# Preface

Service Learning is a pedagogy whose use in higher education has become something of a movement; one of which I have been part at the University of Southern Maine for more than a dozen years. My role is that of a catalytic change agent, bringing together the needs presented by community partners and the opportunities they represent for student learning in alchemy that transforms the one into the other. In my years in this work, the body of research literature has grown and even entered a second generation, having demonstrated first that learning is deepened by the use of service learning as a pedagogy, and then that learning in the discipline is accompanied by demonstrated civic learning outcomes. (See www.compact.org and www.servicelearning.org.)

In January of this year, the American Association of Colleges and Universities published its report, A Crucible Moment, calling on higher education to exercise its unique role in addressing a "civic recession," that is the disaffection of young adults from public life and the responsibilities of engaged citizenship. (See www.aacu.org/civic_learning/crucible/) Campus Compact has been a champion of this work nationally and in Maine since 1994. During that time, the number of dedicated staff working in Maine on our 18 member campuses to further this work has increased by over 100%; the number of faculty who regularly integrate community problem-solving into courses and curricula has increased from approximately 20 to well over 350; and the number of Maine undergraduate students engaged in community problem-solving activities has increased from approximately 3,500 to over 10,000 annually, now contributing well over 200,000 hours of service in Maine communities each year.

At the University of Southern Maine, our faculty has begun to embrace the practice; though as their work here reveals, some do so in response to the civic engagement imperative, while others simply because of the enhanced learning their students demonstrate. All do so despite the fact it isn't easy and certainly does not make cleaner or simpler work of a full teaching load, and despite the fact that incentive or reward for this innovative approach is not explicitly included in promotion and tenure guidelines. Although it's been more than a decade since I began fostering

the practice of service learning at USM, in the life of an institution of higher learning it is notable that it was nowhere discernible when I began in 1994, and in the most recent semester (Spring 2012), there were 21 instructors in the 16 departments in  our three Portland area colleges who offered 26 different courses that included service learning. Under their guidance, 518 students served with over 50 community partner organizations to provide 11,136 hours of service in a wide array of fields, settings, and addressing diverse community-identified need.

But don't take my word for it. Read on!

Andrea Thompson McCall
Director of Community Service Learning
University of Southern Maine
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