



September 25, 2008

Dear PCA Advisory Board Members and Grantees:

Traditionally, PCA staff members would be busy right now traveling around northwest Ohio providing workshops and helping people prepare proposals for our grant programs. Unfortunately, we will not be doing these types of workshops in 2008-2009. The rumors are true: PCA has been instructed to close its doors at the end of the academic year.

The Facts

We have received a number of inquiries about our status, and in order to address the rumors and to avoid further misinformation, we offer the following facts:

- About the time of the 2008 Grant Launch, central administration informed PCA that it would need to become “self-sufficient” in two years’ time. We submitted a plan to do so but, in the end, we were told we had to close.
- In May 2008, central administration informed us that the funding would end for the Administrative Assistant we have shared with the Center for Innovative and Transformative Education (CITE) since 2000. Anita Serda has moved to Canadian Studies, and we have been operating without her services since the end of June.
- On August 1, 2008, central administration, despite a decade of glowing reviews and praise for developing new programs and “a broad range of meaningful impact on BGSU and members of the surrounding community,” indicated that this was PCA’s final year. We were told to bring closure to activities and projects at PCA.
- Our grantmaking partner, CITE, was also told to close at the end of the academic year. CITE director Bill Armaline is retiring in December 2008.

Ending Partnerships

Yes, this means that the Partnership Support Grant and Dissemination Grant programs are coming to an end after twelve years. Also, Dr. Kathy Farber, Director of PCA, will be on leave from September 19, 2008, to August 11, 2009. She will then return to her academic department to teach. The rest of the PCA staff will find other means of employment on or before the end of the Spring 2009 semester.

The following is what we have been able to support over the years:

- 20% of PCA & CITE partnerships (over \$76,000 since 1998) have been in support of **arts and cultural awareness** and numerous artists in residence.
- In addition to the multimillion dollar GEARUP grants, 38% of PCA & CITE partnerships (approximately \$145,000 since 1998) have been in support of **equal educational opportunity**
- 15% of PCA & CITE partnerships (approximately \$57,000 since 1998) have been directly in support of **economic development** in northwest Ohio
- 32% of PCA & CITE partnerships (over \$120,000 since 1998) have been in support of **health and wellness** issues
- 38% of PCA & CITE partnerships (over \$145,000 since 1998) have been between BGSU and organizations in the **Bowling Green area**.

It is unclear at this time whether or not BGSU will find alternative ways to support these types of partnerships and initiatives in the future.

Closing Activities & Future Directions

Having said all this, we also want to inform you of what we are hoping to do this year—our final year. Dr. Farber says, “PCA is done as of May 2009, but our partnerships are not.” PCA has created an opportunity for our staff and all of you to engage in work that has resulted in significant impact within both BGSU and the surrounding community. While BGSU has begun to draw more from the knowledge and wisdom of the members of the broader community, the broader community has begun to focus more University research and resources toward real world needs and issues. Further, due to all of our efforts, BGSU has become renowned for engagement and community service—regionally, nationally, and globally. We hope “common interests and shared efforts” will continue to flourish and grow.

While we are unable to provide funding for new projects this year, in the spirit of sustainability and celebration, we are offering the following services and events until our doors close in May 2009:

- Assistance for any who would like assistance exploring outside funding, finding community and/or University partners, expanding existing projects, and disseminating partnership activity and results. If you would like such support, please contact us immediately.
- An event to highlight the accomplishments of the 13 grant programs currently engaged in partnership work as part of the Partnership Support Grant and Dissemination Grant programs.
- A retrospective event, highlighting reciprocal partnership activities and impact as well as talks about how to further engagement efforts in the current social/economic context. We will also highlight partnerships with public schools through a preview of “Turning Point”—a GEAR UP funded, BGSU produced and nationally acclaimed documentary chronicling reform at Waite High School in Toledo, Ohio.
- Other events and services to be determined if funding comes available.

Look for a “save the date” announcement for upcoming events.

So, for one year more, PCA will continue to nurture the interests and issues rooted in the community but of significance to both BGSU and the surrounding areas. We hope that you will continue engaged, reciprocal partnerships.

If you have any questions, please contact the Assistant Director Patrick Vrooman at 419-372-7943 or vrooman@bgsu.edu, or the staff at 419-372-9624.

Sincerely,

Kathy Farber and the PCA Staff

P.S. I (Kathy) wanted to add this personal note. We fought and struggled to keep PCA’s doors open, but did not succeed. Currently, I am also struggling with breast cancer. My leave, under different circumstances, would be experienced with more excitement and joy. I would not have cancer, would be learning new partnership strategies and ideas and would be creating more opportunities for all of you. However, even though I am to “retire” to return to the classroom, I look forward to ongoing interactions with many of you as we continue to create partnerships based on reciprocity and equal participation. Thank you for contributing so much to my professional development and personal growth