This doesn't cost him or us anything extra. But the community benefits. Each institution has half of what the community needs. He jokes that the other sheriffs are complaining to him: "Now their superintendents are asking for the same things."

We have similar relationships with other community and business leaders. The meetings run well, I think, in part because we came together over this community inquiry. One committee member is Fay Tucker, the Fruit of the Loom personnel director. At one of our community engagement meetings five years ago, she said, "You know, I like these meetings. This is the first group I've worked with that actually gets things done."

2. The Over-the-Rhine Residency Program

Thomas A. Dutton

Thomas A. Dutton, an architect and professor of architecture and interior design at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, has been involved in a social justice movement in Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine neighborhood (the contested neighborhood described in Bonnie Neumeier's essay "Expression is the First Step Out of Oppression," page 473) for more than thirty years. He is the founder and director of the Miami University Center for Community Engagement in Over-the-Rhine and (as of 2009) holds the endowed position of Cincinnati Professor of Community Engagement.

As comfortable as I personally feel in Cincinnati, Ohio's inner-city neighborhood of Over-the-Rhine—Cincinnati's oldest and poorest neighborhood, predominately of color and listed on the National Register of Historic Places because of its Italianate architecture—it is difficult to shake the media perceptions on the nightly news or in the morning newspaper. "Another shooting on 18th Street" may be the headline that arrives with my morning coffee. I know the media get it mostly wrong, but it still takes a toll.

And any uneasiness on my part is no match for the reaction the neighborhood provokes on people who visit it with me from out of town: for example, the parents of the college students who sign up for the program

In June 2009, as a result of the innovations described here, Thomas Dutton was awarded the National Thomas Ehrlich Civically Engaged Faculty Award by Campus Compact for "outstanding contributions to service-learning, engaged scholarship, and institutional and community change through collaborative engagement." Also in 2009, the Center was awarded the inaugural "Partner in Building the Beloved Community" award by Over-the-Rhine Community Housing, a nonprofit housing development corporation dedicated to housing for low- and moderate-income citizens. Dutton is married to *Schools That Learn* coauthor Janis Dutton.

I founded. The parents try to act nonchalant when they help their son or daughter move into the residency program in this urban locale, but their faces show that they are struggling with vetoing that decision. I have to admit, I have also been worried at times. There were nights I awoke abruptly at 4 a.m. for no reason. The program was a big experiment, and I wasn't always certain how it would turn out.

My involvement with Over-the-Rhine dates back to 1981, when I began taking architecture students there and assigning them hypothetical urban design studio projects back on campus. From the beginning, I was involved in movements to alleviate the barriers and stigma of poverty, and over time I carefully built a network of relationships and trust with individuals and community groups.

In 1996, three university students asked to take on a more hands-on studio, where they would design and physically rehab a unit for low-income residents. Another student asked to work with me on a design-build project, based in the neighborhood, for his graduate thesis. So we were off and running, more or less, working on a series of projects to design and rehabilitate livable spaces. Miami University is fifty minutes away from Over-the-Rhine in the next county. We would load students into cars at 1 p.m., drive to the neighborhood, work until five, and drive back, three times a week.

In the late 1990s, my students pushed me again. They had taken the time to talk to children and other residents. "We are learning a lot about design, materials, and construction," they said, "but we want to know more about the neighborhood." Like any urban area, Over-the-Rhine embodied a dynamic range of issues such as poverty, racial unrest, disinvestment in housing and jobs, and struggling schools. An interdisciplinary approach would be needed. With support from university colleagues and neighborhood organizers, we created what came to be called the Miami University Center for Community Engagement in Over-the-Rhine (MUCCE), a storefront center on a major street running through the neighborhood. We opened our doors in February 2002.

Starting this was not a simple task. At the university, we had to conduct multiple dialogues with faculty across academic disciplines, write multiple drafts of the mission and goals of the Center, seek approval of the university administration and the board of trustees, and submit grant proposals for start-up funding. That was the easy part. I knew that people in the community would resist the university helicoptering in a center and treating the neighborhood as a laboratory and the people as subjects to study. They were sick of being studied by academics from the colleges and universities in the area, and they were tired of taking time out of their busy days to advance other people's work and getting noth-

ing in return. I knew they deserved the courtesy and respect to be included in developing the shared vision of the center, and that ultimately we would not move in until they invited us. I also knew that the invitation would include the adage attributed to Australian artist and activist Lilla Watson and often heard in the community: "If you've come to help me, don't waste your time. But if you've come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."

Our vision involves creating genuine opportunities for collaboration among university students, faculty, and neighborhood groups for interdisciplinary and cross-cultural learning that would intersect with the goals of the social movement that already existed there. Unlike many joint university-community initiatives that partner with establishment institutions such as city hall and the chamber of commerce, our MUCCE engages with the Over-the-Rhine People's Movement and other groups struggling for human and racial rights and social justice. Our mission places human and ecological needs as priorities in community development, and challenges the profit motive as the dominant arbiter in urban social policy. This distinguishes us from programs that are based on charity and noblesse oblige—unlike those models, we challenge students' self-awareness and sense of why charity may be needed in the first place.

We also challenge those student/faculty motivations that too often result in university programs that "do it to" or "do it for" community members, rather than working with them. We resist the word "help," as it too often comes from the mental models that "to help is to fix," that the people in Over-the-Rhine need saving, and that "experts" have all the answers.

〉〉 See "We Dance Together," page 195 and "Public Engagement," page 527.

According to Bonnie Neumeier (page 473), the neighborhood has benefited from our collaboration: "The Center has proven to be a wonderful space for learning. It is a space for dynamic dialogue where people of varying backgrounds, racial and class mix, and with different perspectives can meet and discover our common ground. This prominent place on Vine Street has its doors open to the community. We have dialogued with people we would never have met if it wasn't for [the Center] sharing its connections and resources with us to bring prominent guests to the neighborhood. Our world expanded."

All of this was present from the beginning, but it wasn't enough. The architecture students were still commuting only three afternoons a week for the design-build projects. Some of our larger projects, such as a two-story, four-bedroom apartment, took years to complete. We were thankful for the patience and trust of Over-the-Rhine Community Housing,

According to Wikipedia, Lilla Watson is not comfortable being credited with this quote, which was "born of a collective process" and prefers that it be credited to an "aboriginal activists group, Queensland, 1970s."

For another account of advocating for people that others don't (or won't) see or hear, see *Horton Hears a Who*, by Dr. Seuss, (Random House, 1954).

The author of this chapter and Bonnie Neumeier were listed as role models in the book: Peter Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging* (Berrett-Koehler, 2008) and the Center listed as a community resource.

the nonprofit housing agency that owned the units, but they deserved more. The students also wanted more. I had always wanted to create a full-semester immersion program, a school of social life, in which the students would live in the neighborhood. They would combine a minimum of fifteen hours a week working with neighborhood organizations that serve the underserved with a course of interdisciplinary study that presented them with the academic tools needed to analyze and understand the current reality of the neighborhood they lived in every day.

Again, this was not just a matter of getting university approval. For that, we had to engage in dialogue with Miami University's faculty and administrators to create a curriculum of new and existing courses that would meet the parameters of the program and graduation requirements, determine the departmental capacity to cover the classes, find the necessary funding mechanism to make it work, and get final approval from upper-level administrators. We also had to go back to the community and ask for more of their time and commitment. We worked together to set up and supervise service and internship opportunities in their organizations, to involve community members in the program's administrative and teaching team to have them be responsible for the students' orientation and weekly reflective journal writing, and to set up the project so that the students would be thoroughly involved in community-based campaigns.

LIVING AND LEARNING IN OVER-THE-RHINE

The Residency Program began in fall 2006, and the first cohort consisted of twelve students. They were mostly white, from upper middle class suburbs and small towns. Six were majors in architecture and interior design. Others came from psychology, philosophy, teacher education, and interdisciplinary studies. Students enrolled in four courses: Service Learning, the History of the American City, Family Poverty, and a Community Engagement Practicum. Subsequent cohorts have included students from business, anthropology, art education, speech pathology, family studies and social work, and geography and urban planning.

This program has allowed us to deepen four ongoing initiatives that benefit both the university and the community:

∎ Design/Build: In collaboration with Over-the-Rhine Community Housing—a nonprofit, affordable housing development corporation—students in the Design/Build Studio have been working with staff and end users for more than fifteen years to rehabilitate livable spaces for low- and moderate-income residents. With architecture students now

spending twenty-five hours per week on the projects, our completion rate increased dramatically. Completed projects include two single-family homes; a laundromat/meeting space; five apartments ranging from one to three bedrooms; a social worker's office and conference room, and the Center's own location. One project that I'm especially proud of is Venice on Vine, a pizzeria and food catering business run by Dominican Nuns who train "hard-to-employ" persons.

■ Agit-Props: In this initiative, students and faculty join community artists and leaders, at their request and guidance, to build installations that "agitate" and "propagate" points of view regarding the neighborhood's history and political awareness. Since 1999 we have completed twelve installations, seven in exterior settings. Placing art-making within a strategy of social change articulated by the People's Movement, Agit-Prop projects create opportunities for community residents to share stories about their lives and history with the broader public. For example, students from Miami and Northern Kentucky University conducted oral histories and collaborated with community leaders to produce the Over-the-Rhine People's Movement Timeline, documenting nearly forty years of history.

■ Community Assistance: Students in majors other than architecture spend their community engagement practicum working in neighborhood organizations. They might work in a homeless shelter, with women's entrepreneurial efforts, early childhood programs, tenant advocacy groups, medical clinics, or other organizations that serve the underserved. Teacher education majors work full-time in neighborhood schools. All students attend meetings of various community groups, perform community service on the weekends, and host weekly dinners with community guests.

■ Community Advocacy: Students spend an additional fifteen hours a week assisting the community organizing that is already in motion. They might design posters and paint banners for neighborhood events, help plan marches, organize community meetings, or conduct petition campaigns. One semester, community members, students, and children painted a football field, baseball diamond, and four-square courts at a temporary school site so that the pupils had a place to play while their historic school building was being renovated.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We have learned much about student, faculty, and community learning through the Over-the-Rhine Residency Program. This has enabled us to hone the guiding principles that are integral to our work:

Venice on Vine was awarded a Cincinnati Chapter of the American Institute of Architects Merit Award in 2006. The project was a collaborative effort among eight architects, multiple contractors, and also included students from the architecture program of the University of Cincinnati.

■ **Critical Community Pedagogy.** The Over-the-Rhine Residency Program organizes learning that explores the intersection of community life and critical pedagogy to reveal the social construction of society. We examine the dominant ideologies, interests, and institutions in the neighborhood that are instrumental in reproducing current reality.

■ **Power and Knowledge.** Social knowledge is always produced according to particular voices, for particular ends, and situated within relations of power. We identify the ways privilege and internalized oppression are learning disabilities that create barriers to achieving a vision of just and equitable communities.

■ **The School of Social Life.** Creating community requires that people engage meaningfully with otherness to learn to recognize their own partiality and question their deeply held assumptions about themselves and others.

■ **Creative Inquiry.** Inspired by the Peaslee Neighborhood Center motto that "Expression is the first step out of oppression" (page 473), we maintain that when tied to an analysis of oppression, expression becomes a more creative and liberating practice.

■ **Political Exposure.** As we study the systemic structures that reinforce oppressor-oppressed relationships—especially how class and race struggles take specific form in Over-the-Rhine and Cincinnati—we seek ways to act upon those structures and relationships with the community.

TRANSFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

From the beginning, I was certain that the students would gain a deeper understanding of the issues facing Over-the-Rhine and cities across the country through the residency program. However, I did not foresee the strong bonds they would forge with community members and how deeply the experience would transform them. One student told me she had to pull over to the side of the road on her trip home at the end of the first semester because she couldn't stop crying—from grief at leaving the neighborhood and the relationships she had forged.

Their assignment at the end of the semester is to write a reflection of their experiences in light of the course readings. Each year I am overwhelmed with powerful, personal testimonies about how they wrestled with their privilege, their fears, and their anger at the recognition that little is done by city officials, corporations, and state and federal governments to address the conditions prevalent in Over-the-Rhine. Many of

them came to see life differently. Poverty became real. Voting became relevant. They were amazed at how the daily lives of ordinary people affected them. They learned from those who are homeless and their neighbors. They opened their hearts and minds and developed compassion and empathy. They saw community and realized both its strong bonds and its responsibilities. And they saw through the stereotypes of their middle-class biases.

⸘ See "Intelligent Behaviors," page 240.

As they struggle to make sense of their new relationships and knowledge, they begin to recognize a dissonance between the mental models they have held and their current experiences. They come to realize that the dissonance requires disassembling their middle class consciousness and constructing a new one that allows them to experience life in new ways. Make no mistake: going through a change like this is very hard work, and the change can be profound. As one student wrote:

"Before setting foot in Over-the-Rhine, poverty didn't exist. Secluded by the picket fences, cul-de-sacs, half-acre lawns, and strip malls, my perception was that everyone had the resources and money necessary to live in America. I also believed in the idea of economic opportunity for everyone. However, Over-the-Rhine hit me like a bat hitting an apple. Everything that made sense crumbled. The experience has transitioned me from a passive, accepting, and narrow-minded idiot into a questioning, revolting, and active participant in this corrupt [society]."

Another student who struggled with certainty in the first weeks wrote: "Coming to Over-the-Rhine I was confident in the permanency of my beliefs, beliefs that had never been thoroughly challenged. Thankfully I was not unwilling to be altered, I just didn't think that it would happen…Every single day provided me with something to ponder…I am the different person I never thought I needed to be. Now the real challenge will be returning to Oxford."

Many students find it difficult to make the transition back to life on campus. They repeatedly tell me that they had never lived in neighborhoods as friendly as Over-the-Rhine, or experienced such a strong sense of community. They see that poor people and their advocates are not a problem, as the media and politicians claim, but an asset. One student, who had struggled with missing her close friends and the campus when she was in Over-the-Rhine, discovered that when she returned to campus she missed the neighborhood even more. She chose to remain in the neighborhood and commute to campus to finish her degree. She wrote: "[The residency program] overwhelmed my mind and senses and I can't

See the residency program website for links to student reflections, videos, interviews, and media coverage: http://arts.muohio.edu/cce/residency_program.html.

get away from it. I think about issues like gentrification, city life, urban education, business development, racial tension, class conflict, police presence, and community activism all of the time…The best part about it is that I want to be thinking about these issues all of the time. Unlike so many classes at Miami, I don't shut off the material when I leave the class. I can't shut it off here, and I don't want to."

Community members also recognize and talk about the value of the relationships and the shared understandings they build with students. Acting as mentors and teachers, community residents are able to share their histories. In the process, they often undergo personal transformation and deepen their understanding of their own experiences. Mike Rogers, a former staff member of Over-the-Rhine Community Housing who worked with students for three years renovating a vacant storefront for a nonprofit coffee shop, said: "Those kids have changed my life dramatically. They have no idea. They allow me to mentor them."

Community activist Bonnie Neumeier is the program's community liaison and takes on the roles of neighborhood guide, advisor, team teacher, and also shepherds the students through their weekly journal reflections. "As our future architects, city planners, social workers, advocates, journalists, teachers, entrepreneurs, and politicians," says Bonnie, "[the students] can bring much deeper wisdom into our world so that equality for all is not just a dream, but can be a reality." At the end of the semester she tells the students, "You are now part of this place. When you leave you will leave something of yourself here, as I know you will take something of us with you."

3. The "Systems Basketball Coach"

Nancy W. Lippe

Program Officer for the Los Altos Community Foundation, mother of four, longstanding girls basketball coach, and former member of the U.S. Olympic Field Hockey team (1980), Nancy Lippe describes how community members involved with children can use systems thinking to improve their involvement—not just in sports, but in any kind of coaching or mentoring.