



4C Initiative: Campus Community Civic Collaborative

Year-End Report, 2013 – 2014 2015 Preview

The 4C Initiative: Campus Community Civic Collaborative

Now in its third official year, the 4C Initiative partnership between James Madison University’s Institute for Constructive Advocacy and Dialogue (ICAD) and the Fairfield Center, continues to fill needs for productive discussion about challenging and value-laden issues. 4C partners with campus and community groups to determine needs for and then create processes that encourage the kind of transformative talk that can lead to deeper understanding, focused deliberation of choices, or collaborative action-taking. Trained 4C student associates, faculty affiliates, and community associates serve as a resource of passionate and impartial facilitators available to the community.

Our Mission:

To advocate for, create spaces for, and facilitate the kinds of public conversations that allow communities to move forward on tough issues.

4C Affiliates:

This year, the 4C program was delighted to add an additional faculty affiliate, Aaron Noland in Communication Studies, who focuses attention on global refugee and justice issues. 4C welcomes other faculty across the campus and other community members to approach us if you are interested in exploring service as a 4C affiliate.

4C Student Associates:

Student Associates have completed SCOM 447: Facilitating Public Engagement Processes at JMU and are trained to plan public conversations and act as impartial facilitators for high quality public discourse events. This year’s Student Associates are:

Lauren Holder
Haylee Walker
Rachel Cousins

MaryBeth Fielder
Alison Steed
Kerry McLendon

Laura Mack
Leanna Smithberger
Caroline Ashby

Katie Lese
Courtney Herb

Continuing Research with the Kettering Foundation:

Lori Britt and Rob Alexander at ICAD, and Tim Ruebke of the Fairfield Center were awarded a \$5,000 research grant from the Kettering Foundation in Dayton, Ohio. This grant funds the development of a tool to assess a community’s capacity to incorporate public dialogue and deliberation as part of civic processes.

Major 2014 Events

Access to Health: It's Political — A Community Dialogue

April 2, 2014

Students in SCOM 447: Facilitating Public Engagement Processes class facilitated a community dialogue as part of the Book for the 'Burg community reading experience. The event centered upon the book, *Mountains Beyond Mountains* by Tracy Kidder, based on the work of Dr. Paul Farmer who has dedicated his life to treating drug-resistant tuberculosis. The book describes how Farmer recognized and tried to address the ways that social class, wealth, politics, disease and health are intertwined. The students used this text as a means for facilitating a dialogue about the ways that our own community provides and prohibits access to health. Participants shaped and gained an understanding of how access to healthcare is impacted by many factors in our local community.

Harrisonburg/Shenandoah Valley Community Conversation about Mental Health

April 26, 2014

4C and its Student Affiliates designed and implemented a process for nearly 30 community members who came together for an open and honest conversation about how our community addresses public health concerns and needs. Some participants represented mental health care and resource professions while others shared experiences being impacted by mental illness directly or as a family member of a person struggling with mental illness. The event was part of a national initiative on mental health called "Creating Community Solutions" and the perspectives shared in our dialogue became part of the larger data set shaping national conversations about what is needed to be able to address mental illness issues. Specific ideas for the Harrisonburg community included continuing discussions for how we handle mental health in our jail system, and training individuals with "Emotional First Aid" skills.

Trainer Workshops

April 2014

With the generous support of Dean David Jeffrey and Associate Deans Dietrich Maune and Jessica Adolino in the College of Arts and Letters at JMU, 4C held two small group facilitator training workshops for graduate students of the Masters in Public Administration and Communication and Advocacy graduate programs as well as interested community members. Workshop members developed basic facilitation skills and then helped to facilitate the *Community Conversation About Mental Health* to experience. Following this experience, the group spent time debriefing the impact of facilitation and note taking skills on public dialogue processes.

The State and Marriage

September 23, 2014

Working collaboratively with a community coalition called the Public Dialogue Project, 4C students and faculty affiliates collaboratively designed a community dialogue to follow two speakers presenting differing views on the state's role in defining marriage. Lori Britt, moderated the speaker discussion to produce civil and thoughtful exploration of differences and students facilitated small groups that discussed reactions to the moderated discussion. This event included an additional collaboration with the EMU Peace and Justice Studies program to utilize some of their students for facilitating the small group discussions of the nearly 100 attendees.

Harrisonburg and Rockingham Bike - Walk Summit

October 10, 2014

For the second year in a row, 4C facilitators led a collaborative planning discussion of the Summit and assisted participants in creating goals and establishing steps for supporting travel and tourism efforts as a way to gain support and funding for bike and walking infrastructure in our community.

Presentation at National Coalition on Dialogue and Deliberation, Reston, VA

October 18, 2014

Two 4C student associates who are currently JMU Communication and Advocacy graduate students and who have been part of 4C since their undergraduate involvement presented with Lori Britt during a workshop entitled *Teaching Next Generation Democracy* at this biennial conference that draws public dialogue and deliberation scholars and practitioners from around the nation. They presented the 4C model of training and engaging students in designing and facilitating public engagement.

Student As Neighbor: Sharing and Shaping Community

November 11, 2014

Three 4C Student Associates working on a collaborative Honor's Project designed and hosted a community dialogue titled *Students as Neighbors: Sharing and Shaping Community*. This conversation, which was attended by about 60 community members, students and JMU faculty and staff, explored how each group defines "neighbor" and engaged in dialogue about tensions between community members and student neighbors. The perceptions and perspectives that emerged from this forum were used to shape a second forum which will focus on *Engaging for Sustainable Solutions*. This event will occur on Saturday, February 21, 2015 in the JMU Student Success Center (see below.)

***Reports from many of these forums are available online at jmu.edu/icad
or contact Lori Britt at brittll@jmu.edu***

Upcoming 4C Events

Saturday, February 21, 10 am - 12:30 pm

Student as Neighbor: Collaborating for Sustainable Solutions

JMU Student Success Center, EPIC Rooms, 4th floor

Saturday, March 7, 3-6 pm

4C will facilitate small group discussions after a panel of speakers as part of a local world women's day event, *Speaking for Change in Congo: Empowering Narratives from Congolese Women*.

First Presbyterian Church Hall Fellowship

Friday, March 27, 9-11 am

4C will facilitate a dialogue for students, faculty and staff as part of Disability Awareness Week on *Accommodating Invisible Disabilities: Developing partnerships in the classroom, field work and the working world*.

Montpelier Room, JMU East Campus Dining Hall