

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cultivating the Globally Sustainable Self ***Summit Series on Transformative Teaching, Training, and Learning in Research and Practice***

March 25-28, 2015

James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Virginia

The global movement known as “Education for Sustainable Development” (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-sustainable-development/>) represents a great hope and daunting challenge for wholesale transformation of local and global educational systems. That is because ESD recognizes that in order for actions, policies, and practices around the world to address the most pressing issues of our day, we first must acknowledge the inextricable linkage between environmental, economic, and sociocultural aspects of sustainability. In order to pursue these laudable goals in a maximally efficient and effective manner, this summit series is informed by two fundamental observations:

1. Although substantive and comprehensive, ESD is neither the first nor only attempt to promote global transformation of the educational system. Therefore, much could be gained by encountering the methods, goals, and activities of allied individuals, groups, organizations, and movements that also are attempting to promote wide-spread local and global change across five overarching thematic areas: 1) conflict resolution, 2) human rights, 3) sustainability, 4) global education, and 5) religious and cultural understanding.
2. From the standpoint of research and practice over the short- and long-term, it would be helpful to engage in a comprehensive review and discussion not only of *what* we are doing in order to create change (e.g., the content or approach of our interventions) but *why* we have a basis for concluding that our work is effective (e.g., specifying the theory, data, models, and methods that support such conclusions).

To translate such observations into credible deliberation and action, a three year series of research and practice summits will be hosted by James Madison University, focusing on transformational teaching, training, and learning. The first summit will pursue a number of processes and outcomes, including but not limited to the following:

- bringing together scholars, educators, trainers, students, practitioners, and leaders from a range of transformation-oriented global movements who will come together to learn from and contribute to each other’s missions, methods, goals, and activities;
- developing a draft agenda for a global program of research-to-practice on the basis of summit presentations and deliberations (e.g., regarding theory, data, models, methods);
- specifying the means and methods by which participants may participate in and propose future activities and engage in further collaboration as part of the planning process for the next two research-to-practice summits; and,
- identifying scholarly, professional, and organizational venues through which the outcomes, activities, and plans of *Cultivating the Globally Sustainable Self* may be disseminated and furthered over at least the three years of this series of summits.

For more information, please contact Steering Committee members, Drs. Teresa Harris (harristt@jmu.edu), Craig Shealy (shealycn@jmu.edu), and/or Tim Thomas (thomastg@jmu.edu).