

ENGAGED CITIZENSHIP: THE EFFECT OF
BLACKBURN INSTITUTE PARTICIPATION
ON POST-GRADUATE BEHAVIORS
AND BELIEFS

by

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A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to understand the lasting effect of participation in the Blackburn Institute on post-collegiate behaviors and beliefs of alumni from The University of Alabama, a four-year research public institution. As a result of the interviews and the data analysis, six themes emerged from the interviews regarding the participants' experiences in the Blackburn Institute. The themes that emerged from the interviews were 1) characteristics of students selected as Blackburn Fellows; 2) current community engagement; 3) citizenship; 4) benefits of being a Blackburn Fellow; 5) experiences with the Blackburn Institute; and 6) lasting impact.

This study determined that participation as an undergraduate student in the Blackburn Institute did have an impact on the behaviors and beliefs of many of the participants by reinforcing the values beliefs that were established prior to attending college. The Blackburn Institute did have a lasting impact on Fellows and their desire to be involved in their community. The Blackburn Institute provided Fellows with a greater understanding of the value of diverse opinions and working with communities across difference. For participants, what made the Blackburn Institute so special to them was not the opportunity to interact with Dr. John L. Blackburn or attending the Burt Jones Travel Experience. Instead it is the network of people that keep the alumni engaged in the Blackburn Institute. Continued research will highlight how to have a greater impact not only on the undergraduate student Fellows but also the alumni Fellows.

DEDICATION

This dissertation began many years ago over coffee with Dr. John L. Blackburn. It was his idea, for my dissertation, to research the civic engagement practices of alumni of organizations similar to the Blackburn Institute. Not surprising to those that knew Dr. Blackburn, he challenged me to utilize this opportunity with my dissertation to determine how the Blackburn Institute can better engage alumni for life. Upon speaking to Dr. Marc Shook, Director of the Blackburn Institute at the time, about this idea, it was decided; my dissertation would gather information about how other organizations work with alumni in order to better engage the alumni of the Blackburn Institute. The subject matter was narrowed to its current topic after working with my dissertation chair.

During another coffee outing and after some processing of the idea, I asked Dr. Blackburn if he would be a part of the process by serving on my committee as this was his vision. He reluctantly declined knowing that his health was poor. It is with tremendous respect and adoration that I dedicate this dissertation to the legacy of Dr. John L. Blackburn, the Blackburn Institute.

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Blackburn Institute	2
Statement of the Problem	6
Purpose of the Study	7
Research Questions	8
Need for the Study	9
Assumptions.....	10
Delimitations.....	10
Limitations	11
Operational Definitions	11
Organization of the Study	13
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	15
Introduction	15
Prologue	15
Higher Education’s Role in Developing Engaged Citizens.....	16
Defining of Civic Engagement in the United States.....	24

Theories and Models Leading to the Development of Social Capital	27
The Importance of Teaching Civic Engagement	31
Civic Engagement as a Pedagogy	33
Civic Engagement as a Result of Service Learning	34
Volunteerism	37
Living-Learning Communities	38
Co-Curricular Programs	38
The Role of Spirituality	39
Creating Social Capital through Civic Engagement Practices.....	41
The Blackburn Institute: Creating a Network of Alumni	43
Retention in Organizations	45
Summary	48
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	49
Theoretical Framework	49
Methodology	53
Research Questions	54
Design of Questionnaire	54
Site Selection	55
Participant Selection	57
Data Collection	60
Data Analysis	62
Bias Statement	66
Researcher Positionality	66

Summary	67
CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS	68
Introduction	68
Profiles	68
Themes	76
Characteristics of Students Selected as Blackburn Fellows	77
Undergraduate Participation	77
Spirituality and Parental Influence.....	79
Personality Traits of Blackburn Fellows.....	80
Current Community Involvement.....	81
Barriers of Volunteerism.....	82
Working with Community Organizations.....	83
Citizenship	84
Characteristics of a Good Citizen	85
Responsibility for Community.....	86
Benefits of Being a Blackburn Fellow	87
Reputation of the Blackburn Institute.....	88
Networking	89
Broadening Perspectives.....	90
Experiences with the Blackburn Institute	91
As a Student	92
As Alumni.....	94
Knowing Dr. John L. Blackburn.....	95

Lasting Impact	97
Connection to The University of Alabama	99
Summary	99
CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	101
Introduction.....	101
Discussion of Findings.....	103
Research Question One.....	103
Diversity of Opinion	104
Networking through the Generations.....	105
Call to Action.....	105
Lifetime Commitment.....	106
Research Question Two	106
Civic and Political Engagement.....	107
Public Good	107
Community Service	108
Moral Discernment	109
Communities Across Difference.....	109
Research Question Three	110
Conclusions	111
Implications for Practice	112
Limitations	117
Recommendations for Future Research	119
Summary	120

REFERENCES	122
APPENDICES	140

LIST OF TABLES

1.	Dimensions of Civic Responsibility in Literature	26
2.	Linking Research Questions, Theoretical Framework and Interview Questions	55
3.	List of Participants	59
4.	Open Coding for Transcripts	64
5.	Sample of the Axial Coding.....	65
6.	Pseudonym, Year Inducted, Type of Community, Gender, Marital Status, Children, and Profession of Blackburn Institute Research Participants	75

LIST OF FIGURES

1.	Common Agenda: Higher Education for the Public Good	21
2.	Summary of Core Measures of Social Capital, and Illustrative Examples of its Determinants and outcomes	42
3.	Types of Informal and Formal Networks.....	43
4.	The March–Simon Model of Group Identification	45
5.	Theoretical Framework: Overarching Values of the Blackburn Institute and Characterizations of Citizenship	51

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

A great deal of research exists supporting the need for the integration of civic engagement in the college curriculum (Giles & Eyler, 1994). Specifically, student outcomes and learning objectives of service learning have been studied extensively (Driscoll, 2000). However, more research is needed to determine the effect of collegiate experiences on post-collegiate activities (Astin, 1999) in relation to civic engagement and the building of social capital. This study was conducted to examine the lasting impact of a student development organization that encourages civic engagement while in college and expects community involvement post graduation. This study addressed the role of higher education in the promotion of civic engagement, the student development process through civic engagement activities, and the lasting impact of participation in the Blackburn Institute on the values, beliefs and behaviors of alumni Fellows. The study examined methods for reinforcing civic engagement in alumni by the organization.

The adoption of civic attitudes as characteristics of college graduates positively affect all of society not just the alumni of an institution (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). “In short, the college environment offers a setting in which the impetus and opportunities for change are substantial, perhaps unsurpassed by those of any other social institution” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 59). This study attempted to discern if collegiate experiences, specifically the Blackburn Institute, contribute to the post collegiate civic engagement. More specifically,

this study examined the current civic engagement of graduates that were and continue to be involved in the Blackburn Institute.

Background of the Blackburn Institute

The Blackburn Institute is a co-curricular organization that strives to produce graduates who will be engaged citizens for a lifetime. The Blackburn Institute educates, unites, and inspires a network of ethical leaders with a lifetime commitment to collaborative work for the betterment of Alabama and the nation. Funded through contributions from private donors and from the operating budget provided by The University of Alabama, the Blackburn Institute is considered to be one of the most dynamic leadership development organizations in the country (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home>, para. 2). In 2008, the Blackburn Institute was awarded a National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Excellence Award (Roach, 2009). The award “recognizes the institute as a leadership organization that maintains high standards to which other institutes and student affairs should aspire” (Roach, 2009, p. 5).

The history and founding of the Blackburn Institute is critical to understanding the mission and goals. The Blackburn Institute was conceptualized in 1993 to accomplish the vision of The University of Alabama’s former dean of students, NASPA president, and higher education leader, Dr. John L. Blackburn (December 21, 1924-July 3, 2009). A nationally-renowned leader in higher education, Dr. Blackburn served as dean of students at The University of Alabama and was instrumental in the University’s peaceful integration (Wolf-Wendel, Twombly, Tuttle, Ward, & Gaston-Gayles, 2004).

When approached about a proper tribute to his legacy at The University of Alabama, Dr. Blackburn responded that he did not want a room named in his honor but, rather, wanted an

organization that would cultivate ethical leaders for the future of Alabama and the nation (K. Cramer, personal communication, February, 2007). Dr. Blackburn's belief that people link strategic actions through the generations for progressive and ethical change established the vision for the Institute (C. Causey, personal communication, March, 2007). According the Blackburn Institute website homepage, Blackburn stated,

My vision is to develop a community of ethical leaders who collaboratively accomplish good and noble ends. A good community is comprised of more than one generation; embraces transcending values that esteem each citizen; and creates a sense of oneness where individuals set aside personal gain, benefit, or goal for the sake of the group (<http://blackburninstitute.org>, para. 1).

The most important aspect of the Institute's mission is to positively impact the social and economic conditions in Alabama by molding the future leaders of the state and nation; the Blackburn Institute attempts to accomplish this vision by structuring its yearly curriculum around four overarching values (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home>, para. 5). The first is to facilitate diversity of opinion by providing opportunities for students to experience all sides of issues impacting their communities as well as sponsoring situations for open, spirited debate focused on determining the resolution of issues rather than their mere identification. The second is a call to action by constantly directing students that active citizenship necessitates individual as well as collective works to ensure improvement and providing opportunities for students to access support for strategic initiatives. The third is to create a network of ethical leaders through the generations by providing opportunities for Fellows to engage in dialogue and personal contact with advisory board members, alumni, faculty, community leaders, scholars, and political leaders. The fourth overarching value is to instill a lifetime commitment by providing a rich undergraduate experience where, upon graduation, students are encouraged not only to mentor

student Fellows but also to uphold the ideals of the Institute in their daily lives (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home>, para. 5).

The Blackburn Institute's mission is to develop a network of leaders who have a clear understanding of issues that face the state of Alabama and the nation (J. L. Blackburn, personal communication, March 2007). Considered to be a formal network, the Blackburn Institute operates as a non-political organization as described by Brewer (2003) and participates in political engagement by exploring issues as described by Putnam (1993) and Stone (2001). To accomplish the mission, the Institute provides opportunities for engaged citizenship in service to the state of Alabama and the nation through educational programs, discourse, and personal action. While traditional collegiate leadership experiences center on individual competency building, the Blackburn Institute has a three-tiered focus that proposes to make a personal and meaningful impact on student Fellows, alumni Fellows, as well as the citizenship of Alabama as a whole (Reamey, Lamon, & Shook, 2008). The leadership model is specifically tailored to encourage and support both student and alumni Fellows to seek progressive change in service to their state and nation. Each year, approximately 28 student Fellows were selected from more than 200 nominations and more than 100 applications. Applicants must complete two essays illustrating their ability to construct an argument. The essays were scored based on the applicant's ability to illustrate an argument through the written word by student Fellows and alumni Fellows. The top sixty are invited to interview with a panel of Blackburn alumni Fellows, student Fellows, administrators, and advisory board members. The interview is an opportunity for the applicants to articulate their passion to be a change agent. Approximately 75 student Fellows are on campus each academic year participating in events hosted by the Blackburn Institute. To date, there are 420 Blackburn Fellows living in 26 states and five foreign

countries attempting to live by the ideals of the Institute on a daily basis (C. Peters, personal communication, February 4, 2010).

The Blackburn Institute's emphasis on alumni Fellows is a defining and unique aspect of the programming model (M. Shook, personal communication, May, 2007). For example, Birmingham-based alumni Fellows worked with the Institute to host focus groups and various meetings with community members to examine the future of Birmingham and to determine what a small group of engaged individuals could do to become change agents in the community (E. Pruitt, personal communication, February, 2009). The group identified areas for community improvement through events sponsored by the Institute. The focus groups and conversations resulted in a workshop designed to help young professionals learn how to apply to serve on non-profit boards. The event was open to everyone in the Birmingham community. The event was extremely successful with more than 75 attendees learning how to be selected for a non-profit board, to serve effectively on boards, and to manage boards. The focus was primarily on nonprofit organizational and advisory boards (J. Bedsole, personal communication, August, 2008). The event supported the mission of the Blackburn Institute by creating agents of change and encouraging board membership in the Birmingham community.

Schein (1990, 1999) discussed organizations that strive to produce change agents. He explained that these organizations are complex and interdependent on four items: 1) a sense of identity, purpose, or mission; 2) a capacity on the part of the system to adapt and maintain itself in the face of internal and external changes; 3) a capacity to perceive and test reality; and 4) some degree of internal congruency of the stakeholders. The Blackburn Institute strives to create change agents like the organizations previously described (J. L. Blackburn, personal communication, March 2007).

Statement of Problem

Putnam (2000) indicated that the decline in civic engagement is putting American democracy at risk as the inaction negatively affects democracy. The lack of interest in community involvement is a concern for America (Harwood, 1991). Researchers wonder what is to blame for the decline. Some believe higher education should be doing more to teach civic engagement and are therefore, examining how colleges and universities are working to teach citizenship and create social capital for a democratic society (Austin, 1997; Barber, 2001; McDonnell, Timpane, & Benjamin, 2000; Saltmarsh, 1996).

A concern of many political leaders, researchers, and citizens is the lack of community engagement amongst Americans (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Kezar, Chambers, & Burkhardt, 2005; Putnam, 1995A). In Robert Putnam's (2000) book, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* the idea of civic disengagement and its consequences are addressed. Since its publication additional research (Jones & Abes, 2004; Print & Coleman, 2003; Raill & Hollander, 2006; VanHecke, 2004; Wildman, 2005) has focused on incorporating civic education into the curricula of primary, secondary, and higher education.

The interest in determining the role of higher education in creating engaged citizens is expanding (Apple, 2004; Ellsworth & Whatley, 1990; Giroux, 1981; Leonardo, 2003; Smith, 2003). A number of authors, including economists, policy scholars, legislators, and government agencies, are interested in the role of higher education in teaching citizenship (Bartik, 2004; Becker, 1993; Brandl & Weber, 1995; Gottlieb & Fogarty, 2003; Weiss, 2004) which further supports the interconnectedness of society. Palmer (1999) wrote,

We are in a community with it all: the genes and ecosystems of biology; the symbols and references of philosophy and theology . . . the elusive idea of justice under law. We are in community with all of these great things. (p. 13)

Furthermore, how colleges and universities teach civic engagement is being assessed because of the impact on students. Research shows the development of a sense of social responsibility that occurs in college is critical for future civic engagement (Kerrigan, 2005; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993; Perry & Katula, 2001). For most, college is the first time students have the opportunity to explore and adopt ideas that are not what they have learned in the past (Kuh, 2001). Students diversify in their thoughts, opinions, and lifestyles (Turiel, 2002). As one of the greatest predictors of civic and political engagement is education (Nie & Hillygus, 2001; Putman, 1993), service learning and civic engagement are one of the most successful ways to increase the social responsibility of college graduates.

This study addressed how collegiate experiences can serve as a catalyst for civic involvement. Through interviews, the researcher explored the experiences of Blackburn alumni Fellows both as a student and as alumni while gathering information about their current community involvement. There is evidence that higher education does impact students' civic engagement (Astin & Sax, 1998; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000), but there is little research that examines specific college experiences (Vogelgesang & Astin, 2005). The more specific issue addressed in this research is the impact of the Blackburn Institute on the post-collegiate behaviors and beliefs of Blackburn Fellows.

Purpose of Study

Research universities can demonstrate their contributions to the development of social capital and the ideals of democracy, but few have shown interest in promoting civic responsibility (Ehrlich, 2003). At the same time colleges and universities are devoting resources to activities, like service learning course and living learning communities, that can result in increased volunteerism and civic engagement, budgets keep getting cut (Ehrenberg, 2006). With

the blame for the decline in civic engagement placed in part upon higher education, it is important to the future role of higher education to show the lasting impact of colleges and universities on the citizenship of alumni.

The purpose of this study was to determine the lasting impact of the Blackburn Institute on undergraduate students. Based on the four overarching values of the Blackburn Institute, the researcher investigated the five ways that Elyer and Giles suggest to produce active citizens. Then, using the characterizations of citizenship provided by Van Hecke (2004), the researcher assessed the post-collegiate involvement of Blackburn Fellows in order to gauge the participants' civic engagement.

Research Questions

The ideals of a democracy are based on citizen participation (Putman, 1993; Turiel, 2002). It is the intent of the researcher to ascertain information concerning the civic engagement of Blackburn Fellows. Assessing the post collegiate involvement of the participants is important to understanding the impact of the Blackburn Institute. Research questions that guided the study include the following:

1. In what ways do Blackburn Fellows engage in behaviors which reflect the Blackburn Institute mission and overarching values of 1) diversity of opinion, 2) networking through the generations, 3) call to action, and 4) lifetime commitment to being a change agent after graduation;
2. In what ways do Blackburn Fellows engage in behaviors which reflect Van Hecke's five characteristics of citizenship: 1) civic and political engagement; 2) public good; 3) community service; 4) moral discernment; and 5) communities across difference; and

3. To what degree do Blackburn Fellows attribute these behaviors to their participation in the Blackburn Institute?

Need for the Study

Research is needed to examine what colleges and universities can do to encourage continual civic engagement among alumni. Past studies have researched the civic engagement of college graduates based on their history of voting and participation in community organizations (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Jones & Abes, 2004; Korn, 1999; Pace, 1979; Raill & Hollander, 2006; Sax & Astin, 1997; Van Hecke, 2004). Other studies have focused on curricular and co-curricular activities, faculty rewards, student community –related research, community partnerships, and the mechanisms of support (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Ehrlich, 2000).

Studying the impact of undergraduate experiences, more specifically the Blackburn Institute, can provide colleges and universities the data needed to further integrate civic responsibility into the core curriculum. This study also demonstrated how the Blackburn Institute at The University of Alabama is improving society by educating students and contributing to the overall social capital through alumni long after graduation day.

This study expanded on previous research to examine not only the post-collegiate habits of Blackburn Fellows but also the effect of the curriculum and programming of the Blackburn Institute undergraduate experience. Utilizing Van Hecke’s (2004) characteristics of citizenship and the overarching values of the Blackburn Institute, the researcher examined the effect of the Blackburn Institute undergraduate experience on the post- collegiate behaviors and beliefs of Blackburn Fellows.

Assumptions

The research conducted was based on the following assumptions:

1. It was assumed that all participants have graduated from The University of Alabama;
2. It was assumed that all participants have been recognized by the Institute as an active participant and granted the lifetime title of Blackburn Fellow, also known as being pinned;
3. It was assumed that all participants attended events hosted by the Blackburn Institute during their time as students; and
4. It was assumed that participants were truthful with their responses to the questions posed in the interview.

Delimitations

This study was delimited in terms of the population to be studied. Members of the Blackburn Institute, also known as Blackburn Fellows, was the only population investigated. Since the inception of the Blackburn Institute in 1993, only 420 University of Alabama students have been granted the distinction of being a Blackburn Fellow. Another delimitation was that only the participants' civic behaviors post-graduation were considered. Thus, currently enrolled University of Alabama Student Fellows were excluded from the study. Once last delimitation of this study was to insure that responses were not biased based on the relationship with the researcher, only alumni Fellows from 1993-2004 were interviewed.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. Some of the limitations are out of the control of the researcher, while others are based on the nature of the study's participants. Some of the limitations included the following:

1. This study examined the alumni of a single organization at a single institution;
2. Each Blackburn Fellow's experience is unique and thus, an individual participant may not be representative of all other Fellows from his or her cohort year;
3. Participants used in the study may not give honest responses to the interviewer based on the position held and affiliation with the Blackburn Institute; and
4. The participants selected for the study must have updated contact information in the Blackburn Institute database. Those that did not have updated information may not have expressed the same attitudes toward the Blackburn Institute as the Fellows that provide current contact information (M. Shook, personal communication, March, 2007).

Operational Definitions

A *Blackburn Fellow* is a University of Alabama student who was nominated and selected through a rigorous application process to become a part of the Blackburn Institute. University of Alabama students are typically called *student Fellows*. University of Alabama graduates are typically called *alumni Fellows* or *Fellows*.

Citizen. "Those who choose with deliberation and act with responsibility in the political realm" (Kymlicka & Norman, 1995, p.126).

Citizenship. An expression or identity of a citizen's membership in a political community (Kymlicka & Norman, 1995).

Civic engagement. “Working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combinations of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes” (Ehrlich, 2000, p. vi).

Civic responsibility. “The sense of personal responsibility individuals should feel to uphold their obligation as part of any community” (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 1998, p. 15).

Community. A community “calls forth an awareness of mutual assistance and development in the interrelationship and cohesiveness of its membership that will ensure a harmonious existence” (Galbraith, 1990, p. 3).

Community service. “Voluntary work intended to help people in a particular area” (<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O999-communityservice.html>).

Democracy. “Government by the people; *especially*: rule of the majority; a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections” (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, n.d). (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/democracy>). David Mathews (2008) defines democracy as “political trends that raise troubling questions about the future of self-rule”.

Experiential learning. “Experiential learning exists when a personally responsible participant cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally processes knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes in a learning situation characterized by a high level of active involvement” (Hoover & Whitehead 1975, p. 25).

Service learning. A “method of experiential education in which students apply what they learn to a real world situation by performing needed community service” (Morgan & Streb, 2001, p. 158). According to Stanton,

service-learning appears to be an approach to experiential learning, an expression of values—service to others, community development and empowerment, reciprocal learning—which determines the purpose, nature and process of social and educational exchange between learners and people they serve, and between experiential education programs and the community organizations with which they work. (Stanton, et al, 1999, p. 5)

Social capital. One meaning for social capital does not exist (Dolfsma & Dannreuther, 2003). Pierre Bourdieu considered social capital to be more external. He defines social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group” (Bourdieu, 1983, p. 248). Putnam (1995a) approaches social capital as more internal and linking. For this study social capital refers to the “features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam 1995a, p. 67).

Social responsibility. “The set of obligations an organization has to protect and enhance the society in which it functions” (Davidson and Griffin, 2000, p. 127).

For this study, the terms civic engagement, civic involvement, and community involvement will be used similarly when referring to the opportunities to give back to the community and contribute for the betterment of society.

Organization of the Study

This study is presented in five chapters. The first chapter explains how American democracy is declining and introduces the Blackburn Institute as a resource in higher education for the development of social capital through civic engagement. The statement of the problem,

statement of the purpose, research questions, definition of terms, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations are located within this chapter.

The second chapter presents a review of existing research on the topics of (a) higher education's role in developing engaged citizens, (b) defining civic engagement in the United States, (c) theories and models leading to the development of social capital, (d) the importance of teaching civic engagement, (e) civic engagement as a pedagogy, and (f) creating social capital through civic engagement practices. In the next chapter, the terms civic engagement, civic involvement, and community involvement will be used similarly while referring to a greater involvement than simply participating in elections or serving in a political role.

The third chapter explains the theoretical framework used for this study. The chapter delineates the methodology adopted as well as provides insight into how the data was collected and analyzed. Additionally, the third chapter provides the bias statement and the position of the researcher along with the proposed timeline for the research.

The fourth chapter explains the analysis of the data collected in this study. Following the transcriptions of the interviews, the data was coded based on a formula. The coding provided distinctive theme that emerged in the data analysis. The six themes are discussed in Chapter 4.

The fifth chapter includes the findings and conclusions of the study. Strategies and recommendation for using the results of the research based on theoretical conceptualization is provided. An assessment of the weaknesses of the research is included. Finally, recommendations for future research are included in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER II:

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nor must we omit to mention among the benefits of education the incalculable advantage of training up able counselors to administer the affairs of our country in all its departments, legislative, executive and judiciary, and to bear their proper share in the councils of our national government: nothing more than education advancing the prosperity, the power, and the happiness of a nation. --Thomas Jefferson: Report for University of Virginia, 1818.

Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature related to higher education's role in developing engaged citizens, philosophies of civic engagement in the United States, theories and models leading to the development of social capital, how colleges and universities are teaching civic engagement, and the lasting impact on alumni. A great deal of research exists examining how civic engagement is taught which has produced a number of models and theories on the topic. Not much research exists, however, on the lasting impact of collegiate activities on post-collegiate involvement of alumni. The existing research on creating a network of alumni to increase the involvement and the retention of alumni is presented at the end of this chapter.

Higher education in America was, in part, designed to foster democracy and responsible citizenship. In particular, southern universities were first established to teach etiquette and civility to the young southern gentlemen (Rudolph, 1990). It was the intention that these educated gentlemen be the leaders of the new country (Boyer & Hechinger, 1981). These educated men would help the country to grow and thrive for future generations.

Immanuel Kant (Gregor, 1996) believed that humans could choose their own actions and act in their own best interest. Kant stated that teaching moral education could be a challenge.

He elaborated by explaining that moral education is interpersonal and not just the idea of right and wrong. More education provides students with the opportunity to learn about themselves and others. A sense for helping and understanding others will continue to be a determining factor of a moral society (Gregor, 1996).

Thomas Jefferson also expressed his thoughts on the connection between education and citizenship as demonstrated by his contributions to opening the University of Virginia. He believed that citizens should become educated to better manage the country. Each citizen should

understand his duties to his neighbors and country, and to discharge with competence the functions confided to him by either: to know his rights: to exercise with order and justice those he retains...and, in general to observe with intelligence and faithfulness all the social relations under which he shall be placed . . . And this brings us to the point at which are to commence the higher branches of education . . . which are . . . to form the statesmen, legislators, and judges, on whom public prosperity and individual happiness are so much to depend (Peterson, 1977, p. 333).

The progression of higher education's role in developing engaged citizens, the dimensions of civic responsibility in the literature, the development of students to create social capital, and the civic engagement practices of alumni will be demonstrated in this chapter.

Higher Education's Role in Developing Engaged Citizens

The U.S. government acknowledged the link between higher education and citizenship with the passage of the Morrill Act in 1862, which created land-grant institutions (Rudolph, 1990). The inception of the land-grant institutions drove more focus toward vocational training, specifically in science and agriculture. Engineers and technicians were trained at the land-grant institutions and eventually lead the country through the industrial revolution (Boyer & Hechinger, 1981; Rudolph, 1990). The traditional knowledge once required to be admitted to universities was abandoned because of the vocational emphasis at the land-grant institutions (Veysey, 1965). Johnson, Ratcliff, and Gaff (2004) noticed a trend in higher education to require

more classes; to have a strict curriculum with emphasis on liberal arts; to teach more fundamental skills; to teach interdisciplinary content; and to introduce a pedagogy that highlighted service learning.

The purpose of higher education was revisited during the mid-twentieth century by John Dewey (Caspar, 2000) and Robert Hutchins (Ashmore, 1989; Dzuback, 1991). Dewey has been credited as one of the great advocates for teaching citizenship in higher education. Hutchins, after serving as a college president, founded the Center for Democratic Institutions in 1959 (Ashmore, 1989). The goal for the Center was to examine institutions and democracy to figure out how both the institutions and democracy would continue the interrelated dependency.

John Dewey was a progressive who believed that the purpose of an education was to meet the needs of students and to contribute to their future as citizens. He believed in experiential learning in which students could develop socially and emotionally. He valued the critical thinking skills that came with practical problem solving. Dewey (1899) wrote, in *The School and Society*, “What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all its children. Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon, it destroys our democracy” (p. 3).

Robert Hutchins (1937) believed that a liberal arts education with an introduction to basic subjects such as literature, art, history, and philosophy was the proper way to prepare students for the future. He wanted not only to teach students about these topics, but also to provide the tools for a lifetime of learning. Hutchins’ essentialist philosophical view on education valued the potential of humans to continue to grow and learn without mandate rather than their own desire to develop.

Both Dewey and Hutchins agreed that citizens should be educated for the greater good of the community. They differed on how citizens should be educated. Dewey (1899) believed that the goal of education was to assist students in their growth emotionally, mentally, and philosophically. Hutchins (1937), however, wanted students to have a breadth of knowledge on many subjects that would seemingly increase their intellectual capabilities. Dewey believed that schools were the place to teach democratic values and citizenship (Lawry et al., 2006); Hutchins (1937) believed that was the role of the church and family.

Mortimer Adler (1982) entered the debate on the purpose of education and wrote *The Paideia Proposal*. In this proposal, he attempted to merge the ideals of Dewey and Hutchins. The focus of the proposal was not on the role of higher education, rather the reform of the K-12 education. In the proposal, he stated that the best education should be offered to all and that the subjects taught should be standardized for all schools. The subjects are requirements for every student, each of the 12 years in school (Flinders & Thornton, 1983).

World War II led to two partnerships between higher education and the federal government: the GI Bill and the National Science Foundation (Jacoby, 1996). It was later, in 1957, which the National Defense Education Act was passed and became a significant piece of legislation concerning higher education (Flattau, Bracken, Van Atta, Bandeh-Ahmadi, de la Cruz & Sullivan, 2006). Boyer (1994) writes “the very title of the National Defense Education Act of 1958 clearly linked higher education to the security of our country” (p.48).

In 1950, the President’s Commission on Higher Education, also known as the Truman Commission, was charged with studying and defining the purpose of higher education (Kim & Rury, 2007). The report called for changes in higher education challenging the old European methods. The report encouraged a curriculum that would educate for a democracy. It was

believed that the number of students would double by 1960, and that vocational and liberal arts education would be integrated. Both specified training for graduate and professional school as well as training for citizenship. This was the beginning of an expansion period in higher education.

In 1979, the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) began to create benchmarks. The standards included “holistic development of students by emphasizing performance criteria that challenge and support the moral and civic education of students” (Mable, 2007, p. 1). Mable (2007) discussed the beginning phase of CAS adopting the idea of the whole student. He continued by identifying eight learning outcomes that should be obtained. Learning plans are described as an initiative in which students are provided the necessary information to determine where they would like to become involved. The plan concludes with a serious reflection illustrating what students have learned through their involvement. “Defining, producing, and measuring learning outcomes are a definite part of each standard and each of the standards contribute to the goal of student learning and development” (Mable, 2007, p. 3).

It is the responsibility of higher education to teach students about democracy and prepare them to be contributing members of society (Bok, 1982; Morrill, 1980).

Higher education, it was hoped, might affect the conduct of public affairs in at least three ways: First, the university would make each of its graduates into a force for civic virtue. Second, it would train a group of political leaders who would take a knightly plunge into “real life” and clean it up. Finally, through scientifically oriented scholarship, rational substitutes could be found for political procedures subject to personal influence. (Veysey, 1965, p. 72)

In recent years, higher education has been criticized for not teaching more civic engagement and focusing too much on educating students for a profession (Apple, 2004; Ellsworth & Whatley, 1990; Giroux, 1981; Leonardo, 2003; Smith, 2003). Research universities have been the focus of

several reports encouraging change within the system (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1998).

The Common Agenda was the product of over 200 educators and policy makers at the National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good joining together in thought and purpose of understanding higher education's role in creating engaged citizens (Burkhardt & Merisotis, 2006). The document set forth four issues in higher education that are illustrated in the Figure 1. In synthesizing the document, the participants in the forum eventually challenged research universities to make changes.

Each of the four issues stated in the Common Agenda also have goals established. Issue One is *Building Public Understanding and Support for Higher Education's Civic Mission and Actions* (London, 2003). One objective associated with this issue is to develop rhetoric that is understood by the public and those inside the academy. The other objective is to promote more discourse about the issue.

Issue Two is *Cultivating Networks and Partnerships that will Work Toward the Changes Envisioned* (London, 2003). One purpose associated with this issue is to create communication systems and processes that will reach a broad mix of partners. Another purpose is to generate and support the partnerships through alliances and collaborations.



*Figure 1. Common agenda: Higher education for the public good. The source of this figure is from S. London's (2003), *Higher Education for the Public Good: A Report from the National Leadership Dialogues*.*

Issue Three is *Infusing Civic Engagement and Public Service into the Culture of Higher Learning* (London, 2003). This issue specifically addresses how institutions integrate research, teaching, and service for the good of society. One goal is to emphasize leadership development and citizenship into the curriculum and co-curriculum. A second goal is to foster faculty commitment in creating responsible citizens. A third goal is to identify, recognize, and support engaged scholarship. A fourth goal is to encourage graduate programs to adopt the civic mission as well as undergraduate programs.

Issue Four is *Embedding Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility in the Structure of the Higher Education System* (London, 2003). A purpose associated with this issue is to align governing structures and administrative strategies. To publicly praise the work being conducted to support engagement is another purpose. A third aim is to include civic engagement and social responsibility in the criteria for accreditation and assessment. The fourth purpose is to cultivate stronger ties between the academy and government.

Following the creation of the Common Agenda, the National Forum organized three discussions held at the Wingspread Conference Center (Burkhardt & Merisotis, 2006). The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Johnson Foundation, Atlantic Philanthropies, and a number of higher education associations gathered to discuss the issues facing higher education. Research universities received a challenge from the Wingspread Conference to connect students with service and reflection to create engaged citizens for the betterment of society instead of perpetuating individualism and elitism (Wingspread Declaration, 1999).

Some researchers and educators believe that the primary responsibility of higher education was, and continues to be, to produce engaged citizens. “As long as there have been colleges and universities in this country, there has been a commitment at the heart of the curriculum to preparation for what we might call civic engagement” (Lawry, Laurison, & VanAntwerpen, 2006). H. R. Bowen (1977) stated that higher education existed to change individual behavior for the good of the community. Upon graduation, alumni should be willing and able to serve in their community.

Through the three major functions of instruction, research, and public service, the institute hopes to influence students, faculty, and members of the public to help set these people on a course of continuing and desirable activities and, through them, to achieve broad social and cultural advancement of the entire society. (Bowen, 1977, p. 14)

Most institutions of higher education agree that civic responsibility is a portion of what colleges and universities should be teaching based on their mission statements. While researching the mission statements of institutions of higher education, Astin (1993) found that citizenship is an issue that institutions consider very important to the education process and states that “. . . promoting ‘good citizenship’ is one of the most commonly stated values in the mission statements of most colleges and universities” (p. 4). Boyer (1994) explained that though many colleges and universities have service in their mission, service is not being integrated into the students’ experience. Just stating the importance of promoting good citizenship in a mission statement is not enough to produce engaged citizens (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont & Stephens, 2003).

The institution must value its role in civics enough to incorporate responsible citizenship at every level of the institution from administrators to faculty to students as described in the *Involving Colleges* study (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt & Associates, 1991). Sanford (1967) wrote “if a college is to encourage social responsibility, it must (as a minimum) run its own affairs according to values that are known to and worthy of emulation by its students” (p. 75). Higher education as an industry once emphasized the need for “strengthening social values” (Checkoway, 2001, p. 129) but has seemed to have lost that sense of purpose now.

Prince (1997) wrote, “Education is the absolute importance of critical undergraduate thinking that is guided by the values of honesty and respect for other individuals” (p. 37). Student affairs personnel have been challenged with teaching self responsibility and respect for others resulting in the development of citizenship. Student affairs professionals have been trained to develop the whole student (American Council on Education, 1949; American College Personnel Association, 1994). The American Council on Education (1949) stated that

...a social philosophy... thrusts upon the college an urgent responsibility for providing experiences which develop in its students a firm and enlightened belief in democracy, a matured understanding of its problems and methods, and a deep sense of responsibility for individual and collective action to achieve its goals (p.20).

Professional organizations like American College Personnel Association and NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education exist to support student affairs professionals. These organizations, along with others, provide the standards to help students develop values and ethics through programming and resources based on honesty, justice, civility, freedom, human dignity, and responsible citizenship (American Personnel Association, 1996). Dalton (1999) states that student affairs professionals are the leaders in teaching civic responsibility through core programs linked to community service, residential life, leadership, and service-learning.

The next section describes models that colleges and universities have adopted to teach a sense of civic responsibility in students.

Defining Civic Engagement

There is a widespread understanding that civic engagement can and does refer to actions (Jacoby, 2009).

A lack of clarity about what is meant by the term ‘civic engagement’ is evident when, at almost any gathering convened for the purpose of furthering civic engagement in higher education, questions inevitably arise about what is meant by civic engagement and about how it relates to civic education, service learning, democratic education, political engagement, civics, education for citizenship, or moral education. Moreover, the lack of clarity fuels a latent confusion about how to operationalize a civic engagement agenda on campus” (Saltmarsh, 2005, p. 2).

There are other challenges in defining civic engagement. Battistoni (2002) suggested that political views can influence the perceptions of civic engagement. Levine (2007) even suggested that the lack of a clear definition has increased the use and the popularity of the term. Thomas Ehrlich and coauthors (2000) have provided the most comprehensive definition of civic engagement:

Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combinations of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes (p. vi)

Eyler and Giles (1999) defined civic engagement as values, attitudes, and behaviors that lead to a commitment of an individual to be involved in their community while understanding the issues facing the community.

There are many variations in the descriptions of the terms *service learning* and *civic engagement*. These descriptions do not always coincide with each other. There are many terms that have adopted similar meanings. Knowing and understanding the differences in the terms is a difficult challenge because each study and author referenced may use the same terms in a different context with different meanings. Jane Kendall (1990) believed that 147 definitions have existed for service learning. In the twenty years since, many definitions have surely been written as the topic is more thoroughly researched. For the purposes of this study, service learning is referred to as leading to civic engagement.

Bok (2001) believes that community service is one part of civic responsibility. He also states that volunteerism is not an encourager of citizenship. Prior research has implied that service learning has a tremendous impact on the level of engagement to which a person becomes involved civically (Astin, 1993; Astin, Sax, & Avalos, 1999; Batchelder & Root, 1994; Billing & Eyler, 2003; Ehrlich, 2000; Godfrey & Grasso, 2000; Jacoby, 1996; Meyers-Lipton, 1998; Parker-Gwin & Mabry, 1998; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Stanton, Giles & Cruz, 1999). This study examined the lasting impact of higher education on attitudes toward civic engagement and the role in creating or building social capital (Bourdieu, 1985).

Social responsibility is another term that is often used interchangeably with civic engagement among many other terms (Battistoni, 2002; Levine, 2007). Thornton (2006)

examined the many definitions of civic responsibility in the higher education literature to create one comprehensive definition. Table 1, developed by Thornton, illustrates the different dimensions of civic responsibility that are repeatedly cited in the literature.

Table 1

Dimensions of Civic Responsibility in Literature

Dimension	Scholarly Contributions
Voluntary service to the community; commitment to serve the community	(Astin & Sax, 1998; Bowen, 1997; Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Patrick, 1991)
Knowledge about civic life; understanding of how a community works; knowledge of government institutions and procedures	(Bowen, 1997; Colby et al., 2003; Patrick, 1991)
Participation in the political system; desire to influence the political structure	(Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002; Astin & Sax, 1998; Bowen, 1997; Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Colby et al., 2003; Patrick, 1991)
Public commitment to the values of constitutional democracy (liberty, justice and rule of law); work for justice and dignity for all people	(Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002; Bowen, 1997; Ehrlich, 1999; Patrick, 1991)
Desire to help others in difficulty; compassion and commitment to the welfare of others	(Astin & Sax, 1998; Colby et al., 2003)
Desire to promote racial understanding; appreciation of diversity; understanding of differences in ethnicity, race, sexual orientation and class	(Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002; Astin & Sax, 1998; Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Colby et al., 2003; Ehrlich, 1999; Guarasci & Cornwell, 1997b)
Ability to solve public problems effectively; use knowledge to benefit society and make decisions	(Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Ehrlich, 1999)
Skills in debate, listening, teamwork, critical evaluation	(Bowen, 1997; Boyte & Hollander, 1999)
Intellectual honesty	(Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002)
Understanding of self and ethical consequences of one's decisions and actions; accountable individuals	(Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002; Colby et al., 2003)

Source: Thornton, C., & Jaeger, A. (2006). Institutional Culture and Civic Responsibility: An ethnographic study. *Journal of College Student Development*, 47(1), 52-68.

See Appendix A for permission to reprint this table. After synthesizing Thornton's dissertation work, Thornton and Jaeger (2006) stated,

Five dimensions of civic responsibility that repeatedly surface in higher education literature include: (a) knowledge and support of democratic values systems, and processes; (b) desire to act beneficially in community and for its members; (c) use of knowledge and skills for societal benefit (d) appreciation for interest in those unlike self; and (e) personal accountability (p. 52).

The dimension of knowledge and support of democratic values systems, and processes is credited to several researchers including Bowen (1997), Patrick (1991), Ehlich (1999), and Colby et al. (2003). Astin and Sax (1998), as well as the fore mentioned, contributed to the creation of the dimension discussing the desire to act beneficially in community and for its members. The use of knowledge and skills for societal benefit was created as a dimension based on the research of Bowen (1997), Boyte and Hollander (1999), and Ehrlich (1999). Support for the dimension encompassing appreciation for interest in those unlike self comes from Boyte and Hollander (1999) and Guarasci and Cornwell (1997b) as well as others. The literature from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2002) discusses intellectual honesty and understanding the consequences of decisions that contribute to the dimension of personal accountability.

The next section will examine theories and models that lead to the development of social capital.

Theories and Models of the Development of Social Capital

Though Table 1 does not include social capital, it is important to discuss when considering civic responsibility and civic engagement. Paxton (1999) described civic engagement as the heart of social capital. Hanifan (1916) has been credited with coining the phrase *social capital* in relation to community involvement (Putnam, 1995; Farr, 2004). Hanifan

worked in a rural school system and believed that the political, economic, and social problems were due to the change in the culture of the community.

In the use of the phrase *social capital* I make no reference to the usual acceptance of the term capital, except in a figurative sense. I do not refer to real estate or to personal property or to cold cash but rather to that in life which tend to make these tangible substances count for most in the daily Fellowship, mutual sympathy and social intercourse among a group of individuals and families who make a social unit, the rural community, whose logical center is the school (Hanifan, 1916, p. 78).

Coleman (1988) stated that four ideals of social capital are formed through collaboration. They are 1) trustworthiness, expectations, and obligations; 2) norms and sanctions; 3) authority relations; and 4) information channels. Coleman (1990) simplified collaboration stating that risk within an organization will occur with collaboration. Collaborative work could be unsatisfying depending on the personalities in the group (Mandzuk, 1999). Teachers could feel threatened and frustrated by the questioning of ideas (Mandzuk, 1999). Within the group, collaborations will not fail because other members will fulfill the obligations (Coleman, 1990).

Eyler and Giles (1999) stated cognitive development, as well as the aforementioned, is essential to address the problems that face an endangered democracy. There is a positive correlation between a person's educational level, cognitive understanding of the democratic system, and civic engagement (Almond, 1989). William Perry (1970) studied intellectual and ethical development of Harvard College students. He explained that cognitive development can be examined through "structures which the students explicitly or implicitly impute to the world, especially those structures in which they construe the nature and origins of knowledge, of value, and of responsibility" (p. 1).

Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000) developed a four-stage, cognitive-processing model used to assess critical thinking. The four stages are triggering event, exploration, integration, and resolution. The first stage is a triggering event, posing the problem, or

“initiation phase of critical inquiry” (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, p. 10). In this phase an issue from the experience is identified. The issue can become the subject of discourse or a distraction to the learning outcomes.

The second stage is the exploration and search for more information. In this stage, participants reflect privately and with the group in order to grasp the nature of the problem. Students will begin to determine what is relevant to the issue or problem.

The third stage is the integration or construction of possible solution. “Characterized by constructing meaning from the ideas in the exploratory phase” (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, p. 10), students will figure out how their thoughts connect and describe the problem. Students may engage in discourse and reflection repeatedly.

The last and fourth stage is the resolution, which is considered the critical assessment of solutions. This may result in implementation of a solution to a problem or a test if in an educational setting. “Progression to the fourth phase requires clear expectations and opportunities to apply newly created knowledge” (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000, p. 10) and to be able to move on to the next problem whether it is on a test or in the community.

Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, and Stephens (2003) described three approaches to moral and civic engagement. The idea of being connected with different communities refers to the involvement a person has with different groups of people. Diversity of moral and civic values addresses the respect a person has for people with differing values. The concern for social justice and social responsibility references not only the ability to understand social responsibility, but the willingness to act in order to make a change for the betterment of society.

Markham (2007) developed the theory of Morally Serious People (MSP) addressing the characteristics of socially responsible citizens. He characterized Morally Serious People as

encapsulating the following personality traits: 1) responsible citizenship; 2) intolerance toward discrimination; 3) obligation to be empirically informed; 4) disciplined reflection on the cultivation of virtue; 5) consciousness of our sociological conditioning; 6) an ordered interior life; and 7) commitment to moral conversation.

Similar to Markham's (2007) *Morally Serious People*, Eyler and Giles (1999) provided a set of five characteristics to produce active citizens: 1) development of values; 2) knowledge; 3) skills; 4) efficacy; and 5) commitment. This theory will be discussed more in Chapter III as this theory is part of the theoretical framework used for the interview questions asked of alumni. Engaged citizens will naturally adopt these characteristics over time and often in this order (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Unfortunately, there are not many studies that exist to show the lasting effects of teaching service learning and student engagement on responsible citizenship and social capital. Astin (1999) conducted a study over a nine-year period looking at the civic engagement of students after graduation. Astin (1985; 1992b) wrote that students are adopting business majors more often while stating they are more concerned with living a comfortable lifestyle. It is argued that private materialism is detrimental to the idea of the public good for democracy (Boyte & Hollander, 1999).

Research conducted by Jessica Korn (1999) at the University of Washington demonstrates that the University of Washington is fulfilling their mission to create better citizens because the results conclude that alumni are involved in the community. Participants that graduated between one and five years prior to the survey were more likely to be civically-engaged than students that graduated ten years prior to the survey. Korn has discerned that this could be because graduates from ten years prior have moved or are not in contact with the

institution any longer. Other researchers relying on samples from a single institution have reached similar conclusions in that the further from graduation, the less likely civic engagement is occurring (Batchelder & Root, 1994; Giles & Eyster, 1994; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993).

There are many moral development and civic engagement theories and models that could be used for the purpose of this study. The theories and models discussed here demonstrate how social capital can be encouraged through the teachings of civic engagement through higher education. The next section of this chapter addresses the importance of teaching civic engagement and how the issue is addressed at colleges and universities.

The Importance of Teaching Civic Engagement

Civic disengagement is a problem that many researchers, policy makers, and businessmen (Bartik, 2004; Becker, 1993; Gottlib & Fogarty, 2003; Weiss, 2004) are writing about following a growth in literature concerning the renewal of civic interest (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Kezar et al., 2005). Robert Putnam, a Harvard political scientist, has been at the forefront of this research. He uses the metaphor of disappearing bowling leagues to represent the disengagement of citizens in their communities in his book *Bowling Alone* (1995b). Putnam's research shows a decline in participation in PTAs, labor unions, civic organizations, and other community based groups, which have been called communitarianism (Herbert & Hawkins, 1996). Putnam (1995a) has blamed this phenomenon on television and technology without consideration to how much the internet and other technologies have increased communication.

The internet provides unlimited groups to join in order to communicate with others (Crumlish, 2004). Facebook and MySpace are revolutionary in the way young people communicate and an increasing number of adults are joining these websites as well. The

argument can be made that the internet provides ways and means for groups to be formed and for communication to occur (Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs, 2006; Horrigan, 2002; Parks & Floyd, 1996) but the internet does not provide the same benefits for the person or the community as physically joining groups in the community (Nie, 2001) like bowling leagues.

Only three years after launching, Facebook was reported to have more than 21 million registered members (Needham & Company, 2007). In November 2006, almost 22,000 organizations had Facebook pages (Smith, 2006). Despite the popularity of the social networking site, the research being conducted has not proportionately increased (Ross, Orr, Sisis, Arseneault, Simmering, & Orr, 2009). With much of the research focused on identity concerns (Stutzman, 2006), it is difficult to know if the internet is one cause of the decline in social capital (Cummings, Lee, & Kraut, 2006). Some physical communities have found that online communication outlets have had positive effects on the communities (Hampton & Wellman, 2003; Kavanaugh, Carroll, Rosson, Zin, & Reese, 2005). Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007) found that intensity predicted increased levels of maintained social capital. Therefore, Facebook and other social networking sites may be increasing social capital.

The Ladd Report written by a public opinion analyst refutes Putnam's ideas of civic disengagement using a specific survey asking Americans about their involvement in community organizations (Starr, 2000). The survey primarily asked about political volunteerism, for example, writing letters to legislators or working on a campaign (Starr, 2000). Putnam (2000) reported that attendance of college educated citizens at public meetings dropped from 34% to 18% over 20 years. A study conducted by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program at UCLA found that college and university students are volunteering more but participation in political activities is decreasing at the same rate (Ehrlich, 2000). Putnam (1995b) would argue

that distrust of government is causing the disengagement of young Americans in political engagement and volunteerism.

Bennett (1997) has supported the ideas of Putnam explaining that youth are deterred from engaging in politics because of the ever-prevalent indiscretions of elected officials and are apathetic to the process. Young America does not trust government (Astin, Parrott, Korn, & Sax, 1997; Sax, 1999; Sax, Astin, Korn, & Mahoney, 1999). According to Giles and Eyler (1994), it is difficult for students to “find relevance in the political process for addressing important social issues” (p. 333).

Civic Engagement as a Pedagogy

One of the greatest predictors of civic and political engagement is education (Almond, 1989; Putman, 1993). Multiple studies have found that the undergraduate or collegiate activities do have a significant impact on civic attitudes and behaviors (Boyer, 1990; Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Pascarella, Ethington, & Smart, 1988). The teaching of civic engagement and the development of a sense of civic responsibility can occur in many different ways, places, and times.

Chickering (1969) has provided the types of experiences that could lead to developmental change. They include 1) engage students in the decision-making process; 2) prolong students’ interaction with diverse classmates; 3) allow students to be involved in varied experiences; 4) encourage students to challenge conformity by finding creative solutions to complex social issues; and 5) provide students with feedback while they self assess (Chickering, 1969). The civic benefits from higher education depend more on the “kind of people college graduates become than...what they know when they leave college” (Bowen, 1997, p. 270).

Astin (1992) explained that there is a significant relationship between undergraduate education and service learning.

The ideal campus climate for encouraging student participation in community activities in many respects resembles the ideal climate for undergraduate education in general: heavy student involvement, close student-faculty interaction, and a strong institutional emphasis on undergraduate education. (Astin, 1992, p. 110)

Elrich (1997) identified three types of learning that encourage civic engagement: 1) community service learning; 2) problem based learning; and 3) collaborative learning. He stated, “Civic learning – in the sense of how a community works and how to help it work better – and academic learning are mutually reinforcing” (p. 61). This section examines different ways in which civic engagement is taught through service learning courses, volunteerism, living learning communities, and/or co-curricular programs.

Civic Engagement as a Result of Service Learning

There are many ideas and definitions surrounding service learning (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Howard, 2003; Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). The following definition, however, provides an understanding of the role which service learning plays in the lives of the participants.

Service-learning involves intentional planning and execution from which all parties benefit. Service learning is active learning that includes reflection and reciprocity. Reflective practices include teaching theory and expanding student’s knowledge about social issues related to the service learning project. (Johnson, 2005, p. 351)

Professors and administrators who support service learning agree that students gain much more than memorization skills from service learning projects (Connolly, 2005; Enos & Trope, 1996; Jones & Hill, 2001, 2003; Rhoads, 1997; Youniss & Yates, 1997). Studies have shown that there is a distinct correlation between service learning activities and both personal and interpersonal development (Astin, 1977, 1985; Chickering, 1969, 1974; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Pace, 1979; Kuh, 1981; Sanford, 1962). Though professors may

agree with the need for service learning courses, it is difficult for some to find the time and resources to teach such classes with the pressure of the ‘publish or perish’ attitude held at some institutions (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Setphens, 2003). Teaching civic engagement through service learning courses requires professors to move beyond the brick-and-mortar institution and instead collaborate with partners (Morse, 1989).

Service learning students gain practical experiences that will help them through life (Billig & Eyler, 2003; Stenson, Eyler, & Giles, 2003). Students learn decision-making skills and leadership skills that are not taught in a textbook like cognitive processing and event planning (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). Supporters of service learning encourage thinking beyond a right and wrong answer. They want students to see the value of using their own minds to make decisions and then reflect on the decision making process (Billig & Eyler, 2003; Bonwell & Eison, 1991). Being in college does not teach students everything about decision making. Students often arrive on campus with pre-college experiences that have taught them a little about life. Students understand norms and expectations from their family and friends long before setting foot on a college campus (Colby, Kohlberg, Gibbs, & Lieberman, 1983; Turiel, 2002).

Students are not the only ones to benefit from service learning projects. Supporters also believe service learning strengthens relationships between universities, employers, and service organizations (Godfrey, 2000). The quality of the service learning experiences is important when posing social capital as an outcome (Dufour, 2005) because students may become disillusioned with service in the community if they have a bad experience. Eyler and Giles (1999) outlined the characteristics of a quality service learning program. They are 1) placement

quality; 2) application; 3) reflection; 4) diversity; and 5) community voice (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

D'Agostino (2006) explained these characteristics in more detail.

Placement quality is the establishment of connections with the community in order that students are placed in productive situations and are useful to the community. Service – learning is considered to start with the service; thus, if the service is not productive, then the learning may not be as productive;

Application concerns the ability to link the classroom and the community. It is considered one of the strongest predictors of perspective transformation, critical thinking, and problem solving;

Reflection, both written and discussion, is the connection between service and learning. This explicit attention to reflection allows the space and time for students to step back and reflect on their experiences;

Diversity refers to the opportunity to interact with individuals of different ethnic, religious, and gender groups during their service. The presence of these characteristics contributes to the outcomes of critical thinking, transformation of social perspectives, sustained community involvement, and intellectual change; and

Community voice is a component that refers to meeting community needs. This means working with the community on jointly useful projects. (D'Agostino, 2006, p. 5)

Using three types of service learning courses, Parker-Gwin and Mabry (1998) measured which type of course improved the students' analytical skills and critical thinking abilities. The three models were placement service optional, placement service required, or work as a consulting team in which the entire class worked on the same project to develop plans and complete the service learning. Pre- and post-surveys were administered consisting of several Likert-scale questions. The findings showed little significant change on the attitudes of the students. One item to note is that students tended to be less favorable toward service learning after completing the project than before (Parker-Gwin & Mabry, 1998).

Mere instruction that is not accompanied with direct participation in school affairs upon a genuine community basis will not go far. Especially among high school and college students, this participation should extend beyond the school to include an active part in some phases of the larger community life (Dewey, 1936, p.12)

Service learning classes can provide great results for engaging students both in and outside the classroom (Parker-Gwin & Mabry, 1998). Students who participate in some type of service learning earn higher grades in courses.

Volunteerism

Volunteerism is an integral part of a thriving society. These experiences “encourage students to feel a sense of commitment to something larger than their own needs and interests” (Hoffman, 2006, p. 14). Sax and Astin (1997) determined that students who participate in community service or who volunteer were more likely to believe they could become change agents and make an impact in the community.

Behavior change happens mostly by speaking to people’s feelings...In highly successful change efforts, people find ways to help others see the problems or solutions in ways that influence emotions, not just thought. (Kotter, quoted by Deutschman, 2005, p. 55)

Volunteering can give people the experience to look introspectively (Minnich, 1999) and assists in their search for the purpose of life (Boyte & Kari, 1996).

Previous research by Astin, Sax, and Avalos (1999) has suggested that volunteerism during the undergraduate years does positively impact graduates for at least five years. The study *Long-term Effects of Volunteerism during the Undergraduate Years* sampled college students from around the nation at three stages of their life. The first survey was completed upon college entrance, the second was completed four years later, and the third was completed nine years after entering college. A total of 279,985 students at 546 college and universities were chosen for the first-year sample. The final sample resulted in 12,376 students from 209 institutions helping to determine that community service while in college does encourage future civic involvement.

Living-Learning Communities

Living-learning communities are becoming increasingly popular for residential life on college and university campuses. Studies have suggested that living on campus increases retention (Braxton & Lee, 2005; Tinto, 1993). Living-learning communities go beyond just living on campus. Students must learn to work together for the betterment of their community. They share “risks, responsibilities, resources and rewards” (Himmelman, 1994, p. 28). Some institutions create living-learning communities based on interests, majors, academic potential, and themes (Guarasci & Cornwell, 1998).

Researchers have found that living-learning communities offer great benefits that lead to retention. Students choosing to participate in living-learning communities are more satisfied with their college experience, and therefore have greater retention rates and earn higher grades (Lenning & Ebbers, 1999). Early social integration will lead to students feeling connected on campus. The more connected they feel, the more likely they are to persist (Braxton & Lee, 2005). Research by Lenning & Ebbers (1999) also suggests that students are more prepared for life beyond college because of their improved critical thinking skills and a greater understanding of who they are and what they want to be after graduation.

Co-Curricular Programs

Astin (1993) wrote that learning happens as much outside of the classroom as inside of the classroom while students are at college. Students who participate in extra-curricular activities are more likely to persist through college and are generally considered a more complete student. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) determined that learning is social and interactive and, in order to learn, one must be an active participant. They stated that brain activity is directly related to the learning environment. Whether it is the color of the walls, the pictures in the room,

the type of desk, or the smells in the air, if the environment is stimulating, learning will occur. Prince (1997) stated that education should focus on character development and critical thinking skills to prepare students to be engaged citizens. “Education is the absolute importance of critical undergraduate thinking that is guided by the values of honesty and respect for other individuals” (Prince, 1997, p. 37).

The Role of Spirituality

Research on spirituality in higher education is expanding, (Astin, 2004; Chickering, 2006; Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2005) and student affairs professional conferences addressing the subject (Dalton, Eberhardt & Crosby, 2006). With almost half of all freshman in U.S. colleges and universities agreeing that spirituality is either “essential” or “very important” in their lives and most of those students declaring they are looking for meaning and purpose for their lives (Astin, 2004), research is expected to continue to increase. This section defines spirituality for the purposes of this study.

Though the word spirituality is derived from religion historical (Sheldrake, 2007), it is now used in “terms of subjective self-fulfillment” (Smith & Denton, 2005, p. 175). Understanding spirituality in terms of religion alone is not accurate according to Bown and Williams (1993). They go on to describe spirituality as a form of *holism*. Steiger and Lipson argue that religion is “a social institutions in which a group of people participate rather than an individual search from meaning” (1985, p. 212.) Teasdale (1999) wrote a comprehensive description of being spiritual and religious.

Being religious connotes belonging to and practicing a religious tradition. Being spiritual suggests a personal commitment to a process of inner development that engages us in our totality. Religion, of course, is one way many people are spiritual. Often, when authentic faith embodies an individual’s spirituality the religious and the spiritual will coincide. Still, not every religious person is spiritual (although they ought to be) and not every spiritual person is religious. Spirituality is a way of life that affects and includes every

moment of existence. It is at once a contemplative attitude, a disposition to a life of depth, and the search for ultimate meaning, direction, and belonging. The spiritual person is committed to growth as an essential ongoing life goal. To be spiritual requires us to stand on our own two feet while being nurtured and supported by our tradition, if we are fortunate enough to have one. (p. 17)

Fenwick and English (2004) created a framework of seven dimensions of spirituality.

The dimensions are intended “to begin to illustrate how spiritual beliefs and practices are differently situated” (p. 39). They are

1. Life and Death – The Meaning of Life on Earth or Beyond;
2. Soul and Self – The Nature of the Spirit;
3. Cosmology – The Nature of the Spiritual Universe, Including Higher Powers;
4. Knowledge – The Nature of Truth;
5. Focus – The Purposes of Spiritual Seeking;
6. Practices of Spirituality and the Role of Others; and
7. Responses – Action and Application Arising From Spiritual Pursuits

Research suggests that relationships with others are considered a dimension of spirituality (Oldnall, 1996; Putnam, 2007; Slattery, 1995; Sodestrom & Martinson, 1987). English and Gillen define spirituality as more than religion, “an awareness of something greater than ourselves...[that] moves one outward to others as an expression of one’s spiritual experiences” (p. 1). Armstrong (2004) wrote

In the course of my studies, I have discovered that the religious quest is not about discovering “the truth” or “the meaning of life” but about living as intensely as possible in the here and now. The idea is not to latch on to some superhuman personality or to “get to heaven” but to discover how to be fully human—hence the images of the perfect or enlightened man, or the deified human being. (p. 271)

Much like the other researchers previously noted in this section, Principe (1997) Describes spirituality with a dual purpose connecting the world of individual people both inwardly and

outwardly. Spirituality in this form leads to caring for others and being civically engaged through organizations.

Creating Social Capital through Alumni Civic Engagement Practices

Colleges and universities may be charged with educating students for the greater good of a democratic society, but after graduation it becomes the alumni's duty to be engaged citizens. Van der Ryn (2007) explained how humans struggle with becoming contributing members of society. He discussed how people want to be productive citizens, but they are often not sure how to begin their civic life.

Gaff (2004) stated that it is the responsibility of educated people to work with disparate groups in order for people to understand and respect one another. He continued by stating that educated people are able to act as mediators to solve problems in the workplace, community, and even internationally. Moral development occurs in response to a conflict that changes the way a person may think or judge a topic (Kolhberg, 1973). Putnam (1995) wrote

The relationship between education and civic engagement is a curvilinear one of increasing return. The last two years of college make twice as much difference to trust and group membership as the first two years of high school . . . Highly educated people are much more likely to be joiners and trusters, partly because they are better off economically, but mostly because of the skills, resources, and inclinations that were imparted to them at home and in school. (p. 667)

According to Putnam (1995), students involved in organizations will be more active the community and government. A difference does exist between the rules that society enforces and the laws that are mandated by morals and government (Kolhberg, 1973).

Putnam (2002) declared "that social networks have value. Just as a screwdriver or a college education can increase productivity (both individual and collective), so do social contacts affect the productivity of individuals and groups." Stone and Hughes (2002) illustrated the relationship between the social capital and networks in the figure below. Personal

characteristics, family characteristic, resources, attitudes and values, and characteristics of area all contribute to being able to determine social capital. The figure also illustrates how different types of networks operate. The last column in the figure describes the outcomes of social capital as individual and family wellbeing, public wellbeing, vibrant civic life, neighborhood wellbeing, political wellbeing, and economic wellbeing.

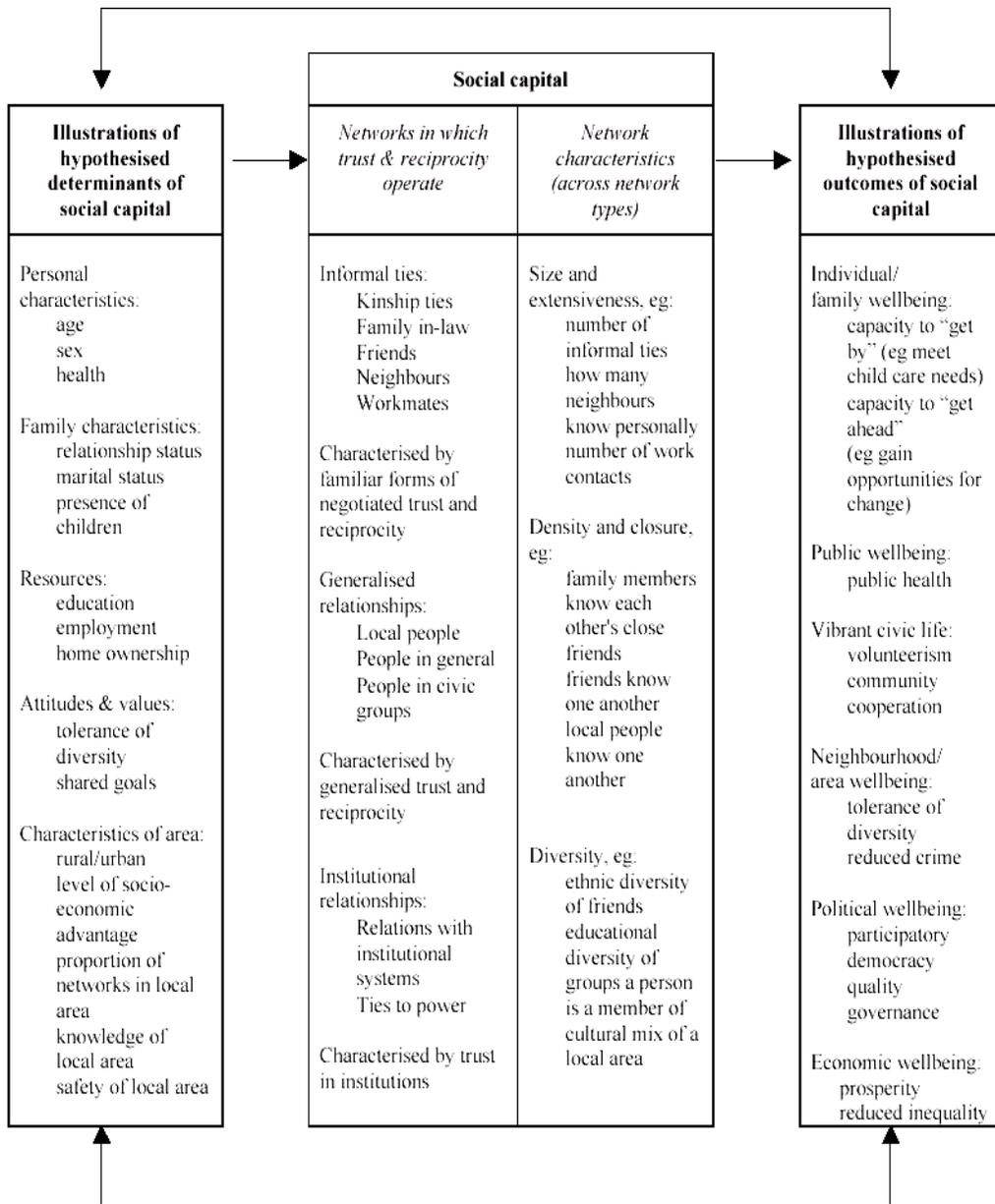


Figure 2. Summary of core measures of social capital, and illustrative examples of its determinants and outcomes. Source: Stone and Hughes, 2002.

The next session of this chapter discusses the Blackburn Institute as a network that creates social capital through the curriculum provided as college students and the retention of Blackburn Fellows in the organization post graduation.

The Blackburn Institute: Creating a Network of Alumni

Stone (2001) stated that a network needs be defined and categorized before research concerning the network can be conducted. She explained the differences between formal and informal networks. An informal network, as described by Stone (2001), might be family, friends, and neighbors. A formal network might be developed through non-group and group based relations as well as work-based and institutional relations. Tinto (1993) stated that the more contacts made between an individual and the institution, the stronger the bond is between the two. Social networks are made by repeated interactions with individuals (Putnam, 1995).

Informal networks	Formal networks of social relations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family household • Family beyond the household • Friends/intimates • Neighbours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-group based civic relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - good deeds - individual community or political action • Associations/group based relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - antenatal - child care - education - sport/leisure - music/arts - church - charity - voluntary - self help • Work based <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - colleagues - associations • Institutional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - state

Figure 3. Types of informal and formal networks. Source: Families, Social Capital and Citizenship project, Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2000.

Formal networks help members find an identity that is distinctive (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1994). Members of formal networks will have common characteristics like hobbies or similar core beliefs (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1994) and even political commonalities. Jennings and Niemi (1981) found that those who participated in political discussions with groups were more engaged.

The most acute indicator of psychological involvement in politics is the frequency with which people talk to others about political matters . . . the very act of verbalizing a thought about politics, that thought comes to have more substance and form . . . Political discourse is probably the penultimate step in the chain leading toward manifest political action designed to affect political outcomes (Jennings & Niemi, 1981, p.33).

In order to understand the Blackburn Institute as a network, it is important to understand group identification. Mael and Ashforth (1992) explain that organizational identification is “the perception of oneness with or belongingness to an organization, where the individual defines him or herself in terms of the organization(s) in which he or she is a member” (p. 104). The March-Simon Model of Group Identification illustrates how members of a group become more committed (Anderson & Milkovich, 1980). Though this model is often used in a human resources or professional environment (March & Simon, 1958) it can also be used in an organizational culture like the Blackburn Institute.

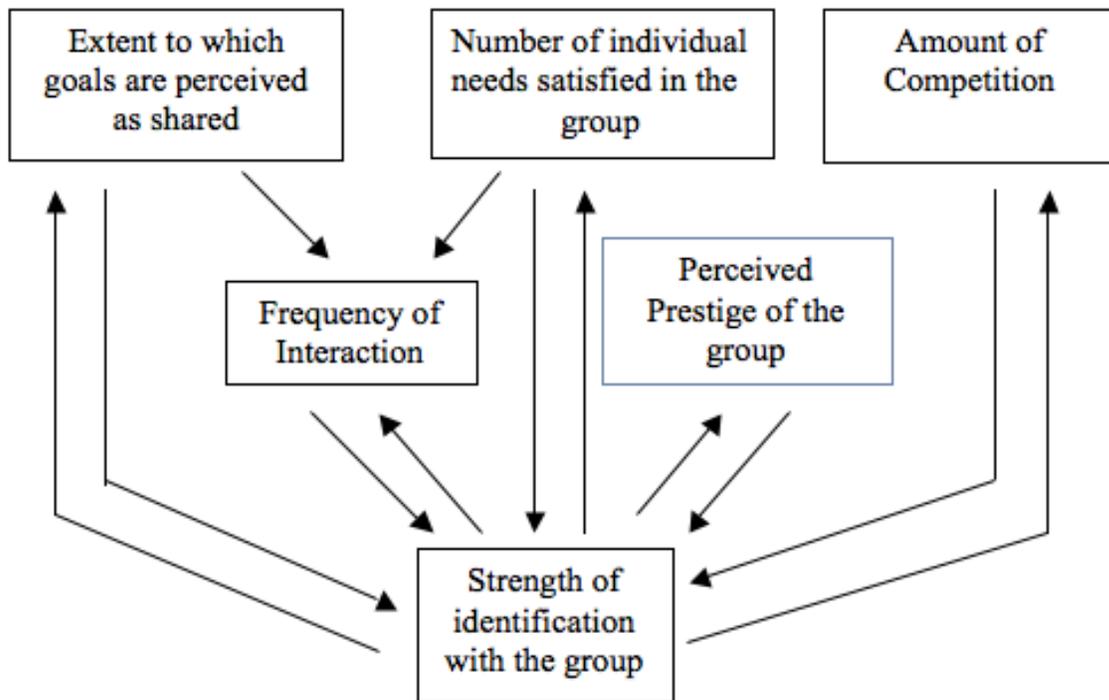


Figure 4. The March-Simon Model of Group Identification (1958).

The March-Simon Model of Group Identification can be broken down into six parts. The extent to which the goals are perceived as shared refers to commonalities or shared values. The frequency of interaction explains that as meaningful interaction increases so will the participant's satisfaction with the group. The number of individual needs met by the organization will cause a reaction to be more involved in the group. Perceived prestige of the group refers to the external prestige placed upon the group by others. The competition between members of the group and the individual can prove to be good or bad for the organization. Simon (1957) discussed the group member, "in making a decision, he evaluates the several alternatives of choice in terms of their consequences for the specified group" (p. 205)

Retention in Organizations

Though Vincent Tinto's (1993) theory of individual departure model is framed by the idea of integration and retention at colleges and universities, the same principles can be applied

to retention in organizations. He argued that the degree to which a student is academically and socially integrated into the university strongly predicts whether the student persists or drops out. Beginning with pre-college attributes such as individual characteristics, prior educational success, and family influence, the student's initial goals and commitments are formed. The students bring these goals and commitments with them into the institution in which they are enrolled. Over time, if the student experiences a positive academic and social experience at the university, their goals and commitments will include thoughts of a career path and hopes of graduating. A negative experience will only weaken the student's initial goals and commitments that he or she brought with him or her into the institution and increase the likelihood of withdrawal or failure. In the end, Tinto (1993) argued that a higher degree of student integration into academic and social communities leads to student retention.

Tinto (1993) defined three principles of retention, which can be compared to values that support the mission statement of the Blackburn Institute. The first principle states, "Effective retention programs are committed to the students they serve" (Tinto, 1993, p. 146). Tinto explained that if students could see the commitment from the institution, they would in turn commit to the institution. One of the Blackburn Institute's four overarching values is a lifetime commitment by all Fellows (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home/>, para. 5). The Fellows are the mentors of the student Fellows, which increases the probability of retaining active Blackburn Institute Fellows.

The second principle states, "Effective retention programs are first and foremost committed to the education of all, not just some, of their students" (Tinto, 1993, p. 147). Sometimes students can get lost in the crowd. Tinto has expressed his belief that it is the institutions that are at fault if a student is not provided the opportunity to excel. Another one of

the Blackburn Institute's four overarching values is networking through the generations (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home/>, para. 5). The term generations refers to not only the generation of Blackburn Fellows but also the advisory board members as well. In order for the generations of Blackburn Fellows to be retained, programming must occur that will excite Fellows about returning to events.

The third principle states, "Effective retention programs are committed to the development of supportive social and educational communities in which all students are integrated as competent members" (Tinto, 1993, p. 147). Tinto supported the idea of using students and genuine participants in the everyday workings of the institution. Another one of the Blackburn Institute's four overarching values is valuing the diversity of opinions (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home/>, para. 5). All students are encouraged to speak openly and ask questions regarding their opinions (Shook, personal communication April 2007).

The Blackburn Institute's mission is to create a network of ethical leaders who will work together to change the state (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home/>, para. 2) essentially creating and contributing to social capital. Among many descriptions, the Institute has been called both a student leadership development organization and a network (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home/>, para. 5). This section will attempt to describe the work and justify the existence of the Blackburn Institute in its current state using previous research.

Pascarella (1988) found that leadership experiences have a significant but indirect impact on personal values. He stated that, "a student's involvement in social leadership experiences during college has a potentially significant, positive influence on the importance he or she attaches to civic and humanitarian values after college" (Pascarella et al., 1988, p. 430).

Schuh and Laverty (1983) studied the impact of leadership positions on the civic engagement of alumni using a sample of former student leaders that spanned 27 years. They found that, though the students learned a valuable skill set, the leadership experiences had little impact on the students in the future.

Summary

A college education is one step in developing social capital. Multiple studies have shown that college graduates are more likely to vote and participate in politics than citizens with only a high school diploma (Erikson et al., 1988; Nie et al., 1996; Taylor & Wolfe, 1971; Wolfinger & Rosenston, 1980). College graduates also have a greater interest in politics and are more likely to get involved in campaigns, endorse candidates, and support political issues than non-college graduates (Jennings & Niemi, 1981; Taylor & Wolfe, 1971). College graduates are also more likely to join civic and work related organizations as well as to attend church (Nie et al., 1996; Withy, 1971). Higher education has been challenged with how to teach and encourage citizenship through collegiate experiences and post collegiate activities. The next chapter will explain how this study intends to research the impact of the collegiate experience and the implications of post collegiate activities.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact that the Blackburn Institute had on the civic engagement of graduates. This study provided evidence that addressed the lasting effect of service learning, and more often experiential learning, on students involved in the Blackburn Institute. This study attempted to determine the lasting effect of the Blackburn Institute on the post-graduation values, behaviors, and beliefs of the Blackburn Fellows.

This chapter presents the qualitative research design used to analyze the participation level of Blackburn Fellows in post-collegiate years. The theoretical framework, methodology, research questions, participant and site selection, data analysis, researcher bias, researcher positionality, and the timeline for this investigation are described in this chapter.

Theoretical Framework

Van Hecke's (2004) five characterizations of citizenship and the Blackburn Institute's overarching values and mission statement are discussed in this section as they frame the research instrument. The two frameworks also provide the categories that were used for coding the responses to the questions. Van Hecke (2004) provided a framework that was used to demonstrate the levels of involvement of Blackburn Fellows after graduation. Van Hecke constructed the following five characterizations of citizenship for her dissertation using literature from sociology, psychology, political science, and higher education: 1) civic and political engagement; 2) public good; 3) community service; 4) moral discernment; and 5) communities across difference.

In addition to Van Hecke's (2004) characterizations of citizenship, the Blackburn Institute's overarching values and mission statement was used as a conceptual lens to analyze the data and success of the organization. Following graduation, Blackburn Fellows are expected to be change agents within their communities maintaining a sense of civic responsibility (see Figure 5). This mission includes the following:

1. The Blackburn Institute facilitates a *diversity of opinion* by providing opportunities for students to experience all sides of issues impacting their communities as well as by sponsoring situations for open, spirited debate focused on determining the resolution of issues rather than their mere identification (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home/>, para. 5);
2. The Blackburn Institute encourages a *call to action* by constantly reminding students that active citizenship necessitates individual as well as collective works to ensure improvement and by providing opportunities for students to access support for strategic initiatives (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home/>, para. 5);
3. The Blackburn Institute supports *networking through the generations* by providing opportunities for Fellows to engage in dialogue and personal contact with advisory board members, alumni, faculty, community leaders, scholars, and political leaders (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home/>, para. 5);
4. The Blackburn Institute expects a *lifetime commitment* by providing a rich undergraduate experience where, upon graduation, students and are encouraged not only to mentor student Fellows but to also uphold the ideals of the Institute in their daily lives (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home/>, para. 5); and

5. The Blackburn Institutes mission is to develop a network of ethical leaders who have a clear understanding of issues that face the state of Alabama in order to be progressive change agents in the state (J. L. Blackburn, personal communication, May 2007).

In order to evaluate the relationship between a students involved in the Blackburn Institute and their long-term civic engagement, the researcher developed a visual model to illustrate the relationship of Van Hecke’s (2004) five characterizations of citizenship and the overarching goals and mission for the Blackburn Institute. Van Hecke’s (2004) five characterizations were used to demonstrate the various levels of community involvement of the Blackburn Fellows.



Figure 5. Overarching values of the Blackburn Institute.

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to determine the lasting effect of the Blackburn Institute participation on post-graduate behaviors and beliefs. Based on the four overarching values of the Blackburn Institute and the Characterizations of Citizenship provided by Van Hecke (2004), the researcher assessed the post-collegiate involvement of Blackburn Fellows in order to gauge the participants' civic engagement. The objective was to understand the impact of the organization on students and their post-collegiate community engagement. The best way to understand the effect of the Blackburn Institute on the Fellows was to interview the participants about their experiences as students and their post-collegiate involvement.

After considering various research methods, the research method chosen for this study was basic qualitative research. Interviews were the best option for this research because interviews are based on experiences and perspectives (Lindlof, 2002). Qualitative research methods provide

an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. (Creswell, 1998, p. 15)

The interviews enabled the experiences and post-collegiate actions of the Blackburn Fellows to be relayed in a comprehensive way, and allowed common ideas to be extracted (Yin, 2003). This method is often used when research is being conducted concerning “areas of education where little research has been conducted; innovative programs and practices are often the focus of descriptive case studies” (Merriam, 1998, p. 38). Merriam (1998) provided the following five characteristics of a qualitative study that have helped to organize this study:

1. *Understanding the meaning people have constructed.* The interview process was based on the participants' perspectives of their experiences and involvement (Merriam, 1998);
2. *Researcher as primary instrument for collecting and analyzing data.* The interviewer was the primary instrument for gathering data with the pre-determined questionnaire (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1998). This allowed the interviewer to conduct the research based on the responses to questions not on the participants' interpretations of survey questions (Wolcott, 1990);
3. *Qualitative research involves fieldwork* (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1998). Qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting for the participants or in the field;
4. *Qualitative research is inductive.* The outputs of the researcher provided a framework for the collection of data. The research questions presented the direction of the intended outputs but the interview was open for more discussion (Merriam, 1998); and
5. *The product of qualitative research is richly descriptive.* Qualitative research lends itself to gathering words that describe the process and the meaning of what is being studied (Merriam, 1998).

These five characteristics were important to this qualitative study because the participants shared stories about their experiences as undergraduate students as well as their current community involvement and what it means to them.

Research Questions

The intent of this qualitative research was to determine if participation in the Blackburn Institute as an undergraduate student at The University of Alabama affected the post-collegiate behaviors and beliefs of a Blackburn Fellow. The overarching question was, *what are the post graduation civic engagement behaviors and beliefs of Blackburn Fellows?* The secondary questions addressed in the study were as follows:

1. In what ways do Blackburn Fellows engage in behaviors which reflect the Blackburn Institute mission and overarching values of 1) diversity of opinion, 2) networking through the generations, 3) call to action, and 4) lifetime commitment to being a change agent after graduation;
2. In what ways do Blackburn Fellows engage in behaviors which reflect Van Hecke's five characteristics of citizenship: 1) civic and political engagement; 2) public good; 3) community service; 4) moral discernment; and 5) communities across difference; and
3. To what degree do Blackburn Fellows attribute these behaviors to their participation in the Blackburn Institute?

Design of Questionnaire

The National Civic Engagement Survey, Appendix I, used by The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, was adapted for the purposes of this study. The questions were altered for this qualitative research and the order of the questions were changed based on the theoretical framework provided by Van Hecke (2004) and the Blackburn Institute. Some questions from the original survey were not needed for this study and, therefore, were eliminated. The questions were adapted for qualitative research versus the initial

quantitative survey. The table below illustrates the connections between the research questions of this investigation, the theoretical framework, and the questions used in the questionnaire.

Table 2

Linking Research Questions, Theoretical Framework and Interview Questions

Overarching Values of the Blackburn Institute	Characterizations of Citizenship (Van Hecke, 2004)	Questionnaire for Interviews
Lifetime Commitment	Public Good	Questions 7-11
A Call to Action	Community Service	Questions 12-18
Mission Statement of Blackburn Institute	Political Engagement	Questions 19-22
Diversity of Opinion	Moral Development	Questions 23-25
Networking through the Generations	Communities across Difference	Questions 25-28

Site Selection

The University of Alabama (UA) is located in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in the southeast region of the United States. UA is a large four-year institution serving more than 27,000 students. UA is a comprehensive doctoral, student-centered tier one research institution. As Alabama’s first public college, UA is the flagship institution in the state.

The University of Alabama was recently granted the distinction of Carnegie Classification of Civic Engagement based on several dimensions of the culture at the University. Through this classification, the institution looked internally to find the many activities and courses that directly support the mission of The University of Alabama which is “to advance the intellectual and social condition of the people of the State through quality programs of teaching,

research, and service” (<http://www.ua.edu/mission.html>). The researcher had the opportunity to work on the team that gathered the data for the Carnegie Classification. The team collected more than 125 pages of documented service learning and civic engagement activities occurring across UA’s campus.

The University of Alabama does not lack for opportunities of engagement on campus. Even before classes start for freshmen, new students are encouraged to participate in a day of volunteerism called Ripple Effect. The Honors College also offers a week of service options through programs such as Alabama Action, Outdoor Action, and Vision First. Upper classmen are asked to assist with move-in days at the dorms. All of this before classes start. During the first weeks of school, The Source, formerly known as Coordinating Council for Student Organizations, hosts Get on Board Day, a student organization fair showcasing more than 300 organizations.

Academic organizations such as the Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility and student affairs departments such as the Community Service Center work together to encourage civic engagement. The two departments share a staff member who works primarily with Service Learning Pro, a computer program that tracks community service hours, service learning courses, and civic engagement of students. Service Learning Pro is growing in popularity but is still not utilized to its fullest extent to collect all engagement activities at The University of Alabama.

This institution was not only chosen based on proximity but also based on the commitment of The University of Alabama to advancing the “social condition of the people of the State . . . through service.” More specifically, the Blackburn Institute was selected to research because of the mission and vision of the organization. Being a Blackburn Fellow, the researcher is passionate about learning the effect of participation on other Fellows. The

Blackburn Institute has been located on the second floor of Temple Tutwiler Hall on the west side of campus for 3 years. The building is quaint, often mistaken for a sorority house, providing a home-like atmosphere for students.

Participant Selection

A purposeful sample can occur in a variety of ways. The sample can connect to and be influenced based on research site, time, people, and events (Merriam, 1998). The sample for this study was selected from a database of Blackburn Fellows. Access to the database was granted by Dr. Kathleen Cramer, the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs. Permission to contact and interview the members of the Blackburn Institute was also granted by Dr. Philip Westbrook, Director of the Blackburn Institute (see Appendix D). The criterion for being selected in the random sample was that the Fellow must be living in the state of Alabama. The sample was restricted to Blackburn Fellows in the state of Alabama because the mission of the Institute explicitly states

The Blackburn Institute is developing a network of leaders, the Blackburn Fellows, who have a clear understanding of the challenges that face the state of Alabama. The Institute provides the fellows opportunities to explore issues and identify strategic actions that will improve the quality of life for our state and nation (<http://blackburninstitute.org/about/home/>, para. 1).

The researcher, therefore, felt it was important to only select Blackburn Fellows currently living in the state of Alabama for the purposes of this study.

After narrowing the 425 Fellows to only the 200 Fellows with a current mailing address in the state of Alabama, the names of the possible participants were listed on individual pieces of paper and placed in a bowl. From the bowl, a Blackburn Fellow drew 25 names to participate in the study. A list of the current known locations for Blackburn Fellows can be found in Appendix G. The names of the participants have been kept confidential using a code known only to the

researcher. Fourteen males and eleven females were selected. Of the 200 Fellows living in the state of Alabama, fifty-six Fellows were contacted to participate in this study. Thirty-five Fellows responded with some of those declining the interview.

The participant selection process, following the attempt at a random sample, comprised of the researcher selecting Fellows from different cohort years. Selecting Fellows from different cohort year would ensure all classes in the ten-year span being studied were represented. It was important to have all the years represented because the experiences were so different. The first few years, mid 1990s, programming for the Blackburn Institute consisted of Fellows attending a retreat. In the late 1990s, a trip to Montgomery was added as the Protective Life Government Experience. In the early 2000s, the Blackburn Institute embarked on the first Burt Jones Travel Experience learning about a community in Alabama. From then, the programming continued to expand adopting the Kettering model for deliberative discourse and hosting community-wide conversations. During that same time frame, student Fellows selected a yearly theme to be the focus of the year and the Winter Symposium, an annual gathering of all Blackburn Fellows to learn about an issue facing the state. The different classes also provided some variation in age for this study and career levels.

Table 3 is a list of the Blackburn Fellows, listed by their pseudonym, selected to participate in the study along with their induction year in the Blackburn Institute, type of community they are now living in, gender and their profession.

Table 3

List of Participants

Pseudonym	Year Inducted	Type of Community	Gender	Profession
Sam	1994-1995	Rural	Male	Academia
Kate	1994-1995	Urban	Female	Healthcare
Melanie	1994-1995	Rural	Female	Academia
Rob	1994-1995	Urban	Male	Attorney
James	1995-1996	Urban	Male	Attorney
Brian	1995-1996	Urban	Male	Sales
Donna	1996-1997	Rural	Female	Academia
Luke	1996-1997	Urban	Male	Sales
Jennifer	1996-1997	Urban	Female	Attorney
Mark	1996-1997	Urban	Male	Attorney
Edward	1997-1998	Urban	Male	Attorney
Justin	1997-1998	Urban	Male	MBA
Cindy	1998-1999	Rural	Female	Academia
Jerry	1998-1999	Urban	Male	Sales
Sara	1998-1999	Urban	Female	Attorney
Elizabeth	1999-2000	Rural	Female	Sales
Nick	2000-2001	Urban	Male	Industrial
Jason	2000-2001	Urban	Male	Attorney
Lindsay	2001-2002	Rural	Female	Academia
Lisa	2001-2002	Urban	Female	Media
Jack	2002-2003	Urban	Male	Attorney
Hillary	2002-2003	Urban	Female	PR/Media
Matthew	2002-2003	Urban	Male	CPA
Ken	2003-2004	Rural	Male	Healthcare
Mary	2003-2004	Urban	Female	Media

Unfortunately, the researcher was unable to select a truly randomized sample because of lack of response from the initial email. Additional steps to contact those randomly selected were made. A few participants that did not respond to email requests did respond to a request made over Facebook. The sample selected does represent all of the classes of Fellows. Twenty percent of the participants are African-American. This percentage is similar to a typical cohort of Fellows. The interview responses did show some variations in response to several factors that could include differences in leadership, changes to the curriculum, variances in group dynamics, the expectations of student Fellows, and on-campus politics; however, the gender and ethnicity of participants did not seem to be a factor in the experiences of the Fellows.

Data Collection

The interview protocol, Appendix B, and study design were reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board prior to any research being conducted. The approval letter and the IRB application can be found in Appendix E. Once the IRB approved the study, an email was sent to participants requesting a response. An email was sent to each participant requesting that they participate in an hour-long interview that would be used for a dissertation. The text for the email is in Appendix F. A follow-up phone call occurred once initial contact was made. A date, time, and location were determined for the interview.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted for this study. Interviewing is the most common form of data collection (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 1998). The researcher explained the study, and then asked for permission to record and transcribe the interview. Each participant was asked to sign the Informed Consent Form. A copy of the form is in Appendix C. The first series of questions required a factual response. A non-threatening, neutral, or factual question is best to open the interview (Merriam, 1998).

Following the opening factual questions, a several series of questions were asked to answer the research questions while utilizing the framework provided by Van Hecke (2004) and the Blackburn Institute. The first series of questions addressed the Fellow's lifetime participation in the Blackburn Institute and Van Hecke's (2004) characterization of public good. The second series of questions addressed the Blackburn Institute's call to action and Van Hecke's (2004) community service characterization. The third series of questions addressed the Blackburn Institute's mission statement and Van Hecke's political engagement characterization. The fourth series of questions addressed the Blackburn Institute's value of facilitating a diversity of opinion and Van Hecke's (2004) moral discernment. The fifth, and final, series of questions addressed the Blackburn Institute's value of networking through the generations as well as Van Hecke's (2004) communities across difference.

As with any qualitative research, reliability and validity of the data were a concern. In order to ensure the most truthful answers were provided, verification strategies (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002) were adopted. The first strategy, methodological coherence, is to make certain the research questions match the method adopted which should also complement how the data will be analyzed. For this study, methodological coherence was completed during the proposal and approval of the research.

The sample selected must be appropriate for the study. Having the appropriate sample, allows for saturating data which forms patterns and themes. An appropriate sample of Blackburn Fellows was selected for this study. The third strategy collecting and analyzing data concurrently was used in this study. The interview questions were altered throughout the process as themes emerged.

Thinking theoretically is the fourth strategy provided by Morse, et al. This strategy explains how emerging themes will be verified by new data. This strategy was employed throughout the interview process. The last strategy is theory development. “Theory is developed through two mechanisms: (1) as an outcome of the research process... (2) as a template for comparison and further development of the theory (Morse, et al., 2002, p.19)

The strategies detailed above are not the only way to gain validity in qualitative research. Quotations and detailed experiences were also used to ensure trustworthiness (Merriam, 1998). It is through all of the practices mentioned in this section that the researcher ensured truthful answers from participants; however, only the participant is aware of the complete truth is told in the interview.

Data Analysis

The interviews provided information on the participants’ current community involvement and their past involvement as well as their experiences and perceptions of the Blackburn Institute. Qualitative data deals with meanings and interactions (Dey, 1993) which led to the responses during the questioning. Comparisons of responses were used during the interview process in order identify possible themes during the process (Merriam, 1998). The connections between the responses were examined to determine what factor or activities during college may have contributed to the individual being civically engaged. It is the “process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others (Bogden & Biklen, 1992, p. 153).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) presented a technique for gathering qualitative data that is a constant comparative method. This technique was used throughout the interviewing process.

From interview to interview, the questions were slightly adjusted in order to gather the data needed for the study. As with some qualitative research, a specific analysis method, such as an editing style or a template approach (Crabtree & Miller, 1992) was used for this investigation in the sense that the interview was used a template with the option to edit the questions throughout the process.

Merriam (1998) described six strategies for validating qualitative data including triangulation, member checks, long-term observation, peer examination, participatory or collaborative modes of research, and researcher's bias. For this study, the researcher used triangulation, member checks, and researcher's biases. Long-term observation, peer examination, and participatory or collaborative modes of research may be considered methods for future research.

Triangulation by an additional source occurred through the collection of historical data held within the Blackburn Institute office such as the location of Blackburn Fellows and the themes of each year. Demographical data and giving history can be acquired through triangulation. The participants were from different classes of Fellows allowing for different perspectives of the Institute. *Member checks* were accomplished by emailing Fellows a copy of their interview transcripts for verification of accuracy. Later, a draft copy of the report for verification of findings and conclusions was emailed to the participants.

Once the interviews occurred and transcriptions were completed, the coding of the data began. Using an inductive data analysis approach, a large amount of transcription data was condensed through data coding. Coding procedures developed by Strauss and Corbin (1990) involve breaking down the data, conceptualizing it, and putting it back together in new ways. This is the way theories are formed from the data collected. Open coding, axial coding and

selective coding were used to analyze the data. Open coding will assist in developing the categories of information. Two sample transcripts that have been coded can be found in Appendix J. The colors of the text do reflect the open coding process. The significance of each color is listed in Table 4.

Table 4

Open Coding for Transcripts

Categories	Color of Text
Demographics	Blue
Characteristics of Participant	Green
Community Involvement	Red
Citizenship	Purple
Benefits of being a Blackburn Fellow	Orange
Experience with the Blackburn Institute	Peach
Impact of Blackburn Institute	Brown
Diversity of Opinion	Pink
Volunteer Hours	Turquoise

Axial coding helped to connect the categories and concepts derived from the interviews. A sample of the axial coding used for this study can be found in Table 5. Selective coding connected the data and the categories resulting in the findings of the study. The selective coding occurred when condensing the data into fewer categories or putting the data back together.

Table 5

Sample of the Axial Coding

Person	Characteristics of Students Selected as Blackburn Fellows	Current Community Engagement	Citizenship	Benefits of Being a Blackburn Fellow	Experiences with the Blackburn Institute	Impact of BI	Hours	Commute
	<p>a. Student orgs, interests, spirituality, parental impact</p> <p>I think that I kind of had that I was civic minded before Blackburn and what Blackburn did was reiterated to me the importance of civic involvement. It has opened my eyes to several different ways that one can become involved and also kind of kept me abreast of what some of the gaps are where there needs to be more involvement. So I think that the Blackburn Institute has fostered that civic mindedness umm retrospectively instead of preempted that civic mindedness. So it's been something that has um has maybe you get the picture I think that its helped shape my civic involvement more so than create it.</p>	<p>Where/with whom, how much, BI involvement, working with others</p> <p>I think that one person can make a change and I think that one person has to make a change by being active, by being visible in the community, by being a person who doesn't simply reside in the community but um becomes a part of the community.</p>	<p>Characteristic of good citizen, responsibility versus choice</p> <p>someone who takes ownership in the area where they live. I think it's someone who um uh participates in the um uh in the political um system in our country by taking advantage of privileges to vote, I mean I'm not saying necessarily run for office but um certainly being an active member of society. Uh I think the characteristics of a good citizen is someone who looks out for their fellow man.</p>	<p>Social capital – reputation of org, networking, broadening perspectives</p> <p>I don't think I am motivated to have interactions with people who are not like me. , it demonstrated to me the power of a group of people. The ability to problem solve as a group, being more powerful than an individual trying to take something on. It um provided me with um kind of renewed enthusiasm about what a group of young leaders with very little experience outside the university of Alabama can actually do to effect change in the state.</p>	<p>As a student – pre travel experiences, As alumni Knowing Dr. John L. Blackburn</p> <p>Um not been able to do it but certainly its something that I would love to be able to do. And I really appreciate the fact that Blackburn Institute reach outs reaches out to young leaders in an effort to get them more acclimated to what community level issues might be in areas that they may or may not be familiar with, particularly in the rural areas of Alabama which I think are so often ignored. what I gained from him as an individual was less one on one discussion and more um watching him model behavior. Hearing him speak about his vision and problems that he solved um issues that were inherent in the state.</p>			
Sam	<p>I always understood that being involved in the political process was important. I mean that kind of foundation comes from home and church and things like that so I understood that. Being at UA and in Blackburn and student judiciary, which is part of SGA, just heightened it.</p>	<p>Blackburn was still trying to get organized together and evolved per se. So I don't wanna say that it had a moral impact on me because I don't fell like it did. I feel like there is a heavier burden on the educated to lift those burdens and alleviate and solve the problems of society.</p>	<p>A good citizen, I think a good citizen is one who votes. I guess because November 2 is just around the corner that's on everyone's mind. I also think that good citizens try to see beyond their community or their subdivision and to look at things from the perspective of those who live in a different zip code or on the other side of the tracks.</p>	<p>Maybe, if we want to count Facebook that would have to be daily. But if we're not counting Facebook and we're talking to face to face interactions probably once or twice a month and ironically it's when I'm in a mixed audience that a difference of opinion come about.</p>	<p>I'm proud you know I tell people "Well you'll always be a Blackburn Fellow" kind of thing I'm proud of it, but it seems like the students now, which is how things should be as years progress, just get so much more mileage out of it. A</p>	<p>I don't think Blackburn necessarily changed any of my beliefs or that necessarily it provided a forum for the diversity of opinions, there was no debates, no controversial anything. It was about civic engagement, Dr. Blackburn's leadership and the like. It was good to see a group talk about the good and the potential of the state of Alabama as a native of Alabama and hearing so much bad or telling people your college decision and they would say "Oh, well you don't wanna go away" or different things.</p>	10/ month	1 hr
Donna								1.25 hr

Bias Statement

Qualitative studies are intertwined with biases based on the researcher, research methods, sample population, and even interview locations (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Based on personal and professional experiences, the researcher conducting this study believes that it is a responsibility of higher education to teach civic engagement therefore creating social capital, and that the Blackburn Institute is a model for building social capital through a Fellow's collegiate experiences and post-collegiate activities. Qualitative methods, when studying organizational dynamics, are the ideal choice (Davey & Symon, 2001), but may provide more opportunities for biases.

Researcher Positionality

Though I have been involved personally and a professionally with the Blackburn Institute for 8 years, I first learned about the Blackburn Institute as a high school student, fifteen years ago, because my older sister was in the initial cohort of Fellows. I attended my first Winter Symposium as a spouse of a Fellow in 2003 and attended the event ever since. In March of 2007, I was honored with the distinction of becoming a Blackburn Fellow as a doctoral student in Higher Education Administration who had returned to school. The following May I became a full-time staff member of the Blackburn Institute coordinating the student Fellow experience. For three years, the researcher served the Blackburn Institute in various capacities including Interim Director and Assistant Director. I recently changed positions at The University of Alabama and am now the Associate Director of Student Development for the Honors College.

I explained at the very beginning of each interview that a structural analysis of the Blackburn Institute was not the goal of this study, rather a reflective examination of the role that the Blackburn Institute has played in its Fellows' lives. The purpose of this study is to examine

the effect of participation in the Blackburn on the behaviors and beliefs of Fellows not to demonstrate the positives and negatives of the Institute. Participants understood the purpose and answered the questions accordingly.

My relationship with the Blackburn Institute and Fellows only impacted the structure of the interviews in the sense that time was spent catching up with friends and colleagues.

Interviews included personal stories that were important to the study. Another prior concern to the Blackburn Institute was if participants believe that the nature of the organization might be altered due to their comments. I explained that this study was being conducted as a doctoral student not as a staff member or a previous staff member. My former professional role with the Blackburn Institute did not impact the nature of the interviews.

Summary

Chapter III explained how interviews would provide the needed information to answer the three research questions posed in this study. When determining the best research methods to employ for this study, qualitative research was better to examine the experiences and perspectives of Fellows. Following the guidelines set forth in this chapter, the interviews were conducted, transcribed, and analyzed. The next chapter presents the findings and the emerging themes driven by the data analysis from the interviews. Chapter V answers the research questions proposed in this study as well as discusses the conclusions and implications of the research.

CHAPTER IV:

DATA ANALYSIS

Everyday you should try to improve the lives of somebody who needs your help and therefore improving the community at large, the university, the city, the state. You know that's one thing about the Blackburn Institute, particularly Dr. Blackburn, that I don't think I'll ever forget is the sense of urgency to do something that day and not wait until tomorrow to do something, to do it then. (James)

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the lasting impact of the Blackburn Institute on undergraduate students. As a leadership organization focused on civic engagement at The University of Alabama, the Blackburn Institute offered many different experiences for students over the ten years being studied. Even as alumni, the Blackburn Fellows are encouraged to attend events and continue to participate in the organization recognizing the mission to create a network of ethical leaders who will work together to better the state of Alabama. Chapter III presented the way participants were selected and the way the research was conducted. Chapter IV presents the findings and analysis of the twenty-five interviews with Blackburn Fellows. This chapter is organized into nine sections including introduction, profiles, six themes, and conclusion.

Profiles

This section provides additional information regarding the participants of the study. The profile information introduces participants for the purposes of understanding the analysis later in the chapter. For anonymity, all participants were given a unique pseudonym that is used throughout the study.

Donna is a thirty-three-year-old female who graduated in 1998. She earned a master's degree and is working in academia. She commutes an hour to and from work each day. Donna is active as an alumna of her sorority and is somewhat active in her community. She does not consider herself to be active in the Blackburn Institute at this time.

Sam is a thirty-nine-year-old male who graduated in 1993. He earned a master's degree, is currently taking classes in a doctoral program, and is working full-time in academia. He commutes an hour to and from work each day. Sam volunteers with youth in his hometown. He does not consider himself to be active in the Blackburn Institute at this time but did state that he reads the emails and keeps up with what is going on.

Luke is a thirty-six-year-old male who graduated in 1997. He has a full-time sales job as well as serves as an elected official in his hometown. He has a three-year-old child. He admits to learning to say "no" to involvement to be able to focus on family. He previously served as an advisory board member for the Blackburn Institute and helps when asked.

James is a thirty-four-year-old male who graduated in 1998. He has a juris doctorate and works as an attorney. He serves his community through pro bono legal work. He also serves as an advisory board member for the Blackburn Institute and wishes he could be twice as involved with the organization.

Cindy is a thirty-four-year-old female who graduated in 1999. She earned a master's degree and is currently enrolled in a doctoral program. She works part time and has four stepchildren that she shares custody of with her husband who commutes seventy-five minutes each way to and from work. Her commute is about twenty minutes. She considers herself to be more active with the Blackburn Institute now than she was as a student.

Mark is a thirty-nine year-old male who graduated in 1993. He earned a master's degree and works as an attorney. He is married and has one child. He volunteers with a professional organization among other things. Mark is an advisory board member for the Blackburn Institute and considers himself to be very active with the organization.

Lindsay is a twenty-nine-year-old female who graduated in 2003. She earned a master's degree and is currently enrolled in a doctoral program. She works full time in academia. She commutes forty-five minutes each way to and from work. She is very active in her community but not with the Blackburn Institute anymore.

Edward is a thirty-three-year-old male who graduated in 1999. He has a law degree and is an attorney. He commutes ten minutes each way to and from work. He is active in young professional organizations. He considers himself to be active in the Blackburn Institute though he has not been able to attend many events in the last two years because of scheduling conflicts.

Jennifer is a thirty-nine-year-old female who graduated in 1993. She has a law degree and is an attorney. She is married and has two children. English is not her first language. She is active in a state-wide professional organization. She serves as an advisory board member for the Blackburn Institute and considers herself to be active. She noted how she liked to interact with the students as much as possible.

Melanie is a thirty-eight-year-old female who graduated in 1994. She earned a master's degree and is employed full-time in academia. She is married and has two children. Her commute is fifteen minutes each way. She is active in her children's school and church. She says based on her participation in events she is not active. However, she does keep up with the email notifications.

Kate is a thirty-six-year-old female who graduated in 1996. She is a medical doctor in rural Alabama. She is married and has two children. Her commute is 45 minutes each way. She is volunteers with the activities that her children participate. She does not consider herself to be active in the Blackburn Institute but does make an effort to attend events as her schedule permits.

Nick is a thirty-one-year-old male who graduated in 2001. He earned a master's degree and is employed in an industrial organizational. He is married. He commutes an hour each way. He is very active at church and the Wesley Foundation but not many other organizations in the community. He considers himself to be active with the Blackburn Institute.

Jason is a thirty-year-old male who graduated in 2002. He earned a juris doctorate and is an attorney. His commute is between 25 to 45 minutes each way. He is very active with the Roteract Club noting that he volunteers an average of ten to fifteen hours per week. He considers himself to be "somewhat" active in the Blackburn Institute.

Jack is a twenty-eight-year-old male who graduated in 2004. He earned a juris doctorate and is an attorney. He is not married. His commute is fifteen minutes each way. He volunteers with his church and is active with the UA alumni association. He does not consider himself to very active in the Blackburn Institute.

Hillary is a twenty-eight-year-old female who graduated in 2004. She is currently enrolled in a master's program and works full-time in an industrial business. She is not married. Her commute is about fifteen minutes each way. She is involved in numerous community activities. As an undergrad, she served in a leadership position in the Blackburn Institute. She considers herself to be active but does say that she could be more active with the Blackburn Institute if she chose to be.

Rob is a thirty-seven-year-old male who graduated in 1995. He earned a master's degree and a juris doctorate. He is an attorney. He is married and has a five-year-old child. His commute is about twenty minutes. He did not think he was a good candidate for this study because he is not active in the community or with a church. He works a lot and the remaining time is devoted to family. He does not consider himself to be active in the Blackburn Institute but would try to help out if asked about a specific task.

Ken is a twenty-eight-year-old male who graduated in 2004. He earned a master's degree. He is married and has a child. He works in the medical field. He is active in his community working with youth to go to college. He is an advisory board member and considers himself active with the Blackburn Institute.

Elizabeth is a thirty-two-year-old female who graduate in 2001. She earned a master's degree and works in sales. Her commute is about twenty minutes each way. She volunteers a lot with activities sponsored by her company. She noted some weeks she volunteers fifteen to twenty hours per week. She considers herself to be active with the Blackburn Institute but says that it is not as much as it should be.

Chad is a thirty-four-year-old male who graduated in 1999. He has a master's degree and works in an industrial field. He is married and has two children. He has learned to be really involved in a couple of organizations and not in a little involved in many organizations. He does consider himself to be active with the Blackburn Institute and has served on the advisory board previously.

Lisa is a twenty-nine-year-old female who graduated in 2003. She has earned master's degree and works in media. She is married and has a child. Her commute is seven minutes. She

is involved in her community through her work activities and her church. She noted that she gets inspiration from being with her Blackburn cohort.

Jerry is a thirty-four-year-old male who graduated in 1999. He earned a master's degree and works in sales. He is single. He volunteers a lot with his church as well as other community organizations. He has a few other family members involved in the Blackburn Institute and tries to stay involved with the organization.

Matthew is a twenty-seven-year-old male who graduated in 2005. He earned a master's degree and works in accounting. He is married and has a child. He commutes about twenty minutes each way. He volunteers with company sponsored events and church. He regularly attends Blackburn events and brings his wife as a guest. He added that he regularly sees Blackburn Fellows at unofficial events.

Sara is a thirty-five-year-old female who graduated in 1997. She earned a juris doctorate and is an attorney. She is married and has one child. Her commute is fifteen minutes each way. She recently bought a business and is not able to volunteer as much as she would like. She tries to attend at least one event per year.

Mary is a twenty-seven-year-old female who graduated in 2005. She is working in media. She has one child but not married. Her commute is fifteen to twenty minutes each way. She is active with several organizations in the community. She noted that she stays in regular contact with her friends from the Blackburn Institute even though she is not able to attend as many events as she would like.

Brian is a thirty-five-year-old male who graduated in 1997. He earned his master's degree and is working in politics. He is married and has two children. His commute is less than five minutes each way. His job does require a lot of travel. He has served on a number of boards

around the community. He does not consider himself be active in the Blackburn Institute but is proud to be called a Blackburn Fellow.

Table 6 has been included in order to provide more information about the participants. The table also serves as a quick reference for the data analysis.

Table 6

Pseudonym, Year Inducted, Type of Community, Gender, Marital Status, Children and

Profession of Blackburn Institute Research Participants

Pseudonym	Year Inducted	Type of Community	Gender	Marital Status	Children Yes/No	Profession
Sam	1994-1995	Rural	Male	Single	No	Academia
Kate	1994-1995	Urban	Female	Married	Yes	Healthcare
Melanie	1994-1995	Rural	Female	Married	Yes	Academia
Rob	1994-1995	Urban	Male	Married	Yes	Attorney
James	1995-1996	Urban	Male	Married	No	Attorney
Brian	1995-1996	Urban	Male	Married	Yes	Sales
Donna	1996-1997	Rural	Female	Married	No	Academia
Luke	1996-1997	Urban	Male	Married	Yes	Sales
Jennifer	1996-1997	Urban	Female	Married	No	Attorney
Mark	1996-1997	Urban	Male	Married	Yes	Attorney
Edward	1997-1998	Urban	Male	Single	No	Attorney
Justin	1997-1998	Urban	Male	Married	Yes	MBA
Cindy	1998-1999	Rural	Female	Married	Yes	Academia
Jerry	1998-1999	Urban	Male	Single	No	Sales
Sara	1998-1999	Urban	Female	Married	Yes	Attorney
Elizabeth	1999-2000	Rural	Female	Single	Yes	Sales
Nick	2000-2001	Urban	Male	Married	No	Industrial
Jason	2000-2001	Urban	Male	Single	No	Attorney
Lindsay	2001-2002	Rural	Female	Married	No	Academia
Lisa	2001-2002	Urban	Female	Married	Yes	Media
Jack	2002-2003	Urban	Male	Single	No	Attorney
Hillary	2002-2003	Urban	Female	Single	No	PR/Media
Matthew	2002-2003	Urban	Male	Married	Yes	CPA
Ken	2003-2004	Rural	Male	Married	Yes	Healthcare
Mary	2003-2004	Urban	Female	Single	Yes	Media

Themes

Through interviewing twenty-five Blackburn Fellows who joined the Blackburn Institute from the inception of the organization (1994) until 2004 and guided by the research questions, six themes emerged regarding the participants' experiences in the Blackburn Institute. After the interviews were transcribed the answers to each question were categorized using open coding. Using axial coding methods, the data was then analyzed and grouped based on commonalities that eventually became the themes. The themes that emerged in this study based on the responses of the participants included the following:

1. Characteristics of Students Selected as Blackburn Fellows
 - a. Undergraduate participation
 - b. Spirituality and parental influence
 - c. Personality Traits of Blackburn Fellows
2. Current Community Involvement
 - a. Barriers of volunteerism
 - b. Working with organizations
 - c. Time given to community
3. Citizenship
 - a. Characteristics of a good citizen
 - b. The responsibility for engagement
4. Benefits of Being a Blackburn Fellow
 - a. Reputation of the Blackburn Institute
 - b. Networking and the development of social capital
 - c. Broadening perspectives

5. Experiences with the Blackburn Institute

- a. As a student
- b. As alumni
- c. Knowing Dr. John L. Blackburn

6. Lasting Impact

Characteristics of Students Selected as Blackburn Fellows

This section examines the influences of undergraduate students prior to becoming a Blackburn Fellow. Participants were asked to comment on why they were selected to be a Blackburn Fellow. Jerry stated

I'd like to think I was chosen for my involvement, because I am very driven and motivated to be involved and not just to be a passive member of anything. It was a new organization, obviously. My level of interest in being in on something on the ground level is even more so than- I like to be involved in as many things as possible, but it was also extra intriguing because it was a start-up or new organization. Plus, I have certain family ties to the group and to the Blackburn Institute; [advisory board] members who were instrumental and continue to be and I knew about it that way as well.

The Fellows also shared how their sense of responsibility was developed over many years, not just while in the Blackburn Institute. Kate stated, "I believe that you can advocate for change or for justice...A lot of times my experience from college has given me the experience in leadership roles and been able to apply those to church and community functions." Four areas emerged that contributed to their desire to give back to their communities. The four areas are participation in organizations as an undergraduate, spirituality, parental influence, and personality traits. This section discusses each of these areas.

Undergraduate participation. All participants noted that they were active in many other organizations as a student at The University of Alabama. Fifteen specifically credited their membership in the Blackburn Institute to involvement in other organizations. Organizations

such as Freshman Forum, Student Government Association, Coordinating Council for Student Organizations (CCSO), and Capstone Men and Women, were all organizations that were repeatedly credited to leading to participation in the Blackburn Institute. More specifically, Freshman Forum is a highly selective student leadership organization for freshman only and might be considered a feeder because these students are considered to be top student leaders. James stated that Freshman Forum was one of the only other organizations that taught civic engagement. The Coordinating Council for Student Organizations is a coordinating body to assist all student organizations in administrative tasks and might be considered to be a feeder because of the interest of these students to serve all organizations on campus. Capstone Men and Women are the ambassadors for The University of Alabama, participation in that program may lead to selection for participation in the Blackburn Institute as these students are highly regarded within the University community.

Sam shared that he was involved in “way too much” but more specifically “organizations like Freshman Forum and CCSO that was pretty much the extent of my involvement. No band, no sports.” Jerry credited his involvement and personality being the reason he was selected as a Blackburn Fellow.

I'd like to think I was chosen for my involvement, because I am very driven and motivated to be involved and not just to be a passive member of anything. It was a new organization, obviously. My level of interest in being in on something on the ground level is even more so than- I like to be involved in as many things as possible, but it was also extra intriguing because it was a start-up or new organization.

Jennifer thought it was a recommendation that provided her the opportunity to be associated with the Blackburn Institute.

I think probably had some good recommendations perhaps. It's changed so much since I first was selected as a Fellow... We didn't even do interviews, I think they just selected based upon applications... I guess it said something about service I'm sure. So they just probably went on recommendations.

Jennifer's comment was similar to others who felt they were invited into the Blackburn Institute based on knowing someone that had the influence to recommend potential Fellows.

Spirituality and parental influence. Spirituality and parental influence were grouped together because participants most spoke of the two areas of their life as one entity. In fact, four participants stated religion and thirteen stated church as reasons for their desire to give back to the community. Eleven participants stated parents and eight participants stated family as the reason for their desire to give back. Participants were able to list more than one entity that influenced their values beliefs.

Though Chapter II presents spirituality as more of a holistic being not centered on religion, the participants that spoke of spirituality did seem to be referring to their relationship with God and church. Nick stated, "It all starts with my family and my church and friends for that matter and developing my personal traits through church and through my family that would be the foundation." Based on the numbers previous presented, most participants interviewed agreed with Nick's assessment that the foundation of giving back to the community came during childhood and was based on family and church. Donna agreed that she was civic minded before joining the Blackburn Institute and further stated:

I was civic minded before Blackburn and what Blackburn did was reiterated to me the importance of civic involvement. It has opened my eyes to several different ways that one can become involved and also kind of kept me abreast of what some of the gaps are where there needs to be more involvement. So I think that the Blackburn Institute has fostered that civic mindedness umm retrospectively instead of preempted that civic mindedness.

Matthew credited his parents first with the development of his moral and ethics.

Primarily my parents. Watching them and the books and other things that they had either in the house or directed me to read. I think that's primary and I think second would be the church. Growing up and the discussions that I had and church camps and things like

that where there were discussions not only about faith but also about social justice and being a part of a community and those kind of things.

Although several participants noted that it was the influence of their parents and church that keep them civically engaged, they also noted that the Blackburn Institute reinforced those values and beliefs.

Personality Traits of Blackburn Fellows

Participants in the study proposed that the Blackburn Institute brings like-minded people together. Jerry added that it is not like-minded in the sense that everyone agrees all the time but like-minded in the sense that everyone wants to make a difference. Lisa explained, “The fact that the Blackburn Institute was a group of like-minded students that...had a passion and idealism of making things better, I guess I was just really interested in...the purpose of it.” Rob suggested that the Blackburn Institute attracts people who want to be involved in their communities.

...where the people that are in Blackburn already had that desire so it's gonna be, it may be how did it help more or how did it enhance it because I think probably I had the interest. I think my interest came from way back when I was little and my grandfather was the county commissioner and I used to do things with him when he campaigned or when he was doing stuff in the community, kind of where mine started.

Sara agreed with Rob's statement.

I think the reason that I was accepted to be a part of the Blackburn Institute because I was that type of person anyway that wanted to give back to society and be a leader...I honestly think I would be the same no matter what, but it has been an experience that certainly has enriched my life, but I don't think it's had that dramatic an impact on it from the standpoint that I wouldn't be the same person.

Mary explains that the Blackburn Institute's mission is similar to her personality.

I guess one of the things about me, I've kind of always been an over achiever. I've always had a strong sense of justice and that comes across in the activities that I choose to do and Blackburn is obviously a very prestigious organization, but one that also allows your passions to come through if you care about making the world a better place. It gives you something to focus on which is the state. So this is kind of a round about way of saying it fits me. It fits my personality. It fits along with my personality and my goals.

Brian agreed with Mary.

I think generally those that are in the Blackburn Institute are probably involved a little more with on campus things or with social and political issues than probably the average student at the university is. So there's that general level of, you kind of put pressure on yourself to be involved because you have that type of personality anyway.

Jennifer shared a personal story of how her circumstances affected her personality. She always emphasized empathy and diversity when she spoke to students because she was isolated as a child. "When I came to the United States I didn't speak English. I spoke French. [French] was my first language, I didn't speak the language. So I relate to the diversity aspect fundamentally because I was different from all the other kids. You know so I get it."

Current Community Involvement

Participants agreed that community involvement was an important aspect of their lives.

Mary explained why it was important for her to be involved in the community.

I really feel like life is a gift and being able to live in America is a gift. There is lots to complain about but there's a lot to be grateful for. It's always been my belief that you should give back.

Most participants expressed the specific desire to be able to do more in their communities.

Cindy explained, "It's not enough to just say that you care about something but you have to show it in the way that you tangibly do things that benefit somebody else."

This section addresses the barriers of volunteerism and the community organizations with which Fellows choose work. James agreed that everyone has the opportunity to make a difference in their community. He shared his contributions to the community.

I'd like to think I could make a pretty big difference just from the standpoint of having worked some in government with, having been pretty active in a variety of charities over the years. And also what I do everyday is try to solve problems for people and so I think I can be pretty effective at that.

Barriers of volunteerism. Family commitments and job constraints were by far the two top reasons why participants did not get more involved in their communities. Of the participants, eighteen were married and fourteen had children. During the interview, the thirteen participants each mentioned the time constraints because of the desire to be with their children and the activities their children participate in at school and church. Brian, a thirty-five-year-old, summed up the sentiments of other participants saying, “I think a lot of people my age probably are in that same area where either they are just starting a family or in the process of starting a family or starting a career so it’s a little difficult to attend all those things.”

Blackburn Fellows from the earlier years seemed to be more selective about their volunteer work. It could be due to more of the older Fellows having children. Luke, thirty-six-years-old commented,

You learn more a little bit more when you get older to say no and to balance yourself a little bit better and personal life is just as important as a lot of the things that you do outside of the home and sometimes that can get the best of you and you’ve gotta kind of reel things back in.”

The Blackburn Fellows were asked to estimate the number of hours per month or per week that were spent contributing to the community. Participants were encouraged to include time spent working with a church as well as community organizations. Participants often paused to think about the answer. Answers varied greatly between months and weeks. One notable result of the question was that participants who had a commute of greater than thirty minutes reported fewer volunteer hours. The commute from home to work ranged from twelve minutes to seventy-five minutes each way to work and home. Eight of the twenty-five participants commuted 45 minutes or more each way for work every day.

Work requirements and obligations had an impact in the level of involvement. Of the eight attorneys interviewed, all reported working an average of fifty hours a week or more.

Though all of the participants were not asked about an average work week other participants did report working more than fifty hours per week.

Working with community organizations. Some participants shared what organizations they were involved with and projects they work on to benefit their communities. Sam said he learned about group organization from the Blackburn Institute. He saw first hand “the ability to problem solve as a group, being more powerful than an individual trying to take something on.” Brian explained that there is an internal expectation to be involved in the community.

I think there’s kind of some general level of expectancy for you to be involved and pressure to, not pressure in a negative way just kind of thought that you ought to be. Some of the issues, some of the boards and things that I have been involved with here locally and statewide, you’ll bump into others that were in the Blackburn Institute so it kind of fosters that mentality in general.

Rotaract of Birmingham is one organization that was named repeatedly as an organization for young professionals of which many Blackburn Fellows are members. Jason and Chad both discussed the multiple hours that they spent each week as members and leaders of the Rotaract Club. Rotaract shares some of the same values of the Blackburn Institute like leadership and responsible citizenship. Rotaract also promotes being change agents which naturally attracts Blackburn Fellows in the Birmingham area. Jason and Chad both reported volunteering at least fifteen hours per week at times.

Jerry linked the Blackburn Institute to the Rotaract Club more succinctly than others.

I’m real involved with the Rotaract, which is the junior rotary of Birmingham, sponsored by the Birmingham Rotary Club, founded about six years ago. One of the first presidents was a former SGA president at Alabama, my good friend Bill Hankins in Blackburn. He was one of the first presidents [of Rotaract]. We’ve gone from a hand full of member to over a 150 active members. The largest Rotaract club in the world, we were given the top award by Rotary International right there in Birmingham Alabama.

Sam shared how he tried to not only work on projects in the community but sees a great benefit in integrating with the community at other events.

I try now to be at high school football games and help out with band boosters and things like that are important to the community that I live in. And I'm not sure that actually that makes any kind of social change itself but I feel like that certainly gives me leverage that if something should arise that needs the community's participation people see me, know me and I can then participate in that kind of change.

Participants who have children shared more frequently that they do not have time to participate in community activities and volunteer like they wish they could. Kate and Melanie both alluded to feeling "mommy-hood guilt" whenever they were not spending time with their children or working. Lisa felt similarly. "When I think of volunteering, I think of going out into the community and teaching kids to read or something. I wish I had time to do that. I haven't had that kind of involvement."

Citizenship

Blackburn Fellows realize the emphasis of the organization on responsible citizenship and being a change agent in their communities. Jerry explained how he views his role in the community.

As I get older, I feel a higher and higher sense of more of a responsibility to make a difference and when I see something that I don't agree with, ten years ago—I'm not saying I didn't care—but as I've matured in my age and in my role as a citizens and a business owner, I can't just let things go by. I'm just more in a place where I can say something about it now or care to—care to say something about it. I think all that's a part of the maturity process.

Participants noted not only how they are give back to the community but also how they hold each other informally accountable to be change agents. Elizabeth said, "I mean the Blackburn Institute, we do hold each other accountable probably in a very informal way, just conversations. But we also encourage each other in whatever it is that we're doing." She added, "it's not like it's a stated accountability...everybody knows [a Fellow] is the kind of worker."

Sam shared how he wanted to become a better citizen.

I think that even now I might tell you all day long that I am a good citizen but I think now more than ever I'm trying to be a better one so all that to say that I think I'm becoming more able to even converse about current events than I have been in the past.

Rob specifically shared in regards to citizenship and giving back to the community that anyone can be a change agent and start a conversation. It does not have to be an elected official.

I know you can be a catalyst for change, anybody can be a catalyst for change, it doesn't, you don't have to be any special, if you are dedicated to the goal and wanna see it happen you can make it happen. It's just that simple...All that being said it's just a lot of things grabbing at you and hopefully it's just managing those to try to harness what you do in the community but I think anybody can make a community change.

Characteristics of a good citizen. Participating Blackburn Fellows were asked to describe a good citizen and some of the characteristics a good citizen might have. The list ranges from being a Christian to voting to just reading the news and keeping up with issues in the community. Jennifer described a good citizen saying, "I think it's somebody who is selfless, thinks about others before they think about themselves, are concerned about those in their community, as well as obviously their own family. But I think that a good citizen is someone who cares about their community." Chad added, "I think, commitment to your goals, integrity, honesty."

Sam described a good citizen as someone that takes ownership in their community.

I think the first thing that might be someone who abides by the laws of the land. I think it's someone who takes ownership in the area where they live. I think it's someone who participates in the political system in our country by taking advantage of privileges to vote...I think the characteristics of a good citizen is someone who looks out for their fellow man. If I have certain resources available to me and am able to link someone who doesn't have that resource to that resource then I think that that's the characteristics of a good citizen.

Mary agreed with Sam stating, "Voting and knowing what's going on and if your community has some kind of festival, go check it out." Rob described being a good citizen as someone that pays their rent – their civic rent.

You've got a civic rent that you've gotta pay and you need to pay it. And it's basically you need to give back in some form or fashion cause you owe this rent, you know, you owe it. And so it goes back to your responsibility theory and so I think you've got it, I think there's just different ways people pay it but you need to pay it, you need to somehow do it. I guess it's like tithing in church you've gotta determine somehow or another have you done it enough.

Brian shared similar sentiments as Rob.

On a general basis one would be that you care about your community and respected the right to have dialogue in different things and opinions and direction; that you participate in the most elementary way in voting as it relates to being a good citizen. You have respect for the community where you live and for the other people that live around you and for the idea that branches not only from when you're in your community but when you're in other communities or other areas.

Matthew explained how he was impacted by others just by watching their actions and sometimes that is enough to be a good citizen. "Then by your work and actions you show not necessarily others what to do or how to do it, but that you do what you feel is right and hopefully others will see that or you'll have opportunities to have conversations to lead that way."

Responsibility for community. Participants were asked to comment on their beliefs concerning community service as either a responsibility or a choice. Most participants shared the same general idea that the responsibility to give back exists but the choice is where and how to give back. Matthew shared,

I definitely think there is a responsibility there to care for others and to work to make things better for society. But while there's that responsibility each person has to make a choice as to what their going to do and how much time they'll spend or where they'll focus their energies to do that. I think everybody has a responsibility, but we all have a choice as to whether we will, what we will do and how much we will do to try to make it better.

Three participants began answering the question in one way and then changed their mind while speaking. Brian began stating that giving back was a choice and then altered his opinion based on circumstances.

I think everybody has a choice in which they can be something at what level and I don't really think they need to be a differentiation which is more important than the other. But then I think those that have found themselves at different stages in their life or different economic stages in their life or in their profession maybe carry a little bit more responsibility in my view and have the capacity to do a little bit more, based on where they are in their life or their career.

Sara offered a very different opinion than others regarding her role and the responsibility to the community.

I feel my personal responsibility is to make others see that it is their responsibility and that's what I try to do through the organizations that I've described to you. That is basically their sole purpose. I think Blackburn obviously a lot of that does the same thing. They just really try to make people to consider it a responsibility and not an option.

Sara explained that the organizations she was involved with promoted more social justice issues not charity. She helps people to become able to help themselves.

Benefits of Being a Blackburn Fellow

When asked how participants benefited from being a part of the Blackburn Institute, the responses can be categorized in one of three areas: the reputation of the Blackburn Institute, the network offered by the Blackburn Institute, and the broadening of perspectives of participants. Though not asked about the building of social capital through the Blackburn Institute, it was apparent through the responses that the organization is a tool for building social capital. As did many other participants, Jerry emphasized how important the networking is to the organization. He stated, "I definitely think the networking is a benefit. Knowing different people in different places. I think that and the general knowledge of things going on around the state would be a benefit."

Lisa, a 2001-2002 Fellow, discussed how inspired she was as a student when listening to the older generation of Fellows who are still involved in the Blackburn Institute and their communities. She stated, "I do think it was really inspiring to see the way that the Blackburn

Institute has put young people in touch with people who are older who have impacted their community, who have been involved and done some amazing things and kind of breaks that gap between those two generations.”

Sam’s response was unique in that it was more introspective than the other responses. He stated, “It provided me with a kind of renewed enthusiasm about what a group of young leaders with very little experience outside the University of Alabama can actually do to effect change in the state.”

Reputation of the Blackburn Institute. Hillary said that the Blackburn Institute’s reputation has been so strong in various circles because of the Fellows and what they do. She said, “I think it helped me find a job. I mean it helped all my, that level of prestige helped where ok, she was a Fellow so she’s knows this person and this person and that helped.” Hillary later added, “It’s a respect level of the people who have been Fellows and have been in the Institute.”

Jerry stated

I’m honored to put the Blackburn Institute, to tell about it. I’m honored to tell people I’m involved with it. Because of what it stands for, it’s mission to really advance the state and to educate the next generation of leadership in the state, within the region, even on a national level, starting at the University of Alabama ground level. That’s an honor to be a part of that, because the Blackburn Institute is filled with fantastic individuals.

Brian has benefited from being a part of the Blackburn Institute because of the reputation that has been building especially in the political world.

I think that I’ve found now that if someone sees my name on a roll or someone asks me for a recommendation or something of that nature, I think [Blackburn’s] standing has definitely increased since I was there. I’ve utilized it in networking...[when] I have to submit a resume they’ll see that it’s on that and some of them often times questions are asked or someone will say “Hey, I was in Blackburn with you” or “you were in there when so and so.”

Networking. The mission of the Blackburn Institute as envisioned by Dr. John L. Blackburn was to create a network of ethical leaders that will work together across party lines

and across generations to improve the state of Alabama. Blackburn Fellows noted the value of the network provided by the Blackburn Institute. Elizabeth explained how she felt the Blackburn Institute network was meant to work. She stated

Because Dr. Blackburn had a vision that none of us really understood and that vision was all these people together is what's gonna make Alabama better. It's not picking out the ones that just wanna be politicians, it's not picking out the ones that are just gonna be doctors and putting them together, its putting all these people together that at some point are gonna cross paths to be better people.

Jack assessed how he felt the Blackburn Institute encouraged Fellows to utilize the network of leaders that comprised the organization. He said

I don't think the Blackburn idea was ever to have the model of the lone warrior. It was a model of leaders who rally others. So if I would think about a difference that I could make in a community using the lessons of Blackburn it would be ok, I'm an individual but it would be all about rallying a group. That's the way I think that I guess, social change is what you asked, social change could be accomplished.

For years Melanie, a 1994-1995 Fellow, has known Fellows who have been younger than her due to her profession. It was in the last couple of years that she realized the true value of the Blackburn network. She stated

I've run into people here much younger than I who were in Blackburn long after I had graduated but simply by having that single common ground it creates a bond and I don't know if that's just knowing the caliber of individuals that is accepted into Blackburn, if that's knowing that what someone's values and belief systems would likely be, to be accepted into that organization, there's that commonality there.

Melanie added that she believes when it comes time to work on an issue in her rural community, she will be able to call upon other local Blackburn Fellows to assist.

Hillary feels the formal and informal networks of the Blackburn Institute are important. She goes on to discuss how the annual events help maintain relationships. "I'm still friends with people today who are in Blackburn and we still keep in touch and they weren't in my little social group in college so that's nice."

Broadening perspectives. One of the overarching values of the Blackburn Institute is the diversity of opinion. As Blackburn Fellows, students were exposed to differing opinions as well as differing cultures. This exposure provided the opportunity for students to have deliberative discussions challenging each other and broadening their own perspectives. Donna stated

I don't think Blackburn necessarily changed any of my beliefs or that necessarily it provided a forum for the diversity of opinions, there was no debates, no controversial anything. It was about civic engagement, Dr. Blackburn's leadership and the like. It was good to see a group talk about the good and the potential of the state of Alabama.

Jason appreciated the opportunity that the Blackburn Institute gave him to be around people with differing opinions.

Learning and being in that type of environment and that type of dialogue at the collegiate level, also I believe provides a sense of tolerance and respect for other peoples opinions in the sense that having a very vigorous dialogue for just one side of an issue can really be almost counter productive when your aggressive nature in arguing your point really sort of turns the opposing side off in the sense that you just sort of turn people off from your position. I think it overall provides that type of environment from the Blackburn Institute provided tolerance for other people's opinions.

Jason continued to explain that those lessons of tolerance impacted him for life. He stated, "I'd rather listen to what people that don't have the same beliefs and opinions that I do, I'd rather hear their take on something and I think its important to get other peoples viewpoints on issues to truly develop ones own moral belief system." Chad described what it is like for him to learn about some else's opinion. He said, "It's not only about education it's also about understanding the perspective from the other side and can you put yourself in their seat."

Alternatively, Lisa admittedly avoided conflict and did not like to discuss controversial topics.

I've always kind of steering away from conflict when it comes to differing beliefs. I think your political beliefs are kind of like your religion. You're able to believe whatever you want to believe, whether it goes along with what I believe or not...It's one of those things that unless our friends have similar beliefs, it's not something we discuss with other people. We have relatives that are very hard strong conservatives and it makes it

very awkward at family dinners when they debate and people get their toes stepped on. They know what we believe and we know what they believe and I am the kind of person that would just avoid conflict and talk about something else.

Lisa also explained that her profession of journalism causes her to be a little more guarded with her personal opinions when speaking with others.

Experiences with the Blackburn Institute

The Blackburn Institute is a unique organization in that the Fellows have each had an individualized experience based on the specific programming in place during their time as a student. Jennifer praised the organization saying that she would love to be a student again to have the experience in the Blackburn Institute that the current students are having. She said, “I think the programs are, I know this is going to sound bad, but I think they are better now than they were then...I think we are serving the students better than they were then.”

The experiences of alumni differ a great deal because the level of involvement is dependent on the desire of the alumni. Cindy shared that she is much more involved in the Blackburn Institute as an alumna than she ever was a student. She specifically mentioned enjoying the programs that are currently offered to the students. Sara said explained how she felt the Blackburn Institute contributed to her desire to be involved in the community. She said

The purpose behind what Dr. Blackburn wanted, I guess that affects me so much. I don't know why, it's just him personally wanting this so bad and seeing how much something like this could make Alabama have better leaders and more engaged leaders nationwide and certainly in Alabama. The fact that it mattered to him so much makes me feel like I have somewhat a responsibility to him because I'm part of an organization that bears his name. But additionally the topics that are covered then having others that feel so strongly about servant leadership and about being involved in your community. Blackburn really, really, really stresses that and that does definitely make a difference.

For the years being studied, Dr. John L. Blackburn was able to attend events which directly impacted the experiences. Fortunately for these students, they had the opportunity to

know and interact with Dr. Blackburn. Mary, a 2003-2004 Fellow, shared one of her encounters with Dr. Blackburn. She said

I can't remember his exact words. It was like he basically said it was on us. We shouldn't sit around and wait for people in charge to do it. To make the state better was our responsibility. That's what I remember him impressing upon us is that it's in our hand and it's something we're responsible for.

This section is divided into three subsections. The first subsection examines the experiences of 25 Fellows in the Blackburn Institute as a student and as an alumni. This second subsection also demonstrates how the actions of one man can affect so many others. The final subsection illustrates the lasting impact of the Blackburn Institute on undergraduate students.

As a student. There was a distinct delineation in the experiences of the students that became apparent during the interviews. The difference in the students' experiences came with additional programming. The 1999-2000 class experienced some additional programming but it was the following classes that benefited from the Burt Jones Travel Experience. During the travel experiences, students travel as a group to a community in Alabama to study the issues facing the citizens. Through meetings with city officials, elected leaders, teachers, high school students, and other citizens, Blackburn Fellows learn about life in the community from the members of the community. The trip was designed to expose students to issues through experiential learning. Ken explained,

It was cool because it was different from anything else on campus and I think the fact that it was very experienced based with a lot of emphasis towards getting out in the actual community and talking to people and learning about the community. I think they took it to the next level in actually doing more in the community through the Blackburn Fellows but when I was there it was more about learning what some of those challenges were in...communities.

The Burt Jones Travel Experience, a required trip to study a community in Alabama, was vital to the experience that many Fellows had as an undergraduate student. Every Fellow who

participated in this study and who had participated in the Burt Jones Travel Experience mentioned the trips as the highlight of their tenure in the Blackburn Institute. Matthew, a 2002-2003 Fellow, stated, “The best parts for me about Blackburn was the travel experiences, going to the different cities around the state, meeting people and talking with them about what their challenges are and what good things are going on in their city and learning from them and interacting with them.” Hillary agreed with Matthew. She said, “The greatest thing would probably be going back to the travel experiences or to the opportunities to have an audience with the movers and shakers in our state.”

Even participants of the earlier classes noted how much the organization had changed from their first years. Justin shared how he felt the Blackburn Institute had evolved since becoming part of the organization in 1997. He stated, “The trips and all those types of things that are done now and the involvement [of] students...the Blackburn Institute hadn’t evolved yet to that level. It’s not that it wasn’t a great experience. It’s that looking back comparing what it is today; it’s totally changed.” Kate said

Well, our experience was a lot different then what they do now. We were told, “Hey, y’all are going on a weekend retreat in a couple of weeks and its called the Blackburn Institute and its for up and coming leaders in the state of Alabama.” And that’s kind of how it was presented to us at the very first Blackburn Institute weekend. We did the weekend and there really was very little if any follow up after that. And then the next year we were asked to come back for the second, that would have been my second year as a student. And then we were invited back each year after that. But it was much more a weekend retreat than it is now.

Edward, a 1997-1998 Fellow, detailed one of the weekend retreats and shared that the programming was internationally focused during his time as a student.

My recollection at that time was that the Blackburn Institute was more international in focus. The conferences or the meetings, the big meetings that we would have focused on, I mean I remember they brought in some European ambassadors and people like that and it had an international focus, I think in large part due to the fact that Russell Bryant was the head of it at that time and that’s what he was interested in. And at some point I think

Dean Blackburn got maybe a little disenchanted with that focus and pulled us back to Alabama centered with Tom Strong.

Additionally, former Blackburn Institute Director, Dr. Cheree Causey, was noted as having been instrumental in the growth of the Blackburn Institute and the expanded programming following the leadership of Dr. Tom Strong. Luke credited the changes in the Institute to Dr. Causey. “Not a whole lot of programming went on. I mean you know Cheree was not the head of it. She took it, along with several others, you know leaps and bounds.”

As alumni. When asked about their current involvement in the Blackburn Institute, all but six Fellows declared a lack of participation but several of the nineteen continued that they would like to be more involved. As alumni, Blackburn Fellows are invited back to attend a number of events including the annual Winter Symposium and Burt Jones Travel Experience. Fifteen Fellows consider themselves to be active in the Blackburn Institute. Of the ten participants that do not consider themselves to be active, three stated in their defense that they do keep up with the events hosted by the Blackburn Institute by reading emails. James shared, “I’m not as active as I want to be just because of real life concerns, jobs and family that get in the way, but I go to a couple of events a year. I wish I could do about twice that much.”

Cindy, a 1998-1999 Fellow, has participated in the Blackburn Institute much more as alumna. All alumni are invited to join the students for the Burt Jones Travel Experience each year. Most alumni do not make the time to travel with the group, but Cindy has a strong connection to the Institute because she traveled as an alumna.

...going along on a couple of travel experiences was pretty powerful for me. Those were, again, not as a student but as an alumni Fellow. Getting to see other communities have some common challenges to what I’ve seen in the communities that I’ve lived in. Talking with people who have literally lost their jobs because a factory closed down, seeing the impact of policies at the state level in really eye opening ways.

Mark, a 1996-1997 Fellow, shared Cindy's opinion about being much more involved as an alumnus. He stated, "I've gotten much more out of Blackburn since I've been out of school. And it is a completely different organization than it was when I joined."

Fellows shared that within their cohort of Fellows, there is a sense of accountability to attend Blackburn events and to stay involved in their respective communities. Ken responded about the accountability within the group. He said, "You know people are doing so many different things, particularly students, which it blows my mind to see all that they do. And it makes me kind of check myself as far as is there something I can do or this person is a law student and doing this and doing that, you know maybe I can do a little bit more too." Sara credited Dr. Cheree Causey with keeping her involved in the Blackburn Institute after graduation. Sara said, "[Cheree] was great about keeping all the old alumni involved... Since she left they don't feel as much a connection. She actually is the one that made us have more interaction with [Dr. Blackburn]."

Knowing Dr. John L. Blackburn. "My view of Dr. Blackburn is that he is an absolute pillar in the community and the state. In the realm of higher education, he did incredible things, and he's just a terrific example for many people about servant leadership," Mark expressed his great admiration for Dr. John L. Blackburn. As Dean of Men at The University of Alabama and as the visionary of a network of ethical leaders working together to improve the state, Dr. Blackburn had a profound affect on many people.

Luke, a 1996-1997 Fellow, reflected on the times he spoke to Dr. Blackburn and the encouragement that he was given as a student.

...when I was thinking about running for city council it was around that time period and I went and talked to him about it. I talked to several people about it and some people said "Oh, you're too young, it's gonna be too hard" and he was one of the ones who said "If you've got a plan, go do it. If you've got a reason why you want to run, go do it," you

know and so he encouraged me to definitely to do it. He and a lot of other folks that I had worked with in administration including Dr. Cramer and others who knew my plan encouraged me to do it and that confidence helped I think build confidence in what I was doing.”

Rob, a 1994-1995 Fellow, summarized what other participants alluded to in their interviews. “[Dr. Blackburn] had a big belief in people and he felt, you know he just, seemed like anybody could do anything.” Justin, a 1997-1998 Fellow, was fortunate in that his father worked with Dr. Blackburn. Through the years Justin heard many stories told by his dad about Dr. Blackburn. He stated, “He saw everyone on an equal basis. He saw everyone as a future leader.” Jerry added how he feels challenged not only by other Fellows but also by the legacy of Dr. Blackburn.

When you know somebody like that who has done some amazing things, that does nothing but motivate people like me. There are days when I am like “I don’t have time to do all this. I’ve overcommitted myself.” Then I think, no I haven’t. This is a drop in the bucket to what some other people are doing. I can do this.

Jennifer, a 1996-1997 Fellow, shared how she remembered Dr. Blackburn and demonstrated the ability he had to challenge people in the right way at the right time.

One of my first memories of Dr. Blackburn was he was sitting down and he turned to me and he said, “You’re a lawyer,” and I said “I am” and he said “I want you to go through the Alabama Constitution and pick out all the amendments that are no longer applicable.” So I went back to my office the next Monday and went through the constitution of Alabama and all the different amendments, and sent it, I don’t know whatever happened to it but I sent it to him and made a list of all of the ones that needed to be changed.

Lindsay, a 2001-2002 Fellow, admired Dr. Blackburn for his courage and strength to do what he felt was right regardless of the critics.

That man was truly amazing and I mean to know not only what he did for education but just what he did, especially for me being a person of color knowing that he was one of the forerunners into the integration of UA...He truly did, he did not care. Did not care what people say, did not care what the color of their skin was, did not care about how much money they had or didn’t have, he did. He took that choice, he knew it was his responsibility and he made that choice to say I’ve gotta do what’s right.

As Hillary, a 2002-2003 Fellow, spoke about her interactions with Dr. Blackburn, she felt led to share a story that spoke to her life and serves as an example to do the right thing.

He and his wife wouldn't join a church until there were black members in there, you know, in the congregation. Something where he actually stood up and took a stand and he wasn't scared to be ridiculed, he was this is how it's going to be and this is what I believe in. And so that's helped me in my life to do the same type of thing where if this person's not gonna be included then sorry, I'm just not gonna do that.

To conclude the story, it was several years after Dr. and Mrs. Blackburn had been attending the church that they joined. When asked by other members what made them finally join, Dr. Blackburn said that an African-American had joined the church and so could he. Dr. Blackburn was a man of his word among many other things.

Lasting Impact

In trying to answer the research question regarding the degree to which Fellows attribute behaviors to the Blackburn Institute, participants were asked how they were affected by being a member of the organization. As much as the experiences with the Blackburn Institute varied, so did the answers to this question.

Ken shared his personal story of the substantial impact the Blackburn Institute had on his life. He struggled with a very difficult decision that would alter his future tremendously.

You know I can look back on the past almost ten years now and say ok, this would have been different without the Blackburn Institute or this decision would have been made differently. For instance, you know in thinking about when I decided to come [to rural Alabama] and it was either here, you know you and I talked about this, it was either here or Chicago and the Blackburn Institute was one thing that I thought about, you know. And in fact when I thought about some of the things that we picked up on through the Institute and some of the concepts and some of the people we met, it really made it a no brainer for me. I mean it was simple at that point, very simple. So all of those things, you know you look back and say yeah I probably would have done something different if I hadn't been exposed to the Blackburn Institute.

When asked if he would be the person he was today Edward replied, "I think so...I have a certain drive to be involved in organizations that are doing good things and that existed before

my involvement with the Blackburn Institute and I think I would be doing it even if I had never gotten into the Blackburn Institute.” Brian stated, “I don’t know if I would have explored or looked into certain career choices had it not been for the Blackburn Institute and not been exposed to specific people that were involved with the Blackburn Institute.” Brian was specifically referring to Dr. David Mathews and Dr. Harry Knopke. Dr. David Mathews served as an advisory board member for the Blackburn Institute and is a former President of The University of Alabama. Dr. Harry Knopke is a former Vice President of Student Affairs at UA. Both mentors encouraged Brian to pursue a career in higher education. Brian did not but still considers it as a possibility in the future.

Some answers related back to the development of the participants’ values and beliefs. Consistent with his previous answers, Nick did not feel the impact of the Blackburn Institute on his desire to be engaged in his community. He stated, “Again since I don’t necessarily attribute Blackburn to any of my moral, ethical, or faith based development I don’t know that it would impact me in that regard but not having the same, without Blackburn I wouldn’t have the same kind of network.”

The lasting impact on Justin was the way in which he faces problems and how he chooses to respond to those problems.

I think one of the things I’ve seen more than anything is the...the ability to understand, I think it helps to understand how to present, how to approach a subject, how to debate. In addition, it’s certainly has opened my eyes to problems and that there are solutions out there that could solve the problems.

Hillary responded that people who make up the Blackburn Institute have had the greatest impact on her. She said, “I would say being exposed to friends that I would never have meet if I had just stayed, if I had never been part of the Institute and learning new ideas that I would never have thought of on my own and it’s being around new people and learning.”

Connection to The University of Alabama. An unexpected theme emerged in the interviews in that the Blackburn Institute was the only remaining bond between some participants and The University of Alabama. It has been stated that the Blackburn Institute Winter Symposium is the closest thing to a college reunion that many of Fellows have. Edward explained that the Blackburn Institute reinforced civic ideas but more meaningful to him were the people involved and the connection to The University of Alabama.

I mean I had the drive and desire to do [community service] before I was ever involved in the Blackburn Institute and, but it is a very unique group that kind of does something different than everything else that I'm involved in. And it's a nice tie back to the University of Alabama and to students, which is something I don't get anymore.

Nick agreed, "I think just that it's helped me to keep a connection to the University and to friends and other people who were active leaders at the time that, again I would not have stayed connected with."

Cindy felt that the Blackburn Institute was her connection to The University of Alabama. "Over the course of the few years right after my graduation when I would come back to the Institute it was my way of staying connected to the university during the time that I was away from Tuscaloosa." Cindy goes on to credit her networking at a Blackburn event to getting a job.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the lasting impact of the Blackburn Institute on undergraduate students. Six themes emerged in the interview process: 1) characteristics of students selected as Blackburn Fellows; 2) current community involvement; 3) citizenship; 4) benefits of being a Blackburn Fellow; 5) experiences with the Blackburn Institute; and 6) lasting impact. Each of these themes provided insight into the Fellows' experience as students, their experiences as alumni, and the effect of participation in the Blackburn Institute on their behaviors and beliefs.

Chapter III outlined the study and data analysis. Through open coding and axial coding the data was put into categories and reconstructed based on topics. The themes emerged from the coding process that occurred. Chapter IV examines the data and the emergent themes. The themes and the quotations from the interviews became the findings for this study. Chapter V presents the findings, conclusions drawn from the research questions, implications for the Blackburn Institute, and recommendations for future research on this topic. The conclusions were drawn directly from the interviews. The recommendations utilized the interviews, conclusions, and previous research.

CHAPTER V:
FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study was designed to understand the lasting effect of participation in the Blackburn Institute, a leadership development organization housed within the Division of Student Affairs at the University of Alabama, on the post-graduation behaviors and beliefs of Fellows. Only Fellows who are currently working and living in Alabama were eligible to participate as the mission of the Blackburn Institute is to create a network of ethical leaders who will work together to change the state for the better.

The data for this qualitative study were gathered by personal interviews with twenty-five Blackburn Fellows. Utilizing the framework discussed in previous chapters, the interviews were conducted and coded. Relevant to the overarching values of the Blackburn Institute and Van Hecke's characterizations of citizenship (Van Hecke, 2004), categories for the data were created and analyzed further (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) using open and axial coding. During the data analysis utilizing selective coding, six themes emerged from the interviews regarding the participants' experiences in the Blackburn Institute. The themes that emerged from the interviews were:

1. Characteristics of Students Selected as Blackburn Fellows- family and spirituality planted the seeds of community involvement, and the desire to be involved continued into college with student organizations;

2. Current Community Engagement- community involvement varied but one commonality was that participants select organizations affiliated with their profession to dedicate their time;
3. Citizenship- voting and being informed were the two most noted traits of a good citizen and participants agreed that it is a responsibility to give back to the community not a choice;
4. Benefits of Being a Blackburn Fellow- the network of people involved in the Blackburn Institute and the opportunity to build social capital are the greatest benefits to Fellows;
5. Experiences with the Blackburn Institute- though the experiences as student Fellows varied greatly, all participants appreciated the opportunities provided by the Blackburn Institute; and
6. Lasting Impact- participants agreed that they would not be the person they are today without either being a part of the Blackburn Institute or having known Dr. John L. Blackburn.

The findings in the study provided valuable insight into the experiences of Blackburn Fellows as undergraduate students, the impact of the programming, and the current civic engagement of alumni fellows. Though the programming throughout the years studied varied greatly, the consensus of those interviewed was that the Blackburn Institute affected the lives of those involved. The next section of this chapter presents the findings based on the data, and organized as answers to the study's three research questions.

Research Question One

In what ways do Blackburn Fellows engage in behaviors which reflect the Blackburn Institute mission and overarching values of 1) diversity of opinion; 2) networking through the generations; 3) call to action; and 4) lifetime commitment to being a change agent after graduation?

Though most participants, if asked, could not recite the overarching values of the Blackburn Institute, most did recognize the emphasis placed on each of the four values. Fellows understood how the values were intertwined in the activities and experiences sponsored by the Blackburn Institute. The overarching values of the Blackburn Institute are recognized and shared not only as individual Fellows but also as a network of people. Formal networks of people share the same values (Stone, 2001).

Diversity of Opinion

Participants noted the good conversations that were had as students in the Blackburn Institute. Some conversations were led by leaders with opposing views, while other conversations were student driven. It was these discussions that Fellows recognized as encouraging the diversity of opinion within a group setting. The consensus of the interviews was that the conversations were non-threatening and information sharing. Twenty-two Fellows continue to seek out that diversity of opinion in their daily lives to learn from others. A few Fellows avoid the diversity of opinion to prevent controversy. Three Fellows admitted that listening to an opposing view only assists in strengthening their own argument. The attorneys who participated in the study seek the diversity of opinion more so than participants in other professions.

As undergraduate student Fellows, participants were exposed to varying opinions. It is the goal of the Blackburn Institute to present all sides of an issue so that informed dialogue can occur. As noted by one participant, the administration does have a great deal of influence on the curriculum and the arguments that are presented to students. The participants of this study seemed to understand that opposing arguments were presented with purpose to encourage the diversity of opinion.

Networking through the Generations

All participants shared that they enjoyed the relationship and networking opportunities provided by the Blackburn Institute. Even the Fellows, who self declared they were inactive in the Blackburn Institute, still felt the benefits of the networking. All of those interviewed said they see Blackburn Fellows outside of events hosted by the Blackburn Institute. The participants from the Birmingham metro area acknowledged seeing Blackburn Fellows at other events more frequently than other participants saw Fellows. Eighteen participants said that they had worked with other Blackburn Fellows in the community outside of the scope of the Blackburn Institute. This does not mean that the other seven participants do not work with other Blackburn Fellows; rather, the information was not provided by participants during the interview.

As defined by Stone (2001), the Blackburn Institute is a formal network. In order to accomplish the mission of the organization to change the state of Alabama, the strength of the network is critical. The citizens of the state of Alabama working together will create a better future for Alabama, not just the elected officials. It was Dr. Blackburn's vision that the Blackburn network would reach across party lines, generations, and other dividers to create real change to progress the state of Alabama. The people comprising the network can accomplish the mission if given the right tools.

Blackburn Fellows who were inducted in 2001 and since are more active in the community and keep in touch with other Fellows more frequently. It may be their stage of life or it may be the undergraduate experience of the Fellows but the network of the later classes is much stronger than with the earlier classes. As proven through the interviews, the later classes had many more opportunities to bond at various activities versus the one retreat hosted during the first few years of the Blackburn Institute.

Call to Action

The response to questions concerning the call to action varied greatly. Of those interviewed, three spoke specifically about Dr. Blackburn's challenge to them individually to take action. The participants with children all agreed that they took action for a cause that related their family whether in the neighborhood, the school, or a juvenile diabetes non-profit board. Fourteen of the participants have children. Fellows who do not have families were more active in the community through multiple activities and organizations. As a profession, the attorneys were required and more inclined to be engaged in the community through pro-bono work and activities endorsed by the law firm. Again as whole, the attorneys gave more time than any of the other occupations noted in Table 5. All participants did recognize that the purpose of the Blackburn Institute was to better the state of Alabama.

Alumni must feel a sense of obligation to each other to become change agents. The sense of obligation should not come from administrators affiliated with the Blackburn Institute or from The University of Alabama. The understanding of the call to action of Blackburn Fellows exists but the obligation is missing. This could be because the right tools are not given to the undergraduate students to become change agents. The opportunities immediately following graduation to become change agents are limited. One Fellow implied that the Blackburn

Institute should provide opportunities to facilitate the transition from student to an active member of a community; therefore, they recognize the call to action.

Lifetime Commitment

Fellows who joined the organization between 1994-1997 agreed that they were not sure, initially, how the Blackburn Institute would accomplish its mission. The infrastructure was just being developed and little was mentioned about a lifetime commitment. A pattern in the interviews occurred as the Fellows who joined more recently were increasingly aware of the lifetime commitment required by the Blackburn Institute. In the last few years of his life, Dr. Blackburn made it clear to all Fellows that the being a part of the Blackburn Institute was an obligation, not an honor; being a Blackburn Fellow is a lifetime commitment.

Fellows are now asked to complete a commitment card before they graduate and leave The University of Alabama explaining how they plan to support the lifetime commitment so greatly valued by the Blackburn Institute. The response is often by providing a monetary gift and mentoring students. Students in the more recent classes have also been able to see first hand the lifetime commitment of previous Fellows. Attendance of alumni Fellows at the Winter Symposium and the D. Ray Pate Dinner are critical for student Fellows to understand and to see the lifetime commitment.

Research Question Two

In what ways do Blackburn Fellows engage in behaviors which reflect Van Hecke's five characteristics of citizenship: 1) civic and political engagement; 2) public good; 3) community service; 4) moral discernment; and 5) communities across difference?

When asked to provide characterizations of a good citizen, the responses were similar to each other and could be categorized into one of Van Hecke's five characteristics listed above.

When analyzing the data, clear connections emerged to code the responses using the characteristics provided by Van Hecke.

Civic and Political Engagement

Almost every participant was quick to respond that voting in elections is a characterization of a good citizen. Most followed up with a comment reflecting their excellent voting record. When analyzing the data, it was apparent that the participants felt very strongly about the right to vote and contributing to society by helping select future leaders. Three participants went on to state how parents needed to take children to the polls to set an example as their parents had done.

More than just voting, participants felt that knowing what was happening in the community and taking an active role was important to being a good citizen. Participants used examples such as meeting with community leaders and researching the issues in the community as examples. Student Fellows are expected to read about issues and observe leaders in order to ask educated questions of leaders. Participants of this study from all cohorts understood the importance of speaking with leaders and asking educated questions.

Public Good

Participants agreed that what was right for one person was not right for everyone. Fellows recognized that working for the good of the public meant very different things. One Fellow noted the many challenges that are often associated with working for the public good because there is so much discrepancy in deeming what is good for the public. Only two Fellows noted working on boards or committees appointed by city officials.

Blackburn Fellows find their way to serve the public whether it is in their children's school system fighting for better teachers, educating the public on juvenile diabetes, or working

with inner-city children to encourage a college education. Wherever a Fellow lives, they can find purpose for the public good. Alumni Fellows who live out of state and even out of the country have stated that though they are not directly working on bettering the state of Alabama, they are embracing the ideals of the Blackburn Institute by bettering their community.

Community Service

Fellows give back to their communities in variety of ways and means. All participants stated some level of involvement in their community; some through church, others through professional organizations, and many through non-profit organizations. Only one participant said that he really did not do anything in his community, though throughout the interview he referenced pro-bono work that he was doing as an attorney. Community service was not only a characteristic that Fellows listed when describing a good citizen it was also a characteristic that each participant valued for themselves.

Though participants valued community service, it is not an area promoted by the Blackburn Institute. Dr. Blackburn's vision was to create sustainable and systemic change in a community. Student Fellows are not expected to participate in the traditional community service projects like Habitat for Humanity. Instead of building a house for someone Blackburn Fellows should teach a community how to build a house creating systemic and sustainable change. At times this is frustrating for student Fellows to understand. A student Fellow once said that the Blackburn Institute does not do anything. A few months later his attitude had changed. He stated that the Blackburn Institute explores and discusses issues. The discussion leads to action and the action leads to change. Another student described the Blackburn Institute as a chamber of commerce that helps all the ideas be developed and formed for action to happen elsewhere.

Moral Discernment

Morality was a predominant focus of some participants when describing characteristics of a good citizen. When naming characteristics of a good citizen, ethical integrity and honesty were consistently on the list. Only the first five participants to be interviewed were asked if being a good person was enough to qualify as a good citizen. The five responses were overwhelming, “no”; a good person is not the same as a good citizen. Six of participants who had the opportunity to know Dr. Blackburn specifically stated how he emphasized doing the “right thing” in all situations. Though the “right thing” leaves a great deal of interpretation, it is doing what is best for the most people. Colby, Ehlrich, Beaumont, and Stephens (2003) explain that social justice and social responsibility include not only the ability to understand issues but also the willingness to take action.

The observations of the importance of spirituality to the participants lead to the conclusion that moral discernment is important to Blackburn Fellows. One participant said that moral discernment can be interchanged with ethical discernment. Part of the mission of the Blackburn Institute is to create a network of *ethical* leaders who would work together to change the state. This demonstrates an understanding of the mission of the Blackburn Institute.

Communities Across Difference

Participants in the later cohorts immediately responded with the tremendous impact of the Burt Jones Travel Experiences on them. The travel experiences expose students to issues, cultures, and areas of the state that are hidden to Fellows. In the interviews, Fellows who had joined a travel experience had a greater desire to travel to other communities and learn about new cultures.

Similar to the way in which Fellows approach the Blackburn Institute's overarching value of diversity of opinion, Fellows had opportunities as undergraduate students to develop the desire to work with communities across difference through exposure. This continued desire demonstrates the lasting impact of the Blackburn Institute on post-graduate behaviors. During the interviews, Fellows repeatedly discussed working with disparate groups and underprivileged communities. Gaff (2004) stated that it is the responsibility of educated people to work with disparate groups for greater understanding and respect. As shown throughout the interviews, Blackburn Fellows developed an appreciation for diversity of opinions. One participant spoke specifically about a Catholic non-profit board he serves on currently. He said when he was first asked he was perplexed because he is not Catholic. The board member then stated that was why the board wanted him. He could offer a different perspective than the others. Overall, Blackburn Fellows have the desire to work with communities across difference.

Research Question Three

To what degree do Blackburn Fellows attribute these behaviors to their participation in the Blackburn Institute?

Based on the interviews, Blackburn Fellows do not attribute the civic behaviors to their participation in the Blackburn Institute. However, most did agree that the Blackburn Institute fostered and reinforced their values and beliefs while encouraging action. Similar to what Pascarella (1988) wrote concerning the influence of collegiate experiences to the way in which "he or she attaches to civic and humanitarian values after college" (Pascarella et al., 1988, p. 430), the encouragement and exposure that the Blackburn Institute provided to Fellows revived participants' desire to give back to the community.

Family and church were referenced frequently as having developed the attitudes and beliefs concerning citizenship. The impact of family was far greater than the impact of the Blackburn Institute as participants provided specific examples of family influence. Church and spirituality were also repeatedly attributed to having instilled the values and beliefs of good citizenship. Participants that were asked specifically about influence of spirituality stated that they grew up going to church and continue to attend church. They also noted their devotion to the church through their involvement.

Interestingly, fourteen out of the twenty participants asked said they would not be the person they are today if they had not participated in the Blackburn Institute. Only a four stated that they believe another organization would have filled the gap created by the void of the Blackburn Institute if participation did not occur. To that degree, the Blackburn had a significant lasting impact on Fellows but not necessarily to their beliefs and behaviors.

Conclusions

Based upon the framework of this study, the researcher is led to draw the following conclusions:

1. In general, the behaviors reported by Blackburn Institute alumni strongly reflect the underlying values and mission of the Blackburn Institute. The participants understand the overarching values of the Institute and their record of volunteerism seems to reflect the mission of the Blackburn Institute;
2. *Van Hecke's model of good citizenship provides an effective and accurate set of criteria by which to assess the behaviors of Blackburn Institute alumni.* When asked to name characteristics of a good citizen, the responses from the participants could be categorized into one of the five criteria stated by Van Hecke;

3. *Blackburn Institute alumni demonstrate overall the qualities of good citizenship as presented by Van Hecke.* As each participant described their level of involvement in their communities and why they chose those organizations, it was clear that the participants would be classified as good citizens based on the criteria as presented by Van Hecke;
4. *Blackburn alumni have a tendency to attribute their extensive network, therefore their social capital, and knowledge of the issues facing the state to their participation in the Blackburn Institute.* The benefit of the network of people within the Blackburn Institute was repeated during each interview. The knowledge gained from the speakers and travel experiences was also a commonality in the interviews; and
5. *Blackburn alumni, in general, do not attribute the development of their values and beliefs to their participation in the Blackburn Institute.* Participants attributed the development of their values and beliefs to their parents and their spirituality. All participants did state that the Blackburn Institute reinforced their values and beliefs.

Implications for Practice

The Blackburn Institute, a student leadership development organization, was established to develop a network of leaders who would change the state of Alabama by exposing undergraduate students to the problems that face the state. Through a highly selective process, 25-30 students are invited each year to learn about the state of Alabama in hopes that they join the organization and actively contribute to the network of ethical leaders working together.

This study was designed to understand the lasting impact of the Blackburn Institute. However, the research may serve as an example to organizations similar to the Blackburn Institute. The implications for practice are based on experiences of the Fellows interviewed with a focus on involvement in the Blackburn Institute and ideas for similar organizations. Two specific areas identified in the interviews that are important to long-term engagement are the student Fellow experience and the value of the Blackburn network. The recommendations being made are to positively increase the affect of the Blackburn Institute on Fellows and recommendations for other organizations.

Eyler and Giles (1999) provided five characteristics to produce active citizens: (1) development of values; (2) knowledge; (3) skills; (4) efficacy; and (5) commitment. The recommendations for developing undergraduate student Fellows are based on the model provided by Eyler and Giles as well as the interviews. The recommendations to positively increase the effect of participation in the Blackburn Institute include the following:

1. The alumni, advisory board, and administration should work together to identify the characteristics and values desired in a Blackburn Fellow prior to the selections process. As shown in the interviews, Fellows share certain characteristics and have a similar value system already. Members of formal networks will have common characteristics such as core beliefs (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1994). Eyler and Giles (1999) also recommend the development of values. Using Eyler and Giles (1999) characteristics of good citizens a rubric should be used during the interview process to rate each of these traits. Having a developed set of desired characteristics and values will assist in the selections process making the scoring of the interviews less subjective;

2. The administration with input from students, alumni, and advisory board members should plan a 2-3 year curriculum to ensure that all Blackburn Fellows have a similar experience developing the skills needed to become change agents in their community. Though difficult to implement with a small staff, two or three different curriculums should be running at once. The first year should be the history and basics of Alabama. The second year should be built around Fellows developing a skill set and the desire to change the community through projects and speakers. Fund should be provided through the Daniel Foundation Community Scholar. Eyler and Giles (1999) state that teachers need to help students develop the skills needed to work in the community and be active citizens. The interviews demonstrated that the experiences of student Fellows varied greatly from year to year. Having a similar curriculum each year will provide stability to the programming. Providing hands-on opportunities for students to be change agents in their community will assist in the transition to the professional world;
3. The administration should make the goals and the mission of the Blackburn Institute known prior to induction. The early classes of Fellows did not understand the lifetime commitment that was asked of them. Leading by example and having alumni Fellows on campus and at events regularly will demonstrate the behaviors desired after graduation. A ceremonial signing of the Blackburn code of commitment at the New Fellows Reception will help drive the idea of lifetime commitment into the student Fellows early. Commitment is one of the five characteristics that Eyler and Giles (1999) noted. Explaining the expectation

of lifetime commitment clearly to students before applying to the Blackburn Institute will assist in alumni involvement;

4. The administration and leaders should create opportunities for Fellows to interact in order to create a level of accountability to each other by hosting more informal and smaller events for students to be introduced to alumni Fellows and advisory board members. This recommendation is for both student Fellows and alumni Fellows. The research shows that alumni Fellows are working together through other organizations instead of the Blackburn Institute. Elyer and Giles (1999) state that efficacy is needed to be an active citizen. The effectiveness of Blackburn Fellows should be in conjunction with events hosted by the organization as well as other organizations. Creating more impactful opportunities for the group to gather and have discussions will strengthen the network as well as the efficacy of the group;
5. The advisory board, alumni and administration should work together to develop a way to tell Dr. John L. Blackburn's story to connect students to his legacy and vision for the organization. A video should be created that tells the story of Dr. John L. Blackburn. Each year as part of the New Fellow Retreat, an alumnus Fellow or advisory board member should return to speak about their experiences with Dr. Blackburn giving personal accounts of the challenge he made to all Fellows. As proven in the research, Fellows that knew Dr. Blackburn were impacted by his leadership, courage, and sacrifice. The history of the inception of the Blackburn Institute should be passed on to all Fellows; Elyer and Giles (1999) state that knowledge is important to creating active citizens. Fellows need to

understand his legacy in order to understand the mission of the Blackburn Institute.

6. The alumni involvement committee and the administration should encourage alumni Fellows to take ownership of the alumni sector of the organization through formal and informal communication. Each month an alumnus Fellow in Birmingham should host a gathering for five student Fellows and three alumni Fellows giving alumni a way to be involved and opportunities for networking across the generations.

Participants stated their desire to be involved in the Blackburn Institute and claimed involvement through “keeping up with emails” but did not know how to be involved with the organization. The administration should ask Fellows to do something. Those interviewed wanted a specific way to assist the organization;

1. The administration should leverage the value of the network and social capital within the Blackburn Institute by developing more opportunities for information dissemination and communication. Coleman (1988) states that one of four ideals for creating social capital is information channels. Creating more opens forums for discourse and conversations will create a more informed network, therefore, creating great social capital within the organization.

Organizations similar to the Blackburn Institute are faced with various challenges including but not limited to: how to engage students; what to teach; how to teach ‘it’; and how to engage stakeholders including alumni and advisory board members. Campus Compact and other national organizations can assist with these details. However, if an organization is attempting to retain the involvement of alumni within their organization, the principles outlined in Tinto’s (1993) theory of departure can be helpful. Though the theory is associated with retention at

colleges and universities, the following recommendations are based on the principles of the Tinto's (1993) theory:

1. Create effective programs that are just committed to alumni. Tinto (1993) states that if students see and feel the commitment of the institution they will in turn commit back. This is the same for organizations as seen by the responses from Blackburn Fellows. Alumni want to be involved; so create a way for them to be involved.
2. Make sure that all alumni feel apart of the organization no matter where they live. Tinto (1993) stated that the institution is at fault if opportunities to excel are not provided to the student. The same is true of alumni of organizations. If opportunities are not provided for all alumni to be involved the level of commitment will decrease.
3. Give alumni opportunities to work within the organization. Tinto (1993, p. 147) wrote "...all students are integrated as competent members." Alumni are talented, educated, and have vast experiences through mentoring, job shadowing, and in-home dinners these members can be valuable asset to the organization. Take advantage of the lessons they learned with other organizations to assist in shaping an organization with alumni participation.

Limitations

Several limitations became apparent as the study progressed. First, the sample of Blackburn Fellows participating in this study was limited to individuals living and working in the state of Alabama. Initially, a random sample of Fellows was selected. Of this random sample, several Fellows had outdated contact information that forced a broadened approach to contacting

Fellows. Of the fifty-six Fellows that were contacted about the study, only thirty-five responded. The outdated contact information in addition to the current residence of respondents limited the diversity of locations.

The participants of this study had extremely different experiences while an undergraduate participating in the Blackburn Institute. Fellows who joined the organization in 1994-1998 did not have the same experiences as those in that joined later and therefore do not feel the level of commitment nor connection to the Blackburn Institute of the later classes. It is inequitable to compare the experiences of a 1994-1995 Blackburn Fellow to those experiences of a 2003-2004 Blackburn Fellow because the later were given so many additional opportunities as opposed to the early cohorts.

The data, as with most qualitative research, is ambivalent in nature. As explained in Chapter III, many steps were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. However, a control group was not used for this study so there is no baseline to measure the civic engagement of a non-Fellow. Though this was not the focus of this research study, knowing the rate of volunteerism for the average graduate of The University of Alabama would add to the study.

Additionally, the researcher's relationship to the Blackburn Institute as a former employee may have prevented Fellows from being completely open and honest about their experiences. Very few negative comments were recorded about any of the Fellows' experiences. The participants were also extremely complimentary on the way the organization has been managed over the last few years. Again, this may be due to the relationship of the researcher to the program. According to the second strategy provided by Morse, et al. as described in Chapter three, the researcher should have sought more participants who had a negative experience.

Recommendations for Future Research

The implication for practice, the limitations, and the findings of this study support future research that will continue to examine the lasting impact of the Blackburn Institute on undergraduate students as well as alumni Fellows. Though the recommendations are specific to the Blackburn Institute, similar organizations should be considered as potential subjects.

Based on the findings of the research, there are six areas primed for future research. First, research is needed to determine the experiences of the undergraduate students during a given year of the program. The participants in this study had drastically different experiences as undergraduate students. The adoption of a yearly theme occurred in 2002 providing a vastly different approach to the curriculum each year. A list of the yearly themes can be found in Appendix H. The study may prove to be more conclusive had the undergraduate experiences been more consistent.

Second, Fellows are inducted into the Blackburn Institute during different phases of their collegiate career. Does the length of time in the program as an undergraduate student impact future involvement? A longitudinal study tracking students from the time they are inducted in the Blackburn Institute until five years beyond graduation will assist in determining if the time spent as an undergraduate in the program impacts future involvement.

A third area to study would be the involvement of the alumni. All of the participants in this study were alumni who range in their level of involvement with the Blackburn Institute. Future research could be conducted to determine the most impactful ways to engage alumni Fellows in the Blackburn Institute in order to strengthen the network of ethical leaders. Additionally, this research could delineate the role of the Blackburn Institute, as an entity of The University of Alabama, to engage alumni versus the role of the alumni to engage each other.

A fourth area of research would be to compare other organizations similar to the Blackburn Institute. Colleges and universities across the nation have organizations similar to the Blackburn Institute in that they teach leadership and civic engagement. Program comparisons could be conducted to show how institutions of higher education are producing engaged citizens.

A fifth area for future research would be to examine organizations that are named after a charismatic leader. How are these organizations originally named and what influence did the person whose name is attached have influence over the implementation of the organization? What happens to the organization once the person leaves or dies? These are all questions that are not only pertinent to the Blackburn Institute but many organizations in colleges and universities around the world.

Finally, a single study or multiple studies examining the variations of community involvement based on demographic factors. Gender and age would have an impact a study of community involvement. The influence of race and ethnicity on civic engagement would provide an interesting study. Examining the specific differences of rural versus urban opportunities would provide information concerning assimilation into communities. Also, the ability and flexibility to volunteer based on professions would be impactful.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to understand the lasting effect of participation in the Blackburn Institute on post-collegiate behaviors and beliefs of alumni from The University of Alabama, a four-year research public institution. As a result of the interviews and the data analysis, six themes emerged from the interviews regarding the participants' experiences in the Blackburn Institute. The themes that emerged from the interviews were 1) characteristics of students selected as Blackburn Fellows; 2) current community engagement; 3) citizenship; 4)

benefits of being a Blackburn Fellow; 5) experiences with the Blackburn Institute; and 6) lasting impact.

This research will assist in planning, organizing, and developing programming for undergraduate students involved in the Blackburn Institute and similar organizations in an effort to have a lasting impact on the behaviors and beliefs of participants. This study determined that participation as an undergraduate student in the Blackburn Institute did have an impact on the behaviors and beliefs of many of the participants by reinforcing the values beliefs that were established prior to attending college. The Blackburn Institute did have a lasting impact on Fellows and their desire to be involved in their community. The Blackburn Institute provided Fellows with a greater understanding of the value of diverse opinions and working with communities across difference. For participants, what made the Blackburn Institute so special to them was not the opportunity to interact with Dr. John L. Blackburn or attending the Burt Jones Travel Experience. Instead it is the network of people that keep the alumni engaged in the Blackburn Institute. Continued research will highlight how to have a greater impact not only on the undergraduate student Fellows but also the alumni Fellows.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Approval of Table Use

Hi Becky,

Yes, I do remember you - it's good to hear from you and that your research is moving along so well! I apologize for the delay in replying. Of course, I am fine with you including and augmenting the chart for your purposes. In fact, I hope you'll share with me your improvements and recommendations!

All the best in the new year,
Courtney

Reamey, Becky wrote:

Dear Dr. Thornton,

I hope this message finds you well. You may remember me from my work with the Carnegie Classification group here at The University of Alabama. You were a tremendous help in getting me through the very difficult and time consuming process. As I mentioned to you (almost eighteen months ago), I am working on my dissertation. At that point I was just trying to formulate and narrow my topic. I have since decided to research what colleges and universities are doing to engage alumni and encourage long term civic engagement. I hope to be defending in the next 2 months.

I recently came across your dissertation and found the chart with the dimensions of civic responsibility on page 19 to be extremely helpful. The visual aspect of the chart helps readers to grasp all the areas that fall under civic responsibility very easily. I am writing to ask for permission to adapt your chart for the purpose of my dissertation. Of course, I want to cite your dissertation and give you credit for the development of the chart with my additions included.

Please let me know what you think. I am available on my cell phone at anytime if you would like to discuss this more.

Best regards,
Becky

APPENDIX B

Interview Protocol

I am Becky Reamey, Assistant Director of the Blackburn Institute. I am also currently a doctoral student at The University of Alabama in Higher Education Administration. Today I will be inquiring about level of your current community involvement and the collegiate and post collegiate experiences of Blackburn Fellows that may have contributed to your civic engagement.

Research Study:

The Impact of the Blackburn Institute: Colleges and Universities Role in Creating Social Capital.

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Participant:

Questions:

Factual Information:

1. What year did you graduate from college?
2. What is your current age?
3. What is the highest level of education obtained?
4. Are you married, living as married, widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never been married?
5. Are you employed full-time, part-time, not employed, retired?
6. Where do you live and how many years have you lived in the community or town?

Lifetime Commitment (Blackburn Institute)/Public Good (Van Hecke, 2004):

7. What was your classification when you joined the Blackburn Institute?
8. Would you consider yourself to be active in the Blackburn Institute now?
9. How has the Blackburn Institute contributed to your desire to be involved in your community?
10. When you were in college, what organized groups or clubs such as sports teams, band or chorus, language clubs, or the like did you participate in?

11. Were any of these groups, student government, or organizations concerned with social or political issues?

A Call to Action (Blackburn Institute)/ Community Service (Van Hecke, 2004):

12. What difference do you believe YOU can personally make in working to solve the problems you see?
13. Have you ever worked together informally with someone or some group to solve a problem in the community where you live? IF YES, Was this in the last 12 months or not?
14. Thinking about problems in your community, what kind of difference do you believe that people working together as a group can make in solving problems you see?
15. Where have you spent time participating in community service or volunteer activity? By volunteer activity, I mean actually working in some way to help others for no pay. How much time? Have you done this in the last 12 months?
16. What one group have you given the most volunteer time to in the last 12 months? Why is that the most important group?
17. About how many groups would you say you belong to or donate money to currently?
18. Besides donating money have you ever done anything else to help raise money for a charitable cause?

Mission Statement (Blackburn Institute)/Political Engagement (Van Hecke, 2004):

19. How often you vote in local and national elections?
20. Do you wear a campaign button, put a sticker on your car, or place a sign in front of your house, or aren't these things you do?
21. In the past 12 months, did you contribute money to a candidate, a political party or any organization that supported a candidate?
22. When you do talk about current events and the news, how often does that include items about politics or government?

Diversity of Opinion (Blackburn Institute)/Moral Development (Van Hecke, 2004):

23. Why might you believe that there are generally clear guidelines to what are right and wrong or what's right for one person doesn't mean it's right for everybody?

24. What are your beliefs about the responsibility versus choice to make things better for society?

25. What do you believe is a characterization of a good citizen? Is being a good person enough?

Networking through the Generations (Blackburn Institute)/Communities Across Difference (Van Hecke, 2004):

26. How often do you talk about current events or things you have heard about in the news with your family and friends?

27. How often do you engage in conversations with people unlike yourself?

28. What are the motivations to interact with others unlike yourself?

APPENDIX C

The University of Alabama Informed Consent Statement for Blackburn Institute Fellows Research Study

You are being asked to participate in a research study of Blackburn Institute Fellows. This research study is being conducted by Rebecca A. Reamey, a doctoral student in the Higher Education Administration program at the University of Alabama, and is being supervised by David E. Hardy, Ph.D., who is an associate professor in the Higher Education Administration program within the College of Education at the University of Alabama.

STUDY PURPOSE: The purpose of this research study is to determine the lasting impact of the Blackburn Institute on undergraduate students. Students that participated in the Blackburn Institute up to 15 years ago will be asked about their current civic engagement in hopes of determining the effectiveness of the Blackburn Institute.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDY: The information gained from this research study will provide a better understanding of the role that co-curricular programs like the Blackburn Institute play in developing a lifelong commitment to the ideals and practices of civic engagement within program participants.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY: You have been asked to participate in this research study because you have been identified as a graduate of the University of Alabama who also is a Fellow of the Blackburn Institute. In total, 25 Fellows who currently reside in the state of Alabama, selected at random from amongst over 420 alumni Fellows, are being invited to participate in the study.

PRODEDURE FOR THE STUDY: If you agree to participate in this research study, you will be asked to participate in a tape recorded, one-on-one interview with the researcher conducting the study.. The interview will take approximately 1 hour to complete, and consists of 30 open-ended questions. Before commencing with the interview, the researcher will go over this informed consent form with you and answer any questions that you might have about the study. Once you have signed the form, indicating your agreement to participate, the interview will commence. Once the taped interview has been transcribed, you will receive a copy of the transcript to review with a request to confirm the accuracy of it with the researcher. You will receive a copy of this consent form to keep for your records. If you agree to participate in this research study, there will be no cost to you except for your time in completing the interview.

BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY: The benefits to participation include assisting the principal investigator and program administrators to better understand the role of the Blackburn Institute in encouraging civic engagement activities amongst its Fellows. There are no particular benefits that study participants will personally receive, other than the knowledge that they have assisted in the study and, thus, in contributing to the improvement of the Blackburn Institute for future Fellows.

RISKS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY: When participating in the research study, it is possible that you may be uncomfortable responding to some of the interview questions. In order to minimize risk, no unnecessary questions will be asked. There are no particular risks to your physical, psychological, political, economic, or social well-being associated with taking part in this study. Although the interview protocol does ask for some personal, demographic information, all responses are confidential and there will be no legal or disciplinary consequences for you. Collected data will be kept in a secure location accessible only to the principal investigator.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Findings will be summarized across participants in reports that will not identify individual participants. When responses from individual study participants are presented, those participants will be referred to by pseudonyms, thus protecting their anonymity. All collected data will be kept in a secure location, at the principal investigator's home. At the end of the study, all copies of the interview tapes and transcripts, as well as other written and electronic documentation related to the study will be destroyed.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY: Participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate or may withdraw from the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any consequences.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have questions or problems related to this research study, please contact the principal investigator, Ms. Rebecca A. Reamey, at breamey@ua.edu or 205-283-2113. You may also contact Dr. David Hardy at dhardy@bamaed.ua.edu or 205-348-6874. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or to discuss problems, complaints, or concerns about this research study, or to obtain information, or offer input, you may call Ms. Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer at UA at 205-348-8461 or toll free at 877-820-3066.

By signing this consent form, you are acknowledging that you have read and understand the guidelines set forth in this document.

Participant

Date

Principal Investigator

APPENDIX D

Letter Granting Permission to use the Blackburn Institute Database

Blackburn Institute

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
STUDENT AFFAIRS

September 9, 2010

Dear Ms. Graham,

As the Director of the Blackburn Institute I, Philip Westbrook, give Becky Reamey permission to use information housed in the Blackburn Institute's database for her dissertation research.

Sincerely,

Philip Westbrook, Ed.D.
Director and Associate Professor



Box 870167
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0167
(205) 348-3277
www.blackburninstitute.org

APPENDIX E

IRB Permission

Office for Research

Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects



October 14, 2010

Rebecca Reamey
Department of Higher Ed. Admin.
College of Education
Box 870167

Re: IRB#: 10-OR-313 "Engaged Citizenship: The Effect of Blackburn Institute Participation on Post-Graduate Behaviors and Beliefs"

Dear Ms. Reamey:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies

Your application will expire on October 13, 2011. If your research will continue beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of Continuing Review and Closure Form. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of the Continuing Review and Closure Form.

Please use reproductions of the IRB approved stamped consent forms to obtain consent from your participants.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,



Carpantano T. Myles, MSM, CIM
Director & Research Compliance Officer
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**PROTOCOL
 APPLICATION FORM
 FOR EXPEDITED REVIEW
 HUMAN SUBJECTS IN NON-MEDICAL RESEARCH
 UNIVERISTY**

Protocol ID: 1671				
Title: Engaged Citizenship: The effect of Blackburn Institute participation on post-graduate behaviors and beliefs				
Principal Investigator		Degree:	Title	
Rebecca Reamey		(MD/PhD)	staff	
		PhD		
Dept and College	Box Number	Phone	Fax	E-mail
Higher Ed Admin	870167	205-283-2113	8-5928	breamey@sa.ua.edu
Human Subjects Tutorial Completed?		Y		

Co-Principal Investigator - 1		Degree:	Title	
David Hardy		(MD/PhD)	Associate Dean	
		PhD		
Dept	Box Number	Phone	Fax	E-mail
Office for Research	870231	205-348-6874		dhardy@bamaed.ua.edu
Human Subjects Tutorial Completed?		Y		

Co-Principal Investigator - 2		Degree:	Title	
		(MD/PhD)		
Dept	Box Number	Phone	Fax	E-mail
Human Subjects Tutorial Completed?				

Co-Principal Investigator - 3		Degree:	Title	
		(MD/PhD)		
Dept	Box Number	Phone	Fax	E-mail
Human Subjects Tutorial Completed?				

Admin Contact		Degree:	Title	
		(MD/PhD)		
Dept	Box Number	Phone	Fax	E-mail
Human Subjects Tutorial Completed?				

Other Personnel				
Name	Degree: (MD/PhD)	Title	Dept	Human Subjects Tutorial Completed?

Subject Population(s) Checklist

Yes/No

Minor Children (under 19)

N

APPENDIX F
Email Requesting Participation

I am writing today to ask for your participation in gathering data for my dissertation to fulfill the last requirements for the Doctorate of Education in the Department of Higher Education Administration. You and 24 other Blackburn Fellows were randomly selected from the list of 1994-2004 Fellow cohorts. The list was then narrowed to include only Fellows currently living or working in Alabama.

The study is titled “Engaged Citizenship: The effect of Blackburn Institute participation on post-graduate behaviors and beliefs”. Your participation is vital to my research examining your current community engagement and the relationship, if one exists, to the Blackburn Institute.

My request is to interview you for one hour at a time and location of your convenience. The questions pertain to your collegiate activities and your current community involvement. Recent participation in events hosted by the Blackburn Institute is not considered to be a part of this study. Your identity will be known only to me.

Please respond if you are or are not willing to participate in this study. If you are willing to participate, please indicate if you prefer the interview to be held during the week or on the weekend, during the day or at night, and a preferred location for the interview. I will be in downtown Birmingham for other appointments tomorrow and on November 18th and 19th. Please let me know if any of these dates will be convenient for you.

Thank you in advance for considering participation in this study.

Best regards,

Becky A. Reamey
Candidate for the Doctorate of Education
205-283-2113

APPENDIX G

Alumni Fellows Demographic Distribution

Through 2011, there are 449 Fellows spanning across Alabama, the United States, and the globe. With 361 Blackburn Fellows (alumni) and 57 Student Fellows, our number of ethical leaders committed to a better future Alabama and nation grows each year.

Our Blackburn Fellows now occupy 32 states and 4 foreign countries. The demographic distribution for our Fellows is listed below. (Note that we still have several missing fellows whose locations are currently unknown.)

Location	Number of Fellows Residing	Location	Number of Fellows Residing
Alabama	293	Alaska	2
Arkansas	1	California	12
Connecticut	2	D.C.	5
Florida	5	Georgia	19
Illinois	1	Indiana	1
Iowa	1	Kansas	1
Louisiana	7	Maryland	4
Massachusetts	3	Minnesota	1
Mississippi	4	Missouri	4
New Hampshire	2	New Jersey	1
New Mexico	1	New York	8
North Carolina	10	Ohio	3
Oregon	1	Pennsylvania	2
South Carolina	1	Tennessee	13
Texas	19	Virginia	11
Washington	1	Wyoming	1
International			
Cyprus	1	Denmark	1
The Netherlands	1	Taiwan	1

APPENDIX H

Blackburn Institute Yearly Themes

The declared yearly themes were started in 2002. Prior to that year, themes were adopted for the Winter Symposium but not the yearly curriculum.

2002-2003	Image and Impact: The State of Alabama
2003-2004	Building Alabama Community through Deliberation and Collective Action
2004-2005	The Role of Public versus Private in the Quality of Life for Alabama Citizens
2005-2006	Entrepreneurs and Creative Partners for Progressive Solutions
2006-2007	Embracing Change & Fostering Collaborative Communities
2007-2008	Workforce Development: Developing, Training, and Retaining
2008-2009	K-12 Education in Alabama
2009-2010	The Health Care Challenge in Alabama and Beyond

APPENDIX I

NATIONAL CIVIC ENGAGEMENT SURVEY I SPRING 2002

Hello, my name is (first and last name). I'm taking a national public opinion survey for Rutgers University. I'd like your views on some topics currently in the news. We are not selling anything, not asking for money and all your answers will be completely confidential. I would like to speak to an adult 18 years of age or older living in the household.

IF RESPONDENT DECLINES TO PARTICIPATE, POSSIBLE PROBES:

X Your participation is very important because only 3,000 people throughout the country have been randomly selected for this survey and your views will represent many other people.

X IF DON=T KNOW ENOUGH: There are no right or wrong answers. We are only interested in your opinions. They are just as important as anybody else=s.

X IF NOT INTERESTED/DON=T WANT TO: Please help me; we could really use your cooperation and we are interested in what you think.

[IF SAMPLE TYPE=1 (CROSS-SECTION) ASK A. ELSE SKIP TO OS-1]

CROSS-SECTION SAMPLE SCREENING:

A. In order to randomly select a member in your household, which member of your household age 15 or over had the last birthday?

1. Adult respondent on Phone had last birthday (**CONTINUE WITH Q. INT 1**)
2. Some other member had last birthday
3. Refused (**Thank and Terminate: Refused Birthday Information at Q.A**)

B. Just so we can reference this person, may I have the age of this person please?

_____ (Range 15-97)

(Don't know=98, Refused=99: THANK & TERMINATE: REFUSED AGE INFO AT Q.B)

C. And the gender of this person?

1. Male
2. Female

[IF B=15-16 ASK D ELSE SKIP TO Q.G]

D. Are you the parent or guardian of this [AGE] year old [GENDER]?

1. Yes (**SKIP TO Q.F**)
2. No
3. Refused (**THANK & TERMINATE: REFUSED INFO. AT Q.D**)

2

E. May I please speak to the parent or guardian of [AGE] year old [GENDER]?

1. Respondent coming on phone (**RE-INTRODUCE, CONTINUE WITH Q.F**)
2. Schedule Callback
3. Refusal (**THANK & TERMINATE: REFUSAL FOR PARENT Q.F**)

F. As you know this is a research study conducted for researchers at Rutgers University about some topics currently in the news. Based on our random selection, I would like to ask a few questions to [AGE IN B] year old [GENDER IN C] member of your household? Most of the questions will be about the Community, and general issues that affect all of us. Your child doesn't have to answer any questions he/she is not comfortable answering.

Do I have your permission to speak to [him/her]?

(INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF THE RESPONDENT NEEDS FURTHER INFORMATION, OR NEEDS TO AUTHENTICATE THE SURVEY, PROVIDE THE NAME OF [CONTACT NAME AND PHONE# AT RUTGERS])

1. YES, gave permission, youth coming to phone (**SKIP TO Q.H**)
2. No, Refused child interview (**THANK & TERM: PARENTAL REFUSAL AT Q.F**)
3. Schedule Callback

G. Based on our random selection we have selected [AGE IN B] year old [GENDER IN C] member of your household?

May I please speak to [him/her]?

1. Respondent coming to phone (**REINTRODUCE, CONTINUE WITH INT 1**)
2. Refusal (**THANK & TERM: REFUSAL AT Q.G**)
3. Schedule Callback

YOUTH 15-16 INTRODUCTION:

H. Hi, my name is _____ from SRBI. I'm taking a national public opinion survey for Rutgers University. I'd like your views on some topics currently in the news. I will ask you some questions about community, politics and general issues that affect all of us. Everything you tell me will be kept confidential – that is, no one will be able to find out what answers you give us. And you don't have to answer any questions you don't want to answer.

1. CONTINUE INTERVIEW (**CONTINUE WITH INT 1**)
2. SCHEDULE CALLBACK (**CONTINUE WITH INT 1**)
3. YOUTH REFUSED TO DO INTERVIEW (**THANK & TERM: YOUTH REFUSAL Q.H**)

OVERSAMPLE SCREENING (SAMPLE TYPE =2 OVER SAMLE)

OS-1. How many people between age 15-25 currently live in this household?
(RANGE 0-7, 7 OR MORE=7, 8=Don't know, 9=Refused)

3

OS-2. How many people between age 26-37 currently live in this household?
(RANGE 0-7, 7 OR MORE=7, 8=Don't know, 9=Refused)

OS-3. How many people age 57 or over currently live in this household?
(RANGE 0-7, 7 OR MORE=7, 8=Don't know, 9=Refused)

[If Q.OS-1=0,8,9 AND OS-2=0,8,9 AND OS-3=0,8,9 – THANK & TERMINATE: S/O INELIGIBLE AGE]

[If Q.OS-1=1-7 AND quota for 15-25 not filled, ask OS-4, else skip to OS-5]

OS-4. You mentioned that you had [OS-1] members between the ages of 15-25 in this household. In order to randomly select a member between the ages of 15-25, thinking of all members between the ages of 15-25 and currently living in this household, who would be the person who last had a birthday?

1. Adult respondent on Phone had last birthday (**CONTINUE WITH Q. OS-8**)
2. Some other member had last birthday
3. Refused (**Thank and Terminate: Refused Birthday Information at OS-4**)

OS-4B. Just so we can reference this person, may I have the age of this person please?
_____ (Range 15-25, 98=DON'T KNOW, 99=REFUSED)

(DK=98, Refused=99: THANK & TERMINATE: REFUSED AGE INFO AT Q.OS-4B)

OS-4C. And the gender of this person?

1. Male
2. Female

[IF OS-4B=15-16 ASK OS-4D ELSE SKIP TO Q.OS-4G]

OS-4D. Are you the parent or guardian of this [AGE] year old [GENDER]?

1. Yes (**SKIP TO Q.OS4-F**)
2. No
3. Refused (**THANK & TERMINATE: REFUSED INFO. AT Q.OS-4D**)

OS-4E. May I please speak to the parent or guardian of [AGE] year old [GENDER]?

1. Respondent coming on phone (**RE-INTRODUCE, CONTINUE WITH Q.OS-4F**)
2. Schedule Callback
3. Refusal (**THANK & TERMINATE: REFUSAL FOR PARENT Q.OS-4E**)

4

OS-4F. As you know this is a research study conducted for researchers at Rutgers University about some topics currently in the news. Based on our random selection, I would like to ask a few questions to [AGE IN OS-4B] year old [GENDER IN OS-4C] member of your household? Most of the questions will be about the Community, and general issues that affect all of us. Your child doesn't have to answer any questions he/she is not comfortable answering.

Do I have your permission to speak to [him/her]?

(INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF THE RESPONDENT NEEDS FURTHER INFORMATION, OR NEEDS TO AUTHENTICATE THE SURVEY, PROVIDE THE NAME OF [CONTACT NAME AND PHONE# AT RUTGERS])

1. YES, gave permission, youth coming to phone (**SKIP TO Q.OS-4H**)
2. No, Refused child interview (**THANK & TERM: PARENTAL REFUSAL AT Q.OS-4F**)
3. Schedule Callback (**CONTINUE WITH OS-4H**)

OS-4G. Based on our random selection we have selected [AGE IN B] year old [GENDER IN C] member of your household?

May I please speak to [him/her]?

1. Respondent coming to phone (**REINTRODUCE, CONTINUE WITH OS-8**)
2. Refusal (**THANK & TERM: REFUSAL AT Q.OS-4G**)
3. Schedule Callback

YOUTH 15-16 INTRODUCTION:

OS-4H. Hi, my name is _____ from SRBI. I'm taking a national public opinion survey for Rutgers University. I'd like your views on some topics currently in the news. I will ask you some questions about community, politics and general issues that affect all of us. Everything you tell me will be kept confidential – that is, no one will be able to find out what answers you give us. And you don't have to answer any questions you don't want to answer.

1. CONTINUE INTERVIEW (**CONTINUE WITH Q.OS-8**)
2. SCHEDULE CALLBACK (**CONTINUE WITH Q.OS-8**)
3. YOUTH REFUSED TO DO INTERVIEW (**THANK & TERM: YOUTH REFUSAL Q.OS-4H**)

[If OS-2=1-7 AND quota for 26-37 not filled, Ask OS-5, Else skip to OS-6]

OS-5. [If Q.OS-2=2-7, Start with the following text]

We want to randomly select the person in your household that I should speak with so that all people are represented in our survey. Thinking of ALL the members who are between the ages of 26-37 and currently living in this household, who would be the person who last had a birthday? May I please speak to that person?

[If Q.OS-2=1, Start with the following text]

5

May I please speak to the person between the ages of 26-37?

1. Respondent on phone (**CONTINUE WITH OS-8**)
2. Respondent coming to phone (**REINTRODUCE, CONTINUE WITH OS-8**)
3. Refusal (**THANK & TERM: REFUSAL AT OS-5**)
4. Schedule Callback

[If OS-3=1-7 and quota for 57+ not filled ask OS-6 ELSE THANK & TERMINATE: Q/O AGE]

OS-6. [If Q.OS-3=2-7, Start with the following text]

We want to randomly select the person in your household that I should speak with so that all people are represented in our survey. Thinking of ALL the members who are between age 57 or over and currently living in this household, who would be the person who last had a birthday? May I please speak to that person?

[If Q.OS-3=1, Start with the following text]

May I please speak to the person ages 57 or over?

1. Respondent on phone (**CONTINUE WITH OS-8**)
2. Respondent coming to phone (**REINTRODUCE, CONTINUE WITH OS-8**)
3. Refusal (**THANK & TERM: REFUSAL AT OS-6**)
4. Schedule Callback

OS-8: And what was your age on your last birthday?

/_____/_____/ (**RANGE 15-96, 97 = 97 or more; 98 = Don't Know; 99 = Refused**)

OS-9: AGE QUOTA: CREATE DUMMY VARIABLE FOR AGE RANGE:

1. 15-25 (QUOTA=791)
2. 26-37 (QUOTA=637)
3. 38-56

4. 57-97 (QUOTA=142)

5. DK/REF AGE (**THANK & TERMINATE: REFUSED AGE INFO**)

VALIDITY CHECK:

IF OS-4=1,2,4 AND OS-9 NOT 1 OR

IF OS-5=1,2,4 AND OS-9 NOT 2 OR

IF OS-6=1,2,4 AND OS-9 NOT 4

THEN READ:

“I am sorry the age you just provided falls outside the age range we have from prior questions. Let me make sure I have entered the information correctly.” RESCREEN STARTING OS-1.

CONTINUE WITH INT 1

FORM A

FORM B

6

INTERVIEWER: RECORD RESPONDENT GENDER BY OBSERVATION:

1. MALE

2. FEMALE

INT1 To begin with, for how many years have you lived in the community or town where you now reside, or have you lived here all of your life?

/___/___/ Code actual number:1-97, 98 = all my life; 99= don't know/refused

Less than 1 year = 0

INT2 And how would you rate your community or town as a place to live - excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

1 Excellent

2 Good

3 Only Fair

4 Poor

8 Don't know

9 Refused

INT3 Thinking about the problems you see in your community, how much difference do you believe YOU can personally make in working to solve problems you see - a great deal of difference, some difference, a little difference, or no difference at all?

1 Great deal of difference

2 Some difference

3 A little difference

4 No difference at all

8 Don't know

9 Refused

INT4 Have you ever worked together informally with someone or some group to solve a problem in the community where you live? IF YES, Was this in the last 12 months or not?

1 Yes, within last 12 months

2 Yes, but not within last 12 months

3 No, haven't done it

8 Don't know

9 Refused

I need to ask you a couple of questions right now so I will know which questions to ask you later.

NET First, Do you use the Internet either from home, school or work? IF YES, Thinking back over the last week, how many of the 7 days did you use the Internet?

0 No, did not use

/___/ Code number 1 through 7

8 DOES NOT USE THE INTERNET

9 Don't Know/Refused

7

AGE: What was your age on your last birthday?

/_____/_____/ (RANGE 15-96, 97 = 97 or more; 98 = Don't Know; 99 = Refused)

1 15-25

2 26-37

3 38-56

4 57-97

9 98-99 DK/REF AGE

EDUC What is the last grade or class that you completed in school? **(DO NOT READ. PROBE FOR DEGREE OBTAINED)**

1 None, or grade 1-8

2 High school incomplete (Grades 9-11)

3 High school graduate (Grade 12 or GED certificate)

4 Business, Technical, or vocational school AFTER high school

5 Some college, no 4-year degree

6 College graduate (B.S., B.A., or other 4-year degree)

7 Some post-graduate training or professional schooling after college (e.g., toward a master's Degree or Ph.D.; law or medical school)

8 Post-graduate degree (Master's, Ph.D, law, medical or other prof degree)

9 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

SCHL [Ask if AGE CAT = 1 (15-25)] OTHERWISE GO TO V1

Are you currently enrolled in school?

(PROBE IF ATTENDING HIGH SCHOOL, OR A COLLEGE UNDERGRADUATE OR IN GRADUATE SCHOOL)

1 Yes, in High School

2 Yes, in College (Undergraduate)

3 Yes, in Graduate School

4 No GO TO SCHL.2

8 (VOL) Don't Know GO TO SCHL.2

9 (VOL) Refused GO TO SCHL.2

SCHL.1 IF AGE CAT=1 AND CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN SCHOOL AT ANY LEVEL (EXCEPT GRAD SCHOOL)

SCHL = 1 OR 2 ask:

How much further in school do you plan to go?

1 Some high school

2 High school

3 Some college

4 College graduate

5 Graduate or professional school or degree

6 No further

8 Don't Know

9 Refused

8

SCHL.2 IF AGE CAT=1 AND CURRENTLY NOT ENROLLED IN SCHOOL

Do you ever plan to return to school to finish a degree or seek another degree?

1 Yes - Ask SCHL.2a

2 No -

8 Don't Know

9 Refused

SCHL.2a How much further in school do you plan to go?

1 Some high school

2 High school

3 Some college

4 College graduate

5 Graduate or professional school or degree

8 Don't Know

9 Refused

V1 Have you ever spent time participating in any community service or volunteer activity, or haven't you had time to do this? By volunteer activity, I mean actually working in some way to help others for no pay.

{If YES} Have you done this in the last 12 months?

1 YES, Have done it in last 12 months

2 YES, But have not done it in last 12 months - GO TO V8

3 No, Have not done it in last few of years - GO TO V8

8 Don't know if have done it in last few of years - GO TO V8

9 Refused - GO TO V8

V2 I'm going to read a list of different groups that people sometimes volunteer for. As I read each one, can you tell me if you have volunteered for this type of group or organization within the last 12 months? [Random, with OTHER (ITEM F) always last]

{PROGRAMMING NOTE: FOR ITEM "D", DO NOT INCLUDE SECOND SENTENCE IN FOLLOW UP QUESTION.}

A A religious group

B A political organization or candidates running for office

C An environmental organization

D A civic or community organization involved in health or social services. This could be an organization to help the poor, elderly, homeless, or a hospital.

E An organization involved with youth, children, or education

F Is there any other type of group I haven't mentioned that you have volunteered for in the last 12 months

[IF YES] Specify: What group would that be? _____

1 Yes, has volunteered within the last 12 months

2 No, has not volunteered within the last 12 months

8 Don't know if volunteered within the last 12 months

9 Refused

9

PROGRAMMING NOTE: ASK THE FOLLOWING SEQUENCE (V3 - V7C) OF QUESTIONS FOR EACH GROUP MENTIONED IN V2 THE RESPONDENT IDENTIFIES AS THOSE THEY ARE ACTIVE IN, UP TO A MAXIMUM OF 3 GROUPS. IF MORE THAN 3 GROUPS SELECTED, CHOOSE RANDOMLY, BUT ALWAYS INCLUDE 'A political organization or candidates for office', IF MENTIONED BY RESPONDENT.

NOTE: WHEN FILLING IN THE TYPE OF GROUP IN V3 AND V4, SHORTEN THE FILL ON ITEM "D" TO "A CIVIC OR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION"

V3 Thinking about your work for (type of group) over the last 12 months-- Is this something you do on a regular basis, or just once in a while?

1 Do on a regular basis - GO TO V4

2 Do just once in a while - GO TO V4

8 Don't know - GO TO V7INST

9 Refused - GO TO V7INST

V4 Have you worked for this group in the last month or not, or can't you remember?

1 In the last month

2 Longer than one month ago

8 Don't know/can't remember

9 Refused

V5 What is the main reason why you volunteer for this group: to address a social or political problem, to help other people, or some other reason?

1 Address a social or political problem

2 To help other people

3 Some other reason (NOT SPECIFIED)

8 Don't know

9 Refused

V6 When you initially got involved, who made the first contact - did they contact you, you contact them, someone else put you together, or can't you recall?

1 They contacted me

2 I contacted them

3 Someone else put us together

8 Don't remember/Don't Know

9 Refused

10

V7 INST IF RESPONDENT IS A STUDENT (SCHL = 1,2 or 3) ASK V7: {IF NOT A STUDENT, GO TO

INSTRUCTIONS AFTER V7C}

V7 Was your work with [group] arranged or organized by school, or not?

1 Yes

2 No

8 Don't know

9 Refused

V7A Have you talked about your service experience or volunteer work in class or in a group session with other students, or not?

1 Yes

2 No

8 Don't know

9 Refused

V7B Has your service activity contributed toward your grade in any class, or not?

1 Yes

2 No

8 Don't know

9 Refused

V7C Has your service activity or volunteer work been required, or not?

1 Yes

2 No

8 Don't know

9 Refused

REPEAT SEQUENCE V3-V7C FOR EACH OF 3 GROUPS MENTIONED IN V2

V8 Besides volunteering time with organized groups, have you ever volunteered some of your time to help others on your own? Please do not include help given to people living in your household or activities you may have already mentioned. {IF YES}: Have you done this in the last 12 months?

{PROGRAMMING NOTE: IF NO TO V1 AND INT4 (V1 = 3 AND INT4 = 3), SUBSTITUTE "Please do not include help given to people living in your household." FOR THE LONGER SECOND SENTENCE ABOVE.}

1 YES, Have done it in last 12 months - GO TO V9A

2 YES, But have not done it in last 12 months -- GO TO PR1

3 No, Have not done it in last few years - GO TO PR1

8 Don't know if have done it in last few years - GO TO PR1

9 Refused -GO TO PR1

11

V9A The last time you did this, whom did you help?

CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY

1 Family member/relative

2 Friend

3 Neighbor

4 Stranger

- 5 Cause
- 6 Other
- 8 (VOL) Don't Know
- 9 (VOL) Refused

(Form split A,B,C,D, V9B asked of new form A only (25% of cases)

V9B And what was it that you did? **PROBE FOR SPECIFICITY**

ASK ALL:

People disagree about which problems are really serious today for the country as a whole. We want to know what YOU PERSONALLY think. If you aren't sure about a topic, just say so and we'll move on to the next one.

PROGRAMMING NOTE: RANDOMIZE PR1-PR7

First, what about ... Do you think that it is NOT REALLY A PROBLEM, a SMALL problem, a SERIOUS problem, or an EXTREMELY serious problem for the U.S. TODAY -- or aren't you sure? Next, what about ...

PR1 pollution in the environment?

PR2 the number of people who have to pay the government too much in taxes?

PR3 discrimination against black people in hiring and promotion?

PR4 the number of abortions that take place in the United States?

PR5 the number of people who cannot afford health insurance?

PR6 the future financial condition of Social Security?

PR7 the quality of public education?

RESPONSE CATEGORIES FOR PR1-PR7

1 Not really a problem

2 A small problem

3 A serious problem

4 An extremely serious problem

8 Not sure, don't know

9 Refused

12

FILTER OUT PEOPLE TOO YOUNG TO BE REGISTERED (IF AGE =15, 16, OR 17 SKIP TO VP3A)

VP1. In talking to people, we find that many are not registered to vote because they are too busy or move around often. Would official state records show that you are now registered to vote in your election district, or not?

1 Registered

2 Not registered - GO TO CONDITIONAL BEFORE VP3

8 Don't know / not sure - GO TO CONDITIONAL BEFORE VP3

9 Refused - GO TO CONDITIONAL BEFORE VP3

FILTER OUT PEOPLE TOO YOUNG TO HAVE VOTED

VP2. Can you recall if you voted in the 2000 election between Al Gore and George W. Bush, or did something prevent you from voting?

1 Voted

2 Did not vote

3 Not eligible in 2000 (vol.) SKIP TO PP1

8 Don't know

9 Refused

FILTER OUT PEOPLE TOO YOUNG TO HAVE VOTED (IF AGE =15, 16, 17, 18 or 19) GO TO VP3A

VP3 We know that most people don't vote in all elections. Usually between one-quarter to one-half of those eligible actually come out to vote. Can you tell me how often you vote in local and national elections? Always, sometimes, rarely, or never?

1 Always

2 Sometimes

- 3 Rarely
- 4 Never
- 5 Other (eligibility problems)
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

GO TO PP1

VP3A We know that most people don't vote in all elections. Usually between one-quarter to one-half of those eligible actually come out to vote. As an adult, how often do you think you will vote in local and national elections? Always, sometimes, rarely or never?

- 1 Always
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Never
- 5 (VOL) Other (eligibility problems)
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

13

PP1 When there is an election taking place do you generally talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for or against one of the parties or candidates, or not?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

PP2 Do you wear a campaign button, put a sticker on your car, or place a sign in front of your house, or aren't these things you do?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

PP5 During the past 12 months, have you been contacted by someone personally to work for or contribute money to a candidate, political party, or any other organization that supports candidates?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 DK
- 9 Refused

PP6 In the past twelve months, did you contribute money to a candidate, a political party or any organization that supported candidates?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 DK
- 9 Refused

Now I'm going to read you some pairs of statements to see how you feel about some matters. Please tell me which you agree with more, even if neither is exactly how you feel. **READ STATEMENTS A AND B (RANDOMIZE ITEMS, ROTATE PAIRS WITHIN, STARTING WITH FIRST...(READ FIRST OF ROTATED PAIRS); SECOND.. (READ SECOND OF ROTATED PAIRS)**

ATA1 Most of the time people try to be helpful OR

Most of the time people are just looking out for themselves

ATA2 There are generally clear guidelines to what is right and wrong OR

What's right for one person doesn't mean it's right for everybody.

ATA3 It is my RESPONSIBILITY to get involved to make things better for society

It is my CHOICE to get involved to make things better for society

ATA4 A person who wants to make a speech saying women are inferior to men should be allowed to do so OR

A person who wants to make a speech saying women are inferior to men should be prevented from doing so

14

ATA6 Government should do more to solve problems OR

Government does too many things better left to businesses and individuals

ATA7 Politics is a way for the powerful to keep power to themselves OR

Politics is a way for the less powerful to compete on equal footing with the powerful

ATA8 The political system is filled with unnecessary conflict OR

There are so many competing groups in politics that conflict is unavoidable

ATA9 Being a good citizen means having some special obligations OR

Simply being a good person is enough to make someone a good citizen

RESPONSE OPTIONS ATA1-9

1 First statement

2 Second statement

3 Depends/Both/Neither (Vol)

8 Don't know

9 Refused

ATA10 How much difference does it make whether the Democrats control the government or the Republicans do--A lot, some, a little, or no real difference?

1 A lot

2 Some difference

3 A little difference

4 No real difference

8 Don't know

9 Refused

A11 On the whole, would you say the political system in this country IS or is NOT responsive to the genuine needs of the public, or haven't you thought much about it?

1 Is Responsive

2 Is NOT Responsive

3 Haven't thought much about it

8 Don't Know

9 Refused

A12 Thinking about problems in your community, how much difference do you believe that people working together as a group can make in solving problems you see – a great deal of difference, some difference, a little difference, or no difference at all?

1 Great deal of difference

2 Some difference

3 A little difference

4 No difference at all

8 Don't know

9 Refused

15

MI1 Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election or not. Others aren't that interested. Do you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, rarely or never?

1 Most of the time Go to MI2

2 Some of the time Ask MI1a

3 Rarely Ask MI1a

4 Never Ask MI1a

8 Don't know/Depends

9 Refused

MI1a Do you not follow it more often because you dislike politics and government, because it's not very important

to you, or some other reason?

- 1 Actively dislike/Dislike politics/just dislike it/dislike government
- 2 Not very important/Just not interested/Not into it
- 3 Other, Specify: _____
- 4 (VOL) No Time/Too Busy
- 5 (VOL) Can't follow it/don't understand it/don't know enough about it
- 6 (VOL) Can't affect government/Feel powerless/Can't change things
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

MI2 How often do you talk about current events or things you have heard about in the news with your family and

friends -- Very often, sometimes, rarely or never?

- 1 Very often
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Never (skip to M14)
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

MI3 When you do talk about current events and the news, how often does that include items about politics or government --Very often, sometimes, rarely or never?

- 1 Very often
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Never
- 8 Don't know/Depends
- 9 Refused

16

{PROGRAMMING NOTE: IF AGE=18+, ASK MI4, AGES 15-17 ASK MI4A}

MI4 When you were growing up, how often was politics discussed around your house: Very often, sometimes, rarely, or never?

- 1 Very often
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Never
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

GO TO MI5

{PROGRAMMING NOTE: IF AGE=15-17, ASK MI4A}:

MI4a How often is politics discussed around your house -- Very often, sometimes, rarely, or never?

- 1 Very often
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Never
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

{PROGRAMMING NOTE: IF AGE=18+, ASK MI5, AGES 15-17 ASK MI5A}

MI5 From what you remember growing up, did anyone in your household spend time volunteering, or not?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't know/Remember
- 9 Refused

{PROGRAMMING NOTE: IF AGE= 15-17 ASK MI5A}

MI5A Over the past several years, has anyone in your household spent time volunteering, or not?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't know/Remember
- 9 Refused

ASK ALL:

MI6 How many close friends do you have these days - these are people you feel at ease with, can talk to about private matters or call on for help. Would you say that you have no close friends, one or two, three to five, six to ten, or more than that?

- 1 None
- 2 One or two
- 3 Three to five
- 4 Six to 10
- 5 More than 10
- 6 Depends (VOL)
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

17

MI7 I'm going to read you some ways that people get news and information. Over the past seven days, please tell

me on how many days you have done each of the following....

- A Read a newspaper
- B Read magazines like Newsweek, Time, or U.S. News and World Report
- C Watch the national news on television
- D Listen to the news on radio
- E Read news on the Internet [IF NET = 8, AUTOPUNCH "0"]

0 No, did not do

/___/ Code number 1 through 7; couple=2; few=3; everyday=7

- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

MI8 Thinking about everything you watch on television -- not just the news -- , about how many hours per day do

you spend watching TV?

Code Hours /____/ plus decimal .25, .50, etc.

18

{PROGRAMMING NOTE: ROTATE, BUT KEEP THE FOLLOWING BLOCKS TOGETHER: E and F;

G and H; I and J}

PP7 Now I'm going to read you a quick list of things that some people have done to express their views. For each one I read, please just tell me whether you have ever done it or not. **(FOR EACH YES, PROBE:**

And have you done this in the last 12 months, or not?)

- A Contacted or visited a public official - at any level of government - to ask for assistance or to express your opinion?
- B Contacted a newspaper or magazine to express your opinion on an issue?
- C Called in to a radio or television talk show to express your opinion on a political issue, even if you did not get on the air?
- D Taken part in a protest, march, or demonstration
- E Signed an e-mail petition about a social or political issue?
- F And have you ever signed a written petition about a political or social issue?
- G NOT bought something because of conditions under which the product is made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company that produces it?
- H Bought a certain product or service because you like the social or political values of the company that produces or provides it
- I Personally walked, ran, or bicycled for a charitable cause -this is separate from sponsoring

or giving money to this type of event?

J Besides donating money have you ever done anything else to help raise money for a charitable cause?

K Have you worked as a canvasser - having gone door to door for a political or social group or candidate.

Response Options PP7A-K

1 No. Have not done it.

2 Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months

3 Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months

8 Have done it, DK whether in last 12 months or not

9 Don't know if have done it./Refused

19

I'm going to read you some more pairs of statements. Please tell me which you agree with more, even if neither is exactly how you feel. **READ STATEMENTS A AND B (RANDOMIZE ITEMS, ROTATE PAIRS**

WITHIN, STARTING WITH FIRST..(READ FIRST OF ROTATED PAIRS); SECOND... (READ SECOND OF ROTATED PAIRS)

ATB1 Most people try to take advantage of others if given the chance OR

Most people try to be fair in their dealings with others

ATB2 I do things out of duty - because I'm supposed to do them OR

I do things only when I want to do them

ATB3 Government regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest OR

Government regulation of business usually does more harm than good

ATB4 The political system works to ensure equal opportunity for everyone OR

The political system works to give special favors to some at the expense of others

ATB5 Homosexuality is a way of life that should be accepted by society OR

Homosexuality is a way of life that should be discouraged by society.

ATB6 Immigrants today strengthen our country because of their hard work and talents OR

Immigrants today are a burden on our country because they take our jobs, housing and health care.

ATB7 My age group is unique and distinct from other generations OR

There is nothing particularly unique or distinct about my age group.

ATB8 Government is almost always wasteful and inefficient OR

Government often does a better job than people give it credit for.

RESPONSE OPTIONS ATB1-8

1 First statement

2 Second statement

3 Depends/Both/Neither (Vol)

8 Don't know

9 Refused

(ASK S1 THROUGH S5 IF AGE <26; AGECAT=1, ELSE SKIP TO GP1)

IF SCHL=1 (CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN HIGH SCHOOL) ASK:

S1. Are you currently participating in any organized groups or clubs in high school such as sports teams, band or

chorus, language clubs, or the like?

1 Yes

2 No **GO TO S4**

8 Don't know **GO TO S4**

9 Refused **GO TO S4**

20

S2. IF YES: About how many organized groups or clubs are you currently participating in?

INTERVIEWER: IF R SAYS NOT SURE, PROBE: "Just your best guess."

Code number of groups

88 Don't know

99 Refused

S3. Do any of these groups include student government or organizations concerned with social or political issues?

1 Yes

2 No

8 Don't know

9 Refused

GO TO S4

IF SCHL NE 1 (NOT CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN HIGH SCHOOL) ASK:

S1a. When you were in high school, did you participate in any organized groups or clubs in high school such as

sports teams, band or chorus, language clubs, or the like?

1 Yes

2 No **GO TO S4**

8 Don't know **GO TO S4**

9 Refused **GO TO S4**

S2a. IF YES: About how many organized groups or clubs did you participate in?

INTERVIEWER: IF R SAYS NOT SURE, PROBE: "Just your best guess."

Code number

88 Don't know

99 Refused

S3a. Were any of these groups student government or organizations concerned with social or political issues?

1 Yes

2 No

8 Don't know

9 Refused

GO TO S4

(IF SCHL = 1, 2 or 3 ASK S4, S5, AND S6, ELSE SKIP TO GP1 (RESPONDENT CURRENTLY A STUDENT IN HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE)

S4 Do any of your classes require you to keep up with politics or government, either by reading the newspaper, watching TV, or going onto the Internet, or not?

1 Yes

2 No

8 Don't know

9 Refused

21

S5. In classes that deal with history, government, social studies, or related subjects, how often do teachers encourage the class to discuss political and social issues in which people have different opinions - - never, rarely, sometimes or often?

1 Never

2 Rarely

3 Sometimes

4 Often

5 (VOL) DON'T TAKE ANY CLASSES LIKE THIS

8 Don't know

9 Refused

S6 And how often are students encouraged to make up their own minds about issues - never, rarely, sometimes or often?

1 Never

2 Rarely

3 Sometimes

4 Often
5 (VOL) DON'T TAKE ANY CLASSES LIKE THIS
8 Don't Know
9 Refused
22

(CREATE VARIABLE FOR OPEN SAMPLE REPLICATES AND NON DIALED REPLICATES, OPEN SAMPLE REPLICATES CONTINUE WITH GP1 THROUGH GP9 NON-DIALED REPLICATES GOTO TEXT BEFORE QUESTION GPA)

You've been very patient, and we're getting near the end. I'd like to ask about groups and organizations some people belong to. Just tell me YES or NO if you have been involved with each in the past 12 months. First, **(RANDOMIZE GP1-8)** Yes or No?

NOTE TO PROGRAMMER: If YES to ANY of GP1 through GP9, ask GXa & GXb AT THE END OF THE SEQUENCE. DO NOT ask GXa and GXb for every YES response to GP1 through GP9

GP1. National or local charities such as the United Way, the Red Cross, the March of Dimes, or any similar organization.

GP2. Labor unions or employee associations.

GP3. A business or professional association.

GP4. Any association that looks after the interests of some kinds of people, such as the veterans, the elderly, the handicapped, children, or some other similar group.

GP5. Any association that is concerned with social or political issues, such as reducing taxes, protecting the environment, promoting prayer in the schools, or any other causes.

GP6. Sports, recreation, community, neighborhood, school, or youth organizations.

GP8. Cultural, literary, or art organizations.

Put last; do not rotate GP9

GP9. Any other groups we haven't mentioned?

1 Yes

2 No

8 Don't know

9 Refused

IF RESPONDENT BELONGS TO ANY GROUPS IN A CATEGORY (IF ANY of GP1 To GP9 EQ 1, ASK GXA and GXB), ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ONLY ONCE:

(4/17 ADDED FOR NON-DIALED SAMPLE TO REPLACE GP1-GP9 SERIES

GPA. Now we would like to know about the groups and organizations you might belong to. I'm interested in knowing about groups you're a member of, or donate money to. I'm talking about charities, labor unions, professional associations, political or social groups, sports and youth groups, and so forth. Do you belong to or donate money to any groups or associations, either locally or nationally?

1 Yes - ASK GPB

2 No - GO TO K1

8 Don't Know - GO TO K1

9 Refused - GO TO K1

23

GPB. About how many groups would you say you belong to or donate money to? Take your time and think about it.

[RANGE 1-97, DK=98, Refused = 99]

CONTINUE WITH GXA

GXa. Are you an active member (IF GPB = 1 "of this group", IF GPB>1 "any of these groups"), a member but not active, or have you given money only?

1 Active member of at least one of them

2 Member but not active in at least one of them

3 Given money only

4 (VOL) Given money and active member

5 (VOL) Given money but INactive member

8 Don't Know

9 Refused

GXb. (IF GPB = 1 "Does this group", IF GPB>1 "Do any of these groups") take stands on or discuss public issues, or try to influence governmental actions?

1 Yes

2 No

8 Don't know

9 Refused

Here are a few questions about things that have been in the news. Not everyone will know the answers.

K1. As far as you know, does the federal government spend more on Social Security or on foreign aid?

1 Social Security

2 Foreign aid

3 Same/other response

8 Don't know

9 Refused

K2. Would you say that one of the parties is more conservative than the other on the national level?

IF yes: Which party is more conservative?

1 Republican

2 Democratic

3 Other

4 No, one party is not more conservative

8 Don't know

9 Refused

K4. How much of a majority is required for the U.S. Senate and House to override a Presidential veto?

1 Two thirds, 67%

2 Any other substantive answer

8 Don't know

9 Refused

24

D1 In politics today, do you consider yourself a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or something else?

1 Democrat Ask D1a

2 Republican Ask D1a

3 Independent

4 Something Else/Other

8 Don't Know/No opinion

9 Refused

D1a Do you consider yourself a strong [insert party] or not so strong [insert party]?

1 Strong Go to D2

2 Not so strong Go to D2

8 Don't know Go to D2

9 Refused Go to D2

(IF #3,4, 8 OR 9 TO D1, ASK)

D1b Do you lean more toward the Democratic Party or more toward the Republican Party?

1 Democratic party

2 Republican party

3 Other party

4 Neither

8 Don't know/no opinion

9 Refused

D2 In general, would you describe your political views as... **(READ OPTIONS 1 THROUGH 5)**

1 Very conservative

- 2 Conservative
- 3 Moderate
- 4 Liberal, OR
- 5 Very Liberal?
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

YOU'VE BEEN VERY PATIENT. NOW JUST A FINAL FEW QUESTIONS FOR US TO CLASSIFY YOUR ANSWERS:

D3 Are you of Latino or Hispanic origin, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban or some other Spanish background?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused
- 25

D4 Are you white, black or of Asian origin?

- 1 White
- 2 Black
- 3 Asian
- 4 Other (VOL/SPECIFY:)
- 8 Not determined/Don't know
- 9 Refused

D5 Were you born in the United States, or in another country?

- 1 Born in US
- 2 Born somewhere else
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

D6 Do you consider yourself to be Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, some other religion, atheist or agnostic?

- 1 Catholic [GOTO D7]
- 2 Protestant (include Baptist, Episcopal, Jehovah's Witness, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Pentecostal, Church of Christ, etc) [GOTO D7]
- 3 Jewish [GOTO D8]
- 4 Muslim [GOTO D8]
- 5 Other GO TO D6A
- 6 Atheist/Agnostic [GOTO D8]
- 8 Don't Know [GO TO D8]
- 9 Refused [GOTO D8]

D6A. Do you consider yourself a Christian, or not?

- 1 Yes GO TO D7
- 2 No GO TO D8
- 8 Don't Know GO TO D8
- 9 Refused GO TO D8

D7 Would you describe yourself as a born again or evangelical Christian, or not?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

D8 Aside from weddings and funerals how often do you attend religious services... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never?

- 1 More than once a week
- 2 Once a week
- 3 Once or twice a month

4 A few times a year

5 Seldom

6 Never

8 Don't know

9 Refused

26

D9 How important would you say religion is in your own life - very important, fairly important, or not very important?

1 Very important

2 Fairly important

3 Not very important

8 Don't know

9 Refused

D10 Do you think of yourself as belonging to the working class, the middle class, or the upper class?

1 Working

2 Middle

3 Upper

4 No class

5 Lower (VOL)

6 Other

8 DK/NA/Other (refused to accept idea of class)

9 Refused

D11 Are you married, living as married, widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never been married?

1 Married

2 Living as married

3 Widowed

4 Divorced

5 Separated

6 Never been married

8 Don't know

9 Refused

D12 What was the last year of school your mother completed? If you were raised by a stepmother or some other female relative, please answer for that person.

1 No high school

2 Some high school

3 High school

4 Some college

5 College graduate

6 Graduate or professional school or degree

8 Don't Know go to D12a

9 Refused

D12a Did she finish high school?

1 Yes go to D12b

2 No go to D13

3 Didn't go to HS (vol) go to D13

8 Don't know go to D13

9 Refused go to D13

27

D12b Did she attend college?

1 Yes go to D12c

2 No go to D13

8 Don't know go to D13

9 Refused go to D13

D12c Did she graduate from college?

- 1 Yes
- 2 NO
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

D13 Are you now employed full-time, part-time, not employed, or retired?

- 1 Full-time
- 2 Part-Time
- 3 Not Employed
- 4 Retired
- 8 (VOL) Don't Know
- 9 (VOL) Refused

D14 Were your parents born in the United States or in another country?

- 1 Both in U.S.
- 2 One in U.S./one in another country
- 3 Both in another country
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

D15 Which of the following best describes where you are currently living: I own my home, I rent my home or apartment, I live in college or university housing, I live with my parents.

- 1 Own
- 2 Rent
- 3 College or university housing
- 4 Live w/ parents
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

D16 Is anyone in your household a member of a union?

- 1 Yes go to D16a
- 2 No
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

D16a Is that yourself, someone else, or both?

- 1 Myself
- 2 Someone else
- 3 Both
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Refused

28

Finally, we want to ask you about the composition of your household.

D17 How many people, including yourself, live in your home?

(Includes all adults and children)

/// (ENTER number: 15=15+, 98=DK, 99 = REFUSED)

IF D17=1, 98 OR 99 GO TO D18

SHOW SCREEN WITH AGE CATEGORIES AVAILABLE SO THAT INTERVIEWER CAN ENTER NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN EACH AGE CATEGORY.

Of the ___ people, including yourself living in your household. I would like to know how many of these people are in each of the following:

IF D17=2+ ASK: D17a-D17e. Including yourself, how many are:

D17a 14 YEARS OR UNDER _____

D17b 15-25 _____

D17c 26-37 _____

D17d 38-56 _____

D17e 57+ _____

DK/REF (ENTER "99" _____
(VALIDITY CHECK - TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS ENTERED IN D17A MUST
EQUAL
NUMBER IN D17)
(GO TO D18)

D18 So that we can group all answers, is your total annual family income before taxes: **READ**

RESPONSE OPTIONS 1 THROUGH 8

- 1 Under \$20,000
- 2 \$20,000 to just under 30,000
- 3 \$30 to just under 40,000
- 4 \$40,000 to just under 50,000
- 5 \$50,000 to just under 64,000
- 6 \$65,000 to just under 80,000
- 7 \$80,000 to just under 100,000
- 8 OR OVER \$100,000
- 9 REFUSED/DON'T KNOW

D19 Thanks. You've been very helpful. Sometimes we need to recontact people to verify that this interview took place, or someone writing up the results may want to know more about how you feel. Would it be okay for us to recontact you if necessary? (IF YES, ASK: Could I please have just your first name?

- 1. YES -----> RECORD NAME:
- 2. NO

APPENDIX J

Sample Interview Transcripts

The legend for understanding the coding:

Categories	Color of Text
Demographics	Blue
Characteristics of Participant	Green
Community Involvement	Red
Citizenship	Purple
Benefits of being a Blackburn Fellow	Orange
Experience with the Blackburn Institute	Peach
Impact of Blackburn Institute	Brown
Diversity of Opinion	Pink
Volunteer Hours	Turquoise

**Additionally, the information highlighted was considered to be used as a quote in Chapter 4.

SAM

Becky: Four questions about yourself and then moving forward your civic engagement and then your information about the Blackburn Institute

Respondent: Ok, cool. I hope I can remember (laughter)

Ok, alright. What year did you graduate from college?

R: Undergrad or ?

Undergrad.

R: Undergrad in umm 1993

And what is your current age?

R: 39

And your highest level of education obtained?

R: So, I have a master's degree and then some doctoral work

And are you married?

R: No

Are you employed full time?

R: Yes

And where do you live and how many years have you lived in the community?

R: Um, I live in Pell City, AL and I've lived there since uh 2004 so I've lived there umm 6 years

Ok. (pause) What was your classification when you joined the Blackburn Institute? Junior, senior...?

R: (pause) Blackburn, Blackburn. Um, I believe that I was a Junior and there were several meetings to kind of get the institute started and I may have actually been a Senior when I was actually officially engaged in it but umm I think I was a Junior when we first started talking about it.

One of the first.

R: I, I Yes..first 5.

And uh would you consider yourself to be active in the Blackburn Institute now?

R: No.

And how...

R: But I want to clarify that. So I'm very interested and I do keep up with what's going on with them but just because of my schedule, and particularly with school, I am not able to participate as I would like to. So I guess I consider myself an informed alumni of the Blackburn institute umm but not always able to actively participate.

And how has your Blackburn, how has the experience that you had with the Blackburn institute contributed to your desire to be involved in your community now?

R: (Pause) Well when I think about this umm you know the question is how has Blackburn contributed to my desire and I'm not sure that that's exactly the order that things went. Umm, I think that I kind of had that I was civic minded before Blackburn and what Blackburn did was reiterated to me the importance of civic involvement. It has opened my eyes to several different ways that one can become involved and also kind of kept me abreast of what some of the gaps are where there needs to be more involvement. So I think that the Blackburn Institute has fostered that civic mindedness umm retrospectively instead of preempted that civic mindedness.

So it's been something that has um has maybe you get the picture I think that its helped shape my civic involvement more so than create it.

When you were in college what other organizations, sports teams, band, chorus, language club or something else, did you participate in?

R: Way too much. (laughter)

Everything. (laughter)

R: So I was um, the things that stick out in my mind is I was on the Avanti staff, the orientation, umm Student Orientation group for the university for umm three years. So I became involved with that as a freshman and was that through the summer before my senior year. I was involved in the umm what was then called the coordinating council of student organizations, the CCSO, I don't event know if they have that anymore umm and was actually president of that. Uh I worked umm in some subcommittees with SGA but that's the extent of my SGA involvement, it was kind of subcommittee or committee level work. And I was involved in any honorary that would have me. (laughter) Um so probably most actively involved in Freshman Forum um, which was much more elite than it is now, so disappointed to hear how things have changed. Um and Mortar Board, ODK, Anderson Society um and then some in the middle there like maybe Cardinal Key and Lambda Sigma I think. So beyond honoraries and a few select other organizations kind of coordinating organizations like Freshman Forum and CCSO that was pretty much the extent of my involvement. No um no band no sports.

Would you consider any of these groups to be concerned with social or political issues?

R: (Pause) Um, it seems to me that when I was selected into ODK that it was uh that there was kind of a service social component to ODK. Kind of maybe leadership, scholarship and service. Anderson Society may have been the same. But most of those were, at least I viewed them at the time, were mostly scholarship types of groups. Freshman Forum was a service organization umm and there were certainly political issues that we dealt with in CCSO. I remember during that time in particular there was a lot of talk with umm the University recognizing like the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Alliance and so there was lots of talk and meetings and forums about things like that. So I think that CCSO and certainly SGA had the opportunity to effect some changes in the political social environment. But I don't know if I would really call any of them a social change group. I'm not sure of your wording on that but that's kind of what I heard, so um, so maybe the short answer of that is um there were organizations that I was involved in that touched on those types of issues but I don't think any that were specifically in a meaningful way affecting any type of change.

What difference do you believe you can personally make in working to solve problems within the community?

R: Well I 'm a strong believer that any kind of change cannot take place without umm the work of at least one person and sometimes I might be the one person that gets the change started. **So um today happens to be a day that we're voting, um and um you know I'm not real confident that**

what I voted will be seen when the election coverage ends this evening but if I don't do my part then there's no hope, umm particularly if other people feel the same way. So I think that one person can make a change and I think that one person has to make a change by being active, by being visible in the community, by being a person who doesn't simply reside in the community but um becomes a part of the community. Certainly voting is a very basic way to do that. I try now to be at high school football games and help out with band boosters and things like that that are important to the community that I live in. And I'm not sure that actually that makes any kind of social change itself but I feel like that certainly gives me leverage that if something should arise umm that needs the community's participation people see me, know me and I can then participate in that kind of change. So again, I think I'm kind of being tangential here, but to answer your question directly I think that anything that anybody can do plays an important role in bringing about any type of social change.

Have you ever worked together informally with someone or some group to solve a problem in the community where you live?

R: Define informally.

Umm, maybe without being prompted to do so. Or maybe not in your job, not being paid for it.

R: Yes, I have. Do you want me to tell you about it?

Sure.

R: Ok, alright. Not the community where I live but the community where I grew up and where my family still lives. Umm, it's a small town in east Alabama, it's Oxford, Alabama not far from Pell City. And in that county I actually started and still work with a coalition of community members that have come together to address youth substance abuse. And um that was a situation that was prompted because I worked in Anniston, Oxford /Anniston at that time but not as part of my job. It was just being there and being able to see a need and having a group of people that kind of also saw that need and just organizing folks into a coalition. And its actually turned out to be a pretty remarkable group that's been able to effect some change, some real community level change in Calhoun County up to the level of city ordinances being changed about you know anything from public smoking, or smoking in public buildings, to having mayors and county commissioners have proclamations for, you know, a smoke free day or a drug free day or things along that. That's been going on for about 10 years now, and the coalition has about 80 members that represent a number of sectors of the population in the county from youth to parents, religious organizations, other agencies that do substance abuse prevention services, health care workers, media, politicians, law enforcement, all are involved in this. So, that's something that was very meaningful to me at the time and is still real important to me and I still take off work here in Birmingham and go to Anniston to their meetings once a month.

Wow, ok. So still involved with that then?

R: Yes.

Ok. And thinking about problems in your community what difference do you believe that people working together as a group can make in solving problems you see? You've touched on it a little bit in both the last two questions.

R: Yeah I think that people working together can solve or certainly put a big dent in just about any problem that occurs. I think the key to that is it being an issue that the community umm the community buys into, that everyone in the community feels like it is a problem. I don't think that you can affect a lot of change if you look back or you know even me, from my perspective alone, saying "I think this needs to be changed in my community, maybe there are some people who feel the same way." But it really has to be, it has to be an issue that people agree is an issue. And I think that's a very difficult level to achieve because I think that people um in communities, any community, have many other competing things that that may not be as important, that that issue may not be as important to them. I'm very concerned with people being able to have food on their table, for example, and when people are concerned with that I think they are less apt to be able to focus on community level changes.

Mmhmm. How much time do you think that you spend volunteering in the community a month?

R: (Pause) I think it varies but um I would say probably on average I would say I would say 10 hours a month. And again, Becky, these are not you know formal things where I'm signing in and signing out volunteer times. I'm just thinking about the things that I do in the community that I don't have to do, that I don't get paid for. Umm, I would say 10 hours is probably a fair average.

Ok. Is there a particular group that you have given the most time to in the past 12 months?

R: Yes, that coalition in Calhoun County is the one, over the past 12 months, that I've given more to. The name of that group is the Substance Abuse Prevention Advisory Coalition, SAPAC, S A P A C for short and it functions out of Calhoun County.

And what about raising money for charitable causes? Is that something that you consider?

R: Umm, it seems like it's something that always comes up at different meetings that I'm at and when I'm volunteering I'm not a very good fundraiser, umm and I've not done a lot of that so its not something that I feel like I know a whole lot about. It seems to me, just in my limited experience, that fundraising has kind of gone along with the economic times but that's really all I can say about that.

Ok.

R: I am working though actually, this is part of my job but I took it on voluntarily, I'm working with like a toy drive for the holidays, so I may have a little bit more information about how easy it is to fundraise and get donations in another month or so, but I'm not real good at it.

Do you believe that there are general guidelines to what is considered right and wrong? Or maybe another way to think about it is what's right for one person doesn't mean it's right for everyone?

R: And your question is do I believe that?

Yeah, or why would you believe one way or another?

R: Umm, well I definitely believe that what is right for one person is not necessarily right for another and I'll go I'll go back to what I said previously about um you know identifying a community level issue. Umm, I think that people as individuals have so many things that are competing in their particular case umm that it's very difficult to arrive at one single issue to focus on or one single solution to that issue. Umm, and so what you have to do in those cases I think is find consensus and it's give and take. Umm, yeah, yeah.

And what are your beliefs about the responsibility versus choice to make things better for society?

R: I strongly believe it's a responsibility. I strongly believe that uh everyone should contribute whatever they can to um to um to improving or maintaining uh you know, society and addressing issues that arise in communities. Everyone without exception and I think it should be taught at a very early age. I don't think it's too early ever to teach a child um that they not their family are islands and uh that um that not only is their participation important in community issues but I think what an individual or family can get from the community by virtue of their own participation in that is invaluable.

What do you believe is a good characterization of a good citizen then?

R: Characterization of a good citizen. I think the first thing that might be someone who abides by the laws of the land. I think it's someone who takes ownership in the area where they live. I think it's someone who um uh participates in the um uh in the political um system in our country by taking advantage of privileges to vote, I mean I'm not saying necessarily run for office but um certainly being an active member of society. Uh I think the characteristics of a good citizen is someone who looks out for their fellow man. If I have certain resources available to me and am able to link someone who doesn't have that resource to that resource then I think that that's the characteristics of a good citizen. Umm

So one of our, of the Blackburn Institutes' overarching values of networking and.

Absolutely. Yeah, absolutely. That's you know, that's, and I've called on those resources that I've gained through networking before. Many times, um, to address a problem or bring help to

someone. I could probably create a more exhaustive list of a good citizen but I mean those are the first things that come to mind, I think are really important.

Ok. How often do you talk about current events or things that you've heard in the news with family and friends?

R: Umm, very frequently with family probably less so with friends. For me uh, a lot of my friendships are that's kind of what I do for fun and I don't always think current events are fun. Um but um my family is very um knowledgeable of current events. And it seems like maybe in the past few months I've become even more aware of current events myself. I found myself even last night for the first time watching a news program. Not your regular local news, but a political program on TV that I've not done much of before. And I think as I age all of these characteristics that I've mentioned to you, things that have come to me through the Blackburn Institute and other experiences has become more important to me. And I think that even now I might tell you all day long that I am a good citizen but I think now more than ever I'm trying to be a better one so all that to say that I think I'm becoming more able to even converse about current events than I have been in the past.

And do you engage with people unlike yourself for conversations about the topics social or political that might have different opinions?

People unlike myself. Um, yes uh yeah I do. Probably not to the extent that I could but I certainly have acquaintances and friends that share different beliefs than I do that are different from me. I guess I kind of think of like the pool of people that I talk to as being just like me but when I think more about it there are some that are quite different. So, yeah.

What are motivations and your motivations to interact with others that may have differing opinions than you?

R: Well that question assumes that I am motivated to do that. (Laughs) Given if I was motivated, I think generally, this is not going to be an answer your going to like much very much, but generally I don't think I am motivated to have interactions with people who are not like me. I think that, first and foremost, I see people on the surface for what they are and if we get past that any differences are really a nonissue. We may debate, we may uh we may cajole each other about those differences I don't think I'm actually motivated to seek out people who are different from me. So given that, um people who I've made it past that kind of initial barrier if you will, challenge umm with umm, I like to be around people who have different opinions from me that are different from me and I try to take those umm experiences as an opportunity to learn, uh to become more knowledgeable about what their belief is on a particular topic, about what they do umm in a particular culture or what have you. I guess the motivation at that point, once I kind of get past the fact that it's not a motivation to me, is to learn and broaden my own knowledge base.

What were some of the aspects of Blackburn, or what are some depending on which way you look at it, that have been most important to your (inaudible) community involvement?

R: Well I um the very first thing that come to my mind and I feel a bit of a hypocrite talking about it because I haven't been able to participate, but I've been very intrigued with one particular activity of the Blackburn Institute that was incorporated probably five or six years ago and it's the um the traveling around the state to the different neighborhoods. Um not been able to do it but certainly its something that I would love to be able to do. And I really appreciate the fact that Blackburn Institute reach outs reaches out to young leaders in an effort to get them more acclimated to what community level issues might be in areas that they may or may not be familiar with, particularly in the rural areas of Alabama which I think are so often ignored. So I really like that and one of the things that I remember early on um Dr. Blackburn and some other folks that helped form the Blackburn Institute talking about is this um unfortunate situation where we have so many bright young people in Alabama that we educate here, well that grow up here that are raised here that we educate here that once we've educate them they're gone. They leave the state, they contribute their talents and their skills in other communities and how unfortunate that was for our state. And the importance of trying to retain people here who are products of Alabama to get them then to give back to Alabama. I don't know that Blackburn has been able to effect much change um in regard to that but I know it was something that Dr. Blackburn was concerned about and that he identified as an issue and I've seen it since the day he said it and at the time I didn't really have a grasp of to the extent of what a problem it was. Certainly since that time in my professional career and now teaching both at the University of Alabama and at UAB and at various places so many times good, bright individuals you know their first thought is 'Let me get done here so that I can go somewhere else so I think that that is important. And I think it is important for Blackburn to remember and something for us to continue to effect change in. And its certainly been something that has impacted me as kind of the ultimate goal uh make changes, maybe make small changes as an individual or in a community and model that for young leaders and hope that we can retain more.

Yeah. (Pause). So on the other side of that, what aspects of the Blackburn Institute did you gain the least from sort of framing your community involvement?

R: (Pause) hmm. You know I really and truly can't think of anything that I didn't get out of Blackburn. I can think of you know maybe something that was not quite as positive but that helped and it even helped in shaping my community involvement. And what I'm talking about is initially when we first formed the Blackburn Institute I think that by virtue of access really the folks that were invited to participate in Blackburn at the time were the same folks that I was in every other organization with. It was the you know a group of us who were student leaders, we all came from similar backgrounds, we all looked the same um and I think it limited us at first and I understand what happened and I think it was clearly because we just didn't have access at that time to more diverse students. I think more, I don't think we had access to them in forming a small group like Blackburn was at the time but I don't the university was diverse in 1992 as it is now as well. Umm and I think that's changed but I cant, even though that's like a negative that's not what I learned the least from because I learned from that the importance of having everyone around a table when you engage a community to effect a change. So I think in essence I'm not answering your question. I can't think of anything that was least important but I can think of things that, you know, might have been less positive that I have still been able to incorporate in my community involvement even today.

In what ways, I asked you this in the beginning, but what ways does Blackburn attribute to your beliefs?

R: Umm, it demonstrated to me the power of a group of people. The ability to problem solve as a group, being more powerful than an individual trying to take something on. It um provided me with um kind of renewed enthusiasm about what a group of young leaders with very little experience outside the university of Alabama can actually do to effect change in the state. Umm (pause) the umm the value of relationships that were formed in the bi have been long lasting and I think that to be able to call on them as people that you network with even today umm has been you know illustrated to me umm and I don't think that I can, you know even though I'm talking about the power of a group of people, I think that I think back kind of maybe differently from others that you would interview from kind of from that initiating and developmental kind of stage um I don't mean this to contrast to the power of group, but I also think its taught me the power of one person's vision.

I mean truly what the bi has done could not have been done with Dr. Blackburn alone probably but to take a mans vision and to see it umm manifest in so many different ways and to I don't think he would ever have thought in 1992 what 18 years later you know his thinking and his vision could have brought about. So you know it teaches me that there is um you know it's worth acting on a vision that you may have even though you may not can do it alone.

In that same vain, do you feel like you had a, or how would you say that your interaction with Dr. Blackburn specifically have impacted you?

R: Uh, I'm, you know, believe it or not, I'm kind of shy and I can't think of too many times that I interacted with him one on one so what I gained from him as an individual was less one on one discussion and more um watching him model behavior. Hearing him speak about his vision and problems that he solved um issues that were inherent in the state. Um so I, so ask me the question once more and let me make sure I'm.

Well having had the opportunity for Dr. Blackburn to be more involved in the earlier classes, while his health was still well, do you believe you had a different experience within the Blackburn Institute?

R: I don't, you know I really don't think so and that's less more, that comes less from my experience and more just me kind of watching Blackburn now because I think that Blackburn now is very much the way Dr. Blackburn wanted it to be. I think that his vision is being fulfilled um and I think um I think my you know its certainly something that I won't forget being able to walk side by side with such a great man but um I feel strongly that things are still very much the way he wanted them to be and I think the experience for new members now may even be greater than they were when I was involved because um you know we've seen the power of bringing folks together and so many people have become invested in this process and in the Institute um that it just provides more opportunities than we had when I first joined.

Ok, then one last question before I (inaudible) have you realized any personal gains through your participation in the Blackburn Institute?

R: Absolutely, um I think that um you know my my ability to um look at things from a community to level to think about how um a decision or a problem or an issue at some level in the community can trickle down and effect others that may not have the same resources or the same voice to um advocate against or for a particular issue. All of that I think came from the Blackburn Institute and similar organizations. Um my entire dissertation work is looking at the importance of community level systemic influences on health and um so when you think about that I don't know that I would ever be thinking in terms of that without something like Blackburn Institute um so I think those are kind of the things that I gained personally.

Anything else that you would like to share about your involvement in your community or in the Blackburn Institute?

R: Umm. (pause) I think that really the the as I've just been answering these, your questions I think that one thing that comes to mind is just um the capacity of the Blackburn institute now versus when we first began 18 years ago um and how much more far reaching um it is and its ability to effect change I think is much greater now, I know its much greater now than it was in the early days. Um you know I think that's a powerful story to tell. Like I said you start with one man's vision and you bring a very few group of people together and you you build on that with um with being able to involve alumni, um excellent student uh leadership umm both in official capacity and just as members and um looking at the broader picture um you know there's a lot that can be said for that. I wish that I could list um you know specific accomplishments of the Blackburn Institute. You know I know the things that certainly have been important to me for the Blackburn Institute to take part in but I suspect that over 18 years the list would be quiet lengthy. So, that's it.

Well, thank you.

Yeah.

INTERVIEW 2

DONNA

Ok. Well thank you again for your time today and like I said a few demographic questions like what year did you graduate from college?

R: Graduated from Alabama in '98.

Ok. And your current age is?

R: 33.

The highest level of education you've obtained?

R: Master's degree.

And are you married?

R: Yes.

Umm, and employed full time?

R: Yes.

And how many years have you lived in the community that you're living in now?

R: A little over two, two and a half years.

And what is the town?

R: I live in Trussville, Alabama. So north of Birmingham.

You commute.

R: Yes.

I did not realize that.

R: Yes, it's not bad.

Ok, commuting in a doc program, that might be a little bit challenging.

R: We're trying to sell our house.

Ok. I guess moving back now to the Blackburn Institute a little bit, why do you think you were selected as a Blackburn fellow?

R: I think at that time I was in a lot of leadership activities at UA and I really probably pushed the envelope a lot in the College of Communications at that time, so probably because of that.

Ok, what was your classification? What year were you when you joined the Blackburn Institute?

R: I think my junior year. Let's see, I'm trying to think of what's on the website. From '98. It might have been the last half of my sophomore year beginning of junior year but I'm not positive.

Ok, that's close enough.

R: Ok.

Would you consider yourself to be active in the Blackburn institute now?

R: Mmm, not really. I've gone to a couple of things but I know they have a lot and I haven't gone to a lot of things and now I feel bad about it.

No, no, please don't. And how do you think the Blackburn institute has contributed to your desire to be involved in your community?

R: Blackburn institute talked a lot about contributions for the state and your local area and I'm not, I never thought about it like that. When you're in high school you think you wanna go to college, get as far away from home as you can and then sometimes you don't. And then you think about it for graduate school and different things and I just decided to bloom where I'm planted, so it had that kind of impact because I had never heard of anyone trying to encourage you to stay. A lot of people encourage you to leave home and go somewhere else, so that was the first time I'd ever even heard that conversation and I've stayed and I can't fathom leaving the state of Alabama or going somewhere else like my siblings have done and other people, so I've never thought about it that way but Blackburn was probably one of those factors.

Wow, ok. And then when you were in college what other organizations, clubs, sports teams, band, chorus anything like that did you participate in?

R: I was President of my sorority, which is Delta Sigma Theta. I was in the XXXI, an Ambassador, Vice President of the ambassadors for the College of Communication. I was in a ton of honoraries. Alpha Lambda Delta, I was President of Phi Eta Sigma honorary.

Wow!

A lot. I was an RA. I did a lot!

Look at you. So, yeah.

R: And I was on student judiciary, so a lot.

Were any of these groups student government or organizations concerned with social or political issues?

R: The student judiciary is the judicial branch of the SGA, so of all of them I would say that one probably was. And I was in College Democrats maybe one year, that's political.

Yeah. And did that, did that organization effect your belief or your values as far as political engagement then?

R: I always understood that being involved in the political process was important. I mean that kind of foundation comes from home and church and things like that so I understood that. Being at UA and in Blackburn and student judiciary, which is part of SGA, just heightened it. Especially being Greek and different things you really learn while you're here a lot about the

political process and why it's important to vote and different things, so I think it heightened the awareness that I had. Because it will, it's in your face. You see it, it works or it doesn't, people vote or they don't, and you get more involved in the process because of those types of results. And I was a columnist for the Crimson White and I look back on some of the articles I wrote and I hope they never see the light of day but you just felt free about your opinions. That's college, that's part of the process, so it meant a lot to me and Blackburn certainly always kept it on the forefront then because it was such a select group of people. Not necessarily like minded, but I think our core values are similar in some ways within that group.

Ok. What difference do you personally believe that you can make when working to solve the problems that you see in your community?

R: If there were more hours in the day. I know, like I feel confident that I could make a difference in my community. I would like to mentor more of inner city youth or rural youth who maybe don't have the exposure to college and the arts and different things, and people who are consistently just another generation within poverty. I firmly believe that grass roots organizations, community based organizations and the like, if you can get them while they're young and be that spark that it will change things. I've done a lot of volunteer work but its hard to fully commit to some of the ones that will take up so much more time just because of lifestyles and relationships and career but its been on my mind which means I'm probably going to do it. Like that would be what I want to focus on.

Ok. Have you ever worked together informally with someone or some group to solve a problem in the community?

R: Yes.

In the last 12 months?

R: Was it 12 months?

Or close.

R: Yes.

Ok. What, thinking about problems in your community what kind of difference do you believe that people working together as a group to solve problems in the community?

R: There's strength in numbers. You see a lot of collective efforts and you see better results. There are a lot of, I don't like it when groups come to reinvent the wheel if there's something that already exists. Everybody wants to help the environment its like "Ok can you be a part of the core group who are already doing things." But I believe there are strength in numbers and I mean I know people say it only takes one person to change the world but imagine if one person had people pushing them and a community who followed their leadership, it just gets more done I think.

And where have you spent time participating in community service or volunteer activities and by that I mean how much time and where have you spent your time? With what organizations and what types of organizations, like environmental organizations.

R: Ok, I'm in the Junior League of Birmingham and we are required to do a minimum of 54 hours of volunteer service a year. I am still active with my sorority as an alumna for Delta Sigma Theta and we are constantly hosting activities and participating in activities. And then I had a church member who recently was blessed with a Habit Home so I've been volunteering there to help her get the required hours, so things like that.

Ok, very neat. Is there a group or an organization that you feel specifically drawn to, whether it's your church or another organization that you give your time to?

R: The two organizations I give the majority of my time to are my sorority and the Junior League, so I guess organizations lead by women. Get the work done by women, seems easier to get the job done that way.

What do you believe is a good characterization of a good citizen?

R: A good citizen, I think a good citizen is one who votes. I guess because November 2 is just around the corner that's on everyone's mind. I also think that good citizens try to see beyond their community or their subdivision and to look at things from the perspective of those who live in a different zip code or on the other side of the tracks. **Because you always have the "haves", the "have nots" and sometime as individuals climb the social ladder its easy to forget or to just write the check and not want to put in the hours and I think citizenship requires civic accountability as well as community responsibility to the less fortunate.**

So the difference between being a good person and a good citizen, is there a difference?

R: Let me think about that out loud before I give my answer. A good person could be defined as someone who is good at heart and has the right intentions. A good citizen is one who is actively engaged in what goes on in the community or has some thought to help others. So I think there is a difference but it's not necessarily mutually exclusive. You have some people who are good who don't do anything, they're just a nice person to know who wouldn't hurt a fly but that's it. So I think there's a difference.

Ok. How often do you talk about current events or things that you've heard about in the news with your family and friends?

R: Everyday.

And the time that you spend, I guess, talking about or researching different things that you hear on the news?

R: I spend some time because I worked at the Birmingham News for nine years so and in radio for one year, so the past 10 years of my life have been about nothing but the news and media

both. I've spent a lot of time doing that type of research and reading blogs and seeing who wrote what article and contacting the reporter with my opinions and the like.

Well thinking about one of the values in the Blackburn Institute, I guess the diversity of opinions and embracing the diversity of opinions how often do you engage in conversations with people who have an opposing opinion.

Maybe, if we want to count Facebook that would have to be daily. But if we're not counting Facebook and we're talking to face to face interactions probably once or twice a month and ironically it's when I'm in a mixed audience that a difference of opinion come about. Or I go to a dinner once a month with some, all of us graduated from UA, about 10 of us and the majority are some of my sorority sisters so there are about 10 of us who get together and its interesting how our opinions change as we get older or someone gets married or someone has a child or someone has a special needs child or someone becomes an entrepreneur. So as we evolve our opinions are not as common and it's a little surprising because we all used to think so much more alike. So maybe once or twice a month but if you count online daily.

Alright, that's ok. Studies show that people you know people are willing to say stuff on line, all the bullying that happens.

R: Oh yes.

What are some motivations for you to interact with others that may have a differing opinion than yourself?

R: I think it's important, you should always hear what the other person has to say because people feel just as strongly about their values as I do. A lot of its perspective and you just cant change that persons mind so I try to find common ground a lot of times. I don't like it when people criticize something that they have not experienced or because they saw a sound bite on the local news they make judgments about a rural community or an inner city community or health care or even volunteer work and funding. And I always say if you've never performed any volunteer work, if you've never counseled a woman trying to get off welfare for her first job, you've never interviewed a recent college graduate who's looking for work how can you say that or how can you believe that? So its important to me, particularly when I'm around a young mind that thinks differently to try to pitch open mindedness or at least tolerance because I think a lot of times that the problem and that's how the communication barriers start.

What aspects of the Blackburn institute have been or were the most important to your civic involvement?

R: The aspects that were, you were surrounded by people who were equally as involved, some more so some less. So when you put a group of people like that together, I'm still friends with Blackburn fellows who were at UA with me so it really goes beyond. And you really don't think about it then as an undergrad that 10 years from now you'll be on a board with this person or this person will move on and you'll make a campaign contribution to them when they run for office and things, but Blackburn did that. It was similar to what I think kind of Honors College is now

where they pick, pick, pick and bring this village together as a microcosm of UA to impact change and its, really its more powerful than I ever would have realized then when I showed up to interview.

So, seeing the benefits now?

R: Oh, it's huge. I'd encourage any student if you can get in make that your goal if you're attending UA.

And then what aspects did you gain the least? I guess what were some of the negatives about being in Blackburn?

R: The negatives. Blackburn is very different now then it was then. So back in '96 or '95, '96, '97 we didn't really understand it. A lot of my understanding of Blackburn has come post graduation, the importance of it. We always knew about Dr. Blackburn and that it was an honor to be in Blackburn but the messages were not as organized and communicated to us about what Blackburn really wanted, to do the core of the work. We didn't really do group projects I think we went to something at someone's house and things so I didn't really understand it. I knew it was a big deal to get in and so I got in but really making the impact and interacting with the leaders, I don't think it was emphasized the way it is now so I'm excited about how the program has evolved. I'm proud you know I tell people "Well you'll always be a Blackburn Fellow" kind of thing I'm proud of it, but it seems like the students now, which is how things should be as years progress, just get so much more mileage out of it. And during our years selections were even different. Some people didn't have to interview, some people did and it was just weird a little bit so you know if that could be a criticism I guess that would be the one. We didn't get it and we did things and it would be awkward and we would kind of be looking at each other. But they meant well, they meant well so I can see the difference now cause it was nothing like that then so that's exciting.

And Dr. Blackburn was still involved.

R: Mhmm.

Did his involvement mean more, or knowing Dr. Blackburn how did that impact you?

R: It didn't, it didn't. He was there and it was like, I can look at it now and say well to the faculty and staff present it meant a big deal. To the students we were courteous and polite but it was like "Ok, thank you" and then we would leave.

Yeah, you just knew who it was named after.

R: Yes.

Ok. In what ways did Blackburn contribute to your beliefs?

R: I don't think Blackburn necessarily changed any of my beliefs or that necessarily it provided a forum for the diversity of opinions, there was no debates, no controversial anything. It was about civic engagement, Dr. Blackburn's leadership and the like. It was good to see a group talk about the good and the potential of the state of Alabama as a native of Alabama and hearing so much bad or telling people your college decision and they would say "Oh, well you don't wanna go away" or different things. Just say "No, I'm gonna go to UA. I'm fine with that," but just to see people so positive about the state and its potential was really good to see then.

How have you realized any personal gains though your participation with Blackburn?

R: I think so, yes. It means a lot to say that you're a Blackburn fellow and the invitations with the speakers you all line up, that's a huge perk. And just, I presented a workshop at the Winter Symposium and I learned something from the co-presenter and he and I were on a board together but I didn't really know him that well and just his line of thinking and everything and just to interact with students I was very impressed, very very very impressed and I know that Blackburn's a part of that. So I enjoy the fact that they still try to connect and keep in touch and keep you engaged with Blackburn's mission, because that's not always easy to do. But it seems like they are adamant, come back. I don't know if they even do it anymore, but come back, come back to Homecoming come by. I think when Mark was here and things like they try, they really want that connection and I appreciate that.

And I'm not comparing, without sounding like I'm comparing god to Dr. Blackburn or anything like that, but compared to you spoke about how your morals were already set when you came because of your church and family and so forth, would you say that, do you believe that any of the, how do you believe that impacted your current beliefs and maybe did Blackburn emphasize that or were there any correlations between the two as far as your moral development during college?

R: I'm pretty tough but because I'm one of the rare college students, I don't drink or smoke, I've never tasted a beer in my life. So I wasn't a drinker so I've never been a follower necessarily so the morals I came with, without a few bumps about religion and a few things are the morals that I left with. Blackburn, and I don't feel like, I never noticed the moral impact or them talking to us about issues like that and it could be that I'm old now and don't remember really an emphasis. There was the Elliot Society, which I don't know if that still exists or not. Back then I felt like they were taking on more of what Blackburn takes on now. And I don't even know if that group still exists, and its probably the same members, truth be told, and maybe Elliot was more radical in thinking and action and Blackburn was still trying to get organized together and evolved per se. So I don't wanna say that it had a moral impact on me because I don't fell like it did. So.

Yeah that's great. Well, how involved were you as a student with the Blackburn Institute then?

R: I would attend a few events, they had the retreat and receptions and that was really it. I don't think that they would have had anything that I would not have attended its just that I don't think there was a lot. And I could be wrong, I could be completely wrong but I just don't remember it being like that then. And I certainly don't think anything was required maybe.

Well, are there other things that you might could think of that you'd like to share about your experience with Blackburn or about how maybe your current civic engagement, anything along those lines?

R: I think Blackburn has done a great job. I was upset when Blackburn invited Patrick Cooper to speak and I emailed that and expressed my beliefs about it because I did not want Blackburn to be perceived as picking a side in such a heated, you know as a resident then of Birmingham those races got very ugly and very intimate and I felt like Blackburn was taking a side. And I know it was because of Craig Elon and I probably contacted him too because we were here together and different things so I think we need to be very careful with situations like that because you never know what alum in that city will wave a red flag or cause problems but I went to some of the meetings in Birmingham when they were trying to figure out what they wanted to do with pockets of alums in areas and I never went back to a second meeting because I felt that Blackburn was not as progressive for the alumni in Birmingham as other groups in the city of Birmingham. I was a little surprised at how some of the leaders or former Blackburn fellows were in the meeting and were very disconnected from what was going on in that particular city so I was turned off because I felt like Blackburn was trying to do something that had been done a million times here and I felt like it was an easy way to say "we're doing something" when it didn't have a lot of meat to it. I think they decided to host an event with the Association of Non Profits to talk about how to get involved and I was like "Ok, but what does that do to impact change." And I know different people have different ways to get to a goal as long as we get there its important, I wanted Blackburn to be more engaged not do something soft, we could do that with any group, I wanted Blackburn to really make an impact and so I chose not to return because I just felt like my thinking and civic engagement was so much farther along than what we were trying to do with the group. I know it's different based on where you are and different people bring different years of experience to the table but that was really my only thing so it just seemed harder to stay connected or when I get the invitations I didn't wanna come and feel like I'm not gonna know anyone there or would anyone from my class show up and it would just be a little weird because so many of the younger or more recent grads are there you don't wanna feel like the odd person out. But Blackburn's awesome, no one will every be happy 110% but I can definitely see with the recent fellows and the caliber of the groups, I mean wow, to see in ten years plus how its evolved and I wonder what'll be like when I have kids who come to UA kind of thing just because it's such a powerful model and other schools should really follow it. Cause we're the best. So that's really my two cents.

One last question I think. What are your beliefs about the responsibility versus choice to make things better for society?

R: I think people have both. I think it's, I feel like there is a heavier burden on the educated to lift those burdens and alleviate and solve the problems of society. Ideally each person would pick up that type of responsibility but we know and anyone who has ever worked with a lower income population or first generation population can see that there is such a disconnect from day to day reality. And even with school programs and systems the lack of exposure can limit a child beyond the least of ever seeing anything outside of their day to day. So I really think that both the responsibility and the burden lie on those of us who have the privilege of a college education

and beyond. All of it doesn't have to be solved that way, we have a Bill Gates story and different things, but I do feel like a lot of the grassroots community, day to day has to come from that community of thinkers unless you have someone who is completely innovative and just beyond the scope of reality who will come once in a lifetime and create something, **I really think the burden is on the educated and I really don't think we've done our part**. I really don't.

Well again, thank you for your time today and if you think of anything else just email or call me.