

Transforming Community- University Partnerships:

An Assessment of the CoResearch/CoEducation (CORE)
partnership between Dudley Street Neighborhood
Initiative and Tufts University

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Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative



Executive Summary

CoResearch/CoEducation (CORE) is a community-university partnership program housed at Tufts University's [Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning](#) (UEP). Its mission is to cultivate transformative relationships between university and communities to co-learn and co-produce knowledge and action to support community-based movements in Greater Boston and beyond.

This report assesses CORE's pilot partnership from 2016-2019 with the [Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative](#) (DSNI), a community-based planning and organizing non-profit located in the Roxbury and Dorchester neighborhoods of Boston. DSNI empowers residents to revitalize the Dudley neighborhood through place-based community organizing and planning. CORE grew out of intensive community collaborations that UEP lead faculty Penn Loh started in 2011 with DSNI and other partners. But the relationship between UEP and DSNI dates back as far as 1990. CORE was developed to address the short-term nature of most community-university partnerships. It aims to overcome some of the inequities in resources and results of these collaborations, where universities often extract learning and knowledge without reciprocal benefits for communities.

This report focuses on the impacts of CORE on the community partner, based on interviews with seven DSNI staff. CORE has built strategic capacity at DSNI by leveraging Tufts' institutional resources to support action research and garner funding for DSNI. Long-term processes of co-creation and trust-building have allowed DSNI to feel supported in CORE's activities, which include student Field Projects, master's theses, courses open to students and community, summer fellowships, and research funding. Current and former staff members at DSNI explained that UEP now functions as the organization's research arm. Interviewees noted that Tufts has centered the needs of the organization by remaining flexible and responsive to changing conditions and fluctuating capacities.

Research, learning, and action projects build on each other across several years. Among many accomplishments, CORE has contributed to the launch of the [Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network](#), the development of a land trust operations manual for DSNI, and supporting DSNI's co-facilitation with City of Boston of a process to develop an arts and innovation district in the neighborhood. CORE also enabled the partnership to win a 3-year [federal action research grant](#) from Americorps.

Beyond these outcomes, CORE is leading to deeper institutional transformations. CORE is helping build a deeper bench of leaders at DSNI. During the partnership, two DSNI staff enrolled in UEP's mid-career MPP program, while three UEP graduate students were hired as DSNI staff. CORE has also helped UEP develop its curriculum through courses that are open to community residents, such as [Teaching Democracy](#) (a popular education train-the-trainers program) and UEP's Community Practicum, which has been co-designed with DSNI.

Many interviewees felt that the partnership has set a new standard for reciprocity in community-university partnerships. Tufts' commitment to multi-year funding has allowed DSNI to plan ahead. Despite these accomplishments, more needs to be done to institutionalize CORE beyond the founding faculty and secure long-term university resources. In this current moment, there may be an opportunity to frame CORE as a way for a university to strengthen its racial justice, anti-oppressive practices.

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1. Introduction to CORE

CoResearch/CoEducation (CORE) is a community-university partnership program housed at the Tufts University [Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning Department](#) (UEP), with support from the [Tisch College of Civic Life](#) at Tufts. CORE's mission is to cultivate transformative relationships between university and communities to co-learn and co-produce knowledge and action to support community-based movements in Greater Boston and beyond.

Building equitable and reciprocal partnerships between communities and universities is a challenging task. Elite universities are predominantly White spaces, with higher concentrations of relatively wealthy and privileged students and faculty. Colleges and universities in the U.S. hold an immense concentration of wealth, with nearly \$600 billion in endowments¹ and more than \$1 trillion in economic activity.² Working class communities and communities of color in Greater Boston have historically experienced tensions with the region's universities and colleges over extractive research projects and institutional expansion. The classic "professional-expert" model of community-university partnerships frequently limits a community's ability to drive research agendas.³ Other well-documented barriers to more equitable partnerships include devaluing local and practitioner knowledge, forcing community practice into short term academic calendars, prioritizing university benefits over community impact, and limiting access to the university through narrow standards of academic excellence and selectivity.

The first CORE partnership was piloted with [Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative](#) (DSNI) from 2016-2019. DSNI is a community-based planning and organizing non-profit located in the Roxbury and Dorchester neighborhoods of Boston. DSNI empowers residents to revitalize the Dudley neighborhood through place-based community organizing and planning. Formed in the mid-1980s, DSNI is renowned for establishing community control over development and for creating a community land trust (CLT) that owns over 30 acres, on which they have developed hundreds of units of permanently affordable housing, as well as parks, urban farms, and a greenhouse.

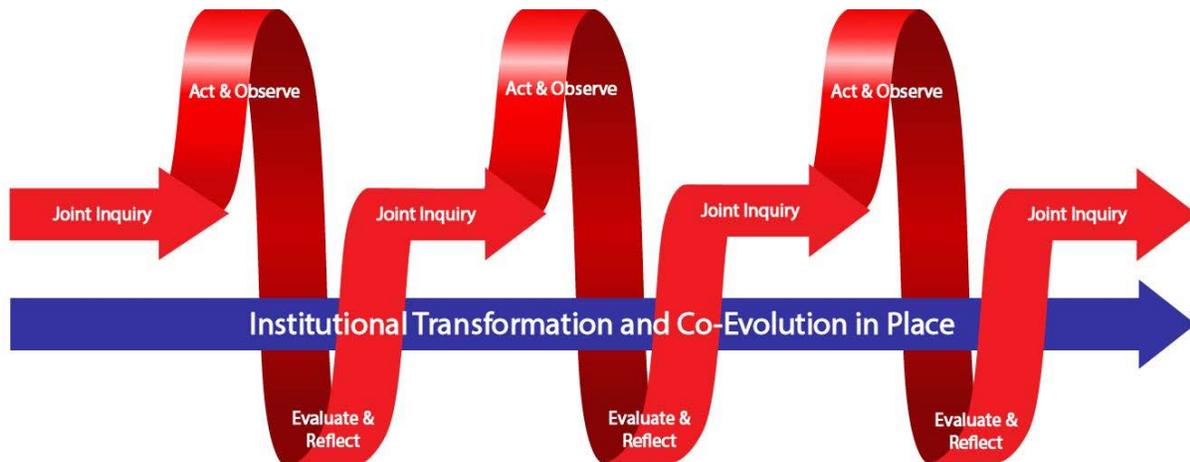
CORE grew out of intensive community collaborations that UEP lead faculty Penn Loh started in 2011 with DSNI and other partners. Loh was recruited to UEP as a full-time faculty in 2009 to help deepen UEP's community strategies, after spending 13 years with a community-based environmental justice organization in Roxbury. His relationship with DSNI dates back to 1996. However, the relationship between Tufts UEP and DSNI goes back to 1990 with a student Field Project and UEP's hiring of Melvyn Colon as a lecturer. Colon was involved in founding DSNI and served as board president for two years before joining UEP.



Eliza Parad and Joceline Fidalgo of DSNI lead a tour for Tufts UEP's community practicum. Photo: Alonso Nichols/Tufts University

Over the decades, numerous faculty and students have worked with DSNI through courses, research projects, and internships. Prior to the CORE partnership, three DSNI staff, including two Executive Directors, had been recruited into the UEP mid-career Master of Public Policy (MPP) program, and one UEP alum had been hired as a DSNI staff. Despite these strong ties, the collaboration remained semester-to-semester and fragmented into engagements with individual students and faculty. There had not been an explicit multi-year plan tying together teaching, research and service until the CORE partnership.

CORE was developed to address the short-term, ad hoc nature of a relationship that had already spanned more than two decades. Starting with joint inquiry and planning, CORE integrates teaching, research, and practice over a cycle of three to five years. The hope is that if partnership is sustained over multiple cycles, the partners co-evolve in place. CORE's theory of practice draws upon traditions of action research, service-learning, scholarship of engagement, and universities as anchor institutions. It is also inspired by Black radical traditions and the struggles of Third World peoples to democratize universities and advance racial and economic justice in the 1960s and 70s. CORE aims to leverage UEP's position within the university to better support community movements towards a more just, democratic, and sustainable society.⁴



CORE's Co-learning model⁵

In 2016, Tufts and DSNI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that identified learning, research, and action goals for a three-year partnership (see *Appendix A*). CORE committed the partners to collaborate on just and sustainable community-controlled economic development, with a focus on the food economy and community land trusts. The CORE MOU included activities that were already established and resourced, such as a [Field Project](#) each spring, a funded summer graduate student fellow, and a co-designed Community Practicum to be held every other Fall.

Tufts and DSNI agreed to make decisions together and to jointly raise funds to support DSNI's role in the partnership and other activities that were to be developed. This MOU was approved by the Tufts Provost as an official affiliation. Tisch College, which was already supporting summer fellows and the CORE lead faculty to develop this partnership, contributed \$10,000 per year over the 3-year partnership to support DSNI's role. DSNI estimated that it was spending at least \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year on the staff time dedicated to the partnership (the equivalent of 15-25% of a full-time employee).

2. CORE Accomplishments 2016-2019

The chart below summarizes the activities and outcomes of the CORE pilot over the three academic years 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 covered by the MOU. See Appendix D for more detail on the outputs of the partnership.

Activity	Description	2016-2019 Notable Results
Field Projects	Teams of 4-5 students work on semester-long projects with a real world partner in this required core course.	Projects completed each spring with the Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network (GBCLTN), facilitated by DSNI.
Community Practicum	Course co-designed with DSNI and other partners and taught every other year. About a dozen students join with practitioners to learn together and complete projects for the partners.	2017 theme: Building Community Controlled Economies in Boston 2019 theme: Solidarity Rising in Boston and Beyond
Summer Fellowship	10-week full-time graduate student summer internship with DSNI, funded by Tisch College.	Two of the three fellows were students of color. One fellow was later hired by DSNI as the part-time coordinator of GBCLTN.
Master's Theses	Required year-long project for UEP MA degree.	Six students developed master's theses related to the community land trust focus of the CORE partnership with DSNI. One was later hired into a full-time position with DSNI's land trust.
Guest Lectures and Site Visits	DSNI staff and leaders host visits from Tufts students and faculty and come to campus as guest lecturers 1-2 times per year.	DSNI hosted site visits for the Community Practicum in 2017 and 2019. Visits include students, other community practitioners, and also the Dean of Tisch College in 2017.
Research Projects	Commitment to develop longer term research projects related to CORE themes.	In 2018, UEP and DSNI began a 3-year community action research project to assess and strengthen community control in DSNI's work with City of Boston to develop a commercial arts and innovation district.
Popular Education and Leadership Development	Commitment to explore ways to support DSNI to build resident capacity and leadership.	<i>Teaching Democracy</i> , a two-day popular education train-the-trainers program for students and community, was piloted in 2016, and held again in 2018 and 2019. It is now a regular credit-bearing course in UEP.
Community Planning and Organizing	Commitment to support DSNI's planning and organizing related to CORE themes.	Through the Practicum and research projects, UEP has been supporting the GBCLTN and DSNI's commercial district planning efforts.
Fundraising	Commitment to raise grants for joint projects coming out of CORE.	Received 3-year federal grant from Corporation for National and Community Service's Community Conversations program (\$270,000 total).

3. Community Impact Assessment

This assessment focuses on CORE’s contributions and impacts from the perspective of DSNI stakeholders. The community-university partnership literature tends to focus on outcomes for students and the university, leaving impact on communities less studied. This assessment tries to fill that gap for this partnership.

The research questions for this project were:

- What has been CORE’s impact on DSNI and community stakeholders?
 - How do DSNI stakeholders characterize the relational, trust-building, and power-sharing elements of CORE?
 - How did the various structures for engagement (e.g. courses, thesis projects, internships, ...) contribute to DSNI achieving its goals?
 - What did the partnership achieve overall? How did CORE support DSNI to build strategic capacity and confront systemic barriers as an organization? How can the partnership continue to evolve to support DSNI?
- What relationships and resources enabled this impact?
- How can the program be improved in coming years?

The lead author, a Tufts UEP graduate student, conducted semi-structured open-ended interviews with seven DSNI staff who have interacted with the CORE partnership (see *Appendices B and C*). All but one of the interviewees were or are also UEP students. Two were DSNI staff who entered the UEP mid-career MPP program after engaging in the CORE partnership. One is a former Executive Director who had completed the MPP program prior to serving at DSNI. Three were Tufts UEP students who got involved in CORE and then went on to work at DSNI.

The chart below summarizes the key findings on CORE’s overall contributions, specific practices, and recommendations for how the partnership can continue to evolve.

Contributions	Practices	Recommendations
<p>Deepened partnership based on trust and relationship-building.</p> <p>Tufts UEP has become DSNI’s “research arm”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UEP hires faculty (CORE lead Penn Loh) with extensive experience and relationships in community. • 3-year MOU established with explicit goals and shared values, co-governance process, and commitment of resources, allowing DSNI to plan ahead. • Faculty lead prepares new students for engagement and helps distribute the institutional relationship. • UEP centers the organizational needs of its partner and remains flexible as DSNI’s staff capacity fluctuates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build more institutional nodes and relationships (beyond Loh). • Conduct annual CORE orientation for new UEP students. • Pass knowledge from one UEP cohort to the next through collective reflection and inter-cohort learning.

Contributions	Practices	Recommendations
<p>Co-created knowledge and action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported launch of Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network. Developed operations manual for DSNI's community land trust. Supporting DSNI's co-facilitation of the Upham's Corner Implementation process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Field Projects, summer fellowships, and master's theses are connected from year to year, with each successive cohort of students building on previous work. Publish reports that give academic legitimacy to community land trust model and network. Co-design UEP Community Practicum. Conduct embedded action research to help DSNI document its process in community planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more assistance with scoping projects to fit a semester timeline. Explore how academic validation for community projects reinforces knowledge hierarchy.
<p>Cultivated a deeper bench of leaders at DSNI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruited two DSNI staff to UEP's mid-career MPP. DSNI hired three UEP graduate students into staff positions. Developed a popular education train the trainer's program for DSNI and other community partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect DSNI leaders to programs at Tufts, like the mid-career MPP and Neighborhood Fellowship. Provide opportunities for UEP graduate students to work with DSNI in the field through summer fellowships. Develop trainings and workshops that can benefit DSNI staff, board, and members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop more funding for BIPOC UEP students. Build and leverage the CORE alumni network. Fund more programs for DSNI residents and board members, such as Teaching Democracy. Fund year-long Tisch student fellowships.
<p>Developed resources to support and value DSNI's role in partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tisch College committed \$10,000 per year for three-year pilot. Tufts and DSNI received a 3-year federal grant for community action research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compensate community partner for staff time. Jointly raise funds from sources that do not compete with community partner's existing funders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify how longer-term (7 to 10 year) partnerships could work.

4. Findings on CORE's Contributions and Practices

The CORE partnership models how community-university partnerships can build power for community organizations through developing deep relationships with shared goals and values, co-creating knowledge and action, cultivating the leadership pipeline, and developing resources for the community partner. DSNI interviewees shared that through these practices, CORE set a new standard for community-university partnerships. Far from being an extractive, one-way process, DSNI stakeholders felt that their organization's relationship with Tufts UEP supports the movement for community control over land and planning processes. Sharon Cho, a UEP student and former staff at DSNI, explained, "CORE's value lies not so much in what Tufts has done, but the strategic capacity Tufts and UEP have taken on so that DSNI can do more for itself."

4.1. Deepening the Partnership

4.1.1 *Bridging to community through faculty connections*

Developing deep partnership starts with building trust through a diverse, dynamic, and complex network of human relationships in the community-university space.⁶ UEP faculty and CORE originator Penn Loh is a trusted bridge between Tufts UEP, DSNI, and many other community organizations. As a former Executive Director of Alternatives for Community and Environment, his experience with community partners in the Boston area pre-dated working at Tufts. He is one of a number of UEP core faculty hired because of their experience as practitioners.

Bayoán Rossello-Cornier, a DSNI organizer who later became a UEP mid-career MPP student, shared, "Penn's background working with low-income communities of color, being part of Alternatives for Community and the Environment, understanding the community and needs and making sure those were at the forefront" set the tone of the partnership. He brought a familiarity with environmental justice, housing, and land use struggles in different neighborhoods, according to Cho, who later went on to work part-time at DSNI. Some of Penn's relationships with DSNI stakeholders pre-dated his affiliation at Tufts or theirs with DSNI. For example, Juan Leyton, a former Executive Director at DSNI and MPP graduate, explained: "I had known Penn a long time. We had this close, working relationship for years. When I came to DSNI, he had already been doing some work, and students were already in place. It was a deep, ongoing relationship."

4.1.2 *Valuing community and developing shared goals and expectations*

One of CORE's key values is, as Cho described, "the recognition that what the community partner brings to the table is just as valuable as the university." Together, the partners develop goals, guiding values, and practices that benefit everyone involved. Goals and values do not emerge in a top-down, bureaucratic process, starting with an academic dean and then making their way to the community.⁷ In reciprocal, co-created partnerships, the university is not prescriptive—as a funder is when it offers tightly-prescribed grant programs—and does not take the spotlight, as larger White-led nonprofits are known to do, for example. Several of the interviewees described how other universities in Boston have tried to set the agenda with DSNI to meet university objectives, instead of co-creating the goals.

Harry Smith, a former senior staffer at DSNI, emphasized CORE's commitment to jointly develop learning, research, and action agendas: "The university partner [UEP] exercised humility by coming in and asking the partners, 'What do you need?'" Rossello-Cornier added that Tufts and Loh were ready to hear what the community could offer and to work within the capacities of the partner. The university needs to understand, for example, that a community organization is not going to go out of its way to set up a meeting to meet the needs of student research. This should all be spelled out in an MOU, according to Smith: "Good communication and putting expectations down in writing is important when there are misunderstandings or disagreements when something comes up." Smith continued: "The university partner should also be prepared to answer this question too, saying what they need."

In 2016, the CORE partnership between Tufts UEP and DSNI was formalized through a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that articulated the values, goals, and financial commitments. Creating this partnership agreement allowed both Tufts and DSNI to understand the aspiration of the partnership and what continuity and consistency mean in practice. Joceline Fidalgo, an MPP student and former Deputy Director at DSNI, explained that the three-year MOU articulated how the partnership could be co-beneficial to DSNI and the wider community before getting into specifics about projects and internships. Part of why CORE works well, she explained, is because of shared values. Smith explained that formalizing the partnership "moved us from a project-by-project orientation to Tufts becoming the research arm of DSNI, nimble enough to adapt in the face of change and advance the CLT [community land trust] movement and our work around land use and planning."

4.1.3 Managing relationships and distributing trust

When new students enter into the partnership, Loh's reputation helps confer a level of trustworthiness. In Field Projects and master's theses, students carry most of the work and communication with community partners, but Loh sometimes steps in to manage relationships and expectations. CORE's relationships are either "distributed" from Loh to students when they work on short-term projects or students develop their own relationships over the longer term when they string projects together (connecting a field project, internship, thesis, and job, for example).

DSNI stakeholders trust that Loh is transmitting knowledge, cultural competence, and ethics to students. As Rossello-Cornier shared, "DSNI could trust in a certain level of cultural competence of the students they'd work with. Other universities would send teams of white students to take pictures of people's homes. Land trust owners worried that their homes were being sold. You're a white kid in a Patagonia sweater taking pictures... this is not a safari. You have to approach it carefully, respectfully."

Loh also ensures that institutional partners at Tisch College connect directly with DSNI, getting them to the "community level." Leyton shared that Tisch Dean Alan Solomont's visits to DSNI, for example, signal that Tufts, as an institution, wants an ongoing relationship and to engage from a place of learning.

4.1.4 Centering the organizational development needs of the community partner

DSNI has had four executive leadership transitions (including two interim directors) in the last four years, as well as a round of staff reductions and turnover of other key staff. These fluctuations have,

at times, made it hard for UEP to sustain engagement. Loh has had to build relationships with new sets of actors who do not always know about the values of the partnership or how much has been accomplished. The partnership has also had to be flexible and adjust plans when these changes occur. For example, in summer of 2020, DSNI had to cancel its plans for its youth program, which UEP had planned to conduct action research with. Instead, the UEP team pivoted to supporting program staff to shore up their capacity around community planning.

Loh's deep relationship with and knowledge of DSNI has also helped in other ways during the most recent transition. He was asked to lead a workshop on community organizing with new DSNI staff in January 2020, since DSNI had lost its Director of Organizing. He was able to draw on various periods of DSNI's history to show how the organization had approached organizing over the decades.

In sum, Loh approaches DSNI in a relational way and supports students to do the same. The relationship and well-being of the partner is the first priority. This ethic stands in contrast with other universities' approaches, some of whom wanted to highlight DSNI's land trust model but did not make relationship-building a central component, according to four of the interviewees.

4.2 Co-creating Knowledge and Action

Based on deep trust and relationship, the CORE partners have jointly undertaken research, learning, and action projects that build on each other over several years. This work has produced knowledge and action to further DSNI's mission of community self-determination. These projects promote deep learning for UEP students, faculty, and others at Tufts and have led to tangible community progress, most notably the launch of the Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network (GBCLTN). Other outputs of the partnership include an operations manual for DSNI's community land trust and supporting DSNI's role in co-facilitating with the City of Boston the Upham's Corner Implementation process to develop an arts and innovation district .

UEP brings students into CORE as a major resource. Students engage in the partnership through their curriculum, including Field Projects, summer internships, master's theses, and the community practicum course. In each of these elements, students build on the cumulative work of the partnership. Instead of starting from the beginning, they further the work of previous cohorts. For example, one Field Project developed a public report that the GBCLTN used to make the case for CLTs in Boston at its public launch in 2015. This project built on the work of the Field Project the previous year, in which a student team helped compile resources for DSNI and the groups that went on to form the GBCLTN.

We describe below several cases of how UEP has become DSNI's "research arm". As Cho explains, "There are certain topics that are relevant to multiple members of the GBCLTN, but we don't have the capacity or time to go out and interview multiple sources, do analysis, and come up with recommendations." We include work on the food economy that predates the formal CORE partnership, the launch of the GBCLTN, and the trajectories of two UEP graduate students who were subsequently hired as staff at DSNI. But first, we describe how CORE's research centers community.

4.2.1 Centering community in action research

CORE's research agendas are guided by action research and racial justice tenets, including identifying root causes of structural oppression, centering perspectives of those most impacted, supporting the establishment of sustainable institutions led by those directly impacted, and engaging in action and reflection. According to a 2020 report on racial justice grantmaking, this kind of research focuses "explicitly on building civic, cultural, and political power by those most impacted" and "building power for self-governance and self-determination."⁸

UEP students begin CORE research endeavors with a community-based inquiry: what questions are DSNI and its stakeholders asking? What common concerns do they have? The actual practices of 'centering community knowledge' look different in every project. As we detail in the cases below, some projects are more reflective endeavors, where students conduct systematic questioning, listening, and synthesis with DSNI and its stakeholders so that the organizations can see themselves in their strength and complexity.

Centering community knowledge, according to Leyton, involves putting up with a level of messiness that universities are not always used to doing; academics are trained to create categories and narratives that are logical, linear, and neat. This kind of reflective research has a different purpose: to facilitate and share learning with DSNI and the GBCLTN, not to hand down knowledge from the academy to the community. Many CORE projects facilitate Boston movement organizations' ability to access the knowledge they already have, to reflect upon and improve their actions *and* communicate about their process to others looking to learn from it. These endeavors also support student learning but do not center learning goals that originate outside of the project partner's needs.

Students investigate grounded questions through literature reviews, interviews, case studies, and GIS or statistical analysis. DSNI and GBCLTN have used the outcomes of these projects to hone their organizing and community development strategies and build the case for community control to governing bodies in the City of Boston. Students involved with CORE have been able to string together projects and support CORE partners beyond the two-year M.A. program, with several engagements lasting 4-5 years or more.

Leyton described how most academic-community partnerships involve a university studying the community as an *object*. But CORE projects always valued the perspective that DSNI brought; their perspective was inherently valuable, and the foundation for the rest of the inquiry. He explained: "You're not studying the object from afar, you're actually inside of a place. From the perspective of DSNI, we felt valued." Rossello-Cornier explained that CORE projects generally have a goal of actually helping DSNI: "It's not just about giving students experience, and then having them go work in other communities."

4.2.2 Deepening community knowledge and action around food economies

Even before the formal CORE partnership was launched, UEP's work with DSNI supported the increase of resident control over the food system. This case is instructive because it shows how a longer-term engagement can lead to deeper outcomes. The projects included a series of three Field Projects from spring 2013 to spring 2015 and an action research project in summer 2013.

Rossello-Cornier initially got to know UEP and Loh through participation in the spring 2013 Practical Visionaries Workshop, which was an early version of the Community Practicum, bringing together practitioners and graduate students to learn together around critical issues. The UEP students in the Workshop were members of a Field Project team working with DSNI and two other community partners on a project called *Cultivate Your Food Economy: Community Tools and Data for Building a New Food Economy*. This 2013 Field Project created a set of tools for the partners to engage their own communities around the food system.

With funding from the Tisch College Community Research Center, the student team worked in summer 2013 to help DSNI implement a survey and popular education workshop with youth to track where their food comes from and where their food dollars go. The project also trained youth researchers to survey and map 65 home gardens in DSNI's core area. Through visual observation and 39 interviews with gardeners, the team estimated that these gardens produced 50 types of



Bayoán Rossello-Cornier of DSNI leads a tour of the community greenhouse. Photo: Penn Loh

vegetables and fruits, yielding around 4,400 pounds of produce.⁹

In Spring 2014, Rossello-Cornier hosted a Field Project to help DSNI and its partners in the Dudley Real Food Hub develop a community food action planning process. When the project started, he explained that the neighborhood was not a food hub. He discussed how the neighborhood had small projects like gardens, raised beds, and community spaces. The student team was able to research case studies of regional food hubs and developed a planning process proposal. DSNI then carried out a planning process, informed by this report,

from summer 2014 into early 2015 that resulted in five priorities for action and the formation of *Dudley Grows*, a community committee to pursue those priorities. In spring 2015, another UEP Field Project team assessed the planning process, resulting in the report *Community Food Planning in Action: Lessons from Dudley Real Food Hub*.¹⁰

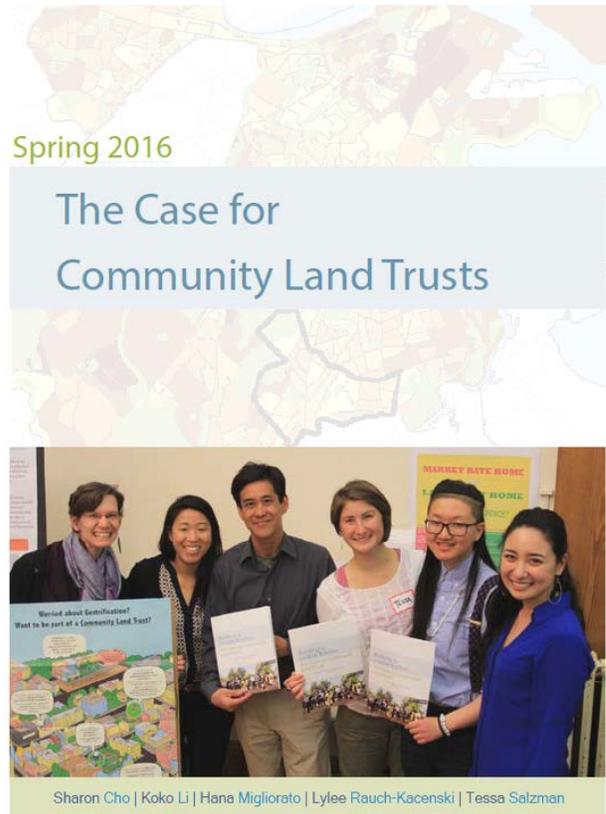
Rossello-Cornier shared that as an organizer and community planner, he did not have the time to review literature about food systems planning or learn from models in other states. The student team was able to think longer term. According to Rossello-Cornier, "the students showed us the arc of how a longer-term process for developing a real food hub could look." He reflected: "This project was valuable because it was actually part of my workload as an organizer, not just managing students for the students' benefit."

4.2.3 Launching the GBCLTN and making the case for community land trusts

In 2015, DSNI hosted a Field Project to help it form the GBCLTN. A team of students researched the CLT model, its history, and best practices across the country. They shared their findings with DSNI and the community partners that were exploring the formation of a network. Their report included a slide deck that was used by the community partners to educate their own members about the CLT model.

The next year, a Field Projects team (which included Cho) partnered with the newly formed GBCLTN and wrote a report that was released at the public launch of the land trust network. According to Leyton, DSNI's Executive Director at the time, projects like this "provided a space for the organization to make a case for perspectives about what's important, that cities and foundations may not see as flashy or as valuable."

The report, from Cho's perspective, was important because it gave the CLT movement "an institutional stamp of approval." The report said many of the same things that communities had been advocating for, "but in the policy arena, when you're talking to decisionmakers, there's real weight in academic validation." At the same time, admittedly, this academic validation can reinforce knowledge hierarchies, which raises the question of how academic partnerships can center community perspectives in ways that undermine knowledge hierarchies.



Building on the work from 2015 and 2016, CORE projects continued to support GBCLTN in subsequent years. In 2017, a Field Project team worked with a member of the GBCLTN, the Chinatown Community Land Trust, to explore how to move existing private housing into permanent affordability in CLTs. In 2018, another Field Project team worked with GBCLTN member, the Urban Farming Institute of Boston, to identify policies and practices for managing a community land trust for urban farmers.

4.2.4 Students building engagement into careers

The experiences of Ben Baldwin and Minnie McMahon help to illustrate how engagement for CORE can become a multi-year experience for students. Baldwin was part of the 2015 Field Project team that wrote the report about the importance of CLTs. That summer, he interned at DSNI's land trust through a Tisch Summer Fellowship and began to create a policies and procedures manual for their CLT. Two summers later, Cho, another UEP intern, finished the manual. Harry Smith, Minnie McMahon, and others involved with DSNI's land trust — and in the wider CLT movement — have referred to the policies and procedures manual as a key support for daily CLT operations and as an example for other CLTs across the country.

Baldwin's 2016 thesis project served as important groundwork for the launch of the GBCLTN. Baldwin explained that while he was interning at DSNI and in conversations about building the GBCLTN, it was suggested that he look into networks of community trusts as his thesis project. "I ended up interviewing land trusts in Boston and across the country, analyzing their structures and identifying the ideal model for a land trust network." Baldwin's thesis has supported CLTs in other places as well, such as Baltimore. A few weeks after finishing his thesis in 2016, Baldwin was offered and took a job as operations manager at DSNI's land trust.

In Fall 2017, Minnie McMahon entered the UEP M.A. program and took the community practicum course with Loh. That year, the practicum was designed to support the process that DSNI was beginning to co-facilitate the development of an arts and innovation district in Upham's Corner with the City of Boston. McMahon helped document the initial stages of the process to support DSNI's efforts. Though the project encountered challenges around aligning a semester-long timeline with the long-term nature of community organizing and planning, it laid the groundwork for the proposal that UEP and DSNI submitted to the AmeriCorps agency for a collaborative community action research project in spring 2018. When that proposal was funded, McMahon was recruited as a research assistant from 2018-2019. She then applied for the position at DSNI that Baldwin left in spring 2019 and was hired full-time. McMahon continued her work on this research project as a DSNI staff in summer 2019, working with Loh and UEP M.A. student Luisa Santos to conduct a visioning process with youth at DSNI about the Upham's Corner Implementation process.

Building on all of the above research, Loh and student teams have developed and spread the vision and narratives around CLTs to the broader public. As McMahon explained, "publishing allows us to emphasize the radical, transformational, deep, challenging, hard-to-measure, visionary, magical aspects of our work and aspirations. Sometimes it's hard to see that in the everyday workplace."



Joceline Fidalgo, a Tufts MPP student and former Deputy Director at DSNI and Alyssa Kogan, a Tufts UEP MA student, converse on a tour of DSNI's community land trust. Photo: Alonso Nichols/Tufts University.

4.3 Cultivating a deeper bench of leaders at DSNI

Capacity building and leadership development are fundamental pillars and goals of CORE, both within the university and with the community partners. UEP students get first-hand experience working in the community through Field Projects, thesis projects, CORE summer fellowships, and building relationships with staff and residents. They are then well positioned to join community organizations as staff when they graduate, as Baldwin and McMahon did. UEP's mid-career MPP students have the opportunity to attend Tufts to hone their skills in policy and planning, as did DSNI's Rossello-Cornier and Fidalgo. Community residents and students come together for Teaching Democracy, a Tufts-based training on popular and participatory education for movement-building. Below we describe how the mid-career MPP program, the Tisch Summer Fellowship, and Teaching Democracy have been helping to 'build the bench' of leaders at DSNI.

4.3.2 Master of Public Policy Program

The stories of two DSNI staff who entered the UEP mid-career MPP program show how the CORE partnership opened them up to professional development opportunities at Tufts. Rossello-Cornier entered the MPP program in 2016, as one of five Neighborhood Fellows receiving a full tuition scholarship. Before attending Tufts, he had worked as an organizer for about a decade. Being at UEP gave "a more high-level and in-depth look, which planted the seeds for the type of work I wanted to do policy-wise." He reflected on the question: "How do I either grow within the work that I'm doing or shift yourself into a new field, but keep my ties to grassroots organizing work?" Through the MPP program, he realized that the nonprofits where he had worked were all supported by foundation funding. After Tufts, Rossello-Cornier shifted into a new role working at a foundation and pushing to disrupt philanthropy, a predominately White space. He shared, "I wouldn't have received the Neighborhood Fellow Program without being connected through CORE, without the relationship with Penn."

Fidalgo, who grew up with DSNI as a youth board member, entered the MPP program in 2017. She wanted the opportunity to step back and critically engage with the neighborhood work, "concerning theory and what other communities are doing both locally and nationally." Leyton shared that "Joceline brought a perspective from the community to Tufts about was it like to grow up in Dudley, get involved in the organization, and then become a staff member." At Tufts, he said, "she would learn skills and tools to bring back to the community –a win, win situation." She left DSNI as Deputy Director in summer 2019 and is now finishing her MPP while contemplating her next steps. In the meantime, she has also been hired as a research assistant with the Upham's Corner project.

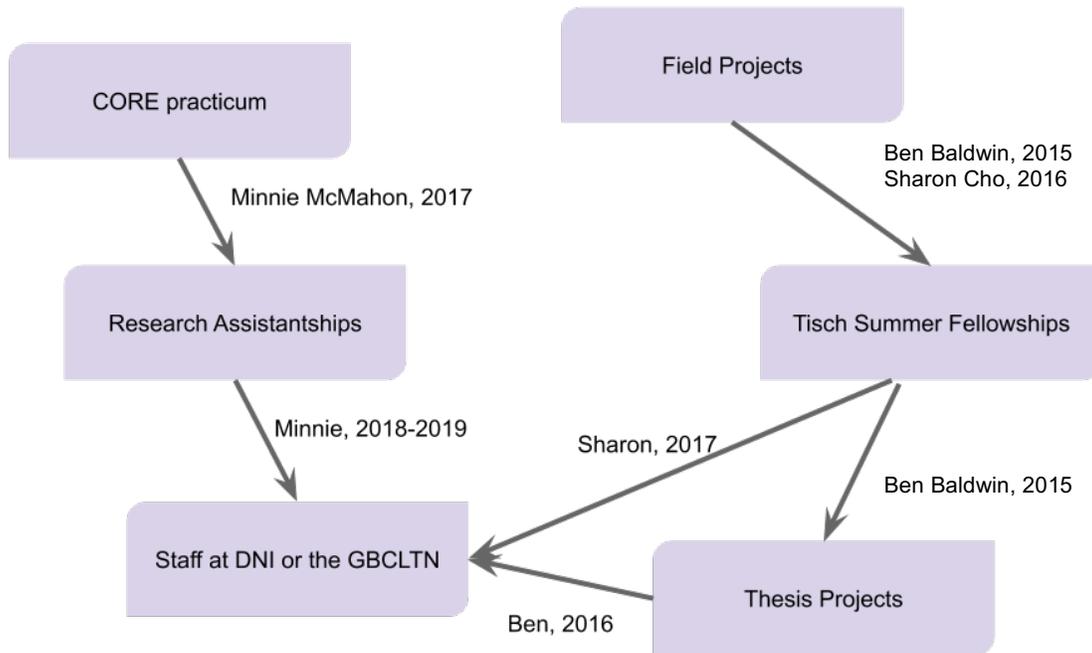


3 UEP generations at DSNI (from left to right: Lydia Collins, Sharon Cho, Ben Baldwin) with Amethyst Carey at DSNI's August 2018 Multicultural Festival

4.3.3 Tisch CORE Summer Fellows Program

Through a multi-year partnership, DSNI knows that they can plan for summer interns every year. Leyton shared that Tisch summer fellows are embedded in the community and given full participation in DSNI activities. According to Baldwin, “Knowing that you can rely on a summer intern is a critical piece of community-university partnerships. Interns could fill in admin duties and projects (like the policies and procedures manual) that get lost along the way.”

CORE Summer Fellowships offer students a chance to sink deeply into community work, partly because they are physically present at DSNI, rather than being further away at the university. The line between theory and practice dissolves. According to Baldwin, “When you're at a CDC [community development corporation], you're not just working at a small nonprofit in a vacuum. Instead, you're surrounded by city councilors, state representatives, Boston departments.” Students benefit from being exposed to more pathways to employment. And DSNI residents and board members who connect with summer interns have learned about opportunities at Tufts – taking classes like Teaching Democracy, for example, that they otherwise might not have known about. After completing summer CORE fellowships, McMahon and Baldwin became full-time staff at DNI. Cho also spent a summer at DSNI and then became the part-time coordinator of the GBCLTN.



A flowchart that demonstrates how three Tufts students engaged long-term with DSNI. Image: Zoë Ackerman.

4.3.4 Teaching Democracy

From 2016-2020, CORE has supported Teaching Democracy, a community-university training space for community residents, organizers, and students to develop knowledge, skills, and confidence in popular education. The course was co-designed by and is taught by May Louie, a UEP Part-time Lecturer, UEP MPP alum, and former DSNI senior staffer for 20 years. The training takes place over two 8-hour days of exercises. During the training, the facilitators share with participants the characteristics and history of popular education, introduce them to new ideas through participatory exercises, and pose problems in a way that build their critical consciousness. Facilitators also convey the ideas and practices by modeling techniques that learners can adapt to their context. Some participants then complete an optional extension, where they reflect on their experience with the training, read theoretical and practice works about popular and participatory education, apply their learnings, and report back for a final 3-hour reflection session at the end of the semester.

A team of 10 students, educators, and community practitioners initially convened to design the curriculum for Teaching Democracy in 2015. Community organizations and staff members involved in initial design meetings included May Louie (who was also with Chinese Progressive Association (CPA) and Activist Training Institute), Suzanne Lee from CPA, Eliza Parad from DSNI, and Meridith Levy from Somerville Community Corporation (SCC). Parad, an organizer with DSNI, explained that Teaching Democracy offered a way to train their staff and residents in popular education methods without DSNI having to create a curriculum entirely on their own. In the 2016 pilot, DSNI sent six participants, including 4 board members and 2 staff. In 2018, 1 DSNI staff and 3 board members attended.

Ackerman's 2020 UEP thesis¹¹ explored Teaching Democracy's impact on participants over its first three years. She found that respondents experienced three main shifts by participating in Teaching Democracy. First, they reported greater confidence in introducing others to basic popular and participatory frameworks. Respondents also noted an increased commitment to designing sessions based on the popular education principle of "centering local knowledge." Finally, respondents reported improving their facilitation skills and increasing participation by sharing power and/or using multi-modal techniques.

4.4 Developed resources to support DSNI

Community organizations require sustained funding to build sustained impact over time. Rossello-Cornier explained that "Community partnership is about leveraging your assets as a university." Tufts has leveraged its resources to compensate DSNI staff for their time supervising projects, remaining consistent in funding despite changes in DSNI's capacity, and offering strategic support for DSNI to access federal and private funding.

The CORE partnership aspires to honor the community organization's time. Leyton shared that often in community-university partnerships, "We're put in the same bag, but we don't have access to the same resources." DSNI, he explained, was often "worried about meeting our budget," so creating more work through managing student teams could be a "hard space to walk into." Cho echoed this idea: "Oftentimes, with the university, there's an assumption that with a student team or intern, you're offering free research capacity. But it takes time and capacity to support projects and students. So I think it's valuable to frame it as community partners bringing something to the table, not the other way around. If you're a university, you should be finding a way to pay community organizations." Baldwin, Rossello-Cornier, and Smith reiterated that funding is important because managing students requires capacity and diverts attention from other work.

CORE funding and capacity remained consistent despite fluctuations in DSNI's capacity, showing DSNI that Tufts valued and trusted them as members of the partnership. "Despite transitions and staff turnover," Fidalgo explained, "Tufts still wanted to be connected, to figure out how to shift and adapt its focus. It suggested that the partnership went beyond the university and students being able to benefit, and was about supporting the organization, even through some of its challenges." Rossello-Cornier shared that DSNI could take stock about how much staff time they had—independent from the original commitment—and calibrate and make adjustments.

DSNI has accessed more funding and staff capacity because of the partnership. Fidalgo explained: "We've been able to leverage this partnership to bring in more funding, both for operational needs and our youth development work." Most recently, the partnership won a major federal grant to support action research related to the Upham's Corner Arts and Innovation District. Leyton explained how universities can support nonprofits through challenges in the 'nonprofit industrial complex,' but they are also part of the problem: "Foundations like to be validated, so if a community organization has a university validating its ideas, that's both a good and a bad thing. It can feel disempowering to the organization, to need to have information validated by an institution. But organizations also want more resources, so the partnership can yield good opportunities. Foundations can change their mission and direction – things that are important today aren't as important tomorrow." Leyton described how universities can help small nonprofits by lifting up certain topics and modeling how relationships have to be sustainable to maintain programs.

5. Recommendations for Deepening the Partnership

In CORE's first pilot with DSNI, the partnership has accomplished a great deal. In the coming years, the partnership can continue to share power with DSNI and other community organizations by confronting institutional barriers to collaboration. Three major challenges to further institutionalizing CORE include:

1. Building continuity with action research projects from semester to semester and student cohort to cohort.
2. Undermining academic validation of community knowledge, further breaking down knowledge hierarchies.
3. Accessing funding for long-term support.

Recommendations to address these challenges are laid out below. They emerge from our interviewees and our findings.

5.1 Further institutionalizing CORE

Loh holds many of the relationships that are key to CORE's long-term success. Smith commented that most of CORE's relationships tie back to Loh and wondered how the program is being institutionalized beyond him. How will there be a *smooth transition of leadership* when the time is right? Loh, UEP, and Tisch might consider how to build relationships between DSNI (and other CORE partners) and other institutional stakeholders at Tufts to ensure smooth transitions.

In addition to institutionalizing CORE via faculty and administration, each incoming cohort of MA and MPP students offers a fresh opportunity to revisit CORE's values and commitments and *broaden and deepen an active base* of students and community CORE stakeholders. UEP could hold a CORE Orientation for students and community members each year, perhaps as part of Loh's course, Community Practice. This course could be extended into a 3-credit course that teaches students about CORE's values, goals, and best practices, and prepares them to engage with the community.

Part of this curriculum might explore elements that make a project useful in the short- and long-term. Cho explained that the concept of a concrete deliverable for a project can be one of the most challenging parts of putting a project together, both for students and for DSNI. She explained: "It's important to consider everything that an organization is working on." Such contextual factors—that students can take into account when making recommendations—include budgetary constraints, mapping decision-making power, competing organizational priorities, and more. Sometimes implementation barriers lie outside of an organization's control, such as when the City of Boston delayed the redevelopment process in Upham's Corner.

Students who have experience with CORE can contribute to a training guide that documents their own experiences and helps coach incoming students about ways to hold their own learning goals and ideas, but not at the expense of the organization. The guide could pose *reflective questions* to incoming students about possibilities for building continuity over the years. At the beginning of their journey, students could be expected to read a key list of past projects. At a middle stage, students could be asked to plan with their courses, internships, and thesis projects to serve community goals. CORE alumni could mentor a member of the incoming CORE cohort.

In terms of building *continuity from project to project*, CORE could host a database of learnings and exit memos. MA students cycle through on a 2-3 year basis and, in general, students at UEP are more focused on discrete courses and projects than collecting learning and passing it on to the next cohort – on the ‘action’ stage of research than on the ‘reflection’ stage. Field project teams, thesis writers, community practicum participants, and CORE interns could mentor the next cohort or provide exit memos around the following questions. The responses could live in a public-facing document for incoming students. See *Appendix E* for possible exit memo questions.

5.2 Further breaking down knowledge hierarchies

One of the main functions of CORE, through writing academic reports and publishing, is to build legitimacy for community knowledge to municipal government, funders, and others. Since CORE aims to challenge the hierarchy of academic and community knowledge, the program could think more critically about how community-university partnerships can undermine these hierarchies. This topic could be added to Loh’s Community Practice course or be the theme of a community-university dialogue.

5.3 Building a deeper bench leaders guided by social justice values

There are a number of ways CORE can continue supporting resident-led organizing and planning. First, CORE could increase funding and support for resident leadership development opportunities. Baldwin suggested that there be more opportunities for residents and board members at DSNi to participate in classes at Tufts for free, following along with the model of Teaching Democracy. He explained: “If you can’t give money, at least give free classes. So much of being in grad school was being in class and realizing that the person to my left works for the Boston Planning and Development Agency, the person to my right works for a small nonprofit, and the lecturer works as a planner for Newton. It’s about putting people in contact with folks in different roles that might be interesting to them or provide career paths.” Baldwin continued, “It would also be great for DSNi to interact more with local educational institutions in the neighborhood, like Roxbury Community College. That never happened besides a one-off learning opportunity.” Tufts could establish stronger ties with community colleges and its undergraduate programs to help connect community residents from CORE partners. This is similar to the Tufts University Prison Initiative of Tisch College, which partners with Bunker Hill Community College to provide opportunities for Associates Degrees for incarcerated people.

Teaching Democracy and the Community Practicum, which are learning opportunities open to students and community residents, could offer explicit ways that anti-oppressive research and education tie together -- for example, conducting power analyses and learning more explicitly how to center the voices of those most affected by injustice in a community meeting. These courses could help both students and residents hone their anti-oppressive research and organizing skills and develop transformative approaches to working together in the community-university space.

Second, CORE can leverage and make more visible CORE’s alumni network. One of the strengths of CORE, according to Cho, is that it creates “a wider base of policymakers and planners who are committed to and care deeply about democratically-controlled economies.” Through CORE, DSNi has developed connections to value-aligned policy and planning professionals, and she explained that “this is a way the partnership is pushing for structural change. Even if a UEP alumna doesn’t

end up working at a CLT, maybe they're working on the lending side, and the fact that they were at UEP and worked on a CORE project means something." CORE's alumni network could be more visible and active, perhaps through a listserv or online networking forum.

Third, Tufts UEP can recruit and fund more Black, Indigenous, and POC students who reflect the communities the program seeks to serve. Rossello-Cornier shared how one summer, a Tufts intern "was from Dorchester, with African ancestry." He said, "she was just easily accepted. She looked like someone from there. It's important to find students who reflect the demographics of the community because residents can easily open up and speak to people that look like them."

In conjunction with this goal, Tufts could expand the summer fellowships into year-long opportunities for UEP students. Cho described how the Tisch Summer Fellows are usually only 10 weeks in the summer; through Tisch, undergraduates have the opportunity to work longer-term during the school year. Longer-term work for graduate students creates incentives to continue working on their thesis or other projects. Baldwin thought that "Having undergraduate Tisch year-long fellows didn't work out that well, I think, because it would only be like eight hours a week or something. So you don't have time to build like a rapport with the rest of the staff or time which is kind of one of the best parts. And if you're talking about trying to help this person find employment, a big part of that is the organization getting to know the person." However, a graduate student who had already worked over the summer as a fellow would already have the rapport and a better understanding of how they can contribute.

Fourth, Tufts could increase funding and support for Visiting Practitioner positions. Both Leyton and Louie have already served in this role, bringing them closer to the students and faculty at UEP. There could be more emphasis in CORE around the importance of having community practitioners teach university courses that are open to residents, and more funding for these initiatives.

5.4 Building even longer term

The CORE partnership with DSNi was a commitment of three years. Smith challenged CORE to think about commitments beyond 3-5 years. What would be possible with a timeline of 10 years of sustained funding? The partnership could investigate what kinds of long-term funding and capacity commitments UEP can hold as the research arm of DSNi and other community organizations – and how to balance commitments across various entities (in terms of number of years, amount of funding, etc.).

6. Conclusion and Areas for Future Research

In its first partnership, CORE has developed a deep and reciprocal relationship with DSNI. It is a model for how community colleges, colleges, and universities can work with community institutions to work together on social justice issues in democratic ways.¹²

As the possibilities of federal, state, and local funding for community-university partnerships continue to develop, program evaluations of these partnerships can help make the case for their importance. Future evaluations of CORE might ask the following questions:

- How can CORE replicate its long-term orientation to partnership-building with other community organizations in Greater Boston?
- How can CORE research projects more explicitly adopt tenets of anti-oppressive research and community organizing?
- How do all of the skills that UEP students learn contribute to movement-building?
- Which competencies have the clearest links and how can all competencies be more linked to movement-building?

A future evaluation could also investigate policies at Tufts that have changed or could be changed as a result of CORE's work to leverage institutional resources for communities, such as by reckoning with how Tufts has perpetuated racial wealth gaps. On a departmental-level, to supplement courses that prepare students to engage with DSNI and other community organizations, an evaluation might examine how White dominant culture is embedded in and seeps into policies and practices at UEP, both through teaching and in team learning environments. Inquiry into this question would not further center Whiteness, but rather identify and uplift practices that center BIPOC students and community members, to shift power, control, wellbeing, and comfort. End of course evaluations or internal team assessments in Field Projects could explicitly address how Whiteness shows up in group and teaching dynamics.¹³

Appendices

Appendix A – CORE Memorandum of Understanding Goals

A Memorandum of Understanding for the Co-Research/Co-Education (CORE) Collaboration between Tufts UEP and DSNI was signed in September 2016. The second section of the MOU is excerpted below:

II. Goals

Through CORE, the parties desire to accomplish the following:

A. Learning

- Develop leadership and capacities of DSNI board, staff, members, and community residents
- Provide professional development and deep learning opportunities for UEP graduate students, faculty, and others in Tufts community.
- Explore emerging theories and best practices for building community solidarity economy that can be applied locally.
Conduct research to support community solidarity economy efforts.
- Document and share emerging innovations and lessons learned from the collaborative work.

B. Action

- Develop and spread vision and narratives around community solidarity economy.
- Support the development of the Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network and its members and help develop and advocate for its policy goals.
- Develop food economy strategies for job creation and development of community-owned businesses.

C. Collaboration

- Deepen institutional relationship between DSNI and Tufts University.
- Increase the visibility of university-community collaborations and the CORE co-learning approach.
- Garner more resources and support for these collaborations.
- Increase recruitment of students and staff from DSNI and its affiliates into UEP and Tufts University.

Appendix B – Interviewee biographies

Ben Baldwin graduated from Tufts' UEP program in 2016 and then went on to become DSNI's Project and Operations Manager. While at Tufts, Ben learned about DSNI as part of a Field Projects team and then continued working with them as a Tisch Summer Fellow. His master's thesis involved conducting research for DSNI. In his role as Project and Operations Manager, Ben oversaw the day to day operations of 226 affordable housing units on the Dudley Neighbors, Inc. (DNI) community land trust. He also assisted DNI's Director in implementing and developing DSNI's resident-guided revitalization of Boston's Dudley Street Neighborhood. Ben is currently a Real Estate Project Manager at Madison Park Development Corporation.

Sharon Cho is finishing her degree from Tufts' UEP program and was a graduate student intern at DSNI as a Tisch/CoRE Summer Fellow in 2017. In 2018 she began a full-time role at DSNI as the coordinator of the Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network. As the coordinator she oversaw activities of the local network of community land trusts and advocated for citywide policies that supported the expansion of CLTs. Sharon currently works at Dorchester Bay on the Real Estate Team as the new Keuhn Fellow.

Joceline Fidalgo left DSNI as Deputy Director in summer 2020 and is now finishing her Master of Public Policy from Tufts while providing strategic planning and organizational development consulting services to small nonprofits in the Greater Boston area. She has also a research assistant with the Upham's Corner project. Joceline is a life-long Dudley community resident and had been at DSNI since 2012, where she began as the Resource Development Manager.

Juan Leyton was the former Executive Director of DSNI where he was recognized as a Barr Fellow. As the Executive Director, Juan worked on the implementation of a major community planning process, advocated for the increase of affordable housing, art space and the expansion of community land trusts. Juan also holds a Master of Public Policy from Tufts University. Juan is now the Director of Community Building at NeighborWorks America, a congressionally chartered non-profit organization that supports community development in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

Minnie McMahon is the Project and Operations Manager with DSNI. She completed her degree at Tufts UEP in 2020 and participated in a community action research project related to the Uphams Corner Implementation District. Furthermore, in 2017 Minnie was a Tisch/CoRE summer fellow with Neighbor to Neighbor where she co-organized a community forum on development and displacement and conducted research on other communities' efforts to prevent gentrification-fueled displacement.

Adrian Bayoán Rossello-Cornier was a Community Organizer and Planner and DSNI from 2012 - 2017. Adrian organized and facilitated the Dudley Grow's nine-month residents-led local food system planning process, implemented strategic action plans including helping to build a resident-owned supply chain, securing permanent vacant land for growing food and assisting with physical development projects that support the local food system vision. Adrian also ran community organizer training workshops for all of DSNI's new employees, youth, local AmeriCorps volunteers and community groups. Furthermore, he was the lead organizer in the development of two new community gardens in Roxbury and Dorchester, housed on the DNI Community Land Trust. Adrian is currently the Senior Program Manager in Environmental Health and Justice at the Liberty Hill Foundation in Los Angeles.

Harry Smith was the former Director of Sustainable Economic Development at DSNI from 2011-2018. He also directed operations of Dudley Neighbors Incorporated, the Community Land Trust established by DSNI to ensure resident control and permanent affordability in the then Dudley Square (now known as Nubian Square). He organized and supported Roxbury and North Dorchester residents to participate in planning and design projects that met the community's needs and vision and built collaborations with residents and neighborhood partners regarding anti-foreclosure and anti-displacement initiatives. Harry now runs his own consulting business where he provides strategic advice on organizational development, community organizing strategy and political advocacy to grassroots organizing, advocacy and policy organizations.

Appendix C – Interview questions

1. How long did you work at DSNI and in what roles?
2. What about the CORE relationship was most beneficial to DSNI?
3. What about the CORE relationship was most challenging to DSNI?
4. How did CORE engagement compare with other universities?
5. How would you describe the impact on DSNI of staff who went through the UEP MPP program? What about the UEP students who became staff members?
6. How did DSNI's goals change while you were at DSNI, and how did CORE respond?
7. If you were to describe two elements of a successful community-university partnership to a university looking to start its own program, what would they be?
8. If CORE were to change two things within the next few years, what would create the most value and benefit for DSNI?

Appendix D – CORE’s significant accomplishments (2013-2020)

2013

- Field Project: Cultivate Your Food Economy: Catalyzing Community Action for Food Systems Change
- Thesis: [\(Hachmyer\) The Institutionalization of Food Movement Projects and the Role of Land Rights in Social Transformation: Stories from Boston, Detroit, and Philadelphia](#)

2014

- Field Project: Dudley Real Food Hub: Community Planning Process
- Thesis:
 - [\(Seamon\) The Dudley Greenhouse: Brownfield Redevelopment towards a more Just and Sustainable Food System in Roxbury](#)
 - [\(Feinburg\) Developing Solidarity: Transformative Community Economic Development and the New Lynn Coalition](#)
 - [\(Ostberg\) Assembling a closed-loop system: Applying lessons from The Plant in Chicago to CERO's vision for Boston](#)
 - [\(Schofield\) The Struggle to Own and The Struggle to Stay "The Story of Greater Four Corners and the Coalition for Occupied Homes in Foreclosure](#)

2015

- Course: Community Practicum - [Community Control and Ownership Strategies for Boston](#)
- Field Project: Examining a Community Food Planning Process: Case Study of the Dudley Real Food Hub in Boston, MA
- Thesis:
 - [\(Hart\) Reclaiming Philly's Vacant Properties: An Assessment of Community Discourse in the Formation of the Philadelphia Land Bank](#)
 - [\(Mann\) Creating Lasting Affordability through Community Land Trusts: Lessons for Somerville, Massachusetts](#)
 - [\(Oorthuys\) Telling the Story of Food Justice: A Case Study of The Urban Farming Institute of Boston](#)
- Visiting Practitioner: May Louie
- [Tisch Summer Fellows](#)
 - Ben Baldwin, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative
 - Danielle Ngo, Chinese Progressive Association

2016

- [CORE Launch with DSNI](#) and [MOU](#) signed between Tufts and DSNI
- Course: [Teaching Democracy Pilot](#)
- Field Project:

- Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network: [The Case for Community Land Trusts: Building a Livable Boston & Mattapan Study of Community and Gentrification](#)
- Community Labor United: [The Potential for Community Shared Solar in Massachusetts](#)
- Publication: (Loh) [Community-University Collaborations for Environmental Justice: Towards a Transformative Co-Learning Model](#), *New Solutions Journal* v26(3): 412-428.
- Thesis:
 - [\(Baldwin\) Networked Community Land Trusts: An Analysis of Existing Models and Needs Assessment for the Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network](#)
 - [\(Kulwicki\) Land in trust: Preserving farmland through easement and fee simple ownership in rural, suburban, and urban contexts](#)
 - [\(Tumposky\) Educating Practical Visionaries at Tufts University: A Framework for Community-University Co-Learning](#)
- Tisch Summer Fellows:
 - [Gabo Sub](#), DSNI
 - Mason Wells, Alternatives for Community & Environment
- UEP MPP Neighborhood Fellow: Bayoán Rossello-Cornier

2017

- Course: Community Practicum - [Building Community Controlled Economies in Boston](#)
- Field Project: Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network - [Pathways to Transfer Private Housing to Permanent Affordability](#)
- Thesis:
 - [\(Blum\) A Clean Break: Fuerza Laboral's Quest to Incubate a Cleaning Cooperative in Rhode Island](#)
 - [\(Sobel\) Boston's Emerging Solidarity Food Economy: Lessons in Transformational Change](#)
 - [\(Stucker\) Kitchen Incubators In New England: How An Emergent Business Incubator Model Is Fostering Food Entrepreneurship](#)
- [Tisch Summer Fellows](#)
 - Sharon Cho, DSNI
 - Minnie McMahon, Neighbor to Neighbor
- UEP MPP Neighborhood Fellow: Joceline Fidalgo

2018

- Course: [Teaching Democracy](#)
- Field Project
 - Commonwealth Kitchen: [Supporting Small Scale Food Manufacturing](#)
 - Urban Farming Institute of Boston: [Soil in the City](#)
- Funding: [Tufts UEP-DSNI awarded 2-year Federal Community Action Research Grant](#)
- Publication: (Loh and Agyeman) [Urban food sharing and the emerging Boston food solidarity economy](#), *Geoforum*, v99: 213-222
- Thesis:

- (Curtis) [Extending Community Control over Commercial Development: Community Land Trusts and Community Finance Models](#)
- (Flagg) [Small-Scale Food Processing's Role in Farm to Institution: Filling Market Gaps and Moving toward a Regional Supply Chain](#)
- (Jimenez) [The Emergence of the Boston Ujima Project](#)
- (Wool) [People's Electric Power: Community Energy Solutions to Empower Democracy and Combat Climate Change](#)
- [Tisch Summer Fellows:](#)
 - Zoë Ackerman, Community Labor United
 - Lydia Collins, DSNI

2019

- Course: Teaching Democracy
- Field Projects:
 - Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network: [Reclaiming the Rules of Land Use: Demystifying Zoning as an Anti-Displacement Strategy](#)
 - Community Labor United: [Understanding Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care in Massachusetts.](#)
- Thesis:
 - (Collins) [Harvesting Power from the Roots: Becoming and Building the Comunidades Enraizadas Community Land Trust](#)
 - (Maggio) [The Meaning of Mutuality in the 21st Century: The Role of Mutual Banks in Community Wealth Building, A Case Study of Lee Bank in Berkshire County, MA](#)
- [Tisch Summer Fellows:](#)
 - Luisa Santos, Community Labor United
 - Savannah-Nicole Villalba, DSNI

2020

- Course: Teaching Democracy
- Field Project:
 - Community Labor United: [Cracking the Code: How Boston is Trying to Address Child Care through Zoning](#)
- Thesis:
 - (Ackerman) [Teaching Democracy: An Action Research Evaluation of a Community-University Training on Popular and Participatory Education Methods](#)

Appendix E – Guiding Questions for CORE Project Exit Memos

1. **What were the most important learnings from the project?** Semester-long timelines present different challenges for students and for community organizations. Often, due to race, class, and educational privilege, UEP M.A. students have not been directly affected by the social, political, and economic systems they are studying. They encounter a learning curve, which generally takes at least a few months to climb. By the time the team knows what it needs to do, there is not always enough time to implement ideal methods.
2. **How did projects pivot to narrow their focus and approach real co-creation?** As Harry explained, “the timing of community organizing and planning is long-term. And so it’s “It can be hard for a project that goes from January to April to always hit the sweet spot. Sometimes we faced issues with over-zealous non-Tufts students wanting to have a community meeting by April and we’d reply with *We’re not going to change our plans or set up things specifically for your project.* What students studied needed to evolve sometimes.”
3. **Where did projects leave off?** What are the key questions for further exploration? Detailed descriptions of areas for further research can help CORE partners scope projects to something “not so difficult that you need a paid consultant, and not so simple that a summer volunteer could take it on,” in Ben’s words. Harry reflected, “Sometimes DSNI are better editors than writers, so if you gave us a list of 10 projects, it would be easier for us to narrow it down than to come up with a project from scratch.”

Endnotes

¹ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics, 2018 (NCES 2020-009), Table 333.90.

² Ira Harkavy and Rita Axelroth Hodges, "Democratic devolution: How America's colleges and universities can strengthen their communities," Policy memo. Progressive Policy Institute, Washington, DC, 2012.

³ Kenneth Reardon, "Enhancing the capacity of community-based organizations in East St. Louis," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 17, no. 4 (1998): 50.

⁴ Penn Loh, "Community-University Collaborations for Environmental Justice: Toward a Transformative Co-Learning Model," *New Solutions* 26, no. 3 (2016): 412-428.

⁵ Loh, "Community-University Collaborations," 2016.

⁶ Lorlene Hoyt, "A City-Campus Engagement Theory from, and for, Practice," *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* 17, no. 1 (2010):75.

⁷ Gouillart, F. and T. Hallett (2015). Co-Creation in Government. Stanford Social Innovation Review.

⁸ Sen, R. and L. Villarosa (2020). Grantmaking with a Racial Justice Lens: A Practical Guide." Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity, GrantCraft, p. 9 and 22.

⁹ <https://tischcollege.tufts.edu/research/cultivate-your-food-economy>

¹⁰ <https://pennloh-practical.vision/2016/01/26/community-food-planning-in-action-lessons-from-dudley-real-food-hub/>

¹¹ Zoë Ackerman, "Teaching Democracy: An Action Research Evaluation of a Community-University Training on Popular and Participatory Education Methods," Master's Thesis, Tufts University Department of Urban & Environmental Policy & Planning, February 2020.

¹² Harvaky and Hodges (2012), p. 7.

¹³ Tema Okun, "White Supremacy Culture," website:
https://www.dismantlingracism.org/uploads/4/3/5/7/43579015/okun_-_white_sup_culture.pdf.