

Boundary Spanning: Engagement Across Disciplines, Communities, and Geography

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Abstract

Narratives from 3 presenters at the closing session of the 2013 Engagement Scholarship Consortium Conference demonstrate that higher education institutions and communities can forge deep and sustainable relationships to address the “wicked problems” in their countries and communities. University leaders in Nigeria described how students and faculty at the American University participate in service-learning courses and programs that have generated important local economic impacts. A community partner described the impact on educational access and civic leadership for a partnership between a Brazilian high school curriculum provider and a U.S. university, Texas Tech. A young Canadian scholar who works with “marginalized, stigmatized, and excluded communities in the world” described these partners as “environmental heroes” and shared a powerful vision of university and community collaboration across the globe. Together, these narratives weave a vision for global partnerships that have tangible impacts for peace, economic security, educational access, and quality of life.

Introduction

Valerie O. Paton

In October 2013, the Engagement Scholarship Consortium (ESC) Conference was held at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas. In 2010, ESC admitted its first international university and began to reframe the organization to embrace engagement at the international level. To strengthen these connections, the 2013 ESC Conference was titled “Boundary Spanning: Engaged Scholarship Across Disciplines, Communities and Geography.” Representatives attended from universities in Canada, Brazil, Mexico, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, South Africa, Thailand, and the United States.

The conference closing session attempted to celebrate the work of U.S. and international universities and partners. Reflecting the conference theme, participants shared their stories of “Boundary Spanning: Engagement Across Disciplines, Communication and Geography.” University leaders from Canada,

Nigeria, and the United States shared their unique experiences, and a community partner from Brazil shared his thoughts about international partnerships. As the convener of this session, I asked each participant to use the following prompts about engagement and its applicability to the “wicked problems” that our global communities are facing:

1. Describe your university’s or community organization’s engagement efforts locally, globally, and across disciplines.
2. From a reciprocity and mutuality perspective, what have you learned from working with community partners or universities that has strengthened your understanding and institutional leadership roles?
3. How does the academy respond to the wicked problems of society, which are typically transdisciplinary in nature?

Each participant narrated their responses from their unique perspectives. As they delivered their narratives, participants discovered resonance with each other’s stories. At the end of the session, participants found that they held significant common values about the role of university–community partnerships and their potential impact on civic engagement and empowerment in the United States and across the globe. The participants expressed their deep personal commitment to their engagement efforts as well as the commitment of their universities and organizations.

As the session closed, we were all in agreement that these stories needed to be written and shared more broadly. Therefore, the following essays flow from the presentations given at the 2013 ESC Closing Session, but have been expanded to more carefully describe university and community partnerships and their potential for local and global impact.

During the 8 months between the closing session and submission of the essays for editorial review, several major events occurred that spoke to the power of these partnerships, particularly in Nigeria. Reith and Harden’s initial essay on the commitment to “service” as part of the mission of American University of Nigeria (AUN) referenced the activity of the Boko Haram (which, loosely translated, means “Western education is forbidden”; *Chothia, 2014*)

before the abduction of 200 schoolgirls in April 2014. From their perspective in the midst of this conflict, Reith and Harden tell us,

Perhaps the ultimate service to a community is keeping the peace. . . . AUN views every service project as an instrument of peacekeeping by virtue of increasing our region's economic and social security; however, our students are engaging increasingly in even more direct service in the interest of peace by implementing plans and programs of the Adamawa Peace Initiative.

Resonating with AUN and its students, community partner Rogério Abaurre of Brazil's High School Serviços Educacionais (HSE) introduces his essay by describing his expectations of the partnership:

With the development of an increasingly complex, intertwined world, occasionally hostile, often friendly, but always competitive, coupled with the arrival of faster and more accessible communication and information technologies, the supportive and foundational needs of every nation's society have demanded that its youthful citizens become educationally, socially, and culturally prepared to join this advancing global community environment.

Through the HSE partnership with Texas Tech University Independent School District, Brazilian high school students and U.S. college students are forging relationships that have the potential for long-term impact in both countries. Abaurre enumerates 12 "core characteristics and guiding principles" which, from his perspective as a community partner, are essential to successful relationships.

In the final essay, Crystal Tremblay of the University of Victoria champions the idea of "cocreation of knowledge" with communities:

There is enormous benefit for communities and IHEs [institutions of higher education] to be partnering and working together in cocreating local solutions. In order to really respond to the "wicked" problems that society faces, we need a multiperspective, multidisciplinary approach that spans multiple sectors. Complex problems are often multifaceted and have social, economic, political, and environmental dimensions, which need

to be approached with these considerations. We need to be working across campus, creating research clusters where students, scholars, and community can be active in cocreating solutions that are rooted in the community and have impact for positive change. We need to be forging collaborative relationships between civil society, government, and IHEs in cocreating locally informed solutions. These solutions are often found in the community, where extensive knowledge already exists.

Tremblay has had the unique opportunity of providing support to the UNESCO Chair in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education, a collaboration between Budd Hall and Rajesh Tandon. Based upon this experience and her partnerships with communities, Tremblay discusses the power of institutions of higher education and communities working together to cocreate knowledge. She tells us, “We need to open our hearts and minds to new ways of living in this world and of organizing ourselves.”

The essays close with Budd Hall’s (2013) poem “A Great Turning,” which was first shared at the 2013 Global University Network for Innovation and is reprinted here with his permission. In part of the poem, Hall challenges us:

And sometimes we even feel that the turning has begun.
But we are unsure of the nature of the turning, and we
are unsure of what it means for ourselves and even for
our work.

And even more we ask how do we make the road
together? What are scholars and civil society leaders
and public officials and funding agencies and artists and
students for in this age? What is the use of our power to
read the world?

The following essays give voice to university leaders, students, scholars and community partners in response to these questions.

Community Service in a Development University

Charles Reith and Karon Harden

Introduction

The closing plenary at ESC's 2013 conference was an excellent forum for describing how community engagement and service at the American University of Nigeria (AUN) is the central agent of actualizing our mission to be Africa's premier development university. This essay follows up to describe our many service initiatives and their benefits to the students, our host community, and beyond.

AUN is uniquely committed to development, and it has been so from the start. The university was founded in 2005 by Atiku Abubaker, a successful politician and business leader who was educated while a primary school student by the U.S. Peace Corps. Atiku was impressed by the way the Peace Corps served the community and delivered an "American-style education." He attributes much of his success to the analytical thinking he learned from the interactive nature of the classroom, which contrasted with the more regimented, lecture-oriented European system in most Nigerian schools. But even more, he was impressed with the way the Peace Corps dedicated itself and its people to the betterment of the community, not just alleviating poverty but striving for its eradication through teaching and service.

Service and Engagement at AUN

Many schools are laudably increasing the emphasis on service and engagement in their repertoire. AUN occupies a special place in higher education—certainly in African higher education—because service is at the very core of our history, mission, strategic plan, and education. In recent years we have developed a service-based cocurricular infrastructure that makes it possible to continuously expand our service program and to extend its reach into the community wider and deeper.

AUN's service activities originate from throughout the university; however, the central, coordinating entity is the Office of Community Engagement and Service Learning in the university's Student Affairs program. This office offers our students weekly extracurricular, volunteer community service opportunities such

as tutoring, building renovation and painting, well restoration, tree planting, and drug awareness campaigns. A highly touted event is the annual Residence Hall Community Service Competition in which dorms compete with one another to complete service projects. This office also provides logistical support to the service-learning courses discussed below, along with other community development initiatives.

A student's experience in our service programs begins right away in Gen 101: Freshman Seminar. This mandatory course introduces students to AUN, its mission, and major themes in development. In addition to academic requirements, students must complete 10 hours of service per semester consisting of on-campus or off-campus activities in the local community. Many of these experiences are very formative, commencing student–community relationships that may last for the full duration of a student's AUN experience. A frequent destination for Gen 101 service activities is one of several women's centers for non-government organizations that provide economic assistance, empowerment, or support in the face of adversity such as HIV, abuse, or family loss. One woman's project involved making valuable products out of plarn, a plastic yarn cut in strips from recycled plastic grocery bags. Amazingly, AUN's students—many of whom hail from the country's privileged echelons—helped their instructor sort bags from the recycle stream, wash them, and provide them to the aspiring artisans. The fruits of their labor are reflected in several hundred of Yola's previously unemployed or underemployed women now earning handsome incomes crafting products sold under the brand Yola EcoSentials (YES). YES truly arose from the intersection of academics and service. The venture was designed, financially planned, and branded by a second-year course in entrepreneurship, and it was “subsidized” during its formative period by the gratuitous labor of service students.

After completing their mandatory Gen 101 service experience, students may enter Applied Community Development (CVD) courses at the 100 or 300 level. Besides providing academic perspective on Africa's developmental challenges and general solutions thereto, the courses immerse their students in service-learning experiences in one of five different foci:

- Tutoring to reinforce basic academic skills in local primary school pupils in Yola
- Designing and delivering technical training in computer literacy, directed not only to K-12 students but

also civil servants, small business owners, unemployed youth, and farmers

- Providing training on economic literacy and health awareness at local women's centers
- Coaching leadership and development sessions for women planning small income-generating projects

One perhaps unexpected and successful experiment in AUN's service program was assigning our students who were struggling in their academic performance to tutor local primary school students. Many AUN students undertook their assignments quite grudgingly, interpreting them as punitive as much as remedial. However, most found the service experience truly transformative, as expressed in end-of-semester essays that conveyed deep appreciation for the experience of helping others learn what they themselves had so taken for granted.

Most of AUN's service activities have focused on foundational needs of the community such as empowerment, literacy, and economic development plus facility fix-ups, landscaping, and even litter patrol. However, our advanced courses are increasingly deploying students toward more nuanced elements of community development. In several courses, students are performing advanced surveys and inspections to characterize poverty and vulnerability in a way that will optimally target future resources toward economic development and health awareness. In another course, students are teaching local tribes to grow jatropha, a cash crop for producing biofuel. In addition to providing hands-on training, the students are operating demonstration plots to show regional readiness for a transition from imported to locally grown diesel and petrol.

Perhaps the ultimate service to a community is keeping the peace, especially in the face of the worrisome violence perpetrated by Boko Haram just one state away. AUN views every service project as an instrument of peacekeeping by virtue of increasing our region's economic and social security; however, our students are engaging increasingly in even more direct service in the interest of peace by implementing plans and programs of the Adamawa Peace Initiative such as (a) an AUN-fostered campaign that convenes community leaders from all walks of life into regular meetings; (b) a Peace Curriculum to deliver in schoolrooms, churches, and mosques to students and adults of all ages; and (c) special events such the weekly "Peace League" games for men's soccer and women's volleyball. In November 2014, many of AUN's students

will perform or exhibit their service portfolios on Adamawa Peace Day, an annual campus celebration that attracts thousands of visitors from the community.

Conclusion

AUN's program of service and engagement arises from its core mission—as articulated in its strategic plan—to be “embedded in the community, working with local change agents to understand the economic, social, cultural and political environment, and together sharing solutions” (*The American University of Nigeria, 2011, p. 7*). We are deeply motivated to showcase this model not just to Nigeria but to all of sub-Saharan Africa because we believe it to be an important agent of the development needed to deliver our continent a secure and prosperous future.

Engagement Across Geography: A Dual-Curriculum Program for Brazilian–American Engagement

Rogério Abaurre

Introduction

With the development of an increasingly complex, intertwined world, occasionally hostile, often friendly, but always competitive, coupled with the arrival of faster and more accessible communication and information technologies, the supportive and foundational needs of every nation's society have demanded that its youthful citizens become educationally, socially, and culturally prepared to join this advancing global community environment. Gaining a deeper understanding of the strengths of the requisite skills to create an interdependent relationship extending beyond national and continental borders requires a broader educational and cultural experience. Students of today must be aware and have a sense of the history, culture, language, and problems of their neighbors. In order to compete in the world market, students require international or global knowledge. This is the goal of the joint academic partnership dual-curriculum program created by High School Serviços Educacionais (HSE) in Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil in collaboration with Texas Tech University Independent School District (TTUUSD) in Lubbock, Texas, U.S.A. The program provides Brazilian students with the

opportunity to study a dual curriculum that integrates American and Brazilian subjects.

About the Partners

HSE and TTUISD are partners in offering an American high school diploma program in 54 selected Brazilian schools. This partnership allows students in Brazil the opportunity to study, in their own local Brazilian school, subjects from the official State of Texas American High School Curriculum, provided by TTUISD under the national coordination of HSE. The local accredited Brazilian schools that house the program in communities throughout the country provide the Brazilian curriculum component.

Pedagogical Objective and Design

The pedagogical objective of the partnership can be very simply described as to increase the global academic and professional engagement of our students. This goal is attained by providing them the opportunity to study two high school curricula: Brazilian and American.

In the 54 accredited Brazilian schools that house the program, students in the dual-curriculum program are taught all subjects from the Brazilian curriculum (mathematics, biology, physics, chemistry, Portuguese, arts, physical education, world history, world geography, Brazilian history, Brazilian geography, etc.) by certified Brazilian teachers during grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. During the regular school week, students have two afternoons dedicated to studying American high school subjects (literature, writing, speech, U.S. government, U.S. economics, and U.S. history) provided by TTUISD and taught by native English speakers in Brazil (physically present in the classroom) and certified TTUISD teachers (at a distance through Moodle) during grades 9, 10, and 11. Grade 12 is dedicated only to the Brazilian subjects and a strong college prep program. The sum of credits from both Brazilian and American curricula meets the 26-credit State of Texas graduation requirements and qualifies the students for receiving both an official American high school diploma from TTUISD and an official Brazilian high school diploma from their Brazilian schools. Not only must the students in the program pass all exams in both curricula, but they must also take and pass the equally rigorous Texas Education Agency's STAAR EOC exams, which verify that students have mastered curricular expectations for the State of Texas.

By design of HSE and in agreement with the community partner, students have local classes in their Brazilian schools with tutors who are native speakers of English from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, South Africa, Australia, and other countries. Students are also tutored by TTUISD certified teachers based in the United States, who are officially responsible for grading all lessons and exams. All instructional materials are provided by HSE.

Each physical high school classroom in Brazil can accommodate a maximum of 20 students and is equipped with whiteboard, desks, table, mini library, air conditioning, digital projector, Internet-connected computer, sound system, video camera, and other equipment. Each school has a high school coordinator who locally manages all high school teachers and students and serves as the main liaison between the Brazilian school and HSE/TTUISD. HSE provides training, instructional materials, and pedagogical and operational support for all coordinators and teachers.

The credits (grades) earned in every Brazilian high school subject that corresponds to an American high school subject (e.g., mathematics) may be transferred as valid credits toward the American curriculum if they meet predefined TTUISD criteria. The sum of the credits taught in both the American and the Brazilian curricula totals the number of credits mandated by Texas Education Agency's graduation requirements. TTUISD high school students, like any other students admitted to an official school in the State of Texas, are subject to the educational laws and regulations of that state. Changes in those laws and regulations may affect the program at any moment, with or without previous notice.

This program is unique in that it allows students to be in their native country and, at the same time, connect with the world outside and gain global insight through the TTUISD high school curriculum, learning material taught in the many schools and classrooms throughout Brazil. Embedded in the program is the recognition that knowledge is the key to achieving global stature, mounting an innovative culture, and developing an entrepreneurial force among the future citizens of Brazil. Now more than ever, nations need to be more globally interconnected, with workers who are oriented toward technology and creativity through liberal arts as well as mathematical and scientific learning. This type of background is key to ensuring students' success in their education, work, and life, including advanced academic and professional contexts such as seminars, negotiation meetings, undergraduate and

graduate programs, and employment opportunities in Brazil, the United States, and other countries.

Pedagogically, the program attempts to integrate critical thinking skills with reading and writing skills in the hope of developing students' ability to contrast, compare, hypothesize, critique, and discover multiple and alternative points of view and ultimately to express their voice by authoring content. Through exposure to numerous different primary sources of information, students can make previously held assumptions the focus of newly posed questions. From there, they can evaluate media biases, interpret judicial decisions, assess political platforms, and develop their identities.

Institutional Relationship Between HSE and TTUISD

The success and achievements of such an international academic partnership, with its diverse operational needs, require that its essential pillars be built upon a spirit of mutuality, transparency, and reciprocity from both institutional partners. This foundation is based on the core characteristics and guiding principles at the heart of this joint program:

- sharing a common interest in advancing the field of international education;
- existing trust and ethics between the partners;
- continued transparency between the partners;
- maintaining a mutual understanding of each partner's cultural and academic environment;
- knowingly dividing roles and responsibilities;
- participating in effective and regular communication, including regular and frequent visits by HSE staff to Texas and by TTUISD staff to Brazil;
- engaging in joint strategic planning, training, and implementation of the program plan and changes;
- a strong commitment from all staff and management;
- the ability to make decisions collaboratively;
- being open in conflicts and in differing perspectives;
- maintaining a broad supportive institutional infrastructure; and
- providing monitoring and continuing evaluation.

Despite some obvious fundamental differences in language, history, and geography, the interactions between the Texan and Brazilian counterparts focus more on their similarities than their differences. This joint collaboration has brought to the forefront such inherent cultural characteristics as cordiality, graciousness, affability, creativity, and steadfast professionalism in an extremely harmonious working relationship based upon their strong mutual work ethic.

As a result of this joint academic partnership, a collaborative environment has evolved that has led to the strengthened educational development of both cross-institutional and cross-cultural capacities, all founded upon a respect for the interdependence of each individual partner's self-identity. Today, a total of 2,307 students from 54 schools in 33 Brazilian cities benefit from the HSE–TTUISD dual curriculum. Participants are fully able to develop creativity, flexibility, adaptability, advanced communication skills, excellent scholastic performance, strengthened perseverance, and enhanced civic and social engagement.

Additional collaboration beyond the high school curriculum has emerged from the HSE–TTUISD partnership. In 2011, a group of five educators from Brazilian partner schools, led by HSE, traveled to Lubbock, Texas to create jointly with TTUISD a summer camp that would enable the Brazilian students in the program to learn about U.S. culture and history by traveling to several sites in Texas and attending a summer intensive academic camp with U.S. students on the Texas Tech campus. In 2012, 54 Brazilian students traveled to Texas to attend the summer camp. Positive word of mouth led to 140 Brazilian students attending in 2013. In June and July of 2014, a group of 180 students is expected to come to the Texas Tech main campus. On another front, in 2014 a group of Brazilian high school students joined graduates from Texas Tech's Rawls College of Business in a study trip to Rio de Janeiro where they visited Brazilian industries, banks, and NGOs. During the visits, strong bonds formed between Brazilians and Americans, promoting better understanding of their cultural differences and similarities.

HSE and TTUISD have become increasingly aware of the role that this partnership has played in advancing our goal of an international educational project and that the successful achievement of our joint agenda has been made possible only by our maximization of the networks and alliances that have been forged between the two partners to this venture.

HSE is currently working with TTUISD on streamlining the operational and curricular elements of the U.S. curriculum component to expand the program globally, using the model perfected in Brazil as a model for other countries. The idea is to provide the same opportunity to as many students as possible in the world so they can be empowered to new levels of global collaboration.

Conclusion

From the perspective of an international community partner, the HSE–TTUISD relationship has endured as a result of the core characteristics and guiding principles discussed in this essay. International relationships require even more stewardship than those involving partners in close geographical proximity. However, international partnerships also hold the promise of a beneficial impact on current and future generations in a global community environment.

Engagement Across Geography—Cocreating Knowledge for “A Great Turning”

Crystal Tremblay

Introduction

It was a pleasure to participate as one of the plenary speakers in the closing ceremonies of ESC’s 2013 conference. The following is a brief reflection of what I shared in working with communities around the world and the need for greater institutional adaptation and leadership in higher education.

I am an emerging scholar from Canada with a background in social geography and communications. My work is multidisciplinary and has been focused largely on waste and resource management, citizenship, and livelihood enhancement. I am particularly interested in the critical theory and practice of participatory action research (PAR) and other approaches to research that value and strengthen community knowledge and interrogate traditional structures of power in decision making. During my graduate studies, I was exposed to PAR and community-based approaches to doing research and had the opportunity to work with communities in Brazil, Canada, India, and elsewhere. I have worked primarily with the informal and cooperative recycling sector, also known as binners in Canada and catadores/catadoras in Brazil. This is one of the most marginalized, stigmatized, and excluded communities in

the world. I call them “environmental heroes.” Together, we have used arts-based tools such as participatory video and photo-voice to document and challenge power structures with local governments and as a tool for communication for more inclusive policies in waste management.

Working in this knowledge cocreation space, the communities I have worked with are the researchers driving the change. The process has been incredibly effective at fostering collective voice, building individual agency, and taking actions for policy change. I have also learned that I have a lot to learn. I know that the communities I work with are the experts; they understand the relationships, issues, and solutions needed to improve their own lives. These collaborative approaches have helped sharpen my own critical reflections of how to conduct research and have provided the tools I need to listen and contribute in meaningful ways.

There is no doubt that civic engagement has become a high priority for many institutions of higher education (IHEs) around the world. At the University of Victoria, for example, there has been significant progress in the last 10 years in the institutional commitment to community–university engagement (CUE) with the new Institute for Studies and Innovation in Community–University Engagement. There are many other excellent models of this institutional commitment globally. Since 2012, I have had the pleasure of working with the UNESCO Chair in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education, a collaboration between Budd Hall and Rajesh Tandon. This a very unique cochair in that it is split between a civil society organization (the Society for Participatory Research in Asia, based in New Delhi, India) and an IHE (the University of Victoria, based in Canada), providing a valuable perspective between community and academia in driving the research process and negotiating the agenda priorities. The focus of the UNESCO chair is assisting countries in building knowledge societies through a lens of knowledge democracy. With a particular focus on the Global South, some of our work is currently exploring how to strengthen institutional structures for community–university research partnerships globally and developing capacity-building tools for teaching and learning in this field, particularly for the next generation of community-based researchers.

There is enormous benefit for communities and IHEs to partner and work together in cocreating local solutions. In order to really respond to the “wicked problems” that society faces, we need a multiperspective, multidisciplinary approach that spans multiple sectors. Complex problems are often multifaceted and have

social, economic, political, and environmental dimensions which need to be approached with these considerations. We need to be working across campus, creating research clusters where students, scholars, and community members can be active in cocreating solutions that are rooted in the community and have impact for positive change. We need to be forging collaborative relationships between civil society, government, and IHEs in cocreating locally informed solutions. These solutions are often found in the community, where extensive knowledge already exists. Growing networks around the globe are spearheading this movement, including the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNi), the Living Knowledge Network, the Global Alliance for Community Engaged Research, PASCAL Observatories, The Research University Civic Engagement Network (TRUCEN), and others. These networks are important platforms in strengthening community-based research and social responsibility in higher education and in promoting a discourse on building a knowledge democracy. We need to open our hearts and minds to new ways of living in this world and of organizing ourselves.

I close my reflections with a poem written by Budd Hall (2013), called “A Poem for the Great Turning,” bringing our attention to the voices of the people and embracing an alternative paradigm of knowledge production, one where all knowledge counts.

We have seen the images, the flames. We have seen the anger and the confusion in the faces of our friends. But, we are told that perhaps . . . perhaps is a special time.

And sometimes we even feel that the turning has begun. But we are unsure of the nature of the turning, and we are unsure of what it means for ourselves and even for our work.

And even more we ask how do we make the road together? What are scholars and civil society leaders and public officials and funding agencies and artists and students for in this age? What is the use of our power to read the world?

Do we have the skills to support the reenchantment of the earth. If you would be a person for the turning, make your work capable of answering the challenge of apocalyptic times, even if this means sounding apocalyptic.

You are Gandhi, you are Martin Luther King, you are Mandela, you are Wangari Mathaai, you are Audre Lorde, you are Neruda, you are Pasolini, you are Walter Rodney, you are every voice from every part of the earth, you can conquer the conquerors with your words, . . . and with your new knowledge.

If you would be a turner, write living works. Be a scholar from outer space, sending articles to the journal of the new world rising, to a great new editor, an Indigenous woman, who cries out for contributions to this new reality and she does not tolerate academic bullshit.

If you would be a turner, experiment with all manner of words, all forms of representations of the new day dawning, of theatre and painting, of poetry, erotic broken grammars, ecstatic religions, heathen outpourings speaking in tongues, bombastic public speech, automatic scribbling's, surrealist sensings, found sounds, rants and raves . . . To create your own limbic, your own voice.

If you would be a turner, don't just sit there. These are not the times of sedentary occupations; this is not a 'take you seat' time in history. Stand up and let them have it. Have a wide-angle vision, each look a world glance. Express the vast clarity of the outside world, the sun that sees us all, the moon that strews its shadow upon us, quiet garden ponds, willows where the hidden thrush sings, dusk falling along the river banks, and the great spaces that open out upon the sea . . . high tide and the heron's call . . .

And the people, the people . . . yes the people all around
the world . . . all around our wild and loving earth, the
people speaking Babel tongues.

Give voice . . . Give voice to all of them.

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About the Authors

Valerie Osland Paton is an associate professor in higher education in the College of Education at Texas Tech University. She formerly served as vice provost for planning and assessment and the institutional liaison for regional accreditation. Paton's research focuses on engagement; online learning; and higher education policy, planning, assessment, and accreditation. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Southern California.

Charles C. Reith directs American University of Nigeria's (AUN) sustainability initiatives, which include recycling for jobs, energy efficiency, and pollution abatement. He also teaches courses and helps guide student-initiated projects such as the nature trail, organic garden, and wetland project. Reith's courses cover entrepreneurship, environmental science, risk management, and policy. His research interests include sustainable business and technology, sustainable development, energy efficiency, renewable energy, waste management, and remediation of toxic and radioactive waste. Prior to his appointment at AUN, Reith taught at Tulane University, George Mason University, and University of Louisiana.

Karon K. Harden earned a bachelor's degree in linguistics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, U.S.A. and subsequently joined the National Peace Corps Association, where she was offered an opportunity to teach English at Lycee de Guider in the Republic of Cameroon (1995–1998). She

later obtained her master's degree in linguistics from Indiana University, U.S.A., and returned to work in Africa as technical advisor of Village Education Project in the Central African Republic (2000–2004). Before coming to Yola, she taught English as a second language and linguistics at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, Kentucky, U.S.A. (2004–2011). In addition to her role as an instructor at the American University of Nigeria (AUN), Ms. Harden also coordinates the basic education project STELLAR (Students Empowered through Language, Literacy and Arithmetic), where AUN students tutor children in local primary schools.

Rogério Abaurre is the national coordinator of the High School Serviços Educacionais (HSE) in Brazil. Originally graduated in IT and business administration (Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo and Faculdade de Administração do Espírito Santo), Rogério developed the first TTUISD partnership with a Brazilian school in 1999, in which 43 students studied American high school subjects in English with local American teachers and TTUISD teachers based in Lubbock, Texas. In 15 years, Rogério has expanded that model so it currently reaches 2,307 students in 54 Brazilian schools.

Crystal Tremblay serves as a Government of Canada Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) postdoctoral fellow at the University of British Columbia's Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability in 2014, working with communities in Ghana and Cape Town on documenting and challenging changing water governance structures. Previously, she served as the research coordinator for the UNESCO Chair in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education, University of Victoria. Tremblay earned her doctorate in the Department of Geography at the University of Victoria, B.C.