



PHYSICAL PLACE ON CAMPUS:

A REPORT ON THE SUMMIT ON BUILDING COMMUNITY

I. FROM THE SUMMIT ORGANIZERS

For the past five years, we have been on a journey to assert the importance of physical place to learning, community, and engagement on college campuses, and to consider what more higher education should do to assure that its vast physical plant is leveraged more intentionally for educational and civic goals. This journey led us to create a unique gathering of higher education and industry leaders called Physical Place on Campus: A Summit on Building Community.

This report presents what was learned from this Summit.

We have learned many things on this journey. Perhaps the most important is that while this document is the culmination of an event, it is also really only a beginning of another journey.

The outcome we hope is most clear is that so much more is needed. More discovery and less inertia. More evidence and fewer assumptions. More boundary-crossing and fewer silos. And more questioning of what we think we know, so that we might reach our envisioned future.

It is our hope that the Summit and this report will be as transformative to the conversation as physical place is to campus community.

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II. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In October 2011, a multidisciplinary group of 50 individuals (students, architects, planners, consultants, campus administrators, and higher education association leaders) met at the University of Wisconsin–Madison to consider the relationship between physical place and campus community. Because a gathering of this type and on this topic had not previously occurred, it enabled robust conversation around important questions for higher education, such as:

- What barriers prevent us from achieving community through physical places?
- What does community look like and what are its elements?
- How do we know when community has been influenced by place?
- How do we measure it?

These questions, and more, were introduced through small group discussions, debated in large group reporting sessions, and challenged by provocative guest speakers.

Although what was learned from the Summit is highly nuanced, and further described elsewhere in this report, three over-arching messages emerged:

1. When campus community exists in its strongest form, it is associated with learning, civic purpose, and a sense of belonging. However, higher education lacks a common definition or vocabulary to democratize participation in facility planning and design, and transparent alignment between research, educational goals, project implementation, and facility management.
2. Places of exceptional community are those that exhibit high levels of human engagement and are imbued with evidence of human-to-human mutuality, psychological safety and refuge, and a strong sense of individual and group ownership. Students, in particular, often seek and develop places of community where it is needed, rather than where it is administratively intended; many times these places are surprisingly low tech and low cost but highly customizable and fully satisfying to their users.
3. Although legitimate barriers to achieving physical community exist, more sophisticated and willful campus leadership can overcome barriers such as discipline-based, institutional, or association boundaries; navigation of campus politics; or inarticulate justification for physical place and community. The largest barrier, then, may be leadership. Overcoming barriers may simply require a more courageous decision to lead through them rather than the unlikely elimination of them.

PLACES OF **EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNITY** ARE THOSE THAT EXHIBIT **HIGH LEVELS OF HUMAN ENGAGEMENT** AND ARE IMBUED WITH EVIDENCE OF HUMAN-TO-HUMAN MUTUALITY, PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AND REFUGE, AND A STRONG SENSE OF **INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP OWNERSHIP.**



III. **BACKGROUND**

The idea of the Summit was born of a hypothesis that there must be a better way to plan for, design, and manage campus space; and there must be a better way to align the transformative power of physical place with higher education's overarching goals. With the extraordinary sums of money being spent on physical buildings (Basu, 2011), the international narrative about the cost of education growing louder (Blumenstyk, 2012), and higher education's obligation to develop in students the skills of citizenship and public life (Astin, 1999), Summit organizers believed it imperative to explore whether physical spaces are making appropriate contributions to the learning and civic goals of colleges and universities.

The philosophical rationale for this gathering is too important to leave unstated. At its core, the concept of community is fundamental to a well-rounded education. To be sure, colleges and universities are much more than a collection of buildings; they also serve as incubators of intellectual understanding and perpetuators of civic commitment. At their best, colleges and universities reflect the intentional creation of relationships designed to nurture a shared vision of purpose and values (Bogue, 2002). Indeed, Boyer (1990) asked more than two decades ago: "If students and faculty cannot join together in common cause, if the university cannot come together in a shared vision of its central mission, how can we hope to sustain community in the society at large?" (p. 3).

In an increasingly diverse society, it is critical that college students have multiple opportunities to practice productive interaction and constructive disagreement, experience high-quality socialization, and learn to live productively in community with one another. Especially important to ensure are opportunities and places for students to experience different perspectives, life experiences, and world views, while developing in themselves a sense of self as part of a community, with concomitant responsibilities to others.

All too often, however, such experiences are limited to pedagogical, cognitive, or curricular considerations, with less intentionality given to physical spaces that might serve as laboratories for practicing the behaviors and perspectives necessary for living in community. The Summit's original question was: "Why might this be?"

Summit organizers hypothesized four possible reasons:

- **FIRST**, although formal learning which occurs in the classroom is fundamental to the civic aims of colleges and universities, often forgotten is that learning and community development also occur in informal settings outside the classroom (Banning, 1995).
- **SECOND**, campus planning too often occurs within the management silos of a typical college administrative structure—one which more likely reflects staff reporting lines than the interconnectedness of the campus (student) experience.
- **THIRD**, most campus metrics for facilities planning are overly quantitative (e.g., cost per square foot, number of users), with few effective tools available to measure the sociological elements of successful campus facilities (e.g., the extent to which users develop social responsibility).
- **FINALLY**, the myriad definitions and perspectives about what constitutes community complicate a shared understanding and common vocabulary.

Even so, the Summit's purpose was not so much to memorialize these reasons but, rather, to imagine a different future for campuses, and new paths to realizing community via physical spaces on campus. The fundamental aspiration was to achieve a more integrated approach to facilities planning and design—one that organizes facility decisions around student need, educational imperatives, and common goals—to create what Rickes (2009) called an "extracurricular infrastructure" (p. 14).

With working hypotheses in hand, organizers were interested in convening a conversation with others on this topic for what was envisioned as more of a think tank, than a conference. After approaching the Association of College Unions International (ACUI) and gaining support for program development, organizers began to create a meaningful cross-disciplinary gathering. They were hopeful that the Summit would serve as a call for higher education to reconsider how it thinks about campus physical space and its role in cultivating community, learning, and engagement.

IV. **VISION AND GOALS**



What the organizers envisioned was a Summit designed to produce a new conversation about (if not a new approach to) facility planning, design, and management on campus. The point of such a vision was to better align campus physical environments with higher education imperatives and to facilitate planning across management boundaries toward a more integrated campus experience. It was determined from the outset that ideas would emerge from inviting a small group of architects, planners, faculty, student life professionals, students, and others to an event that utilizes both research and experience to elevate the dialogue.

From the beginning, organizers had the following goals:

- To convene thought leaders for an interdisciplinary examination of the relationship between physical place and campus community.
- To identify new approaches of planning for, managing, and measuring physical place and campus community.
- To encourage a research agenda for further development of the issues, problems, opportunities, and ideas.
- To offer an opportunity for inter-association cooperation for the betterment of higher education.
- And, to produce a report of the Summit's findings and freely and broadly distribute it to promulgate learning and commitment.

A **SUMMIT** DESIGNED TO PRODUCE A NEW CONVERSATION ABOUT **FACILITY PLANNING, DESIGN, AND MANAGEMENT** ON CAMPUS.

V. **OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Attempting to summarize the literature on this topic is a herculean task not entirely possible within the confines of this report or even a three-day Summit. This is true, in part, because the literature exists within, and not across, professional disciplines (e.g., architecture, sociology, student development theory, etc.) and no meta-analysis exists.

Although an exhaustive literature review is difficult to achieve (and was not the point of the Summit), organizers thought it important to at least establish a common perspective as a point of departure for Summit discussions. To that end, a short list of recommended reading, and a longer list of optional reading, was sent in advance to all participants. These readings offer a glimpse into what the literature reports on this topic, and are summarized hereafter.

CAMPUS SPACE AND ITS EFFECT ON BEHAVIOR

Strange and Banning (2001) remind us that three fundamental perspectives exist for understanding the relationship between physical space and its users. The premise of the first perspective, *architectural determinism*, is that human behavior is predictable and caused almost mechanistically by the physical environment. This perspective suggests that placement of furniture, walls, doors, and other artifacts will cause recurring and consistent responses by its users. Challengers, however, argue that this perspective is overly simplistic and fails to account for the reality of human choice and free will.

The second perspective, *architectural possibilism*, assumes that a predetermined experience is unlikely and that all physical features have an equal chance of attracting user interest and affecting the user experience. Like architectural determinism, this perspective also has its challengers. Detractors contend that, far from offering equal chances, some features of physical space are more likely than others to attract user interest. For example, if all hallways of a student union facility terminate at the bookstore, the bookstore is more likely to be used.

Although not framed with this language, Summit participants seemed to embrace the third perspective of *architectural probabilism*, which suggests behavior is not predictable and the probability of behavior responses can be enhanced with thoughtful design. For example, physical environments that are inviting, well lit, and easy to find will not necessarily cause use but may increase the likelihood or probability of use.

Further, Strange and Banning (2001) make a cogent argument that more attention should be paid to the functional and symbolic elements of (or perhaps the overt and covert messages sent by) physical place. They suggest that when users are faced with a contradiction between intended communication (e.g., a “welcome” sign) and unintended communication (e.g., poorly lit or dirty space) users are more likely to believe unintended communication. This communication says more about campus culture and the ecology of place than design intent. Finally, they call for greater attention to this topic by reporting that of the myriad ways student learning, engagement, and community are developed, the physical environment is “perhaps the least understood and the most neglected” (p. 12).

CAMPUS SPACE AND ITS EFFECT ON LEARNING

Bickford and Wright (2006) effectively summarize what is known about learning and make a compelling case for the catalyzing role that community has upon learning. They argue that the importance of community to learning is implied in higher education but not overtly embraced or effectively planned. Although learning generally refers to individual behavioral and cognitive change, the context for learning is a social one. Because the literature is replete with evidence that people learn best in community with others, physical spaces offer powerful opportunities for community and learning, and more intentionality is needed to achieve this goal.

It is through community and its the social context that individuals apply what is learned in and beyond the classroom. Campus constituents experiment with meaningful interaction, conflict negotiation, and deepening understanding of self and others through community interactions. Indeed, it is through community that colleges and universities fulfill the civic compact that higher education purports to offer society.

Over time, and for many reasons (i.e., government mandates, societal perspectives, size and complexity of universities), efficiency and productivity have taken prominence as primary metrics for college and university management. Moreover, most institutions of higher education are bureaucratic by nature and, thus, result in “organizational silos ... [and a] lack of awareness and acceptance of the interconnectedness of roles on campus” (Bickford & Wright, 2006, p. 4.5). The focus of most institutions, therefore, has shifted away from the student experience, causing students to find their own forms of community without the institutional intentionality that is likely to yield deeper learning and stronger forms of community. To best fulfill educational objectives, the authors argue that colleges and universities must recommit to the role of community as a means to enhancing learning and engagement, and must improve facility planning and design.

CAMPUS SPACE AS THIRD PLACE

Sociologist Ray Oldenburg (1999) introduced the idea of society being comprised of the first place (home), the second place (work), and the third place (neither home nor work). The first place (home) is the most basic to people and is primarily a place of family, privacy, and inward facing. The second place (work) provides the necessary means to support living and is more highly structured with rules, norms, and hierarchy than the first place. Third places, such as coffee shops, lounges, and neighborhood pubs, are essential to a democracy and the anchors for the most vibrant communities.

The attributes of successful third places are replicable on college and university campuses, and begin to offer a framework for how to think about campus planning and design. Third place attributes including the following:

- They are typically free or inexpensive to utilize
- Food is commonly available
- They are easily accessible and proximate to first and second places
- One can expect to see regular users
- The ambiance is welcoming, comfortable, and playful
- Rules are few and neutralizing to hierarchy and status
- Conversation is the sustaining activity.

Indeed, myriad campus buildings have the potential to serve as third places, such as libraries (Clemons, Waxman, Banning, & McKelfresh, 2009) and student unions (Atkins & Oakland, 2008), and the attributes common to third places emerged thematically during the Summit proceedings.

CAMPUS SPACE AS TYPE

Franck and von Sommaruga Howard (2010) explain how building type is too often considered an answer rather than a question, thereby constraining both innovation and design. Building types, such as libraries, recreation centers, and theaters, help “organize the way people make, occupy, and think about the world” (p. 172). Type can also help clients (campuses) explain what they wish to build and guide architects to design what clients desire. On the other hand, type can also limit discovery and the full potential of a building “to be transformative at the scale of the human body and everyday life” (p. 166).

The authors remind us that types are merely guides, were invented by people, and are in a state of flux as they are critiqued, changed, and reinvented. Further, they argue that types should be challenged but often are not because “transforming type requires belief and determination: a strong and clear vision for the new building and a willingness and capacity to stand up to the controversy a transformed type often provokes” (p. 173).

The Seattle Central Library stands as one such example of transformed type. Over a three-month period, the client and design team, recognizing this as a quickly evolving type, engaged in a process of research to determine the future of libraries. The team concluded libraries are no longer dedicated solely to the book but to serving as an “information store” (p. 181) of sorts; are shifting from being “gatekeepers ... [to] mentors” (p. 181) of information; and have an increasing social responsibility to those they serve. These discoveries liberated the team from conventional thinking (e.g., library staff sitting at reference desks throughout the library) and led to innovative design (e.g., centralized, circular reference desk resembling a reception area in a boutique hotel).

The authors illustrate how the design process itself impacts facilities for which definition and mission are (or should be) in a state of evolution. They remind us of the pitfalls of passively accepting conventional form, processes, and organizational structures; the responsibility to reevaluate and change to adapt to what is changing in society; and that design itself is a community activity.

DESIGN ITSELF IS A COMMUNITY ACTIVITY.

VI. **SUMMIT FRAMEWORK**

The Summit opened with remarks by the organizers, Loren Rullman and Jan van den Kieboom. Through their remarks, they asserted that physical place matters, that community is fundamental to a well-rounded education, and that higher education must be smarter and more intentional about what it constructs and maintains. These assertions were predicated upon what is already generally accepted within higher education:

- Years of research have established that there is correlation between learning and engagement (see, for example, National Survey of Student Engagement, 2011). That is, when students interact with others outside the classroom, learning is enhanced. Thus, campuses must have spaces that are intentionally developed for engagement and interaction.
- Experience with and exposure to diversity matters is important to a well-rounded education (Association of American Colleges & Universities, 2012), and if graduates are going to live in and contribute to an increasingly complex world, they need opportunities and spaces to experience ideas, peoples, cultures, and opinions different from those they brought with them to college. Availability must include formal spaces for intentionally developed programs, and informal spaces for serendipitous and unplanned exposure.
- The higher education community increasingly understands that there is a relationship between mental health and a sense of belonging. Because a primary predictor for students' sense of belonging is peer social support (Dixon & Robinson Kurpius, 2008), campuses must offer a continuum of spaces—from private and confidential spaces for therapy and treatment to civic and social spaces—where students begin to understand themselves within the context of, and as accountable to, others.
- Finally, higher education professionals have long known that learning is, at its best, a social process requiring interaction with others. Thus, what is needed are “places that foster connections rather than compartmentalization” (Bickford & Wright, 2006, p. 4.5).

At the start of the Summit, participants were invited to embrace the multiplicity of professional disciplines and perspectives at the Summit as well as the growth that can occur by stretching beyond one's existing thresholds of comfortable knowledge. In fact, because a community is itself not necessarily devoid of conflict, participants were invited to constructively embrace differences at the Summit for the benefit of new learning.

The Summit was described as not so much a seminar or conference, with an expert speaking and learners taking notes, but more like a think tank, imagined as a small gathering of thought leaders working together as both teachers and learners. In fact, the Summit was designed with seven principles in mind:

- The format, setting, participants, and methodology should fundamentally challenge existing thinking about space, design, and community.
- The convening model should encourage candid yet collegial conversation among those with divergent perspectives in an environment that fosters trust and collaboration.
- Associations and participants should be co-equal actors, with co-equal voice, and co-equal contributions.
- Participants should be invited based on their unique contributions to the topic, and group size should be kept small to assure high levels of engagement and candor.
- The experience should be one of “how we should” rather than “what we did.”
- Because growth requires curiosity, an appropriate amount of disequilibrium should be used as a tool for discovery.
- The learning site itself should inspire creativity, reinforce collaboration, and honor Summit principles.

VII. METHODOLOGY



To assure a multidisciplinary perspective from design through implementation, organizers created a planning advisory board made up of individuals appointed by three higher education associations and a faculty member from a notable school of architecture and urban planning. In addition to assisting with all facets of Summit design, the advisory board recommended 10 higher education associations be invited to send participants who, in turn, joined industry representatives and students for the Summit. A total of 50 individuals participated.

Before participants arrived, a short list of recommended reading was distributed to them. This was not so much to suggest which literature is most seminal on the topic but, rather, to establish elements of common experience and vocabulary before arrival and to stimulate thinking on the topic more generally.

The Summit's structure was organized around four "research questions" designed to achieve consensus about the issues, and lead to an action plan for change. The research questions were:

- What is the issue or problem to be resolved? (Definition)
- What would it look like if community were achieved? (Vision)
- What are the barriers to achieving it? (Barriers)
- What is required to achieve change? (Action)

To provide an initial common experience, and to reinforce messages of openness to new ideas, Peter DeLisle, Leslie B. Crane Chair of Leadership Studies and director of The Posey Leadership Institute at Austin College, opened the Summit. DeLisle facilitated an exercise called "Meta Cognition and Cooperating Endeavors." Participants were sensitized to differing ways of perceiving problems and opportunities and learned to appreciate that each perspective adds value to the whole through this opening program.

To professionalize the experience, William Flynn, managing director emeritus of the National Council for Continuing Education and Training, facilitated the Summit. Throughout the Summit, small and equally sized groups were formed to discuss each research question, followed by reports back to all Summit participants. This format allowed the intimacy and immediacy of deep discussion in small groups and the breadth of learning for all participants during facilitated large group conversations.

Each small group discussion was preceded by a 20-minute presentation from individuals specifically invited to provoke thinking. These presenters and their topics included:

- Eric Stoller, a higher education consultant and blogger, whose talk was called "Technology: An Opportunity for Creating Community within Our Physical Spaces"
- Lawrence Abrahamson, senior designer at IDEO (a design and innovation consulting firm), whose talk was entitled "User Centered Design"
- James Carlson, founder of The School Factory and Bucketworks, who spoke about "Community-Driven Collaborative Workspaces"

Additionally, Jeff Vredevoogd, director of education for Herman Miller, presented videos created by college students, which visually and humorously illustrated student perspectives on what constitutes a campus "hub."

In addition, individuals were hired as recorders to take notes in each small group, which were subsequently typed, transcribed, and distributed to three individuals after the Summit. Utilizing a quasi-qualitative research methodology, a list of inductive codes was created so each of these three individuals could code verbal data (transcribed notes) independently. These individuals then reviewed the data and codes and subsequently reached consensus about consistent themes to assure some measure of inter-coder reliability and to build confidence in Summit findings.

VIII. FINDINGS



DEFINITION

Participants were first asked, “What is the issue or problem to be resolved?” Participants agreed that community is necessary for higher education to achieve its objectives and, when community is present, it is generally associated with learning, civic purpose, and a sense of belonging. Participants also agreed that it is unclear whether higher education regularly achieves this aspiration.

But, what is the best way to succinctly define the problem? Five themes describing the issue emerged:

- **SILOS:** Higher education leaders too often work within—rather than across—the boundaries that define our professional disciplines, campus management structures, and association missions.
- **PERMANENCE AND INFLEXIBILITY:** Facilities are too often designed without the flexibility and adaptability needed to assure user relevance over time.
- **METRICS:** Measures of success and effectiveness are too often quantitative (e.g., user counts, square footage) and too narrowly defined (e.g., retention rates instead of student learning outcomes).
- **APPRECIATION:** The sociology of community is less valued and more difficult to describe than academic goals, many of which drive design and financial decision making.
- **TRANSLATION:** Higher education and its industry partners lack an agreed upon definition of community that can be understood across disciplines, professions, and associations and that is easily and democratically used without special training or bounded knowledge.

VISION

After considerable discussion about the perceived problem, participants were asked to imagine thematically what community might look like if it were achieved in all the places it is desired. Participants suggested eight attributes of community:

- **ENGAGING:** Interaction is visible and palpable between people and groups. This form of engagement is something more than mere proximity; it appears active, involving, and dynamic.
- **BRIDGING:** Mutuality, commitment, and commonality occur between people who are seemingly dissimilar.
- **LAYERING:** Individuals can find places of personal refuge before moving into larger group settings and spaces. This scaling of space allows individuals to move from safer and more personal space to larger and more civic space as comfort increases.
- **AGENCY:** Individuals feel a sense of ownership over themselves, their relationships, and the space they occupy. Space, furniture, and other physical attributes can be easily modified without permission as needed for comfort or functionality.
- **RESPONSIVE:** Physical space can morph, adapt, flex, and fundamentally change as needed throughout the day and over years.
- **DISTRIBUTED:** Space is appropriately decentralized and distributed throughout campus to optimize access, convenience, scale, refuge, and personalization.
- **DEVIATION:** Policies and other restrictions that inhibit flexibility and agency are minimized.
- **GESTALT:** All elements (e.g., light, furniture, materials, diversity, sound, location, activity) work together to create a functional “wholeness” that cannot be created by only its parts.

BARRIERS

With agreement about the problems to be addressed, and a vision about what community could look like, participants were then asked to consider what might be in the way of achieving this vision. Six barrier themes were reflected in participant comments:

- **TYOLOGY:** Existing building type mental models (e.g., library, recreation center) are helpful for understanding, but also laden with boundaries to thinking beyond conventional functionality and use patterns.
- **POLITICS:** Intra-campus competition for support inhibits planning, funding, and creativity.
- **RESEARCH:** The literature base exists primarily within disciplines (e.g., architecture, student development) rather than being informed by multiple perspectives at a meta-level. Further, the literature rarely informs actual campus planning, design, and collaboration in practice.
- **INERTIA:** Doing what has always been done requires less tenacity and may actually yield more support than doing things differently.
- **IMAGINATION:** Creating stronger forms of community, different building typologies, or changes in campus processes requires exceptional vision and imagination.
- **LEADERSHIP:** Overcoming barriers requires a stronger form of campus leadership and professional will.

ACTION

As the Summit's last day approached, the organizers decided to alter the agenda with the intent of an open exchange of ideas. Participants were invited to gather in a place of their choice and asked to answer one question: "What if?"

Three rules were given for consideration of this question:

1. Every person must make at least one contribution.
2. Surprise each other.
3. Be bold.

In response, participants offered widely ranging and equally inspiring ideas, a sampling of which are excerpted below. Unlike other responses, these were not coded since the question was not so much a research question to be discussed as it was an opportunity to brainstorm the many ways community could be achieved.

WHAT IF...

- We stopped being practical?
- All of higher education celebrated 2013 as the “Year of Community?”
- Each university designated a “Chief Community Officer?”
- We closed the good community spaces on campus? Would anyone notice?
- This Summit was replicated with only students, would the discussion be different?
- Space was like Play-doh?
- Removing cost from a project was based on community values instead of financial values? Would we call it “values engineering” instead of “value engineering?”
- Students co-created the environments?
- We threw out policies that govern space?
- We built not student centers or libraries, but community centers?
- Students designed the campus; would it look different?
- We had a tool kit for evaluating the efficacy of community space?
- There was funding to pilot community and place ideas on campus?
- Community was not so much a value as an outcome?
- Universities were not places of privilege?
- Student grading was predicated on skills and behaviors and not individual performance?
- The distinction between teacher and student was eliminated?
- Higher education was more failure-friendly?
- We turned the question over to students?
- We modeled “pop-up community” spaces after “pop-up retail” stores?
- Our associations identified together what is working and why?
- We had a common vocabulary like LEED offers?
- The users are the governance and policy structure, rather than the institution?

FINDINGS: **DEFINITION, BARRIERS, ACTION, WHAT IF...**

A group of people are gathered in a meeting room with large windows. One man is standing and pointing at a whiteboard, while others are seated around a table, looking at him. The room has a modern feel with stone walls and large glass windows.

IX. ORGANIZER OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Summit organizers, acting as ethnographers of sorts, offer three meta-observations informed by both experience at the Summit and a review of the findings.

WE MAY BE THE BARRIERS.

Most barriers to achieving stronger forms of community, new approaches to facility planning and design, or the outcomes our institutions seek can be overcome with stronger institutional leadership. This leadership may not be positional and must at least come from those familiar with the literature and with responsibility for facilities. Doing things differently, linking research to practice, navigating unavoidable institutional politics, and elevating campus conversations to an aspirational level are typically within the control of campus leaders. Thus, the educational imperative for community, its link with physical space, and the relevance for learning and engagement are clearly achievable.

PERHAPS FACILITIES SHOULD BE LESS PERMANENT.

Flexibility, adaptability, responsiveness, and a sense of ownership may be more important than the architecture, tradition, or permanence of most campus facilities. Higher education institutions are simultaneously conservators and creators of what is known and experienced. However, because people, technologies, and goals change—and because feelings of community somewhat depend on a sense of spatial malleability—campuses must find more creative ways to strike this balance.

CENTRALIZED FACILITIES ARE BEING QUESTIONED.

Singular, large, centralized facilities for creating campus community may be less desirable or effective (even if more efficient) for bonding between and bridging of diverse peoples. Although centralized facilities are critical for developing a broad sense of institutional identity and shared experience, distributing additional places for community throughout a campus ecosystem may resonate with students and provide greater opportunities for refuge to accompany bonding and bridging. To avoid compartmentalizing community into further silos, however, higher education institutions should consider centralizing intentionality for a decentralized ecosystem of physical places.

FLEXIBILITY, ADAPTABILITY, RESPONSIVENESS,
AND A **SENSE OF OWNERSHIP** MAY BE MORE
IMPORTANT THAN THE ARCHITECTURE, TRADITION,
OR PERMANENCE OF MOST CAMPUS FACILITIES.

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William Flynn, Managing Director Emeritus, National Council for Continuing Education & Training (Summit Facilitator)
Mark Guthrie, Director, Wisconsin Union, University of Wisconsin–Madison
Jenelle Kelsch, Education Marketing Lead, Herman Miller
Peter van den Kieboom, Designer, Workshop Architects, Inc.
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SUMMIT RECORDERS

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Bonnie Toland, Workshop Architects Inc.
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XI. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This Summit was about community but became possible only because it was formed by a community. This community consisted of individuals and organizations that supported, challenged, encouraged, and assisted an idea in becoming reality.

The Association of College Unions International's (ACUI) executive director, Marsha Herman-Betzen, was the earliest supporter of what was once only an unformed vision without structure or support. At the time, ACUI's president, Don Luse, and its Education and Research Fund program team leader, Whit Hollis, suggested the idea be turned into a formal ACUI funding proposal. Zack Wahlquist, ACUI's director of education staffed the planning and execution effort and gave exceptional guidance on all matters of content, structure, and logistics. The Summit Advisory Board of Terry Calhoun, director of media relations and publications at the Society for College and University Planning; Don Luse, director of the Carolina Union at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill; Brian Schermer, architecture faculty at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee; and Michael Schultz, director of university housing at Southern Illinois University–Edwardsville, were wise counselors and smart contributors throughout planning. In addition, Neil Frankel, fellow of the American Institute of Architects and partner at Frankel + Coleman, served as a source of inspiration and good judgment at critical moments.

Later in the process, Matt Van Jura, a program advisor at the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor, was brought on board to lead the data collection efforts. Matt encouraged us to think about video as an element of recording the Summit and was instrumental in the analysis and design that led to the presentation disseminated to Summit participants and some of the literature review for this report.

Because organizers hoped to eliminate cost as a barrier to participation, financial underwriters provided necessary support to the Summit. First, Herman Miller agreed to serve as the Summit's lead underwriter and gave a generous gift, without which this Summit would not have occurred (or only with considerable participant expense). In addition, five other underwriters offered important monetary or in-kind support:

- ACUI Education and Research Fund
- Brailsford & Dunlavey
- Chartwells Dining
- Wisconsin Union at the University of Wisconsin–Madison
- Workshop Architects

In addition, it is important to acknowledge the other associations who joined ACUI as partners in this journey; these groups selected some of their best scholars to represent them as participants at the Summit:

- Association of College and University Housing Officers–International (ACUHO–I)
- Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)
- College Student Educators International (ACPA)
- Committee on Architecture for Education of the American Institute of Architects (AIA)
- International Interior Design Association (IIDA)
- Leadership in Educational Facilities (APPA)
- National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA)
- Society for College and University Planning (SCUP)
- Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA)

These and many other colleagues offered their intellectual contributions in the myriad ways community occurs on our campuses: over a cup of coffee or meal, through storytelling about their own experiences, by forwarding academic journal articles, at conferences, midst friendships, and by pushing, shaping, and challenging each other to create what was experienced. Like any good community, their imprint is woven throughout the experience and its outcomes.

CITATION:

Rullman, L., Van den Kieboom, J., & Van Jura, M. (2012). *Physical place on campus: A report on the summit on building community*. Bloomington, IN: Association of College Unions International.

XII. ABOUT ACUI



As one of the oldest associations in higher education, the Association of College Unions International (ACUI) dates back to 1914 when it was founded in the Midwestern United States by a group of students. Over its storied history, it has evolved to become a premier knowledge-based association for campus community builders.

Today, ACUI is the leading association for college union and student activities organizations around the world and consists of over 3,000 members managing community-focused facilities and programs on over 500 campuses. The Association's "Role of the College Union" document, first adopted in 1956, defines the college union as the community center for campus life, and an organization that values participatory decision-making and first-hand experience in citizenship.

The Association's mission is to support its members in the development of community through education, advocacy, and the delivery of services. ACUI's core purpose is to be the leader in advancing campus community builders. ACUI is recognized by peer associations and campus and industry professionals as a leader on the topics of facilities, community building, and campus life.

THE **ASSOCIATION'S MISSION** IS TO
SUPPORT ITS MEMBERS IN THE **DEVELOPMENT**
OF **COMMUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION,**
ADVOCACY, AND THE DELIVERY OF **SERVICES.**

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