

Course Topic: Community Engagement

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Field site: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

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Community Engagement (CE) Revision Process at PHS

Draft of Values and Best Practices

Applying Best Practices in Communities

Revision of Values and Best Practices

CE Values Draft

- **We Listen First**
- **We work with and through trusted partners**
- **We are sensitive to the past, present, and future**
- **We are both accessible and accountable**

Best Practices will be applied to CE processes and will be evaluated team by team to see effectiveness and feasibility.

After evaluating the effectiveness of Best Practices, the CE Values will be amended to accommodate this feedback from community partners and PHS Staff. The end result would be a final product to implement the following year when conducting CE.

Research Project for Best Studies

Sifted through research studies on topics pertaining to PHS' teams and their work. Found studies that aligned most closely the kinds of neighborhoods they serve, both in terms of racial and socioeconomic makeup, and vetted research methods. Dissected pertinent statistics and principles that could be applied in PHS' outreach and support their work.

Owen's Impact in CE Process

Helped create these CE values based on current literature on non-profit community engagement strategies in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Applied Arnstein's Ladder of Civic Engagement to current PHS practices in CE and pushed towards civic enablement. Based on conversations with the CE Working Group, was able to draft these Values and Best Practices.

COVID-19 Impact:

Not being in the office setting hampered the amount of learning I got out of my time with PHS. The conversations I had with other employees from different teams made my experience so fruitful. My desk position between Public Horticulture and Strategy teams made my Mondays and Fridays special. Nevertheless, having a company-issued laptop with me made working from home seamless.

Learning Goals in Practice

Had the chance to participate in a Charrette for the design of a PHS Pop-Up garden on Drexel's campus. In support of my learning goal to witness this community engagement process, I heard and recorded down the students' ideas about how to adapt the space for effective use. The energized involvement made the discussion fluid and informed my understanding of what kind of visuals guide effective engagement.