

CUPS Objectives, Focus Issues, Activities & Accomplishments *(020710)*

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Except for the initial contact period for membership in early 2009, the CUPS initiative started in April, 2009 and has progressed to the present in May 2010. This interim overview summarizes the objectives, focus issues, activities and accomplishments of the *Community-University Partnerships (CUPS)* council during this period.

Summary of CUPS Mission, Process and General Objectives

Overview

CUPS is proposed and designed as a "collaborative leadership team (COLT)" for creating active, applied service, research, and policy/advocacy initiatives among faculty and fellows of the UCLID Center at the University of Pittsburgh and directors and staff of diverse community-based non-profit education, health, and human service agencies in Pittsburgh area and the Appalachian region of PA, WVA., and SE Ohio.

CUPS processes will promote co-equal leadership and partnerships among the University interdisciplinary "community" within UCLID and regional community agencies for mutual benefits to: (1) combine the power of university and community leaders; (2) blend human and financial resources for mutual benefits; (3) augment the capacities and influence of community programs; and (4) advance and transform policy and practices for individuals at-risk and with disabilities and their families and advocate for those who are most vulnerable across the life-span.

CUPS makes tangible the mandate of Dr. Nordenberg, Chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh, through the University Senate that identifies..." *community service as a necessary and respected complement to the University's mission*" (University Times, 2008, p.6). The community relations committee of the Senate directs university faculty and departments to identify and develop..." *opportunities for community service and civic engagement as expressed through collaborative partnerships, service learning, and community-based research* (p.6)."

Missions

CUPS partnerships emphasize the link among healthcare, education, and human services in natural community settings. CUPS collaborative ventures with committed community partners will establish innovative models for "best practices" that contribute to systems reform and integration for all children and families and the professionals who support them. Essentially, CUPS partners have framed the council and its activities as a broad policy and advocacy forum for all vulnerable children and families, particularly those with disabilities and unmet needs.

Initial CUPS membership consists of non-profits, and community agency and government leaders who already have existing service, consultation, and research relationships with UCLID faculty members. This initial focus enables CUPS to identify current and future ventures that can advance collaboration supported

by diverse funding for mutual benefits to the partners. CUPS processes would enable the University-Community collaborative to detail the needs of community partners which can be met by faculty and students to expand the quality, effectiveness, and rigor of their work in the community.

CUPS members have already existing ventures with UCLID faculty which center upon diverse early childhood intervention projects; many of these projects promote system integration and model program development as well as such issues as disability rights; minority concerns; the links among education and physical and behavioral health support, family support, professional development mentoring of teachers in "best practices", and applied program evaluation research.

Process

Within UCLID, CUPS establishes a dynamic leadership collaborative based upon consensus decision-making and focused upon innovative service, advocacy, policy development, and research ventures between the University and Community instead of a traditional community advisory board with a limited, uni-directional mission. The table summarizes the components in the CUPS process and their status:

<i>CUPS Process Component</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Status</i>
Select CUPS council members	Existing partnership initiatives & possibilities	April, 2009--phone/email contacts; June-September—individual meetings with each member
Begin co-facilitation roles of UCLID leaders	Drs. Bagnato and Trovato	September 2009--email process
Model council consensus decision-making process	Delphi and Nominal Group Techniques	October 2009 via email; December 2009--meeting modelling
Reach consensus on CUPS yearly objectives/tasks	Collaborative decisions on mutual ventures	September 2009—email survey; December 2009—meeting group consensus
Identify support needs of each CUPS initiative	Catalog of community partner needs & UCLID needs	November 2009--email survey; December 2009--meeting
Breakout working action groups	Planning and activities of CUPS subgroups for mutual productions	December 2009—workgroup process on potential activities;
Schedule for rotating venue for CUPS meeting & council member leadership roles	Survey willingness to rotate meeting venues in community and also co-facilitation roles by partners	December 2009--meeting
Set leadership roles of UCLID fellows/trainees	Decisions on tasks and experiences afforded to UCLID fellows/trainees to meet MCHB leadership competencies	UCLID and UCLID-E fellows/trainees assigned to CUPS venues 12/2009-06/2010; Next steps to be determined for 2010 academic year
Begin interim work activities and projects related to consensus objectives	Match resource needs to CUPS member programs	December 2009 through June, 2010

Current CUPS Membership, Affiliations, & Foci

CUPS Partner	Affiliation	Foci
<i>Nancy Hubley, Esq</i>	Lawyer, Education Law and Disability Rights Center	Disability rights, advocacy and education/civil rights policy
<i>Robert Grom</i>	CEO, Heritage Community Initiatives; Non-profit Management Consultants	Creation, funding, and sustainability of early childhood, workforce development, and health model initiatives
<i>William Isler</i>	Director, Family Communications, Inc., WOED and Pittsburgh Public Schools	Promotion of early childhood intervention policies to governor candidates
<i>Margie Kakiou</i>	Director, Beaver County Head Start	Mental health initiatives and staff professional development
<i>Marlene Midget</i>	Executive Director, Northern Panhandle Head Start, Inc., West Virginia	Mental health in rural poverty and family support
<i>Nancy Murray</i>	Executive Director, Achieva	Advocacy for renewed disability policy in PA and nationally
<i>Al Condeluci</i>	Executive Director, United Cerebral Palsy	Advocacy for renewed disability policy in PA and nationally
<i>Lucy Spruill</i>	Manager, United Cerebral Palsy	Advocacy for renewed disability policy in PA and nationally as a person with a disability
<i>Junlei Lee</i>	Manager, DASH; Office of Child Development, Pitt	Local and international research on the impact of orphanages and foster care on vulnerable children
<i>Kurt Kondrich</i>	Chair, Commonwealth of PA, State Interagency Coordinating Council	Advocacy for early intervention policy and reauthorization of IDEA
<i>Mary Esther Van Shura</i>	Director of Community Outreach, Allegheny County Executive's Office	Advancing community initiatives in Pittsburgh region
<i>Joseph Lagana</i>	CEO, Homeless Children's Education Fund	Advocacy for enforcement of state and federal mandates for education of homeless children
<i>Scott Lammie</i>	Vice President, UPMC Health Plan	Greater Pittsburgh End Hunger Initiative
<i>Joyce Rothermel</i>	CEO, Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank	Greater Pittsburgh End Hunger Initiative
<i>Michael Surbaugh</i>	CEO, Boy Scouts of Pittsburgh	Cub Scouts 1-2-3 in urban communities with minority youth

Consensus Objectives for CUPS 2009-2010

During the May to December period of 2009, Drs, Bagnato and Trovato re-connected with likely CUPS members, finalized the CUPS membership, scheduled individual face-to-face meetings with each CUPS community member; and organized conference calls and email survey activities to focus CUPS objectives and activities

Our dinner meeting of the **CUPS** Council was held on Wednesday, December 9, 2009 from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in Monroeville. For this particular meeting, our goals were to develop an action plan, group members according to interest/expertise, and leave prepared to engage in our continuing work using interactive technologies (or at least e-mail) and some face-to-face individual meetings. At the dinner, we decided as a group that we would meet four times in a calendar year and use e-mail and other business networking to communicate on a regular basis. Using interactive technologies would help the Council be highly productive without asking the members to attend too many face-to-face meetings.

In that spirit, we sent **CUPS** Council members an e-mail prior to the meeting asking them to identify one major goal that they would like for **CUPS** to accomplish, list the implementation steps, identify the resources needed and set a timeline.

The suggested objectives and activities from the CUPS email responses were analyzed and then subjected to consensus decision-making processes at the meeting; the major objectives and foci that were identified focused on advocacy and policy related to disability rights, education, and underserved populations. The CUPS membership was unanimous in its desire to influence the perspectives of all governor candidates for the next election in November.

The following are the specific consensus decisions on the 4 focus issues for CUPS to address related to both policy and advocacy:

FOCUS ISSUES:

1. Upcoming process of the reauthorization of IDEA & implications for PA—Recommendations to focus issues of disability rights and education for governor candidates
2. Pennsylvania early childhood intervention regulations on continuation funding for quality Pre-K Counts prevention programs and flexible access to early intervention services for children at-risk and with delays/disabilities
3. Enforcement of education mandates for homeless children; highlighting the needs of other underserved populations: behavioral services for children and families in rural areas; effects of chronic hunger in young children
4. Creative options for continuing professional development of staff in CUPS member's agencies

Specifically as the primary vehicles for policy and advocacy, members were interested in preparing one-page summaries that identify the major recommendations on the issues that can be distributed to government officials and the new governor candidates as "fast fact" documents or through social and

business networks, blogs, wikis, webinars, podcasts and/or YouTube. As you will read in the next section, some of these advocacy initiatives are underway.

The next **CUPS** meeting will be held in September 2010. Prior to the meeting, we will be sending a short electronic survey through Survey Monkey to the **CUPS** Council members. One of the purposes of the survey is to receive feedback from our members about their perception about the consensus mission of CUPS and the quality of the processes that have been put in place to bring a diverse group of professionals together (face-to-face meetings, e-mails, and interactive technologies). They have already indicated to each of us in several ways how welcome this new approach with CUPS in UCLID is and how promising are the possibilities for meeting their needs. Other purposes of the survey are to elicit additional timely issues that the members want to address and to further discuss the implementation strategies that would be most effective.

Clearly, we have to think differently about advocacy in the new millennium to address the rapidly changing realities of a technological world. No longer can we write to or call public officials about an issue. This process takes too long and yields very few results. That is why the CUPS Council is taking advantage of interactive technologies that are available to stay on message and get the attention of our public officials on issues that affect the children we serve. Some of the CUPS community members are savvy already about these powerful approaches and have perspectives on using them for the most effects.

Faculty and UCLID/UCLID-E Fellows/Trainees Activities with CUPS Partners to Meet Objectives

In addition, during the May to January period so far, CUPS members have received specific support from UCLID faculty and trainees on “civic engagement” projects that addressed the individual needs of CUPS members on topics related to the above focus issues. The table below summarizes the personnel, CUPS activity, product, and status for these civic engagement projects:

Faculty or UCLID Fellow/Trainee	CUPS Activity	Product	Status
Eileen McKeating-Esterle	Update/rewrite ELC Early Intervention Rights handbook for parents	Revised manual for ELC website	In process
Amanda Meighan	Practica with Nancy Hubley on education law policies	Assistance in ELC advocacy efforts with parents	Initial stage
Ron Bell; Dr. D’Antonio	Mentoring with Boy Scouts afterschool initiative with inner city minority youth	Research on Cub Scouts 1-2-3 model pilot in Pgh for national study	In process
Christy Horner—ADP Anthony DeMauro—ADP Stephanie Marshall—Duq Rochelle Duffy—ADP Jai Seo—ADP	Observation and professional development of Head Start teachers	Development of manual of process for teacher mentoring	In process

Nancy Hubley, Dr. Bagnato, Kurt Kondrich, Nancy Murray, Eileen Esterle with EICOA group	Advocacy and legal rejoinder to PDE-OCELS draft for early intervention eligibility	Legal policy brief	Completed and submitted November 2009
Dr. Bagnato & Dr. Hawthorne; Tracy Larson	Meetings with HCEF representatives about joint activities; advocacy work with referred homeless preschooler	Meetings to compose joint proposal for funding; Psycho-educational assessment and IEP meeting with parents	In process
Dr. D'Antonio and Dr. Bagnato, Scott Lammie, Joyce Rothermel	Serve on GPFB community action task force to develop an evaluation model	Collaborative design and funding of an evaluation model for funding to monitor the coordination and distribution of food shipments for needy families	In process—Monthly planning meetings with task force
Dr. Bagnato & Bill Isler with OCDEL , WOED and WITF, and Heinz	Planning, coordination, and production of regional media events and TV spots highlighting Pre-K Counts research results to influence election results for continuation funding	Media events and TV spots, and regional research reports	In process (January to October 2010)

Next Steps for CUPS

1. Schedule next quarterly CUPS dinner work meeting in March.
2. Conduct roundtable discussion of issues related to the 4 focus issues and best methods to influence the governor candidates
3. Arrange focus issue workgroups
4. Discuss use of technology to complete the “fast fact” sheets on focus issues by each workgroup
5. Identify venues for meeting the governor candidates and promoting these focus issues
6. Pooling CUPS members on their needs for some individual project assistance