

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE FOURTH DIMENSION:
THE REAL TIME OF REAL LIVES**

AN INTRODUCTION TO CITIZEN ALUM

“Doers, not (just) donors”

Julie Ellison

University of Michigan

WORKSHOP PLAN

I. Informative: Intro to Citizen Alum

Origins: Where did CA come from?

Goals: What are CA's aspirations?

Contexts: Formative challenges

Structure: How is CA organized?

Year One Impacts: CA teams at work

What's next? Year Two



HANDOUTS
BASIC INFO
SUMMER INSTITUTE

II. Interactive: Who is on your CA team?

CITIZEN ALUM: DOERS, NOT (JUST) DONORS

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.



www.citizenalum.org

FAQ

- With partner initiatives, launched at White House meeting “For Democracy’s Future” Jan 10 2012
- 25 campuses and growing
- Based at University of Michigan

Goals

- Deepen and broaden campus culture of engagement
- Enrich student learning
- Support the college-to-life transition
- Benefit alums and the regions where alums live and work
- Value the civic agency, diversity, and creativity of alumni

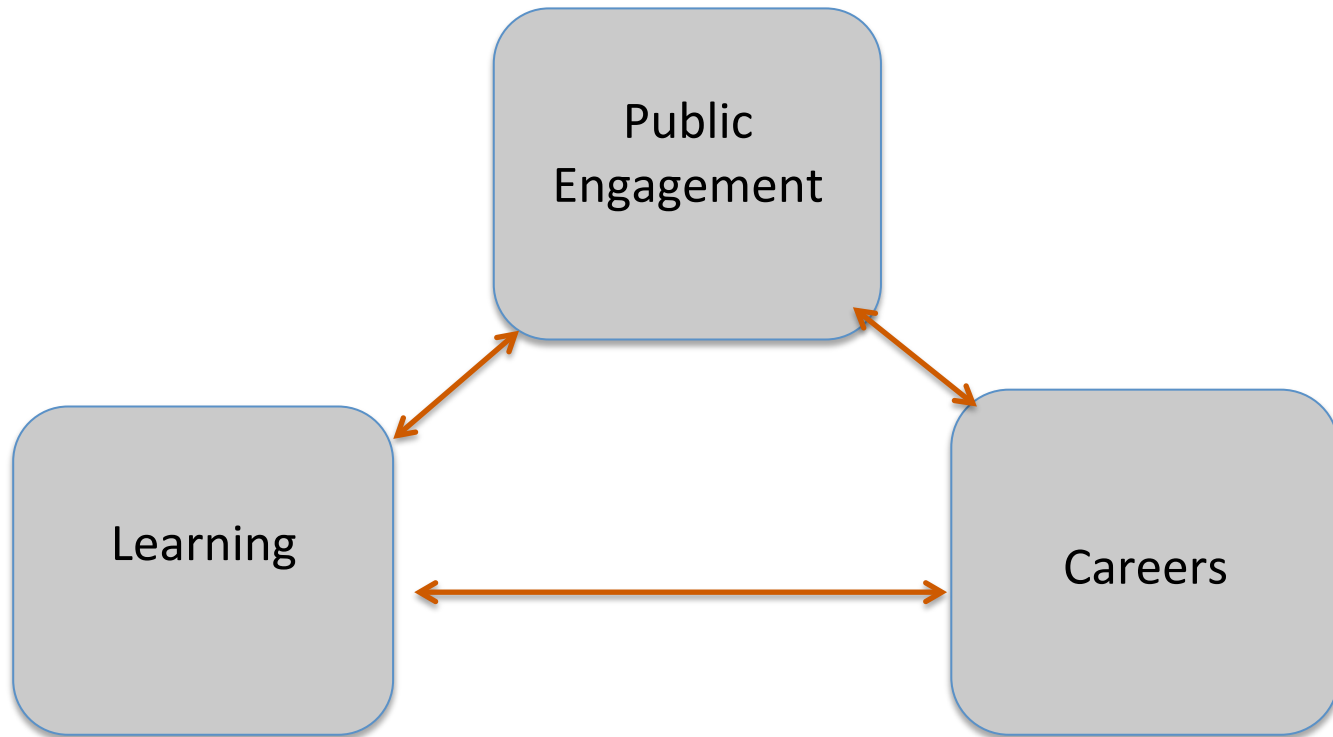
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Why Citizen Alum? The Need to Change the Discourse

Key Context #1: The Fraught College-to-Life Transition



College-to-Life: Pressure to Connect Education, Careers, Citizenship



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Fifth-Year Engagement Fellows at Syracuse University



Alums as Civic Professionals and Stewards of Place: Seeing Other Forms of Capital

Intellectual Capital
Human Capital
Social Capital
Political Capital
Creative Capital

Key Context #2: Growing Inequality

Building the Architecture for Full Participation

Enabling people from all communities to gain access, participate fully, and succeed

Defining institutional mission and practices to build knowledge and capacity to address tough public problems



In the Face of Growing Inequality— Full Participation: A Core Value of Citizen Alum

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**.

How Citizen Alum is Structured

Members Council

Member Teams

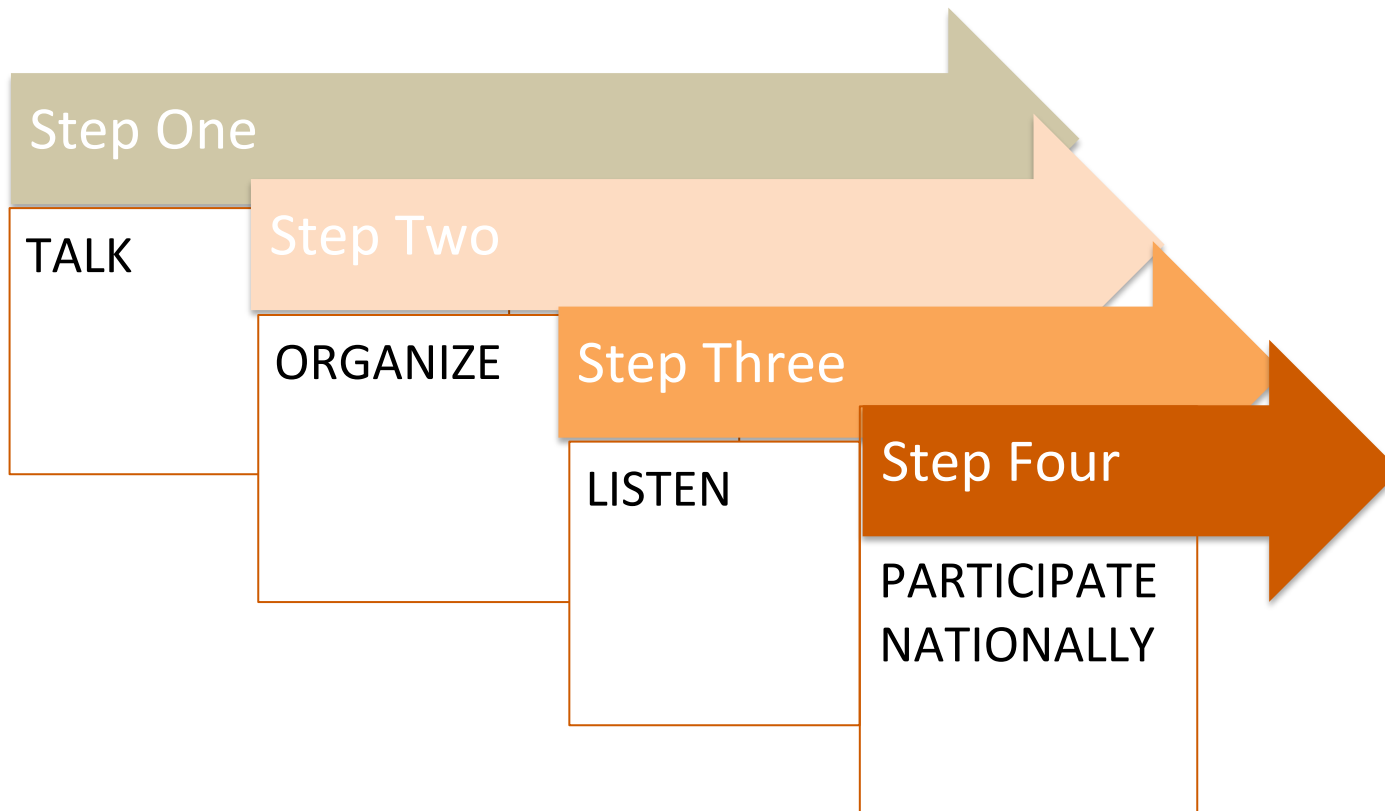
Campuses
Schools and colleges
Centers
Other Cohorts

Central Office

National Steering Committee

Association partners
Initiative partners
Key leaders

How to Join Citizen Alum



What CA Teams Are Doing in Year One: Listening Project Models

Curricular integration (course modules on ethnographic interviewing)

Intergenerational deliberative dialogues

Using digital media to define and communicate Citizen Alum identity

Community-engaged academic units involving recent grads in capstones

Alumni interviews by college development staff

Year One Impacts: Four Examples

University of La Verne: Listening Project

Metropolitan State: Curricular Integration

Ashe College Unbound: Cohort Reflection

University of Minnesota: Mapping

Featured Citizen Alum

University of La Verne

Share your story

These are just a few of our alumni who have shared their civic engagement journey with us. You, too, can be featured here by being part of our [Listening Project](#).



Teri (Luce) Kennan '69

I work with communicatively handicapped kindergarten and first graders. [Read More](#)



Cindy Ronzoni '83

I serve on the University of La Verne's Alumni Advisory Board and volunteer at my church. [Read More](#)



Anita Garcia Ron '88

I am currently President of the West Covina Lions and Past President of YWCA. [Read More](#)



Cecilia Martinez Morris '75

I am currently a Board of Trustee member for the University of La Verne. [Read More](#)



Emmett Terrell '70

I currently serve as a Board of Trustee member for the University of La Verne. [Read More](#)



Franqui Spurlock '05

I am currently a member of the University of La Verne's Alumni Advisory Board. [Read More](#)

Metropolitan State: Curricular Integration

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?

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Ashé College Unbound

University of Minnesota: Beyond Alums Using the CA Model with Other Groups

- Engaging faculty emeriti
- Engaging staff retirees
- Engaging current staff

What's Next? Year Two

- Organize on Campus
- Own the Model
- Build Knowledge



Building Knowledge: Research Questions



Are campuses able to establish relationships with more—and more diverse--former students who exercise robust democratic skills in their post-graduate lives?

What factors encourage alumni to see themselves as co-creators and stewards of the university's public mission?

Are citizen alum teams leverage points for building institutional cultures that embrace civic knowledge and engagement?

Interaction: Organizing on (Your) Campus

“Talking As”: Introduce yourself and your role
Who would be on your campus team?
Who are your Citizen Alums?

Examples of Campus Team Members

Faculty and staff directors of publicly-engaged curricular programs

Faculty departmental administrators (directors of undergraduate studies)

Liberal arts deans and associate deans

Associate deans of professional schools (business, engineering)

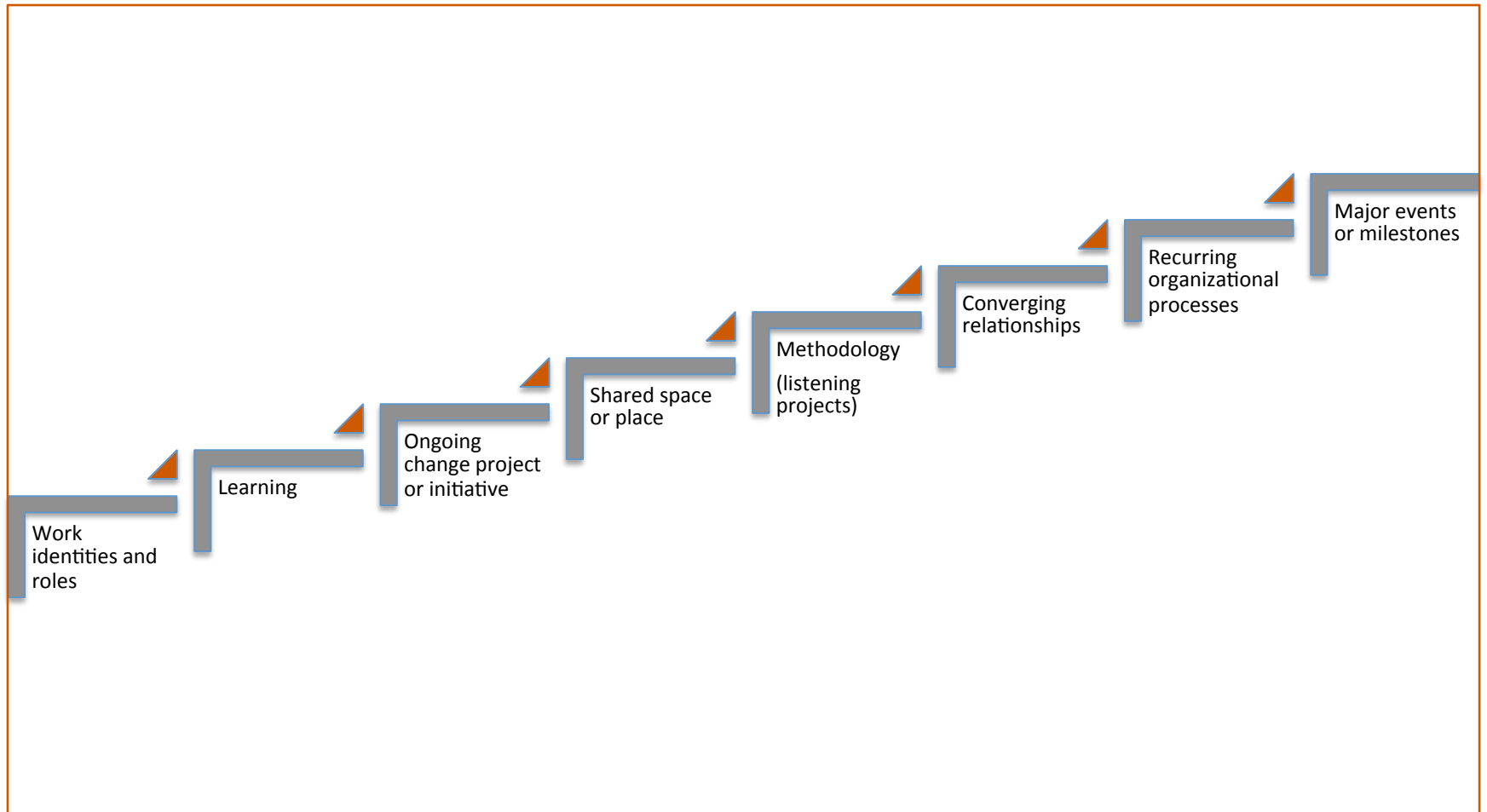
Graduate school deans' office staff

Directors or staff of centers for community service learning/community partnerships

Alumni relations senior staff

Development senior staff

Leverage points



Adapted from Sturm, Center for Institutional and Social Change 2012

Where are your organizational catalysts?

