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Outreach activities are an important component of a university's civic mission because of their role in increasing college access for underserved students (Auerbach, 2004; Oakes, Rogers, Lipton, & Morrell, 2002; Tierney & Jun, 2001), a population that is especially vulnerable in times of economic stress. Outreach, like many marginalized programs and activities, tends to be highly dependent on a small handful of mid-level professionals who operate with very limited budgets. Even when academic departments or colleges run their own outreach programs, these too are typically coordinated by one or a few administrative support staff. Consequently, such efforts often fold once funding is depleted or the responsible staff member leaves the institution.

Whereas administrative support is necessary in carrying out most university operations, faculty involvement is critical to long-term institutional change and fulfillment of institutional objectives and relationships (Checkoway, 2001), such as those necessary to the success and longevity of an outreach program (Auerbach, 2004; Tierney & Jun, 2001). Here, too, several challenges exist. Departmental boundaries and subcultures can undermine cross-campus initiatives promoting university access (Love, Kuh, MacKay, & Hardy, 1993; Matthews, 1997),

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even when participants from academic and student affairs departments share common goals (Philpott & Strange, 2003). Some research universities espouse a “civic mission” to serve their communities, yet faculty have few incentives to engage in such activities. Faculty members tend to view themselves as “teachers and researchers with commitments to their academic disciplines or professional fields, but this does not necessarily translate into playing public roles in an engaged university” (Checkoway, 2001, p. 135).

In this article we analyze a distinctive case of an outreach program that integrates student affairs staff, academic administrators, and faculty across campus with virtually no funding. This outreach effort was organized by “managerial professionals,” that is, “neither professors nor administrators,” but rather professionals supervised and influenced by the schedules and functions of university managers (Rhoades & Sporn, 2002, p. 16). What makes the program unique is the significant number of faculty members who make valuable contributions to the effort. We are interested in understanding the specific factors that enable, facilitate, and motivate academic administrators, faculty, and support professionals across various internal professional divisions of the university to participate in the absence of any tangible incentives to do so.

Our study also highlights the largely overlooked role of mid-level professionals (i.e., managerial professionals) in program development, particularly towards sustainable outreach. Part of our contribution is to offer a “critical agency network” model that combines two major concepts—social networks and critical agency—and emphasizes the agency among mid-level professionals and the power of their social ties and of their positions and roles within the university structure in creating change. This bottom-up perspective on university leadership and change is in contrast to prevailing views that foreground the leadership role of presidents and vice-presidents. Yet we also recognize the tremendous potential of high-level support in expanding innovative programs and ensuring their sustainability, suggesting that both bottom-up and top-down patterns of initiative and support are important over the life cycle of a new program.

We frame the research questions and data interpretation of our study using literature on the various levels of organization involved in change efforts, with special attention to the under-investigated role of managerial professionals. We also consider the role of networks in the change process, particularly across administrative and academic units and across university positions and roles. Yet, we are less interested in analyzing organizational change or using a social network analysis approach to examine the role of managerial professionals than in exposing

an area of research that is neglected in both the organizational change and social networks literature: the underlying motivations and structures that support cross-departmental efforts. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What factors enabled the development of a coordinated effort that integrates professionals across multiple units? How are they connected, and who takes the lead in forging these ties?
2. Given that existing reward structures provide little incentive for faculty members to engage in civic service, what motivated their involvement in this program aimed at increasing student access to the university?

Who Guides and Implements a New Initiative?

The move to a market-based model of higher education has centralized managerial authority over a university in high-level administrators, particularly the president (Fisher, 1984; Kerr & Gade, 1986). Strong central leadership has been cited as a key factor in initiatives that run the gamut from collaboration, learning, and community engagement to social justice (Kezar, 2006; Mohrman, Cohen, & Mohrman, 1995; Rendón, Novack, & Dowell, 2005; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). Keller's (1983) classic study first presented the now almost universally accepted premise that substantive shift in a university's direction depends on top academic managers taking the initiative and providing the vision for change (Leslie & Fretwell, 1996). However, these "multiple-constituency leaders" must regularly juggle competing interests that make it difficult for them to enact and sustain long-term change, making effective delegation vital for any successful president (Kerr & Gade, 1986, p. xiv). Thus, whereas senior administrators are considered to play key roles in setting the direction of and maintaining the motivation for change, lower-level managers are particularly important in establishing the change (Kezar, 2001).

The heavy emphasis on presidential leadership and initiative tends to overshadow strategic leadership at other levels of the academy. For example, although there is growing literature about the activities of deans, it tends to focus on their administrative behaviors and styles, their changing formal roles, and their effectiveness, rather than their change efforts (Del Faver, 2005; Rosser, Johnsrud, & Heck, 2003; Wolverton, Gmelch, Wolverton, & Nies, 2001). There is even less scholarship on the leadership roles of mid-level professionals who perform various university support functions (Rhoades, 1998; Rhoades & Sporn, 2002).

Although this category of professional employees is growing nationwide, they are not considered significant players in shaping the practices and direction of a university. Given their relatively low position in the formal administrative hierarchy, they are believed strictly to support rather than to initiate action. Yet, as we will show, these professionals play important roles in forging professional relationships as their mid-level position has certain advantages for creating and sustaining social networks within the institution as well as with the local community.

The Role of Managerial Professionals

Conceptualizing mid-level support professionals as “managerial professionals” gives important insight into the particular role these personnel can play in higher education institutions. They are neither senior administrators nor professors, but rather combine elements of both types of personnel (Rhoades, 1998; Rhoades & Sporn, 2002). Rhoades and Sporn define the category of “managerial professional” as lying between faculty and executive personnel at the dean level and above. Managerial professionals are mid-level personnel subordinate to the institution’s senior management (e.g., in being hired, evaluated, and fired not by professional peers, but by supervisors). They can however play managerial roles, including undertaking independent initiatives and entrepreneurial activities. They are distinct from faculty in that they lack the latter’s protections of academic freedom and considerable autonomy in structuring their workday and workload. Yet they share with faculty the ability to conduct research as well as professional allegiances and involvement that extend beyond the institution and can shape their role in initiating and managing programs. Thus, managerial professionals are a hybrid group that can take on some functions typically performed by managers and other functions performed by faculty. For example, some non-faculty professionals in student services and teaching centers engage in instructional activities, including teaching for-credit classes (Rhoades & Sporn, 2002). Despite their combined role as administrators and faculty, their professional networks within and between both groups have not been adequately understood.

The Role of Social Networks in Change

Recent scholarship highlights the significance of relationships, or social capital embedded in social networks, in understanding the positioning and advantages of individuals, social groups, and sectors or organizations (Choo & Bontis, 2002; Hart, 2007, 2008; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Powell, Koput, & Smith-Doerr, 1996). Although the current study

is not a social network analysis, we draw on conceptual ideas within the social network literature to understand the characteristics of the social ties among managerial professionals, as well as the specific roles and positions that they and their administrative and faculty colleagues occupied during the establishment of this outreach program.

Social networks are important to understanding the social capital of individuals, because network positions can influence individuals' rewards, resources, and information (Lin, 1999). Network location and the strength of network ties (Granovetter, 1973) are important factors in recognizing an individual's social capital (Lin, 1999). Three assumptions frame a social network approach: (a) structural relations are important for understanding observed behaviors; (b) networks influence one's perceptions, beliefs, and actions; and (c) structural relations should be considered dynamic (Knoke & Yang, 2008). Higher education researchers have utilized a social network theory and methods approach to examine students' academic and social integration (Thomas, 2000), college retention (Berry, 2008), and formation of professionally relevant ties (Deil-Amen & Rios-Aguilar, 2010). Similarly, scholars have used a social network perspective to study higher education institutions, as Pusser, Slaughter, and Thomas (2006) did in examining the relationship between research universities and the corporate world.

Social positions and social roles are also particularly useful in understanding individuals' commonalities and patterns of relations in multi-relational networks. Specifically, "*position* refers to a collection of individuals who are similarly embedded in networks of relations, while *role* refers to the patterns of relations which obtain between actors or between positions" (Wasserman & Faust, 1994, p. 348). Individuals occupying such positions or roles may not be in direct contact with one another (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). For instance, outreach directors (or coordinators) in different higher education institutions may occupy the same position by virtue of similar kinds of ties with students and faculty, even though they may not know one another, work at the same institution, or work with the same students. Network roles, on the other hand, refer to the associations among relationships that link social positions. Thus, a role is defined in terms of collections of relationships and associations among relationships. For particular groups of actors influencing change in specific contexts, such as the one studied here, what is critical is to understand both their roles and positions.

Thus far, however, specific types of social networks, those defined as "professionally relevant networks" (Deil-Amen & Rios-Aguilar, 2010), have rarely been identified as a source of change in higher education organizations. For example, although individual professors can and have

served as change agents within universities, their academic networks are widely characterized as sources of resistance to change, principally because professors generally have greater loyalty and commitment to their disciplines and departments than to the university as a whole (Lee, 2007). Studies in the United States and internationally have identified the cultures and career commitments embedded in different academic disciplines as being major factors constraining substantive change at the institutional level (Jansen, 2002; Kezar, 2006; Ylijoki, 2003). Faculty operate within disciplinary subcultures that shape their values and activities as much or more than the institutional culture does (Becher, 1989; Clark, 1987; Lee, 2004, 2007; Walvoord, Carey, Smith, Soled, Way, & Zorn, 2000). Such subcultures can constitute “stumbling blocks to institutional change” (Edwards, 1999, p. 17).

We turn to a few notable exceptions. The first is Astin and Leland’s (1991) seminal research on women change agents in education and public service who effected “significant societal changes on behalf of women” (p. 12). By establishing connections with other women through professional organizations, committees, and task forces, they exercised creative leadership to establish gender equity, increase access to opportunities, and affirm their place as competent professionals. Hart (2007, 2008) provides another example of networks of academic women working together and collaborating with university and community leaders to establish a “power base ... to transform the academy and improve the status of women academics” (Hart, 2007, p. 34). What is important in these examples is that the women shared common goals and issues that transcended their academic departments. Such examples provide insight into how racial and ethnic communities engaging in grassroots change within a university might establish similar types of common networks.

Kezar and Lester (2009) also found similar instances of bottom-up, or grassroots, organizing in the various examples of change and leadership they studied. Of particular importance to these efforts were the external and virtual networks and connections that change agents tapped into when generating ideas, support, and legitimacy. Kezar (2006) offers insight into factors that facilitate successful collaborations. She points to the significance of “support from senior executives” and to the intentional construction and incentivization of “campus networks” (p. 831) by units that are formally responsible for facilitating collaborations (e.g., faculty development centers).

Despite historic barriers to faculty involvement in cross-departmental initiatives, collaborations between academic and student affairs have received increasing attention within the last decade. Examples of such collaborations are first-year transition programs, service-learning

programs, interdisciplinary courses, leadership development, and cultural programming (Whitt, Nesheim, Guentzel, Kellogg, McDonald, & Wells, 2008). In presenting findings from a national study of academic and student affairs collaborations, Kezar (2001) reports that both Kuh's (1996) culture-based model of change and planned change were successful in establishing collaboration and bringing about change. Kuh's strategies of promoting cross-institutional dialogue, generating enthusiasm, and creating a common vision were particularly important for initiating change. With regard to planned change, senior administrative support and leadership was found to be an important factor (Kezar, 2001). Building and nurturing relationships appear to be common threads in many of the studies reviewed (Astin & Leland, 1991; Hart, 2007, 2008; Kezar & Lester, 2009; Whitt et al., 2008), suggesting that we cannot overlook the significance of relationships in change efforts. The literature reviewed here also points to the different roles that individuals and their networks can play in helping, resisting, or slowing change processes.

Critical Agency

We also draw conceptually on the notion of critical agency as informed by literature on the community-engaged professor (Martinek, Hellison, & Walsh, 2004) and race-related service (Baez, 2000). In what follows we review these concepts and the literature surrounding faculty service. We end by presenting a working definition of critical agency that informs our findings and our discussion.

Faculty are among the most difficult actors to involve in cross-departmental outreach efforts. Significant literature points to the obstacles to engaging faculty in outreach efforts, particularly those connected to the academic reward structure and related patterns of academic activity. Faculty involvement in outreach is often contextualized within the service component of their tripartite professional roles of teaching, research, and service. However, service not only goes largely unrewarded in faculty evaluations and in promotion and tenure decisions; it is also overlooked in the literature. One of the added difficulties in measuring service is a lack of consensus on what activities constitute "service." Some consider faculty contact hours with students outside of class as one form (Milem, Berger, & Dey, 2000), whereas others include even paid consulting in the same category (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1989; Fairweather, 1996; Finkelstein, 1984). Service has also been called by many different names: public service, professional service, outreach, public engagement, community service,

service-learning, and so on (Holland, 1999). In essence, almost any professional activity outside of teaching and research can be labeled as “service.” Although the general term remains ambiguous, questions that directly ask about service provide us with some insight. According to the 2001–2002 HERI Faculty Survey National Norms Report (Lindholm, Astin, Sax, & Korn, 2002), when asked to report the average number of hours per week spent on “community or public service,” about a third of all faculty reported spending zero hours, slightly over 50% of all faculty spent one to four hours, and approximately 15% of all faculty spent five hours or more. Clearly, most faculty engage in some form of service, but the reasons behind the particular forms of service they engage in remain under-investigated.

With respect to the value or rewards of service, there is strong empirical evidence that research is rewarded more than teaching, and that civic service is even less rewarded than teaching (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Fairweather, 1996). In fact, the “community-engaged professor,” one who attempts to serve the community and address significant societal problems by conducting research in community settings and producing information that practitioners can use, is not only unrewarded by his or her academic department, but is often looked on with suspicion (Martinek, Hellison, & Walsh, 2004). Moreover, not only do time spent teaching and doing service not pay off as well as time spent on research, most faculty are not able to be productive in all dimensions of the faculty role simultaneously (Fairweather, 2002). And in the current academic climate, productivity in research is what is most emphasized.

In this context, a literature has emerged emphasizing the “problem of service,” particularly for women faculty and faculty of color, who tend to take on more service responsibilities (Johnsrud & Des Jarlais, 1994; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). Faculty of color are reported to be more involved than white faculty in service and volunteer work (Antonio, 2002; Antonio, Astin, & Cress, 2000). Additionally, faculty of color are much more likely than white faculty to view providing services to the community, engaging in outside activities, and influencing social change as “very important” or as a primary role (Alexander-Snow & Johnson, 1998; Antonio, 2002). Civically active faculty may be burdened by service activities that detract from their research time. Stanley (2006) suggests that for some faculty, participation in service activities, especially those that are diversity-related, puts them at risk for not obtaining promotion or tenure. For their own protection, some faculty may hesitate to participate in such activities, particularly those that are community-service-related.

Baez (2000) identifies the reasons that faculty participate in service as a form of “critical agency” with the potential of to resist and redefine institutional structures, further social justice, and initiate social change. Faculty service is often portrayed only negatively as a time allocation or a requirement. Largely ignored is that service brings meaning to faculty members and is a vital outlet for social justice activities aimed at transforming the institution and society at large. In addressing the service activities of faculty of color, Baez also points out that race-oriented service is an important source of connection in their professional lives. Baez (2000) argues that focusing on the negative aspects of service belittles all faculty members, and especially faculty of color, who use service to define themselves as activists and scholars, and to connect them to their communities in important ways.

Baez’s research underscores the importance of such service in connecting faculty to communities of color, helping them cope with being in a predominantly White professional setting, and contributing to social change through their social agency. Stanley (2006) echoes these findings, claiming that service helps faculty to develop their communities, lessen feelings of isolation, and build upon new opportunities for a research agenda. In short, this perspective takes us beyond career advancement motivations by recognizing that faculty of color may engage in unremunerated service to fulfill personal and social justice agendas.

Thus, we understand critical agency as being practiced by community-engaged professionals, inclusive of managerial professionals and faculty, who work towards social change and social justice by redefining and collaborating across the institutional structures of which they are a part (Baez, 2000; Martinek, Hellison, & Walsh, 2004).

Methods

We selected an intrinsic single case study design for our study for three reasons. First, we are analyzing a unusual type of outreach program that integrates a range of professionals on campus. There are not enough similar programs to warrant a large-scale survey of program administrators or to conduct a multiple case study design. Second, our research questions address units of analysis that require an in-depth exploration and understanding of contextual factors. An intrinsic case study enabled us to focus on the features of this particular case within the bounded system of one university (Stake, 2005). Additionally, an intrinsic case study design allowed us to maintain the integrity of the “holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events” (Yin, 2003, p. 2). These characteristics are precisely what enabled this unique program and partnership.

Site and Sample

The Institution. The case institution is in many respects a typical public research university, but with some atypical features. It is a fairly large university, of about 37,000 students. It has extensive research activity, with more than \$400 million in research expenditures per year. And like many other public research universities, it has been under pressure to increase its minority student enrollment. It is somewhat unusual in that its admissions policies are not highly selective, with 80% of all applicants being accepted as of 2009. Tuition is relatively low (though it has increased dramatically in recent years). And the university's past and current presidents have publicly committed to the goal of becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Latinos now comprise about 14% of undergraduates, well short of the 25% that would be representative of the region's population and therefore required for HSI designation.

The College Knowledge Academy. The program we focus on is the College Knowledge Academy (CoKA),¹ which is spearheaded by the university outreach office. Its goal is to provide parents with the educational and financial aid information they need to prepare their children for college. The program is unusual in three respects. First, it targets parents of elementary-age children and aims to remain in contact with them throughout their children's primary and secondary education. Second, the program is delivered bilingually, because more than half the participating parents have Spanish as their preferred language. Third, it has successfully involved professors in different capacities, from going to schools to give talks on their academic disciplines, to conducting program evaluation. The partnership involves professionals in the university outreach office and in two other support units; school administrators in the three public elementary schools where the program is operating and their district-level administrators; families; and professors and academic administrators in 13 academic departments within six colleges of the university. In just five years, this campus-wide effort entailing collaboration among managerial professionals, professors, and administrators served nearly 1,000 families.

CoKA was created without any infusion of new financial or human resources. The outreach office felt strongly about the need to offer such a program and created it by pulling together resources from existing programs. Over CoKA's five-year history, the number of full-time staff members (1.5) has remained the same. Part-time student staff assist with the program, but all other human resources are strictly volunteer. Although the outreach office has attracted external grants to increase its funding, financial struggles remain as CoKA continues to grow and in 2008 roughly doubled the number of schools and families it served per

year (from approximately 85 to 160 families). The program continues to operate successfully using the same patched-together resources with which it was created—faculty and staff volunteers, in-kind support from various academic colleges, and small pools of money allocated for paying student assistants.

Participants. All 20 of the professionals who were involved with CoKA between 2004 and 2007 were invited to participate in an interview as part of an evaluation of the program's impacts on parents. We were able to interview three-quarters (15 of 20) of them, representing three of the four managerial professionals, both of the academic administrators (who have no supervisory role over the program), and 10 of the 14 professors who deliver and evaluate the school outreach component (including one of the two professors from the College of Agriculture, both of the professors in the College of Education, one of the two in the College of Fine Arts, all four of the professors in the College of Humanities, one of the three in the College of Science, and two of the four in the College of Social Sciences). The three managerial professionals we interviewed were all women, two of whom were Latina. The two academic administrators were both Latino men. Of the 10 professors, four were women and six were Latino/a. The large number of Latinos involved in the program is important to note, given the critical, race-based agency conceptual framework

Data Collection and Analysis

The principal method of data gathering was semi-structured interviews lasting approximately one hour each. A semi-structured interview format allowed us to collect "comparable data" across participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 104) while remaining open to the insights and distinctive roles of the interviewees in the program.

Our interview questions were organized around our research questions: How did people become involved in the program, and how was their involvement possible in an entrepreneurial university focused on revenue generation rather than outreach? To what extent and how were the participants interconnected, and who took the lead in creating the integrated program? And, finally, what motivated participants' involvement: What were their views about outreach and what, if anything, did they gain from their participation?

Our analysis began with developing a list of thematic codes (Creswell, 2007), focused on concepts embedded in our literature review and research questions and utilizing primarily deductive strategies. We looked for themes related to (a) the university's general direction and commitment to outreach, (b) relationships among participants, (c) par-

ticipants' reasons for investing time in the effort, and (d) what they were gaining from their involvement. Specifically, we coded for functional examples of the role of managerial professionals in creating change, examples of faculty agency within an entrepreneurial organizational structure, and examples of network development. All actual names were replaced with pseudonyms to protect the interviewees' anonymity.

Limitations of the Study

Before presenting our findings, it is important to acknowledge our status with regard to the program in this study. Two of the coauthors have worked as program evaluators of CoKA since its inception. That involvement provides us with a level of entrée and understanding that allows us to obtain insider information but may cloud our objectivity. Including a third author who was not involved in the outreach program but has researched higher education organizations and college outreach helped reduce the possibility of bias and blind spots in data interpretation. We have quite consciously and systematically worked to avoid the "heroic success story" flavor of some intrinsic case studies.

Validity in qualitative research cannot be evaluated by the same measures used in quantitative research. As Creswell (2003, p. 195) reminds us, qualitative research is not a "companion of reliability or generalizability." Thus, we took steps to ensure data accuracy, including clarifying researcher bias, employing peer review and debriefing, and employing member-checking (Creswell, 2003). Specifically, we provided reports, presentations, and drafts of the article to the program's managerial professionals and academic administrators for member-checking. Researcher bias was reduced by consulting with members of the program's research team. Peer review and debriefing helped to verify the existence of patterns and themes in the data and offered a critical perspective when the authors' biases influenced the nature of the analysis.

The study's most obvious limitation is also its strength: it is based on one case of a distinctive, perhaps unique, program. It is a frontier analysis of an outlier. A cross-sectional study of a larger sample of programs might have produced more robust findings, but in reality there are few if any comparable outreach programs that formally incorporate faculty in their efforts. In addition, although the program has been well received, at the time of data collection, it is also relatively new, being less than five years old. It is only now beginning to attract the attention of senior administrators up the reporting line, who might enable it to become institutionalized, and its sustainability may be limited if it is forced to draw on the same small set of faculty participants year after year. There is a risk that financial resources and faculty involvement may be tapped

out. In addition, since the original research was conducted, significant changes have occurred in the university's central structure, including a new president, a new provost, and a new reporting line through the Division of Student Affairs. It is unclear whether the program has reached a level of legitimacy to sustain it through such major organizational changes. Yet these challenges also reveal key issues in the life cycle of an innovative program, which deserve continued study.

Findings

We organize our findings around our research questions and around the themes that emerged in the interviews. The first section speaks to the importance of networks, and to the leading role of managerial professionals as catalysts in the creation of networks that interconnected program participants. The second section addresses participants' personal commitments to change the structure of access to college through critical agency, enacted in service work relevant to their professional activities. These sections combined demonstrate the evolution of a critical agency network.

Managerial Professionals' Initiative and Their Networks

Apropos of our first research question, given that participants' involvement in CoKA is loosely coupled (Weick, 1976) to their own units and to each others' activities, how did they come together in this initiative? In this section, we address how a coordinated effort that integrates professionals from disparate units developed; how the professionals are connected; and who took the lead in forging these ties.

The founders of CoKA were mid-level managerial professionals working in academic outreach who acted on their own, rather than under the guidance of an administrative superior, in conceiving of and developing this new program. The vision for CoKA grew out of ongoing discussions they were having amongst themselves about their work and projects, and about the need to effect systemic change in the structure of college access, as the following two quotations illustrate:

In our office we always knew that working with parents was an important aspect. ... After we conducted a review of the literature [and] made some organizational changes in the office, this past summer we really started to begin to think about ideas and ways to impact parents. ... So we started creating the program. ... We wanted to make systemic change through this program. That's why we talked about the [importance of an extended] length of the program versus those one-time programs that we do. And when we

talked about making systemic change, we thought it would be best if we tried to find elementary schools that fed into the same middle schools and would eventually end up in the same high school. (Lisa Tanken)

We know that parents are a big piece of helping children in terms of their academic preparation and overall preparation for the future. We've done some work before with parents through our other programs, but we wanted to get a little bit deeper into working with them. And we wanted to start earlier. (Ana Barra)

Even though the actual impetus for CoKA came from mid-level managerial professionals, readers might ask whether central administrators provided a vision and academic culture that fostered such a program. In fact, the opposite was true of many of the university's institutional policies and practices. The university was in the midst of several years of dramatic tuition increases, in a low-income state where need-based financial aid is almost nonexistent. The president had stated an explicit goal of admitting only the top 25% of graduating high school seniors, in order to increase the institution's stature. More attention and resources were being directed to recruiting out-of-state, higher-income students, as a means of generating greater net tuition revenue. And although the institution had allocated nearly half a million dollars to pay an external consulting firm to guide the strategic management of enrollments, there was no new money for CoKA. The program had to be developed on top of existing programs, with no new operational or human resources, and entirely dependent on the extra commitment of time by staff members (and the gratis participation of faculty). Thus, although the program has been successful, and other school districts have asked to participate, at the time of data collection the outreach office lacked the human resources to expand the program beyond the original school district and instead directed their efforts toward refining and sustaining it.

One of the most striking themes to emerge from the interviews had to do with the networks that underlay the development of the program and the people who became involved in it. Far more important than any formal organizational hierarchies were the social networks that extended beyond various boundaries between the university and the community, and across various horizontal and vertical hierarchies within the university. The program's originators had no formal authority over either the school personnel at the sites where the program was conducted or the university personnel who delivered the program. They worked through trust, mutual respect, and persuasion. The very conceptualization and pitching of the program to local public schools was grounded in an es-

tablished network of social relationships that one of the managerial professionals had cultivated in the district. In her words,

As far as the district is concerned, we have had strong relationships with many of the districts through our [tutoring outreach programs]. But we selected Southside because it's a smaller district ... Southside District tends to have some very clear feeder patterns, and we also knew that it's one of the lowest socioeconomic populated areas in our city and we knew the superintendent well enough that we felt we could just present this to him and see what he thought. (Lisa Tanken)

In fact, this managerial professional had close and longstanding relations not only with the superintendent but also with several school principals in the district, with whom she has breakfast monthly. The trust that defines those social relationships was the foundation for initiating the new CoKA program.

Pre-existing relationships and overlapping social networks were also critical for recruitment within the university. In some cases the managerial professionals called on faculty they already knew. One such professor, César García, had worked for Lisa Tanken as an undergraduate student recruiter. When he returned to the university as an assistant professor, she contacted him and asked if he would be a faculty presenter. As another professor said, "[They] met with me early on to talk about the project and I was interested. ... I've known [Lisa Tanken] for a long time. ... [A]fter I met with them I thought this [program] is really important" (Carlos Favela). This professor then introduced the program leaders to other community-engaged professors (Martinek, Hellison, & Walsh, 2004). In other cases, the managers asked their existing faculty network to suggest other potential recruits. As one faculty participant said, "Well, I was invited to be one of the faculty presenters on the social sciences in Spanish. I received an invitation and I thought, 'Well, this would be fun to try' and I accepted" (Rosa Ramos). In another case, graduate students working in the outreach office introduced their professor to the outreach personnel (that professor then connected them to an academic administrator).

In short, the lead managerial professionals were the common links among several overlapping networks, and interactions within these networks snowballed to expand participation. As another managerial professional who was part of the CoKA creators' personal network commented, "Faculty who might never have had the opportunity to work with parents or work with this kind of program are being identified just because of their expertise in their content area and just because of

who they are as individuals—that they’ve been recommended” (Sofia Cruz). Cruz then connected Lisa Tanken to an academic dean, Carl Trahan: “The dean was talking to me about starting some early outreach efforts. . . . My role I felt was real important in connecting him with the Early Outreach Office. So I let him know it was critical that he talk with her [Lisa Tanken].” Trahan provided financial support to CoKA to fund three student workers. He also encouraged some professors in his college to become involved: “I was approached by Dean Trahan, and he spoke to me about the program, and as soon as he said it involved schools and parents and children and trying to get them into college I said ‘of course’” (Alma Portes).

The formal hierarchy and reporting lines in the university were not instrumental in initiating and establishing CoKA. As Dean Trahan said of his role: “I’m not the decision-maker here. I’m a participant, an ally” (Carl Trahan). Yet the overlapping networks run up and down the academic hierarchy, and as an advocate for the program this dean was able to leverage his own network. Thus, for instance, he said:

I am, as they say in Spanish, a *gritón*. I don’t know if you know Spanish but a *gritón* is a person who blabs a lot, shouts a lot. And I’m willing to use whatever power and influence I have as a dean. I’m willing to do that in intelligent, strategic ways. So I’m going to meet with the person to whom Lisa Tanken reports to say, “[name], what’s next?”

Similarly, as professor Greg Reed suggested about the structure of the collaboration, “I think it has less to do with the organizational units and more to do with the informal networks. . . . [I]t’s a huge university but it’s a tight set of social, informal networks.” Finally, the following quotation illustrates the assets that both sides of the partnership brought to the collaboration:

I really like programs that tie faculty with the student side of administration. I think there’s far too little of that. . . . [T]his is a good example of how the expertise of the faculty can transcend the walls of the university and of the role that student affairs can take in providing this structure for us to go out there. (Rosa Ramos)

It is significant that the “informal” networks we tapped into were personal networks, not organized groups or organizational units. Most of the faculty participants in CoKA were recruited individually or solicited at large, and were the only members of their departments to respond. For example, when asked if other members of her department were

involved in the program, Alma Portes replied, "As far as I know, my colleagues may not even be aware of this program, even though I submit it as part of my annual review. I've never really heard anybody talk about it." But the personal nature of the networks tells us little about why professors agreed to support the program. We turn to that issue in the next section.

A Critical Agency Network

So what do our interviewees identify as their reasons for participating in CoKA? Two themes emerge from the interviews—sometimes offered separately by different participants and other times cited as related issues by the same participant. Some faculty identified a commitment to service as an embedded part of their value system. As Leo Molina commented, "And you have a list there of senior scholars at the university. It's an impressive group. It's part of their value system and part of their reasons for being professors." He emphasized, "This is all *pro bono*, none of us received any money from doing this."

Another participant related his involvement to the university's charter as a land grant institution:

It's our charter, that's what we're about, serve your community. And community doesn't just mean the Ag Extension community, it means *your* community. ... I think we've forgotten that, institutionally. ... We're a land-grant university and I think we have that charter obligation and responsibility, I think we have an educational social responsibility and I think a moral, I don't mean in a religious sense, but a moral responsibility to give back. (Carl Trahan)

Other participants stressed a personal commitment to giving back, derived from their personal life histories, ethnic identity, and connection to the Latino community:

I think it's part of my personal commitment in trying to serve the community. I feel very fortunate in having had a college education. Particularly given my family's background, where my parents have a fourth-grade education and I have a grandfather that's alive that's illiterate. And it seems to me that we, particularly minority faculty but certainly the university as an institution, have a responsibility to serve all people, and so I have both a professional and a personal commitment to do this. (Carlos Favela)

I'm in favor of anything that helps our community be involved with higher education, that helps the parents see the needs of their children. I find that Mexican parents really want their children to be educated but there's so

many obstacles they often face and [they] say “oh well,” and they kind of give up sometimes. ... So I think its wonderful that we reach out in this way. (Rosa Ramos)

Beyond simply giving back, Ramos also spoke of the intrinsic rewards she gained from her involvement in CoKA. Her comment captures similar sentiments expressed by other faculty and demonstrates one example of someone who has connected her service with her research agenda:

I always learn something when I go out. I work with the community quite often—I find it gives me energy, it reinforces my commitment to education, it makes me want to try new things with students, it opens up new questions for research sometimes and so, yes, I get a lot out of it. (Rosa Ramos)

Such comments confirm Baez’s (2000) findings about the significance of race-related service, as one professor pointed out, “The faculty that are participating in it, they know. They know these communities, because they are from these communities” (Marissa Fletch). Yet, when asked if her academic department valued her participation CoKA, Fletch expressed reservations:

As to whether or not it’s valued, I don’t know. Honestly, I have no idea. I think it is, that it’s said that it’s valued. But whether or not that translates into tenure is another question, because all of these things require time exigencies. Obviously. I mean, obviously. And so it’s little bit tricky, because “The dune don’t dance with the sand.”

Perhaps by being low-key about their involvement, faculty were protecting themselves from the downsides of formal participation, such as being tagged the “expert on diversity initiatives” in their respective departments (see Stanley, 2006). On the other side, this situation might result in faculty not being acknowledged for their service and might hinder development of new formal structures in support of the program, which may hinder its sustainability.

Some exceptions to the pattern of departmental neglect are worth noting. For example, a professor of ethnic studies stated that her department encouraged and valued outreach activities.

Oh yes. Our department is very—for example, we have a master’s in applied science, precisely because we try to work and do research with things

that our community wants us to work on. So we have a number of projects that we do in our community. ... Yes, we are very much encouraged to do that. (Rosa Ramos)

A faculty member in the College of Science spoke of a tradition within his unit of engaging in outreach activities, particularly in the public schools, but even he acknowledged that service was not directly rewarded:

We do a lot of outreach in this department. Some of it was instituted because of these large grants that we obtained to do outreach. ... But even before [that], this department has a long tradition of interacting with K–12. I'm not going to say most faculty do this, but a significant number do. ... I'm not going to say that people get rewarded for doing it, but we do see a need for outreach. (Bob Valdez)

Two final points about critical agency provide a segue to our presentation of a critical agency network model that we see as useful for understanding program development and organizational change. First, in this case critical agency was professional in nature; it consisted of people providing service related to their careers and engaging in professional activities rather than in some form of organized, collective political action linked to a social justice advocacy group. Second, although participants' activities may appear loosely coupled, there was an important underlying social agenda to the program. That is, it went beyond helping a few individuals, being instead an effort to systematically change the structure of educational opportunity for a low-income community, and to change the relationship between that community and the university. In short, CoKA was aimed at organizational change, not only in the university but also in the schools and parents' relations with them. Dean Trahan echoed the sentiments of several other participants:

Because of the goodwill and enthusiasm and expectations that have been raised through this program, if we don't continue and if we don't replicate the program, we're just in for a whole lot of grief that we deserve. The [university] has a reputation for doing that in the K–12 schools here; we do X, Y, and Z for one, two, three years, and we disappear. So yes ... replicate, and then we need to do a seamless vertical design. ... We need to come up with a kindergarten through senior high school through undergraduate through graduate school through academic professional careers—an entire plan where the [university] is present at every step of the way. Now that takes a massive investment in resources and a vast cultural change of how we've done business here in the past 100 years.

Discussion and Implications

An Activist Network Model of Change

Our case study has significant implications for conceptualizing and undertaking program development. We organize our discussion around the concepts of social networks, critical agency, and managerial professionals, and propose a *critical agency network* model of program development and organizational change. In terms of implications for practice, we discuss the opportunities and challenges that confront the CoKA program and ask, How can such programs, and their potential for organizational change, move towards being institutionalized? Our conclusions, like our study, are more exploratory than definitive.

Academic departments tend to exist in separate cultural worlds, as do central administrators and managerial professionals. For the most part, the faculty is detached from central administration and is either unaware or dismissive of managerial professionals and their activities, such as outreach to public schools. Much scholarship casts senior academic administrators in a leadership role by formally defining an organizational culture that extends over the boundaries of academic units. It is often assumed that those who control the distribution of resources and manage budgets have corresponding power and cultural influence. Thus, the vision and active support of leaders is seen as critical to innovative program development. Yet our case revealed the power of networks within and outside the university, suggesting the need to attend to social relationships, not just to formal, hierarchical structures, within organizations. Our findings parallel those of Hart (2007, 2008), in that we illustrate that both formal and social networks can engage in collective action to pursue systemic change and create opportunity for a particular community. Moreover, in our case, it was mid-level managerial professionals, not high-level administrators, who exercised leadership: they were the catalysts for the outreach program and were the key connections in a network of social relationships that cut across academic and non-academic units, reached up and down the hierarchies in those units, and extended beyond the university. Furthermore, our findings suggest an important subculture that facilitated these connections. This subculture was rooted not in academic disciplines, but in a commitment to social justice and was inclusive of many managerial professionals and faculty of color. Finally, this subculture proved more significant than the traditional institutional culture (which does not reward faculty service) in motivating faculty to participate in the outreach program.

It is important to look beyond an organization's formal remuneration and incentive systems in order to understand individual motivations.

The formal reward structure in most universities emphasizes research over teaching and devalues service. This pressure is stronger today than ever in light of the current financial and accountability pressures on institutions of higher education. Yet the professionals who donated their time to CoKA were motivated to participate because this service was aimed at reducing social stratification and therefore resonated with their personal commitments to social justice. The alignment of social justice values across disciplines and departments created a common culture that helped to bring this network together in pursuit of social change. Yet a traditional cultural change model does not fit this case because cultural change models stress the *alteration of* values and meaning systems (Kezar, 2001, p. 64); this group came together *because of* their shared values and meaning systems.

What emerges from our case study is the existence and significance of what we call a *critical agency network*, in which managerial professionals developed a program by tapping into their network of social relationships to enlist like-minded professionals committed to critical agency and social justice. Such networks could take many forms, depending on the type of critical agency and the nature of the networks and relationships. The participants in CoKA were engaged in professionalized forms of activism (Hart, 2006). Their critical agency consisted of activities typical of professional work—giving professional presentations in the outreach program or conducting interviews and evaluations to support and enhance the program. They shared a social critique of the academy's role in reproducing social inequalities and a commitment to changing that through their service, but they were not engaged in traditional political activism directed toward that goal, at least not through CoKA. Similarly, the social networks the managerial professionals drew upon were informal personal networks developed through professional interactions in their work, not networks of activist organizations in either the university or the community.

The critical agency network model offers a more balanced view of the potential for organizational change than is found in most higher education literature, which emphasizes the role of formal structures and hierarchies within them (e.g., presidential support for change), the importance of organizational resources being allocated to the activity, and the integration of the change into the incentive structures by which professors operate and are evaluated. Moreover, our model contradicts the prevailing view that vision, focus, and initiative must come from the center and the top (Rhoades, 2000), even at the level of outreach programs. For example, Torres and Márquez (2005) identify having “committed program champions” as one of the five critical characteristics

of exemplary outreach programs, and they define these champions as being “university presidents, the deans of student affairs departments and other high level personnel” (p. 6). By contrast, in our case, mid-level managerial professionals took on the leadership role. The value of high-level support is undeniable, but we should not overlook the role of mid-level professionals in developing programs.

What, then, are the implications of our case for professional practice? We do not want to overstate the power of mid-level managerial professionals to forge an integrated outreach program. This networked collective committed to social change did create a program aimed at reducing social stratification, even in a university deeply embedded in status seeking and academic capitalism. However, two layers of constraint limit what such networks of professionals engaged in critical agency can accomplish. First, in the current economic context in academia, agents must devote increasing percentages of their energies and staff to generating external revenues to support programs that are marginalized from the university hierarchy, and they have less time to do so. Institutions are not making significant investments in outreach activities; in fact, they are increasingly invested in attracting economically privileged students to enhance their prestige and net tuition revenues (Astin & Oseguera, 2004). In this context it is difficult to develop sufficient infrastructure to support entrepreneurial social efforts (Rhoades, 2006) with only the soft monies these professionals generate through grants and gifts. Herein lies the second layer of constraint. If a new program is to become institutionalized, more resources are required. The outreach program in this case runs on a shoestring state budget, out of an already understaffed office. It is successfully supporting itself with external grants and gifts, but this has been a struggle. The program has been so well received in the local school district that there is great demand in the community to expand the program to other schools and districts. Yet there simply is neither the staff nor the infrastructure to support that degree of expansion.

It is at this point that senior academic managers become critical to the future and potential expansion of this outreach program. They have the power to leverage the university’s material and human resources to build program capacity. They could more actively incentivize faculty involvement in the program by more closely connecting it to formal reward structures. And they could tap their own social networks to stimulate greater external support for the program and recruit new participants. In other words, our case suggests that the vision and initiative for a new program can originate from levels outside central administration, and in such an instance, the most important role of central administra-

tors is to recognize the grassroots effort, and to facilitate and nurture the already established initiative.

As stated, we understand the common social justice values which facilitated the outreach initiative established by this social network as described by participants' critical agency. We also understand that managerial professionals and their administrative and faculty colleagues occupy certain positions and roles, and that these also influence how managerial professionals form social ties. However, we do not yet fully understand either the characteristics of their ties (e.g., strength of tie, size, homophily) or how these are influenced by their location within the larger social structure within institutions. To do so, we recommend conducting a formal social network analysis as future research. Such future research would provide a necessary contribution to the literature.

What accounts for the construction of an integrated outreach program that brings together professors, administrators, and managerial professionals in support of goals and outcomes that diverge from the top priorities of the university's central administration? One important factor was the initiative of managerial professionals, a category of professional that higher education programs prepare but academics largely ignore. Another factor was these professionals' ability to exercise leadership and leverage their social networks outside of traditional departmental hierarchies and into the university and community. Finally, there was the critical agency of the resulting network of managerial professionals, professors, and administrators who were committed to changing the structure of educational opportunity in their community. Integrating these factors in a critical agency network model can help us to recognize that leadership can arise within the middle levels of the university hierarchy, and that the role of central managers as charismatic creators of change may be less important than their ability to institutionalize changes envisioned and enacted by others.

Note

¹To preserve anonymity the program's name and names of participating individuals have been changed.

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