

**“I WALK MY EDUCATED WALK”:  
Citizen Alums and the College-to-Life Transition**

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## Explaining the Title



## Ashé College Unbound

- Civic professional first, college graduate later
- Incorporating Citizen Alum into reflection
- Imagining oneself “educated” —in and after college

## **Briceshanay Gresham** **Inaugural Cohort of Ashé College Unbound**

**I walked out of that class head down** and I tiptoed out with nothing in my mind. As I approached the next class with faith and a wink, I expressed my inner feelings and my classmates said, “well, did you ask a question? Did you ask what ‘indubitably’ meant”? And I said “no.”

So it was my fault that I was uneducated by the closing of my lips.

So from that day forth **I am educated and now I walk with a stride and it looks like this.** (She begins to walk across the stage.)

With my head up and my chest back and when you see me walking and I’m not walking my walk. **You say hey girl, hey woman, why aren’t you walking your educated walk and I will walk. I will walk!**

## Plan for Workshop

- I. Exchange: How do we connect to former students?
- II. Presentation: The Citizen Alum Framework
  - i. Three Principles
  - ii. Principles in Action through Teaching and Learning
- III. Exchange: Citizen Alum on Your Campus

## I. Exchange

How do you stay connected  
to former students?

How does your department or program stay connected with former students?

Who are these alums?  
What are they doing?

Are they *citizen alums*?

Are they *civic professionals*?



Can the public engagement of former students, in the places where they live and work, enrich their own the learning of current students moving through the college-to-life transition?

## **II. Presentation**

### The Citizen Alum Framework

Three guiding principles  
for multi-generational civic engagement  
on campus and in communities

**The Mission** “Citizen Alum counters the image of alumni as primarily ‘donors’ with a vision of them as also ‘doers.’ Alums are allies in education--crucial partners in building multi-generational communities of active citizenship and active learning.



## The Principle of Plural Forms of Capital: Changing the Discourse of Debt and Donation



**“Doers, not (just) Donors”  
Means Valuing Non-Financial Capital**

Intellectual Capital

Human Capital

Social Capital

Political Capital

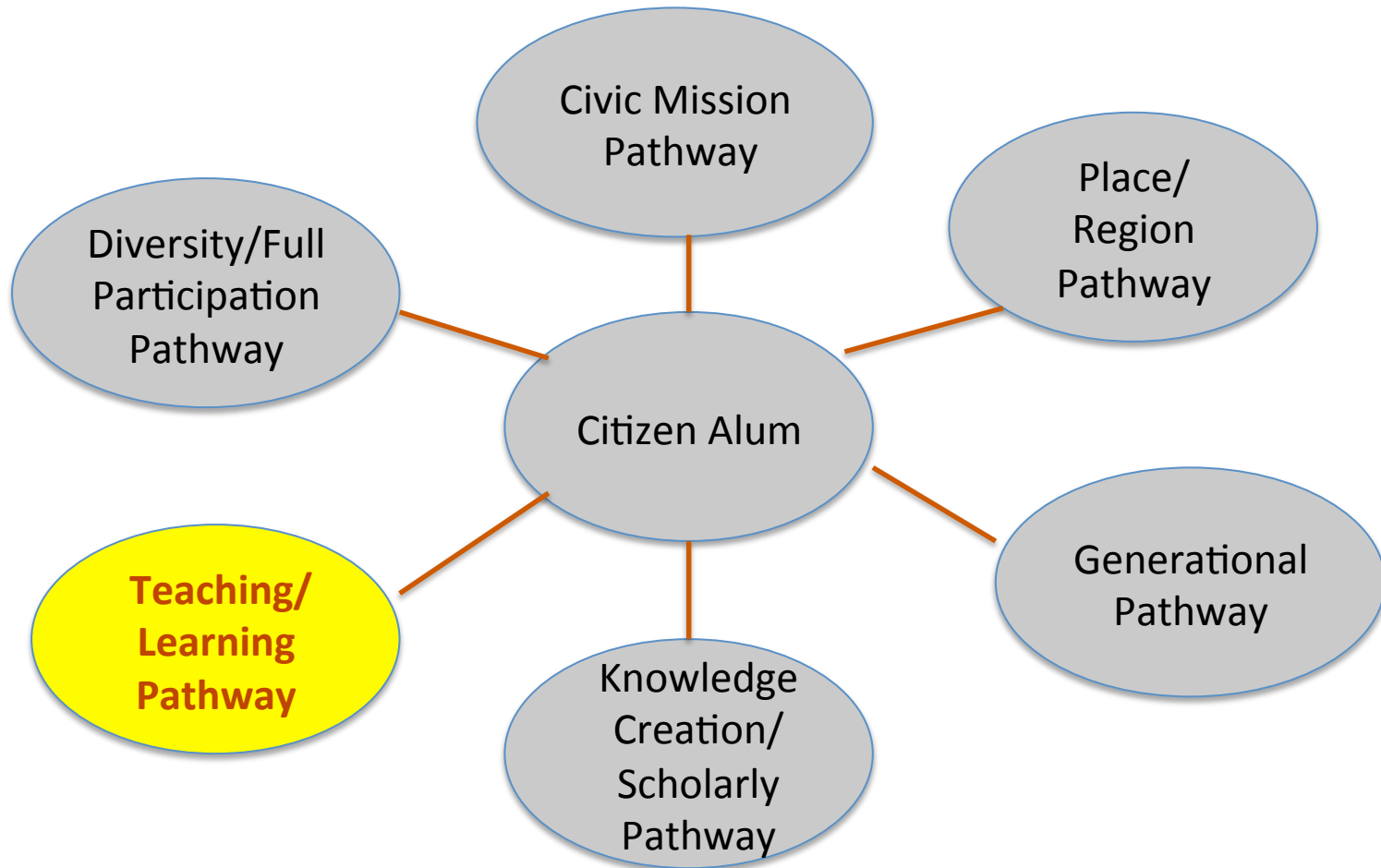
Creative Capital

## The Principle of Full Participation

Full participation is **an affirmative value** focused on **creating institutions** that enable people, whatever their identity, background, or institutional position, **to thrive, realize their capabilities, engage meaningfully in institutional life, and contribute to the flourishing of others** (Sturm 2006, 2010).

It covers the continuum of decisions and practices affecting **who joins institutions**, how people receive support for their activities, whether they feel **respected and valued**, how work is conducted, and **what kinds of activities count as important work**.

## The Principle of Organizational Culture Change Flexible Pathways for Diverse Institutions



## **Citizen Alum Principles in Action: Teaching and Learning**

### **\*Metropolitan State:**

Curricular integration through course module

### **University of Michigan:**

Piloting course module modeled on Metro State

Semester in Detroit, Art and Design, African and Afro-American Studies

### **Missouri State:**

Section of Honors course, Intro to University Life.

### **Weber State:**

Students in Civitas course (a community-engaged learning scholars program) will interview a WSU alum to interview. Audio, video and written files will be posted on virtual "Wall of Fame."



## Metropolitan State

### *What Questions Are They Asking?*

#### *Metropolitan U Students To Interview Alums*

1. How you are involved in your community or in efforts to solve public problems?
2. How do you address community issues through your work? What are the primary social issues related to your field?
3. What motivated you to become involved in community and public problem-solving? How did your path to civic engagement start?
4. Were there any particular classes, instructors or organizations that particularly shaped your ideas or your approach to community work? How?
5. How has your life changed because of your community involvement? What have you gained from being a civic actor?

## **Professor Danielle Hinrichs, Metropolitan State**

“Because my class was an Intermediate-level writing courses focused on research, I was particularly interested in having my students practice integrating various types of sources in a thesis-driven essay. So, the follow-up assignment to the Citizen Alum interview was...an essay in which they had to combine examples from the interviews and from our class readings to discuss civic engagement.”

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## One more example of curricular integration: Fifth-Year Engagement Fellows at Syracuse University



**WHAT FOLLOWS  
GRADUATION FROM SU?**

**THE JOB OPPORTUNITY  
OF A LIFETIME.**



### III. Exchange

#### Walking the Walk: Citizen Alum on Your Campus?

“Talking As”: Please introduce yourself and your role

e.g. “I am talking as a faculty member in Sociology who teaches community service learning courses.”

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***Thank you!***