerships: Appendix



## Division of Community Engagement Activities for Community-Academic Partnerships

Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science

*In partnership with Healthy African American Families*

### Feet of Clay



As a trust-building exercise, this activity encourages partners to challenge character perceptions about each other to forge collaborative community-academic partnerships.

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### On and Off the Bus



Partnerships require a lot of work and at times, partners have to dedicate some time to other responsibilities. This activity addresses communication and trust.

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### Knights of the Roundtable



This activity highlights the value in engagement that welcomes input from all partners involved for ethical and valuable

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### Introduction

A history of discrimination and research abuse has made under-resourced communities skeptical about research. In community partnered participatory research (CPPR), partners are valued equally and collaborate jointly during the entire research process (plan, implementation, and dissemination). The success of a partnership is significantly impacted by a strong collaboration. Those involved learn to appreciate that knowledge comes in many forms across communities, disciplines, and practices. Authentic partnerships exhaust available forms of knowledge production to benefit all communities (beyond the science). This can only happen with respectful engagement across diverse forms of knowledge. Further, a successful partnership anticipates and embraces the struggles and conflicts inherent in balancing multiple perspectives. Exercises that build trust and communication are essential in partnerships.

### Web of Yarn



This activity shows how an effective partnership can hold the community together through collaborations and mutual exchange.

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Icebreakers help to critically examine and observe how people work, think, and engage. They set the environment to find mechanisms for collaboration. This document serves as a tool to establish effective community-academic partnerships through the use of ice-breaking activities. These activities can be implemented at any time, but are more effective as an introduction to the partnership and/or a meeting. The activities proposed in this document should always have a trained facilitator that will lead and participate in the activity.

### What We Carry



Accountability is an essential role of each partner and this activity will provide a reminder of the role we play in the community.

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Wells, Kenneth & Loretta Jones. 2009. "Commentary: 'Research in Community-Partnered, Participatory Research.'" *JAMA*. July 15; 302(3): 320-321.

### Walking With Community



Every partner should know the community impacted by the effort and a walk through the neighborhood may impress new ideas and common understanding.

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## Activities for Community-Academic Partnerships

### The Things We Carry

Community engagement and advocacy are difficult tasks and lifetime commitments. At times, we become consumed by the work and need to be reminded and held accountable. This activity offers that reminder for moments when we are stressed, overwhelmed, and/or disconnected. Keys are the entryway to something; it could be a house, a car, a storage unit, an office, and so much more.

#### Directions

1. Identify the activity's facilitator.
2. Facilitator asks participants to show their keys.
3. Ask all participants to introduce themselves and explain each key. If a participant does not have keys, then ask the participant to share why.
4. Once participants have shared, the facilitator addresses the purpose of the activity (below).
5. After the purpose, the facilitator has a good opportunity to transition to discuss the reason for the meeting, collaboration and/or move along with the agenda.

#### Purpose

Each key represents a privilege and an asset we hold. It's important to recognize that in the work we do, many do not have these keys or the opportunities to voice their concerns. Let these keys be a constant reminder to why we do what we do and be held accountable for it. Everyone gets a blank key at the end of the workshop to carry as a constant reminder that they are the voice for those people and communities that are not sitting at the table.



### Walking with the Community

Research provides us with the necessary data, conceptual frameworks, and scientific understanding of the social and health inequities experienced by under-resourced communities. To intervene on reducing communities and populations to a statistic, there is a need to learn more about the social experiences, behaviors, and dynamics that these people encounter day-to-day. This activity encourages participants to observe, engage with, and walk in the communities that they aim to serve.

#### Directions

1. As a team, plan a walk through the community four blocks in length. Inform participants to bring comfortable shoes (i.e. water, jacket, no jewelry).
2. Identify the activity's facilitator(s).  
Note: If there are more than five participants in attendance, split into groups with one facilitator per five participants.
3. Have each team take different routes.  
Note: During the walk-through, make sure to ask participants about their observations (needs/assets).
4. Once back at the meeting location, have each group talk/reflect amongst each other and report-back.
5. Have one member of each team report-back.
6. Once participants have shared, the facilitator addresses the purpose of the activity (below).
7. After the purpose, the facilitator has a good opportunity to transition to discuss the reason for the meeting, collaboration and/or move along with the agenda.

#### Purpose

This activity forces us to move from a western individualized perspective to a collective consciousness. Though we understand the importance of statistics in knowledge production, the lived experiences of communities impact and inform interventions that address inequities. This exposure helps us encounter something that the numbers may not.

Division of Community Engagement

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# Activities for Community-Academic Partnerships, *continued*

## Activities for Community-Academic Partnerships



### Feet of Clay

The phrase "feet of clay" originates from biblical history. King Nebuchadnezzar dreamt of a gold and metal statue with feet of clay. The dream was seen as a prophecy to the potential collapse of the King's empire. In his dream, a stone crushes the feet of clay, causing the statue to fall over. The fall was associated to the weak foundation: the feet of clay. Modernized interpretations identify clay feet as hidden flaws in the character of a greatly admired person. These flaws are often seen as human and grounded to earth.

### Directions

1. Identify the meeting facilitator.
2. All participants introduce themselves and share one embarrassing moment.
3. After all introductions, the facilitator will offer a 10-15 minute space to have participants share their thoughts and feelings about what they said and heard.
4. Once participants have shared, the facilitator addresses the purpose of the activity (below).
5. After the purpose, the facilitator has a good opportunity to transition to either identify the reason for the collaboration and/or move along with the agenda.

### Purpose

This activity demonstrates the imperfections we experience as human beings in order to establish a common understanding between all collaborators. In community and academia, we all make mistakes never show up to spaces/meetings as the full version of ourselves. Thus, we should challenge perceptions and establish our common mission and goals.

### Riding the Bus

This activity is part of a larger community-academic partnership that implements an equitable project with the aim to talk about community health through outreach and policy (see Witness for Wellness below). This only happens through sharing of resources, observing and listening to community, and actively recording the impact and process of the partnership. The concept of getting on and off the bus originates from the bus' continual movement through a community. There are elements to consider when getting on and off the bus, as it is in a partnership. Not everyone will be on the bus at the same time.

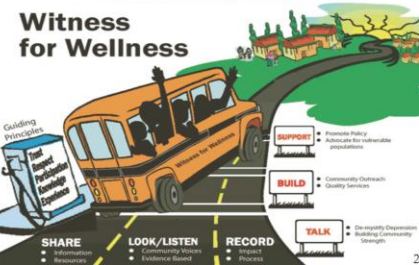
### Directions

1. Identify the meeting facilitator.
2. The facilitator will introduce the concept of getting on and off the bus and the guiding principles: trust, respect, participation, knowledge, and experience.
3. The group will establish a common understanding of the principles in relationship to their work by asking the following:
  - What do you need to establish trust and respect?
  - What motivates you to participate?
  - What skills and experiences do you bring to the partnership?
4. Once participants have shared, the facilitator addresses the purpose of the activity (below) and reiterates common experiences and goals.
5. After the purpose, the facilitator has a good opportunity to transition to either identify the reason for the collaboration and/or move along with the agenda.

### Purpose

People do not have to be at the table all of the time and there is no need to explain why some people cannot "get on the bus" at times. It's important that the partnership establishes a strong sense of trust and communication.

<http://www.communitytrials.org/w4w/>



## Activities for Community-Academic Partnerships



### Knights of the Roundtable

The Knights of the Roundtable were considered the best knights in legends about King Arthur. They lived in King Arthur's castle, Camelot, where they had a special roundtable. The knights were responsible for: (1) safety from harm; (2) protecting the king/kingdom; (3) protecting each other. At the roundtable, all swords pointed towards the circle as a demonstration of loyalty and honor to each other. This meant that everyone who sat at the roundtable was seen as equal.

### Directions

1. Identify the activity's facilitator.
2. Share picture: Knights at the Roundtable.
3. Ask all participants to introduce themselves and explain what they see.
4. After introductions, facilitator expands on the picture by sharing the purpose (below).
5. After the purpose, the facilitator has a good opportunity to transition to either identify the reason for the collaboration and/or move along with the agenda.

### Purpose

The concept of the roundtable ensures that everyone's commitment, accountability, and concerns are represented, considered, and seen. Not everyone had the same responsibilities, but everyone did well in their responsibilities because they were part of a team. Those sitting at the table honor the mission and do not differentiate or function from power. The circular table reflects transparency, consistency, and continuity.

### Web of Yarn

A web is a complex system of interconnected elements. This system of complexities is also something experienced in partnerships. This activity helps address important questions that require collaborative engagement.

### Directions

1. Identify the facilitator.
2. Ensure you have a ball of yarn.
3. Ensure everyone is sitting in a circle.
4. Facilitator determines a question that they would like everyone to answer.

Note: you can use more than one yarn, each representing a question, but this may be a bit more complicated.

5. The facilitator asks the question, tossing the ball of yarn to someone else and makes sure to hold onto the end of the yarn.

Note: The ball of yarn cannot be tossed to someone next to you.

6. The person receiving the yarn responds to the question and tosses the ball to someone else making sure to hold onto the thread of yarn. The thread continues until everyone has participated.

7. Once all have participated, the facilitator addresses the purpose of the activity (below).

8. After the purpose, the facilitator has a good opportunity to transition to either identify the reason for the collaboration and/or move along with the agenda.

### Purpose

Holding onto the yarn demonstrates that you have insights and that you are valuable in the partnership. At times, you will be asked to help find the answer to many complex situations, while other times you may not even be asked. This does not mean you're not valuable, but explains the trust and understanding that is necessary for a partnership: we support each other, so never let go. Everyone is building a web that will hold the community together.

