

Neighborhood Leadership Academy – South Africa



PROJECT REPORT JULY 2024

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Project Goals:

1. Conduct a train-the-trainer workshop of University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) and MU Extension's signature community leadership development program, Neighborhood Leadership Academy at Stenden South Africa (SSA) in Port Alfred, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa
2. Collaborate on a stakeholder workshop at UWC with partners in the International Community Leadership Development Programme (ICLDP) Pilot Project from 2013-2016 between MU Extension and the Community Engagement Unit at UWC, to chart a way forward for UWC as next potential site for this training

Project Abstract:

Disengaged citizens, contentious public discourse, and racial inequality have become some of the greatest challenges communities are confronting. South Africa, like many other low- and middle-income countries, is dealing with these enormous challenges and addressing the needs of a rapidly growing and changing population.

To encourage maximum citizen participation in addressing these issues, devoting resources to develop local leadership capacities is critical. This proposal emerged as a response to a direct request from Stenden South Africa (SSA) – following Dr. Majee's invited public lecture on community development at the institute. The primary objective of the proposed work is to enhance collaborative programming, community leader training, and research between University of Missouri Extension (MU Extension), University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL), University of Western Cape (UWC) and SSA.

Through this training workshop and stakeholder meeting we will:

- a. identify current barriers and opportunities for community leadership development in resource-limited communities
- b. learn how to adapt the Neighborhood Leadership Academy (NLA) for the local context
- c. empower faculty and community members by conducting training in an evidence-based/empirically supported community leadership development program in rural and urban communities
- d. evaluate the efficacy of this intervention among participants in a South African context
- e. explore opportunities for student involvement in community leadership development project.

Findings from this project will inform extramural proposals for international community leadership development work in partnership with community development researchers and practitioners from all academic institutions, as well as promote future exchanges to promote deeper learning and impact.



The NLA-South Africa planning team: Claire Rippel, Juliet Chipumuro, Mzameli Dikeni, Sarah Massengale, Wilson Majee



Meeting with Dr. Busi Mandleni from Mangosuthu University of Technology to discuss future NLASA trainings in Durban, SA

Project Outcomes

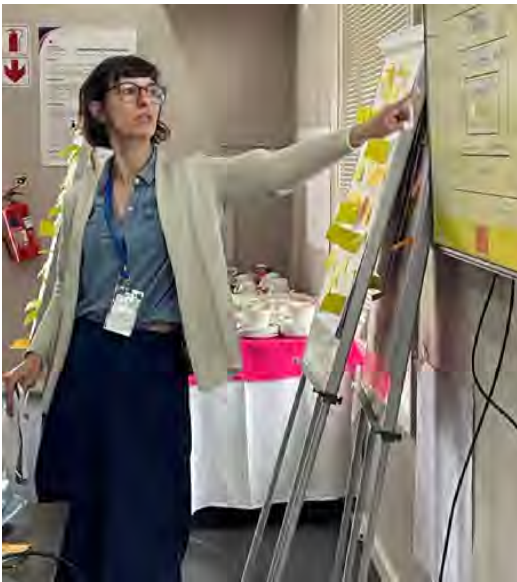
Four faculty members from Stenden SA plus thirteen community leaders from the Port Alfred region completed the training, which was held May 20-31, 2024. Participants included non-profit organization staff and volunteers, teachers, grassroots project leaders, and former elected officials.



Guest speakers included the former mayor of Port Alfred, funders from Global Leading Light and The Learning Trust, plus many opportunities for the participants to share their experiences and expertise during the program.



Stenden SA coordinated several tours to visit local neighborhoods and projects developed by our class participants and through university-community partnerships.



Workshop Evaluation

Participants completed an end of program evaluation for the NLA program that included a post-pre rating of their knowledge of core program skills, reviews of the effectiveness of the program, and opportunities to comment on most/least helpful components, planned action, and overall impressions of the workshop (the same evaluation is used in our US program).

The average score for knowledge change on the question “I know how to write and make a "pitch" for my community project” went from 1.92 to 3.82 after the program (change of 1.90).

I understand the key strategies for effective, community-based fundraising: average pre score: 2.17, post: 3.92, change of 1.75.

I have an understanding of my leadership strengths and weaknesses: average pre: 2.25, post: 3.92, change of 1.67.

I know how to effectively engage volunteers, neighbors and partners in my project: pre: 2.25, post: 3.92, change: 1.67.

I have the knowledge and tools necessary to build capacity for, and lead, my organization: pre: 2.17, post: 3.83, change: 1.67.

Additional comments:

- Thank you very much for assuring me I am on the right track with community development, using asset based community development method
- Keep up the good work, come back to see our progress, continue to communicate with us and mentor our work
- Let me start with the facilitators: so kind, so welcoming and respectful. I felt important and they make it easy to understand what they are teaching us and they all have good listening skills. We are all not speaking good English as it is not our first language, but they could understand us.
- Please assist us to move across the country and abroad to train leaders and showcase the wonderful work that will be a product of NLA!! We are proud representatives.
- Thanks to the super 3 instructors (Sarah, Claire, and Mr. Wilson). You guys were clear enough to my ears and the knowledge was fruitful although time was not enough I wish we could have had a month together. Wish to see you guys again. Of course food is the key.

Next Steps

PARTICIPANTS' REPORTED NEXT STEPS TO BUILD ON THEIR LEARNING:

- Teach my community what I have learned in this workshop
- Organizing a community of practice, with the like minded / unlike minded community leaders
- Create videos of CBP (community building principles) on social media
- Actually do a training course in my community
- Put more focus on my strengths

PARTICIPANTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT:

- Take facilitators to visit the participants' projects before the training to have a clearer understanding of their work
- All was well. Just find icebreakers that are more relevant to the communities NLA is involved in. Come back to SA or let SA come to USA.
- I wish this program could be more than two weeks, a month maybe. I wish there could be more scenarios that are my country related.

MU EXTENSION/UMSL/STENDEN SA TEAM ACTION ITEMS:

- Wilson will conduct in-depth interviews with all NLASA graduates in October-November 2024 to document program impacts and ongoing support needed by participants.
- Continue to update curriculum to include more South African examples
- Discussions with NLASA planning team on how to support Stenden SA and NLASA alumni to host an NLA workshop for additional participants in 2025
- Build agreement and plan to conduct NLASA train-the-trainer in Durban, SA at MUT in 2025
- US-SA Embassy Letter of Intent submitted May 2024, awaiting response
- Continue to build relationships with UWC faculty