LASTING ENGAGEMENT

The Milwaukee Idea: A Study of Transformative Change

In 1994, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) established the Office of University Partnerships (OUP) to encourage and expand the efforts of colleges and universities that are striving to make a difference in their communities. In its ongoing effort to assist institutions of higher education (IHEs) to institutionalize their commitment to community engagement, OUP contracted researchers to study how some IHEs have gone about institutionalizing community partnerships and how successful they were in these efforts. The results of those studies are being published periodically through this monograph series, *Lasting Engagement.*

The series is intended to provide guidance to IHEs that are just starting out on their quest for community engagement. This University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee case study is the second volume in the series. The series began with a look at Springfield College. That first volume included an overview that traces the history of community engagement from colonial times to the present era. That history provides readers with essential background information that will help them evaluate all of the case studies presented in the series.

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Lasting Engagement

The Milwaukee Idea: A Study of Transformative Change

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Contents
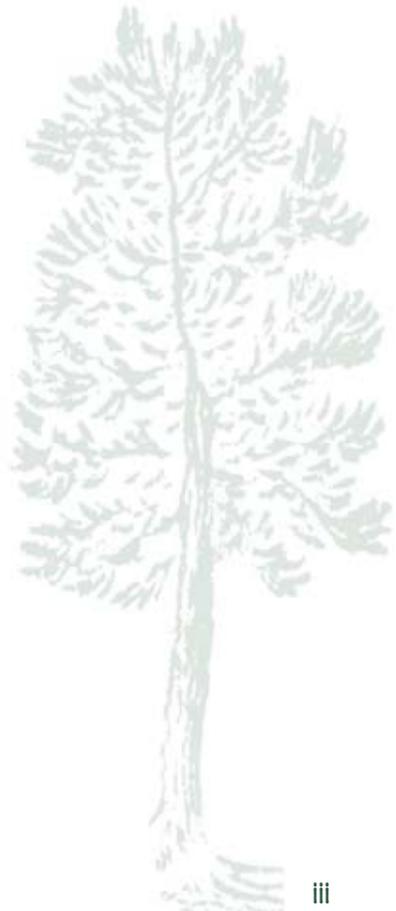
The Milwaukee Idea: A Study of Transformative Change

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Abstract

Through an initiative called the "Milwaukee Idea," the
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UW-Milwaukee) is
striving to become a scholarly partner with its host city
and to have that partnership energize the university's teaching,
research, and service activities. Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher
conceived the Milwaukee Idea in 1998 as a way to capture the
spirit and potential of the university's urban location and charac-
ter. This study assesses the extent to which the university has
transformed itself through this recommitment to community
engagement and whether UW-Milwaukee's new urban mission
is likely to be institutionalized in the coming years.

Zimpher knew from the start that, to be successful, the Milwaukee
Idea would require strong commitments from advocates on cam-
pus and in the community. She also knew that these advocates
would have to represent all disciplines and stakeholder groups.
Creating this support for the Milwaukee Idea required months
of discussion, planning, negotiation, and action.

The process officially began in fall 1998 when 100 campus and
community participants gathered in a daylong plenary session and
identified seven focus areas that would form the core of the uni-
versity's new focus on community engagement. Over the next

2 years, many other interdisciplinary groups would meet to plan and implement community outreach initiatives in each focus area. Initiatives have included a new core curriculum that emphasizes multiculturalism and service learning, a community-based consortium that provides technical assistance and research for economic development, and a collaboration with health and social agencies that addresses urban health issues.

This study suggests that the Milwaukee Idea possesses the ingredients needed to bring about transformative change at UW-Milwaukee. These ingredients include a readiness for change at the university, a charismatic leader who has captured the university's imagination, a capable and committed administrative team, an inclusive process, and new financial resources. This combination makes it likely, the authors suggest, that the Milwaukee Idea will become much more than simply the latest administrative initiative foisted on an unwilling or indifferent campus. How much transformation is likely to take place and whether that transformation will lead to institutionalization depends on the extent to which UW-Milwaukee can address the barriers to change identified by the authors. These barriers include a lack of shared definitions of partnership and engagement, traditional institutional behaviors and values, territoriality, conflicts over funding priorities, a fragile infrastructure, and a lack of widespread understanding about what true diversity means.

Introduction

Since the late 19th century, land-grant universities throughout the Nation have been chartered by their State governments to serve the needs of local residents through teaching and research. In more recent years, urban universities were created with a similar and equally challenging mission: to serve the needs of their cities and their residents. These urban universities may well become the land-grant universities of the 21st century. Progress toward this goal has been slow, due mainly to the tendency of urban institutions to emulate their land-grant cousins rather than to

create their own niche. The forces of tradition are strong, and change is slow.

This study takes a look at an urban university—UW-Milwaukee—that has taken steps to adopt and carry out its mission to serve the city of Milwaukee. Through an initiative called the "Milwaukee Idea," UW-Milwaukee is striving to become a scholarly partner with the host city and to have that partnership energize the university's teaching, research, and service activities. Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher conceived the Milwaukee Idea in 1998 as a way to capture the spirit and potential of the university's urban location and character. This study assesses the extent to which the university has transformed itself through this recommitment to community engagement and whether UW-Milwaukee's new urban mission is likely to be institutionalized in the coming years.

Like many urban universities, UW-Milwaukee has a relatively short history. The school was established in 1956 when the University of Wisconsin Extension Center merged with Wisconsin State College. The merger gave the University of Wisconsin System increased capacity to serve the educational needs of a growing number of ex-servicemen who were taking advantage of the GI bill to earn college degrees and attain better paying jobs. To meet their needs, UW-Milwaukee developed strong programs in education, science, engineering, urban planning, business administration, and allied health.

Despite these strong programs, UW-Milwaukee has existed for many years in the shadow of other nearby universities, including the University of Wisconsin System's flagship institution, located just 75 miles away in Madison. Through the late 1990s, the University of Wisconsin–Madison, along with such Big Ten institutions as Northwestern University in Chicago and the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, wooed Wisconsin's brightest students to its classrooms. This left UW-Milwaukee with a singular challenge: to strive for excellence in its own way without succumbing to the temptation to think or act as if it were a second-class institution.

UW-Milwaukee responded to this challenge by launching the Milwaukee Idea.

This study focuses on how UW-Milwaukee has changed as a result of the Milwaukee Idea. The authors based the study on their review of voluminous material supplied by the Milwaukee Idea staff, including an extensive self-study monograph titled *A Time for Boldness: A Case Study of Institutional Change,* by Zimpher, Chancellor's Deputy Stephen L. Percy, and Mary Jane Brukardt (2002). In addition, the authors conducted extensive interviews on site.[1]

The resulting study gives an overview of the Milwaukee Idea and how it has been carried out at UW-Milwaukee. It also provides an indepth examination of the forces at work throughout the university community that both encourage and present obstacles to truly lasting and transformative change. Finally, the study assesses the likelihood that the Milwaukee Idea will be institutionalized within UW-Milwaukee and concludes with some suggestions for how the successes and challenges of the Milwaukee Idea can be applied to other institutions.

Section I: UW-Milwaukee and The Milwaukee Idea

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UW-Milwaukee) is located on 93 acres in central Milwaukee in an older residential district near Lake Michigan. It consists of 11 schools and colleges and offers 81 undergraduate, 48 master's, and 17 doctoral programs. This scope of degree offerings qualifies the university for Carnegie Research-Extensive status.

UW-Milwaukee employs 3,000 faculty and staff members and enrolls 23,000 students in credit programs. Approximately 14 percent of these students are people of color. Almost three-quarters

(70 percent) of UW-Milwaukee students also work, and 90 percent live off-campus. The majority of students (90 percent) live in Wisconsin, and most come from Milwaukee. Both faculty and students see UW-Milwaukee as a no-nonsense institution where people are goal directed and work hard.

By 1998 the university was engaged in more than 100 community collaborations. However, these projects were viewed as the efforts of individuals rather than as part of a coordinated university strategy. In fact, the university has not sought—or received—much publicity for its community outreach activities. Although its mission has always been to "find strength in its urban setting," many members of the university community have questioned whether urban outreach initiatives are appropriate activities for prestigious research universities. When Zimpher arrived in Milwaukee, she had to face competing attitudes. For example:

- UW-Milwaukee had a self-effacing campus culture, yet wanted to compete head-to-head with the University of Wisconsin System's flagship campus in Madison.

- Faculty and staff wanted UW-Milwaukee to be a first-rate research university but at the same time to develop an identity separate from the Madison campus.

- The university community accepted (sometimes grudgingly) UW-Milwaukee's urban mission as long as it did not stand in the way of institutional prominence.

- A growing number of constituents recognized that an urban campus could offer unique opportunities, but no galvanizing concept existed to give those opportunities credibility.

- Community stakeholders wanted greater engagement with the university, as long as that engagement did not come at the expense of strong academic programs.

It is clear to me that the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee is one of Milwaukee's greatest assets, if not its greatest…. How do we express the essence of the Milwaukee Idea? It's not just us serving the city. It's not just the city serving us. It is the notion of together building a city and a university that are the heart of metropolitan Milwaukee.

—*Nancy L. Zimpher,*
Chancellor
remarks prepared for the
UW-Milwaukee Faculty
Senate, September 1998

These issues were not new to UW-Milwaukee. New was Zimpher's decision to address them head on with the Milwaukee Idea.

The Milwaukee Idea

When Zimpher took office in summer 1998, she searched for a concept that would focus attention on UW-Milwaukee's urban mission in a new way and would also give voice to what many at the university were already doing. She found that concept in the Milwaukee Idea.

The Milwaukee Idea is based on the Wisconsin Idea, an approach to higher education that has shaped the mission of the University of Wisconsin since the turn of the century. The Wisconsin Idea states that the boundaries of the university are the boundaries of the State (Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau, 1998). It suggests that the University of Wisconsin should serve the entire State, not just those who come to its campus to learn.

As a result of the Wisconsin Idea, the connection between the State of Wisconsin and the University of Wisconsin has been very strong since both were established, in 1848 and 1849, respectively. For 150 years, University of Wisconsin professors and students have served their State in various ways, ranging from the creation of a milk test that revolutionized the State's dairy industry to the development of policies that resulted in the Nation's first workers' compensation program (Zimpher, Percy, and Brukardt, 2002). In return, the State has generously supported the university.

Through the Milwaukee Idea, UW-Milwaukee has sought to create a similar relationship with the city of Milwaukee. Zimpher knew from the start that, to be successful, the Milwaukee Idea would require strong commitments from advocates on campus and in the community. She also knew that these advocates would have to represent all disciplines and stakeholder groups. Creating such support for the Milwaukee Idea required months of discussion, planning, negotiation, and action, which began in fall 1998.

Fall 1998/Winter 1999: Affinity Groups and Big Ideas

The process

Two months after Zimpher arrived in Milwaukee, 100 people from the UW-Milwaukee campus and metropolitan Milwaukee were invited to a daylong plenary session to help "create the Milwaukee Idea." For 6 hours, these individuals met to imagine what the UW-Milwaukee of the future would be like.

By the end of that first session, the Milwaukee Idea had come to life in the form of seven focus areas:

- Education.
- Economy.
- Health.
- International initiatives.
- Urban environment.
- Knowledge and research.
- Quick Wins.[2]

Affinity Groups were formed for each focus area. These groups would work for 5 months to develop *Big Ideas* that would help UW-Milwaukee carry out the Milwaukee Idea. Each person at the plenary session was asked to join an Affinity Group. These groups grew over the following months as additional members of the university and community were invited to participate. The Affinity Groups met in both plenary sessions and individual group meetings. Each group had a diverse membership and worked hard to ensure honesty and inclusiveness in the idea development process.

In the meantime, a *Strategy Team* of high-level administrators, also created by Zimpher, monitored the idea development process and kept it on course. To give some continuity to the process, the Strategy Team helped develop five themes, or *connectors,* that had

> The Milwaukee Idea is nothing less than to change forever the quality of our life together, by joining the urban renaissance of Milwaukee.
>
> —*Zimpher,*
> *address to the*
> *UW-Milwaukee faculty,*
> *October 1998*

to be incorporated into every Big Idea. These connectors would help the Affinity Groups structure their discussions and assess whether their ideas were on target:

- *Diversity and multiculturalism.* Each Big Idea had to reflect and encourage the cultural richness of Milwaukee and the UW-Milwaukee campus.

- *Partnerships and collaboration.* Each idea had to be based on partnerships and new collaborations within the university and the metropolitan community.

- *Interdisciplinarity.* The Strategy Team used this term to describe the required linkages across disciplines, departments, and colleges.

- *Campus life and culture.* Each Big Idea was expected to strengthen UW-Milwaukee's traditions and identity and enhance the life of students.

- *Communication and support.* Each Big Idea had to include detailed descriptions of how it would be implemented and how the campus and community would learn about it (Zimpher, Percy, and Brukardt, 2002).

Once an Affinity Group identified a Big Idea, a separate Reading Group assessed the idea's strengths and weaknesses, then responded to the Affinity Group with questions and encouragement. The Reading Group could suggest that the idea be accepted, refined, or overhauled.

The result

During her inauguration in March 1999, Zimpher announced 10 Big Ideas in 3 major categories. The following are *First Ideas,* as described by Zimpher, Percy, and Brukardt (2002):

Education

1. *Cultures and Communities.* A new core curriculum emphasizing multiculturalism, service learning, and public arts.

2. *International Affairs* (later renamed *Global Passport Project*). Programs in international studies with expanded study-abroad opportunities.

3. *Partnerships for Education*. Expanded partnerships with Milwaukee Public Schools.

Economy

4. *Consortium for Economic Opportunity.* A community-based consortium to provide technical assistance and research on economic development.

5. *Technology Center* (later renamed the *Milwaukee Industrial Innovation Consortia*). A clearinghouse for technology transfer, linking area businesses with UW-Milwaukee experience and research.

6. *Knowledge Fest*. An open house celebrating UW-Milwaukee research.

Environment

7. *Partnerships for Environmental Health*. A collaboration with health and social agencies to address urban health issues.

8. *Healthy Living Choices.* An initiative to study substance abuse on campus and in the community.

9. *Fresh Water Initiative*. A world-class institute for research on the science, politics, economics, and ecology of freshwater.

10. *Campus Design Solutions.* A statewide network to create alternatives for improving campus buildings, spaces, and neighborhoods.

Spring/Summer 1999: Action Teams

The process

In May 1999, the Strategy Team of high-level administrators created 10 *Action Teams* to bring the First Ideas to fruition. These

small Action Teams worked with larger Advisory Councils to develop detailed plans and budgets for each First Idea. Action Teams consisted of 12–15 members, one-third of whom represented the community. Advisory Councils were open to any interested people. Advisory Council members offered feedback to their Action Teams, provided needed expertise, and served on appropriate subcommittees (Zimpher, Percy, and Brukardt, 2002).

The Action Teams worked throughout the summer so that the Milwaukee Idea would not lose momentum. By September 15, each Action Team was expected to create an implementation plan that included the following elements:

- Vision statement.
- Launch strategy.
- Organizational and staffing structure.
- Community partners.
- Diversity plan.
- Interdisciplinary collaborations.
- Resource needs (over a 5-year period).
- Funding sources (over a 5-year period).
- Outcomes.

The result

All 10 Action Teams did submit their plans, most by the September 15 deadline. In the meantime, UW-Milwaukee made some headway in finding money to fund the 10 First Ideas. In spring 1999 the university pulled together approximately $4.5 million in bridge funding for the Milwaukee Idea through FY 2001. Funding came in approximately equal shares from the University of Wisconsin System, UW-Milwaukee, and the UW-Milwaukee Foundation. In fall 1999 the First Ideas grew to 11 when an additional project, the Nonprofit Management Education Center, was created. This

initiative to train leaders in the nonprofit sector came not from
UW-Milwaukee but from three Milwaukee foundations.

Fall 1999: The Evaluation Team

The process

An *Evaluation Team* representing all university constituents and
community representatives was formed in fall 1999 to assess the
feasibility of each Action Team's plan. Throughout the fall semes-
ter, the Evaluation Team assessed how well the Action Team plans
fulfilled the Milwaukee Idea mandate to embrace collaboration,
interdisciplinarity, community partnerships, and diversity. In addi-
tion, the Evaluation Team had to make sure that the Action Team
plans were financially realistic and provided solid strategies for gen-
erating additional funding (Zimpher, Percy, and Brukardt, 2002).

The result

By January 2000, the Evaluation Team had separated Action Team
plans into three piles:

1. Those that were ready to go.

2. Those that needed tweaking.

3. Those that needed more substantial work.

Most Action Team plans fell into the "needs tweaking" category.
At this stage in the process, "blue sky" thinking met the realities
of campus governance. Some participants became upset with the
slow pace of the review process. Others were concerned about
the strong emphasis placed on working the proposals through
appropriate channels.

From this point forward, progress on the 10 First Ideas began to
diverge. Some ideas were ready for the next phase in the process,
the *Negotiation* phase. Others were stalled by leadership and coor-
dination issues. Some ideas remained stalled a year later.

Spring 2000: Negotiation

The process

As each First Idea cleared the Evaluation Committee, it was sent to a *Negotiating Team* responsible for figuring out how to make the idea work within the university's existing structure. The Negotiating Team consisted of the Action Team leader for a particular idea, the chancellor's deputy, the provost, relevant deans, and others.

Almost all First Ideas required interdisciplinary leadership to get off the ground. This meant making deals with relevant deans, some of whom had had little to do with the Milwaukee Idea up to that point. It was decided that a Dean's Council, composed of relevant deans and headed by a Lead Dean, would coordinate each idea. Not surprisingly, questions of authority and budget dominated the negotiations. Although these conversations dealt with distributing "new money" rather than reallocating existing funds, they were nonetheless contentious. One dean pointed out that adjustments to the base budget always have long-term implications, and the deans wanted to be sure that their faculty's interests were protected.

Two major interventions helped move the process along. First, a Trustee Council—made up of representative deans, faculty, academic staff, and Milwaukee Idea staff—was formed to give general over-sight to the initiatives and to facilitate cross-disciplinary coopera-tion. Second, Zimpher created several new administrative positions to handle the transdisciplinary projects. These included a new vice chancellor for Partnerships and Innovation, and three chancellor's deputies for education partnerships, campus and urban design, and the Milwaukee Idea.

The result

Six First Ideas were launched by early summer 2000: Cultures and Communities, Campus Design Solutions, Partnerships for Education, the Global Passport Project, Healthy Living Choices,

and the Consortium for Economic Opportunity. By the end of the summer, two additional First Ideas had started: the Milwaukee Industrial Innovation Consortia and the Nonprofit Management Education Center.

Fall 2000 and Beyond: Round 2 Ideas

Big Ideas began to diversify in fall 2000. The three First Ideas that had yet to be launched—Partnerships for Environmental Health, the Fresh Water Initiative, and Knowledge Fest—were reorganized and reassigned. A new coordinating committee, charged with creating a feasible Action Team plan by December 2000, began directing the Fresh Water Initiative. Partnerships for Environmental Health split into two initiatives, an Environmental Health Initiative and an Urban Health Initiative. Both anticipated a spring 2001 startup.

In spring 2000 the Evaluation Committee chose a set of three Round 2 Ideas from among 17 proposals and formed Action Teams for each idea. By spring 2001 the teams had begun developing action plans and budgets. Round 2 Ideas were:

- Center for Age and Community.
- Millennium Information Technology Education and Careers.
- Center for Women's Health Research.

Budget discussions for all Milwaukee Idea projects now took on a harder edge. To continue funding Milwaukee Idea initiatives, UW-Milwaukee had prepared a proposal for a substantial budget increase from the university system. However, various political changes in Wisconsin, including the resignation of Governor Tommy Thompson to become Secretary of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C., dimmed the prospects for this funding increase. Even full funding of the budget would have been insufficient to cover all requests for support under the Milwaukee Idea. Project leaders came to understand that they needed to raise

Adjustments to the base budget always have long-term implications, and the deans wanted to be sure that their faculty's interests were protected.

funds from other sources. In addition, the university's provost announced that all new budget requests, whether they were related to the Milwaukee Idea or not, would be screened for relevance to the Milwaukee Idea.

The result

Some progress has been made in garnering outside support for individual Big Ideas. The Nonprofit Management Education Center, one of the First Ideas, has been fully funded by a community development grant. In addition, the university received a $5 million gift in spring 2001 from the Bader Foundation to support the Center for Age and Community, a Round 2 Idea. These funds will support an endowment for a professorship and student scholarships.

The Milwaukee Initiative

Implementation of the Milwaukee Idea unfolded concurrently with a parallel institutional planning process called The Milwaukee Initiative: Investing in UW-Milwaukee's Future. The Milwaukee Initiative began in spring 1999 when about 50 campus leaders representing most campus stakeholder groups convened in a 2-day retreat to identify strategic goals for UW-Milwaukee. Implementation of the Milwaukee Idea was one of the identified goals. The group also approved other goals, which included making significant enhancements to the university's research mission, increasing faculty salaries, and renovating the campus infrastructure.

These suggested goals were turned over to the Chancellor's Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC), which put together a long-range investment plan. In January 2000 the same campus leaders reviewed the plan and the final result was released the following month.

The CBAC Investment Plan called for additional expenditures of $79 million for fiscal years 2001–05. These additional funds would come from the University of Wisconsin System ($29 million), extramural sources ($21 million), tuition ($20 million), gifts ($5 million),

and reallocations ($4 million). The new funds would support 29 different goals, including program development, research and scholarship, student access and recruitment, instructional support, faculty and staff development, and library enhancement. Only 2 of the 29 approved goals specifically connected to the Milwaukee Idea.

CBAC's plan enjoyed the formal endorsement of the Faculty Senate, the Academic Staff Senate, the Student Association, the State Employees Union, the Academic Deans Council, and the Chancellor's Cabinet. However, by the time the plan was presented to the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents in June 2000, it had a substantially different focus. During the first 6 months of 2000, the Milwaukee Idea had achieved brand recognition on campus and in the community such that the Milwaukee Initiative title was removed from the CBAC Investment Plan. The UW-Milwaukee logo, which had appeared on the plan's cover, was replaced by the Milwaukee Idea logo. The budget proposal inside the document looked different as well, placing great emphasis on the "3 E's," which are the three overarching themes of the Milwaukee Idea:

> The theme of this report is that an enhancement in the 3 E's—Education, Environment and Health, and Economic Development—is the key to economic health and improved quality of life for Wisconsin residents.

The investment plan brings together, in a common framework, original Milwaukee Idea initiatives and related initiatives that are not part of the Milwaukee Idea. For example, the education category integrates First Ideas such as Cultures and Communities and the Global Passport Project. It also includes precollege programs and undergraduate research, which are not part of the Milwaukee Idea. The original CBAC Investment Plan called for the addition of 300 new faculty and staff by 2005 and renewed support for research, recruitment of underrepresented minorities, and enhanced library facilities. However, the investment plan does not highlight

The investment plan brings together, in a common framework, original Milwaukee Idea initiatives and related initiatives that are not part of the Milwaukee Idea.

any of these goals. The Council of Corporate Sponsors, a UW-Milwaukee advisory board of about 30 area business leaders, has endorsed the plan.

In July 2000 the regents' Faculty Academic Planning and Budget Committee (FAPBC) completed an initial review of the relationship between the Milwaukee Idea and the investment plan. In general, FAPBC did not see a clear relationship between the two, expressing concern about the Milwaukee Idea's structure and its relationship to budgetary authority and curriculum planning. From FAPBC's perspective, most of the First Ideas would not generate significant extramural research funding, a major committee priority.

The FAPBC review recommended that the investment plan and the Milwaukee Idea be integrated but that the Milwaukee Idea should not overshadow investment plan budgetary priorities. FAPBC also suggested that each Milwaukee Idea initiative be evaluated based on its contribution to the investment plan. Finally, FAPBC states that "clear procedures that center on shared governance need to be developed to facilitate the realization of the Milwaukee Idea" (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2000). In November 2000 Chancellor's Deputy Stephen Percy issued the Milwaukee Idea Planning Document, which details each Big Idea and its general structure, objectives, budget, and link(s) to the investment plan priorities. The Board of Regents formally approved the proposal in late August as part of a University of Wisconsin System package that included $179.9 million in new spending. The proposal then went to the governor's office for approval.

In September 2000, with State budget negotiations continuing, the provost invited each UW-Milwaukee school and college to submit proposals for spending initiatives for FYs 2001–05. All participants were told that any proposal for new State funds must contribute to one or more of the Milwaukee Idea initiatives described in the proposal to the Regents.

In spring 2001 the Wisconsin State Legislature adopted a budget that showed strong appreciation for the Milwaukee Idea as an

investment in Wisconsin. Over the 2 years of the 2002–03 budget, UW-Milwaukee was allocated $16 million in new funds, with $13.7 million coming from general purpose revenues (State dollars) and $2.3 million generated by a tuition increase of 1.4 percent in 2001–02 and 2.1 percent in 2002–03.

The Milwaukee Commitment

The Milwaukee Idea has been developed in tandem with another campus planning document, the Milwaukee Commitment. The Milwaukee Commitment is the institutional response to the University of Wisconsin System's planning document, titled *University of Wisconsin System Plan 2008: Educational Quality Through Racial and Ethnic Diversity* (University of Wisconsin System, 1998). The development of the Milwaukee Commitment began with a writing team in November 1998. That team developed a 5-year plan approved by the Student Association, the Faculty Senate, and the Academic Staff Committee in March 1999.

The Academic Staff Committee determined that the Milwaukee Commitment document would serve as a living, proactive tool to "improve the social, working, and learning aspects of campus life for people of all cultures in the UW-Milwaukee campus community." (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1999.) Three focal points were identified as areas for improvement: student life, campus climate, and community involvement. In addition, the committee identified four major goals that focused on serving historically targeted racial/ethnic groups and economically disadvantaged (TRE/D) students. These goals reinforce the Milwaukee Idea's focus on diversity and community outreach:

1. *Increase the scope of UW-Milwaukee's precollege programs to reach twice as many students in the Milwaukee Public Schools by 2003.* UW-Milwaukee will coordinate and unify existing precollege programs and develop a strategic marketing plan to reach TRE/D students and guarantee them admission. These

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activities are budgeted at $1.1 million. Funding for these activities will be sought externally and through reallocation.

2. *Increase the proportion of TRE/D students at UW-Milwaukee to match their representation in the Milwaukee community and allow them to reach parity with non-TRE/D students in retention and graduation rates.* Currently, TRE/D student retention is 60.7 percent between the first and second years, compared to 71.7 percent for non-TRE/D students. The graduation rate for non-TRE/D students in 5 years is 39.9 percent, whereas the TRE/D student graduation rate is 18.7 percent. To meet this goal, Zimpher and the UW-Milwaukee Foundation will have to raise $25 million in undergraduate and graduate scholarships. Other activities will include curriculum infusion resources and incentives, new advising and tutoring positions, coordinated recruitment/mentoring/tutoring services, and a student-focused cultural programming board. This group of initiatives requires an additional $525,000.

3. *Increase the number of faculty and staff who represent targeted racial/ethnic (TRE) groups in proportion to the student population.* To increase faculty and staff diversity, the university will fund five new faculty and five new staff lines for up to 3 years. In addition, 10 new faculty positions will be created as a reward for schools and divisions that make the greatest progress in reaching diversity goals. The Cultures and Communities initiative, one of the First Ideas, is eligible for these additional faculty positions. UW-Milwaukee also plans to expand its faculty mentoring program by including an academic staff mentoring component. Tenured TRE faculty will also be afforded the opportunity to attend the University of Wisconsin System Leadership Institute. This goal area is budgeted at $90,000, plus the costs of 10 new faculty members.

4. *Establish a 24-member panel to evaluate Milwaukee Commitment activities.* This evaluation will be used to allocate the new faculty positions and will become a factor in budget allocations for various UW-Milwaukee schools, colleges, and divisions. Deans will be required to submit an annual report on their

progress in meeting the objectives of the Milwaukee Commit-
ment. Students, academic staff, classified staff, faculty, administra-
tors, and community members will take part in the Milwaukee
Commitment Advisory Panel. The panel has a base budget of
$25,000. The budget for the Milwaukee Commitment from
1999–2003 is more than $26.7 million.

Section II: Transformative Change at UW-Milwaukee

At every institution, there are two types of forces: those that
encourage lasting change and those that act as barriers to that
change. At UW-Milwaukee, forces that encourage lasting change
are obvious. The barriers to that change are less apparent but no
less important. This section explores the positive forces first, then
the barriers, providing the evidentiary bases for each.[3]

Forces for Transformative Change

Forces at UW-Milwaukee that encourage lasting change include
a charismatic leader, strong and widespread administrative support,
a galvanizing idea, an open and inclusive process, cultivation of
partners, and resources for long-term commitment.

A charismatic leader

The perception of Chancellor Nancy Zimpher's leadership on
the UW-Milwaukee campus ranges from the breathless loyalty
expressed by her supporters to a grudging respect that comes
from her harshest critics. All, without exception, agree that
Zimpher has been the most critical force for change at UW-
Milwaukee. Some illustrative quotes follow:

● *A willingness to collaborate.* "[The chancellor] was a breath of
  fresh air. She wasn't interested in old fights. Her message was,
  'Let's see what we can build collaboratively.'" (From a faculty
  leader, head of one of the Action Teams.)

- *An urban commitment.* "Until Nancy, no one had quite been able to push the magic button linking 'urban' and 'high quality' in the same university... she's been able to capture the elusive 'urban' thing and get positive community responses...some departments still have a wait-and-see attitude, but there's a sense that she will bring home the bacon." (From a long-time faculty member and former administrator.)

- *A clear sense of mission.* "Before Nancy, UW-Milwaukee was a functional place; there was little sense of its role in the UW system and in Milwaukee…[it] related to students in a bureaucratic manner and its mission was rote. Now there's a clearer sense of mission, a sense of self, [and] a sense that it's going in right direction, through coalition building, working with the community, and realizing that [the university] needs to be relevant. Nancy has been key for her passion and energy; she has created new expectations for the position that will carry on." (From a student leader.)

- *New energy.* "There's been a cascading effect with a new chancellor and a new vision…. It's raised the energy level of everyone, whether they agree with her or not." (From a leader of a Big Idea that was slow to take hold.)

- *New life.* "There's a feeling that previous [central administrators] were barely alive, and Zimpher has breathed new life… the way she has publicized community involvement has created goodwill." (From a faculty member who opposes many of the Milwaukee Idea initiatives on the grounds that they will compromise academic excellence.)

Administrative support

A lone voice for change is rarely effective, no matter how charismatic or well positioned the champion. Fortunately, an impressive supporting cast shares Zimpher's vision. Cast members include a team of UW-Milwaukee administrative deputies who are intensely loyal both to the Milwaukee Idea and to Zimpher personally. A noteworthy supporter is University of Wisconsin System President

Katherine Layall, who has expressed both public and private support for the Milwaukee Idea. In summer 2000 Zimpher returned this support by undertaking a "brain train" tour of 18 cities in the State. During this tour Zimpher met with colleagues at other University of Wisconsin campuses, stumped for the system's plan and budget, and asked how UW-Milwaukee could help.

The Milwaukee Idea went through a delicate process, especially in its later stages, when dollars and organizational responsibilities were on the line. Many of those interviewed about the process pointed to the critical role played by the Milwaukee Idea's administrative staff, especially Chancellor's Deputy Stephen Percy.

"The whole apple cart was almost upset during the negotiation of the evaluation process, but Steve managed to hold things together," said one Action Team leader. Another said, "Several Action Teams almost failed—some several times—but persistence of the administrative [team] paid off." One faculty leader agreed with this assessment, saying, "[The Milwaukee Idea] couldn't have gone far without them." A former member of the academic staff assigned to the Milwaukee Idea office explained how administrative staff members approached their Milwaukee Idea tasks: "We understood the importance of paying attention to details—making meetings happen, keeping people happy, getting the day-to-day things right."

> Several Action Teams almost failed—some several times—but persistence of the administrative [team] paid off.
> —*An Action Team Leader*

A galvanizing idea that fits the institutional culture

Just as a charismatic leader like Zimpher is not likely to get far without a strong supporting cast, neither is she likely to make much headway without a compelling vision around which others can rally. Those interviewed for this study made it clear that Zimpher gave voice to what many already felt about UW-Milwaukee. Her voice gave faculty, staff, and students an identity and a signature campus culture of which they could be proud and to which they could be committed. Many say that this signature is both more robust and more extensive than simple sloganeering.

Universities are highly complex organizations with multiple and
often conflicting missions. It would be unrealistic and unfair to
attempt to characterize UW-Milwaukee with blanket generaliza-
tions. At the same time, however, every university also has a way
of thinking about itself and identifying what it aspires to become.
Those interviewed for this study presented a clear picture of this
cultural fabric, which has four major components:

- *Flexibility.* UW-Milwaukee offers considerable flexibility to
  those who want to innovate, partly because of its complexity
  and lack of tradition. One faculty member and Action Team
  leader said, "Our organizational structure prior to 1998 was
  diffused and balkanized….There wasn't much coordination, so
  [units] have been free to go their own way….There's not an
  entrenched bureaucracy here—you can move fast, you can do
  things…but you have to do the work." Another Action Team
  leader put it this way: "There are few constraints as long as
  you take care of core business."

- *Potential.* UW-Milwaukee has potential that remains to
  be awakened. Two interviewees called it a "sleeping giant."
  Zimpher, paraphrasing the slogan of Milwaukee's North-
  western Mutual (which calls itself the "quiet company")
  referred to UW-Milwaukee as the "quiet university" before
  the Milwaukee Idea. In many ways the Milwaukee Idea pro-
  vided public legitimacy for current UW-Milwaukee activities.
  Several interviewees suggested that university programs were
  already cutting edge before the Milwaukee Idea started. A
  dean noted, "[The Milwaukee Idea] constituted a good per-
  ception of things done well,… articulated and marketed well,
  and making the whole greater than the sum of the parts."

- *Openness.* UW-Milwaukee is open to experimentation, cre-
  ativity, and manageable risk. As one interviewee pointed
  out, "A UW-Milwaukee can innovate faster than a Madison."
  Another added, "The system is complex, so flexibility is criti-
  cal." A number of people volunteered that this openness makes
  UW-Milwaukee unique. At the same time, one person noted,
  "It's important that the Milwaukee Idea is new, not just a lot

of shoring up [of] the old that was done poorly." One faculty member affectionately referred to the freewheeling nature of the creative thinking that took place in the early stages of the Milwaukee Idea as "a floating crap[s] game."

● *Innovation.* The Milwaukee Idea pushed UW-Milwaukee in ways that it needed to be pushed. A faculty member noted, "The Milwaukee Idea challenges encrusted institutional boundaries." Another, an engineer, said that the Milwaukee Idea "is bridging the great divide between liberal arts and sciences and engineering; it's a breath of life into our college." A third faculty member and Action Team leader suggested that before the Milwaukee Idea was introduced, "the institutional culture was to keep quiet and do your own thing but don't step on others." Even the Milwaukee Idea's detractors admit that it has, as one critic put it, "made people get out of the box." This new approach has already had visible effects. Students' work is now being used creatively for campus purposes and the professional schools have substantially increased scholarship through community engagement.

An open and inclusive process

The Milwaukee Idea "brought together multiple constituencies, [stimulated an] exciting quality of dialogue, and heightened the quality of conversation" at UW-Milwaukee, according to a person interviewed for this study. Many others were highly skeptical of the process at first but were eventually won over. "The whole thing seemed so inchoate, like a bowl of spaghetti…[and yet] through some kind of alchemy [it] moved to real plans and outcomes," said one individual. The process "opened the door for anyone to walk in," said an administrator. Inclusion proved to be just as important in the Action Team stage, where the process required delicate and careful negotiation. No one wanted any backroom deals put together by campus administrators. "Open forums were the key to resolving territory disputes," said an Action Team leader.

Cultivation of partners

From the beginning, Zimpher emphasized that UW-Milwaukee would strive to be a partner with the Milwaukee community. Although some have poked fun at this new emphasis (one student called the Milwaukee Idea a "partnership for everybody and their mother"), converging evidence suggests that both community and campus attitudes are changing. Previously, the university viewed community engagement with somewhat of a noblesse oblige attitude. More recently, however, the university has begun to appreciate the community as a true partner in which each party has something to gain and learn.

For example, before the Milwaukee Idea, no forum existed for faculty in the School of Education and the Milwaukee Public Schools to discuss common issues and learn together. The superintendents and other leaders of the Milwaukee Public Schools did not realize how many faculty members wanted to help, especially with diversity issues. Faculty did not know the value of collaborating with a community partner to discuss common concerns about teaching.

Joan Prince, the new vice chancellor for Partnerships and Innovation, reports that approximately 400 university representatives and community residents gather each month to discuss community issues for which the university might be a resource. The university also hosts meetings between faculty researchers and community representatives who need help solving local problems. In Prince's view, faculty members have begun to appreciate the learning opportunities the community offers them, although progress sometimes is slow. Other interviewees agreed with this assessment: "Before there was only lip service to the community. Now the community is also into the research."

Resources for long-term commitment

It is common knowledge at UW-Milwaukee that if the Milwaukee Idea had depended on reallocating funds from other sources, the

process would have sunk immediately. Instead, seed money was scraped together from both external sources and internal discretionary funds. This meant that few people worried about the budgetary consequences any new projects might have for their own programs. One campus dean pointed out that the key to aligning attitudes is having resources available to people when they come for help. Even critics admit that the Milwaukee Idea has provided UW-Milwaukee with a way to garner resources for the university. A look at both the first-round budget allocations and the 2001–05 budget request reveals a strong emphasis on long-term support for faculty work in targeted areas. Change in how a university supports the way people work is a key factor in bringing about transformative change; such support is evident at UW-Milwaukee.

Barriers to Transformative Change

Forces at UW-Milwaukee that discourage lasting change include lack of shared definitions of partnership and engagement, traditional institutional behaviors and values, territoriality, conflict over funding priorities, an overburdened infrastructure, people left behind, lack of widespread understanding of diversity, lack of community, and dependence on the personality of the chancellor.

Lack of shared definitions of partnership and engagement

Zimpher defines partnership as "not the university seeking a community collaborator to help complete a project. It is a reciprocal relationship where university and community together decide what's important and how it is to be accomplished." Barbara Holland, former director of the Office of University Partnerships at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, defines partnerships as a joint exploration of separate and common goals and interests through a mutual agenda, with success measured in both university and community terms. A member of

> Before there was only lip service to the community. Now the community is also into the research.
>
> —*Interviewees*

25

the Milwaukee community describes it as the university really listening to the community and treating the community as an equal. Ann Hains, associate dean of the School of Education, defines partnership as shared expertise and shared ownership of knowledge.

UW-Milwaukee has had trouble getting its partnerships to reflect these definitions. For example, Milwaukee's Women's Health Initiative has not been able to generate a mutually beneficial partnership between several UW-Milwaukee departments and various Milwaukee area health agencies. The team leader of this initiative reports having difficulty finding an organizational structure and a group of program activities that meet the needs of both faculty and community representatives. A former team leader suggested that the Women's Health Initiative was a UW-Milwaukee activity rather than a community activity. This has led participants to question and discuss whether collaboration is always fruitful or whether there might be appropriate times for partners to work side by side but not together. This could be a healthy example of the type of discussion needed to clarify partnership and engagement for the UW-Milwaukee and Milwaukee communities. It also may signal the reluctance of faculty to treat the community as equal.

Traditional institutional behaviors and values

Sometimes anything that runs against the organizational grain is resisted simply because of institutional inertia. One faculty member, for example, explained that he could not teach a specific class because the chairperson of his department would not change course times to accommodate the schedules of community participants. Other obstacles to transformative change include institutional policies regarding research, teaching, and scholarship; conflicting views of what constitutes academic excellence; and different perspectives on how to approach problemsolving.

Institutional policies

Junior faculty members report that they find it risky to engage in community activities because they are facing the tenure process

and must meet traditional objectives for scholarship, service, and teaching. The research model in place does not adequately address the scholarly merit of applied research and engagement, and junior faculty members lack senior mentors to help them walk the line between engagement and traditional scholarship. For example, one junior faculty member who has been heavily involved in the community now sees herself at risk of not gaining tenure. She has sought clarification regarding the scholarly value of her work and has not received it.

"We need to understand that UW-Milwaukee is not a social service agency," suggested one dean in support of current institutional policies. The leader of a major partnership initiative confirmed this institutional attitude by saying: "Young faculty are dying to work with us, but would die if they did."

Some progress is being made in this area. The University Committee, its principal policymaking body (which consists of faculty, staff, and administration), is talking with divisional committees about promotion and tenure. A committee of professors is also looking at the issue. Clearly, promotion and tenure must be aligned with the goals of the Milwaukee Idea if a true shift is going to occur among faculty and if real transformation is going to occur at the core academic levels.

Academic excellence

Some faculty members believe that *interdisciplinary* equals *mediocrity.* For them, the sine qua non of excellence is research productivity, preferably in basic research. These faculty members express concern about the place of pure research within the Milwaukee Idea agenda and suggest that the Milwaukee Idea largely favors researchers in applied fields. Some question the intellectual integrity of community partnerships and wonder whether academic excellence is even a concern of the Milwaukee Idea. They believe that traditional academic values would dictate that UW-Milwaukee support strong academic programs whether or not they fall in line with an "institutional mission." As one faculty

member put it, with frustration, "Can't this institution just do something because it's academically good?"

Those who shared these questions about academic values believe that the UW-Milwaukee focus should be to give the community a first-rate education. This would include sponsoring more lecture series and scholarly conferences and looking to serious intersections of the disciplines instead of "stressing health at a place that doesn't have a medical school." This view holds that the better the program, the better the students, and the higher the intellectual capital of the institution. Those who hold this view object to what they perceive as an approach to education that produces "brochures on glossy paper but no support for graduate students or travel for faculty." Such beliefs lead to sarcastic remarks about courses in "Urban French" and "Don Quixote for Urbanites." These concerns cannot be taken lightly because they reveal some deep cultural differences.

Different perspectives

Academics and community members have different perspectives on how to approach problems. The academic approach calls for taking time to study an issue, analyzing it critically from all sides, and couching any recommendations in careful, probabilistic language. Individuals outside the academy are typically more interested in rough-and-ready solutions to identified problems and are less concerned with nuances such as methodology and critical analysis. Their message to academics is, "Tell us what you think. You're supposed to be the experts." This refrain was common among most, if not all, of the community representatives interviewed for this study.

One representative said, "It's like the community is on one side of a chasm and the UW-Milwaukee faculty are on the other. [The faculty] will come right up to the edge of the cliff but then not do what it takes to clear the divide…If things don't go their way they'll just retreat to their offices." Several indicated significant skepticism about working with the university based on previous unsatisfactory encounters.

"The community is waiting to see if this time UW-Milwaukee will deliver the goods," said one of the Milwaukee Idea's most ardent community supporters.

Territoriality

Many participants in the Milwaukee Idea still do not know one another. This does not negate the movement across disciplinary lines that characterizes the Milwaukee Idea. However, it does shed new light on the frequent comments the authors heard about faculty being "entrenched in their silos." In fact, some faculty members who ventured out of those silos reported being branded expatriates.

"There are no firewalls out there," said a senior faculty member. "I was told to think out of the box and so I did. And for that, my department treated me as a 'betrayer'!"

Battles over turf were frequent on the Action Teams, and participants frequently told stories about loss of civility. The tension was not just a matter of attitude. Action Team discussions involved major structural issues, since each Milwaukee Idea initiative represents a new budget center and has an independent chair. Not unreasonably, faculty would prefer that Milwaukee Idea initiatives be affiliated with a single academic unit. They would rather avoid becoming entangled in activities that might run afoul of the university's governance structure. For example, faculty leaders of the University Committee fear the loss of faculty autonomy when an academic department hires faculty and then loans them to the Milwaukee Idea.

Conflict over funding priorities

To date, the Milwaukee Idea has grown largely by adding programs and centers rather than through substitution. Essentially, Milwaukee Idea initiatives are brand new or major expansions of efforts already under way. Reorganizations have been limited and no programs have been eliminated because they are not aligned with the new

As one faculty member put it, with frustration, "Can't this institution just do something because it's academically good?"

29

priorities. Obtaining funds to sustain these expanded efforts is critical. A dean commented that the money provided through the Milwaukee Idea has been a key factor in aligning attitudes and garnering support for university engagement. UW-Milwaukee had been operating with a fairly austere budget and faculty members especially were seeking new money. However, the implications Milwaukee Idea funding will have for the university as a whole have many people nervous, for several reasons. These reasons have to do with both the university's priorities and the perceptions of those priorities. For example:

- Faculty members are getting mixed messages about whether a program needs to have the Milwaukee Idea label on it to get funded. Officially, not every program needs to fall under the Milwaukee Idea. However, several faculty members interviewed for this study seemed to think that in practice, all programs do need to fall under it.

- Newly created centers, such as the Nonprofit Management Education Center or the Milwaukee Industrial Innovation Consortia, operate on Milwaukee Idea money. This leaves staffers uncertain about whether their positions will be sustained in the future, either from central budget allocations or from the academic unit in which the centers are housed.

- Although centers and other Milwaukee Idea-supported projects operate outside of the normal department structure, faculty and staff appointments are linked back to the department. This also has challenged existing budgeting practices.

- Several interviewees, representing quite different constituencies, expressed concern that UW-Milwaukee is "overpromising" to community and business interests without considering carefully whether needed resources will be available. As one faculty member said, "the credibility of the whole thing with the faculty hinges on getting the necessary State support. Nancy told us, 'Give me support and I'll deliver.' If Nancy doesn't deliver, then all bets are off."

An overburdened infrastructure

Zimpher set out to get UW-Milwaukee noticed and no one
doubts that she has accomplished this task. There are questions,
however, about whether the university can handle all of its
recent changes without causing its infrastructure to collapse.
As one student leader told us, "We can't say we're going to
build a new university and change the way things are done
and then not change the way things are done!"

Enrollment is projected to grow 8 percent over the next few
years and the number of participants in precollege programs
is expected to double. Academic staff members, who see
themselves as part of the UW-Milwaukee infrastructure, are
worried about meeting these challenges in addition to the
new initiatives contained in the Milwaukee Idea. They do not
feel they are full partners in the Milwaukee Idea effort.

Another infrastructure issue concerns the governing structure
that provides oversight for various Milwaukee Idea budgets
and funding schemes. A "shadow governance structure," as
one faculty member described it, was established to launch the
Milwaukee Idea. Deans were incorporated at several points in the
initial process and remain involved. However, there has been sig-
nificant turnover in these positions during the past 2–3 years.
Rank-and-file faculty report that they agreed to go along with
the alternative structure in good faith, based on the chancellor's
ability to secure additional human and financial resources. Some
people who were interviewed for this study feel that Zimpher
has delivered, whereas others are not yet sure.

A gap between the regular UW-Milwaukee governance and the
Milwaukee Idea governance is easy to perceive. Hiring of Milwau-
kee Idea faculty takes place outside the normal departmental
process, but these faculty members must be housed within the
department. The new faculty members may not possess the schol-
arly interests the department desires, and the department may not
have been consulted about its needs before these individuals were

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>
> —*A student leader*

hired. The shared governance system under Chapter 36 of the Wisconsin State statutes legally mandates a formal shared system of governance among students, faculty, and administration (Database of Wisconsin Statutes and Annotation, 1999–2000). The Milwaukee Idea structure has walked on or just outside this line, according to several interviewees. Some felt that governance structures have been circumvented. This has fueled the resistance of some faculty and staff to the Milwaukee Idea.

"There's a conflict between the university's desire to get something done and the struggle to define and establish a working structure," one person said.

People left behind

From the beginning of the Milwaukee Idea process, several "dissidents" felt a subtle pressure from the university to be "company" people. Some commented on the speed at which conversations about possible Milwaukee Idea initiatives became public knowledge through the communication campaign. This meant, for some, that the First Ideas were treated as finished projects rather than works in progress. In addition, there was a perceived lack of attention to how the liberal arts and humanities would connect to the Milwaukee Idea. Some people felt that their voices were not being heard on this topic, creating the impression that dissent was discouraged. Some among those who felt their voices were heard still felt co-opted. One faculty member referred to a $10,000 grant he received to develop independent funding outside the Milwaukee Idea as "hush money."

A common concern in academic circles is that chancellors will use newly developed programs to catapult themselves to a more prominent presidency at another institution. This belief has some foundation in fact. Nationwide, the average tenure for university presidents is approximately 5 years. If UW-Milwaukee dissidents think that Zimpher will not see the Milwaukee Idea through to its conclusion, those who oppose the initiative could decide to simply "ride it out" until she leaves.

Academic staff members also feel they have been left behind by the Milwaukee Idea process. Some of these staff members clearly are on board and have taken leadership positions with several Milwaukee Idea initiatives. Others, however, simply feel exploited and overworked. As one said, "Some [academic staff] are committed 225 percent. We float the boat, yet no additional resources have been committed to us…. Faculty have been promised new positions as a result of increased enrollments, but there's no plan for the infrastructure."

The facts support staff members' concerns. More than 70 percent of the $535,268 pool set aside for the First Ideas went to the support of new or existing faculty. In contrast, just over 25 percent went to the support of new or existing academic staff. The fact that a significant number of academic staff members feel left out of the Milwaukee Idea process could signal trouble in the long term.

Lack of widespread understanding of diversity

Neighborhoods in the city of Milwaukee have a long history of segregation by race and ethnicity, much of which still exists. A true partnership with the community must recognize this segregation.

UW-Milwaukee has identified diversity and multiculturalism as a priority through both the Milwaukee Idea and the Milwaukee Commitment, which is the university's diversity plan. However, diversity has been addressed as a theme rather than through a specific action plan. As such, it has been difficult to focus specifically on diversity in the course of planning and implementing the Milwaukee Idea. The chancellor and other participants in the Milwaukee Idea have generally acknowledged this.

All students interviewed for this study expressed skepticism about UW-Milwaukee's real commitment to diversity and multiculturalism. Students are under the impression that the university is chasing numbers for the State rather than attending to its own internal "family." During interviews, the vice chancellor for Student and

Multicultural Affairs indicated that the Milwaukee Commitment is not "out of the blocks" yet.

The interviewees made it clear that diversity is a serious but unarticulated concern on campus. For example, students remarked on the lack of minority faculty. African Americans make up 8 percent of the student body but only 4.9 percent of the faculty. The academic staff point out that Milwaukee Idea funding is not going to areas that have relatively high percentages of minorities. The academic staff (15 percent minority) and classified staff (30 percent minority) have received the smallest amount of Milwaukee Idea money. The vice chancellor for Student and Multicultural Affairs asserted that UW-Milwaukee is not "user-friendly to people of color," and consequently, "they don't stay long."

Prince is a longtime member of Milwaukee's African-American community. During interviews for this study, she suggested that the university needs a more widespread understanding that "diversity is more than a word—that it must also involve campus sharing of decisionmaking, policy, and dollars." It is clear that UW-Milwaukee has taken significant steps in this direction by empowering people like Prince. In addition, the chancellor has made public statements, such as, "Any failure of the Milwaukee Public Schools is *our* [UW-Milwaukee's] failure," that imply a universitywide commitment to diversity. However, UW-Milwaukee also lacks a widespread understanding that diversity must go beyond talk and include action. This remains a barrier to progress.

In a fall 1999 article titled "High-Stakes Illusion of Community," published in UW-Milwaukee's *Myriad,* Professor Beverly Cross took the university to task for ducking the hard questions of racism. Cross suggested that the Milwaukee Idea needs to focus on issues surrounding marginalization, isolation, and exclusion of minorities or the university will not succeed as a full partner in the community. She noted that "by limiting engagement to the ideal, clinical, and sanitized…[to avoid] tainting our image," the university will risk losing sound and honest partnerships.

Lack of community

Within the last few years, focus groups have suggested that students have little or no sense of identification with UW-Milwaukee. This is not unusual for an urban university, where students typically commute to class, see a college education in largely instrumental terms, and juggle the demands of college with other family and work responsibilities. Although some level of community exists in the residence halls, this culture is distinct from the rest of campus. Students interviewed for this study reported that they could take all their classes in one section of the campus and never interact with anyone outside their discipline. A former Student Association president suggested that students are isolated and lack confidence. Other student interviewees said they see UW-Milwaukee as a place that requires a great deal of initiative from students to succeed overall.

It is difficult to discern the extent to which the lack of student engagement poses a significant barrier to the success of the Milwaukee Idea. Clearly, however, as long as students continue to see UW-Milwaukee as a place to obtain credentials rather than a place that exists to enrich the lives of those in the community, an important element of the Milwaukee Idea agenda will be missing. The university seems willing to pay attention to this problem; in 2001, it established the position of associate vice chancellor for campus climate.

Diversity is more than a word. . . it must also involve campus sharing of decisionmaking, policy, and dollars.

—*Joan Prince, Vice chancellor, Partnership and Innovation*

Dependence on the personality of the chancellor

Zimpher headed the list of forces for change at the university that began this section, and it is appropriate that she has a place on the list of barriers as well. The chancellor has been such a visible presence and has been associated so completely with the Milwaukee Idea that she has fostered a certain dependence on herself as its leader and spokesperson. As one campus leader noted, "It's a problem trying to convince the community to listen to (anyone other) than the 'Z lady.'"

This dependence is important to address in the light of concerns within the university that the chancellor and the point people she selected are not on the same page. Faculty and staff are frustrated with these designees because they do not seem to thoroughly understand the scope of the Milwaukee Idea. Although Zimpher is widely respected for the extent to which she delegates authority and champions inclusion, campus frustration with her designees poses a conflict for the chancellor.

Section III: Prospects for Institutionalization and Organizational Transformation

The ingredients for transformative change are clearly in place at UW-Milwaukee. These include a readiness for change, presented by a leader who has been able to capture the university's imagination with a compelling vision; a capable supporting cast; an inclusive process; and new resources. This combination, especially the readiness factor, makes it likely that the Milwaukee Idea will become much more than simply the latest administrative initiative foisted on an unwilling or indifferent campus.

Some at UW-Milwaukee wonder about the staying power of the Milwaukee Idea after the Zimpher era ends. They have a point, but so do those who assert that the Milwaukee Idea's substance goes well beyond the chancellor's charisma. The question, then, is not whether transformation has occurred and will continue to occur, but how much transformation is likely to take place and whether that transformation will lead to institutionalization. The answer will depend on the extent to which UW-Milwaukee can address the barriers identified in the previous section. Change theorists dating back to the 1950s agree that real change depends

on the extent to which barriers are identified, then weakened or removed. Working only to strengthen an institution's positive forces without seriously addressing barriers to change is only likely to generate more resistance.

The authors approach this discussion with a positive bias toward the engagement goals of the Milwaukee Idea. Specifically, the authors believe that:

● Urban universities have a unique mission to engage their urban communities, not to parrot their land-grant cousins.

● The scholarship of engagement is, in fact, true scholarship, not a watered-down or dumbed-down version of the real thing. Engaged scholarship is as difficult and at least as socially important as basic research.

● An engaged university does not have to leave anyone out, including the traditionalists. All universities, including urban universities, have multiple missions, with plenty of room for multiple goals and beliefs.

Here, then, are five suggested strategies for attacking the barriers identified in this paper, not necessarily ranked in order of importance.

Strategy 1

Engage the institution and its constituencies in conversations about important but widely misunderstood terms, such as engagement and scholarship.

Influential people both within and without UW-Milwaukee have developed particular and unique mental models of what an engaged university does and what true scholarship is.

Engagement

Some people in the academic world, including several influential faculty leaders at UW-Milwaukee, view engagement as

Influential people both within and without UW-Milwaukee have developed particular and unique mental models of what an engaged university does and what true scholarship is.

"giving our agenda to the community." These people worry that engagement poses a threat to independence and academic freedom and that it will invite interference that will hamstring universities from taking risks and exploring controversial topics. They fear that any sort of community partnership risks converting the university into a group of exploited consultants working for the professional gain of outsiders.

From the community's perspective, engagement sometimes is interpreted as a way for the university to carry out its own research agenda. Those who hold this view also fear exploitation.

Scholarship

The notion of what constitutes scholarship varies considerably within UW-Milwaukee. Those who are active in Milwaukee Idea initiatives, with the possible exception of tenure-eligible faculty, are comfortable with a broad definition of scholarship, one that includes the scholarship of practice (engagement), the scholarship of teaching, and the scholarship of discovery (basic research). Others have a hard time accepting faculty work that is not published in mainstream academic journals as genuine scholarship. Their argument is that, if disinterested peers do not review scholarly work before it enters an academic database, then that work is not real scholarship. They view community-based scholarship as little more than traditional community service dressed up to look like scholarship, and they fail to see how it contributes to general knowledge.

It is time to initiate conversations about these definitions in an atmosphere in which participants are encouraged to learn from one another rather than talk at one another. Knowledge Fest, an open house celebrating UW-Milwaukee research that was one of the First Ideas, could serve as a potential setting for these conversations. Two questions need to be addressed. The first is, How can both *pure* and *applied* research be sustained under the Milwaukee Idea umbrella? The second is more difficult: Can those who pursue engagement do so without risking exploitation by those with whom they are engaged?

Strategy 2

Use the Milwaukee Idea to engage in conversations about the nature of the UW-Milwaukee family and what kind of community it wants to be.

Differing definitions of the terms *community* and *diversity* also need to be addressed through campus conversations.

Addressing issues of race and ethnicity

Issues of race and ethnicity are especially sensitive in Milwaukee. However, if UW-Milwaukee truly sees itself as a community of learners, then what better place to address these issues? Too many people interviewed for this study felt the university did not want to take on the diversity controversy for fear of alien-ating the business community, which the chancellor and others have tried so hard to win over. However, based on the expe-riences of inclusion reported by Affinity Group members, the authors recommend that UW-Milwaukee find a way to periodically reopen discussions of where the Milwaukee Idea should go next. These discussions should include a genuine effort to listen to those who, up to now, have been silent. Saturday morning brainstorming sessions with the African-American community, which has become part of the Milwaukee Idea, are a start. The key to the success of those groups will be whether session participants feel they really are being heard.

Internal assessment

UW-Milwaukee should undertake an internal assessment of the campus climate for all university constituent groups. Particular attention should be paid to opportunities and activities that help student leaders integrate into the UW-Milwaukee community. In addition, the various multicultural initiatives on campus should be coordinated to maximize their reach and audience. Annual con-versations about the UW-Milwaukee family could be *themed* to explore how the Milwaukee Idea applies to each member. These

Issues of race and ethnicity are espe-cially sensitive in Milwaukee. However, if UW-Milwaukee truly sees itself as a community of learners, then what better place to address these issues?

themed conversations could bring a broader range of voices into the diversity discussions and strengthen student involvement in those discussions. They could also encourage individual members of the UW-Milwaukee community to determine their own role in carrying out the university's urban mission.

Strategy 3

Ensure that campus policies reflect desired behavior.

Two major areas of dissonance exist between campus policies and the Milwaukee Idea. First and most obvious, the Milwaukee Idea is out of line with current promotion and tenure guidelines. The University Committee has already started working to bring the guidelines into agreement with what the university seeks to accomplish through the Milwaukee Idea. This work needs to be supported and publicized. Furthermore, a series of calibration sessions should be held for faculty members who conduct peer reviews of their colleagues. Not everyone, even those within the same disciplines, interprets specific criteria for promotion and tenure in the same way. This is especially true for the evaluation of material submitted as evidence of scholarship.

Second, the University Committee should consider how the Milwaukee Idea's focus on interdisciplinary work, particularly the complex organizational matrix created by a proliferation of centers and institutes, affects university governance. With real money and authority at stake, this is a highly political issue. Those who have succeeded under the traditional governance structure likely will resist the new one.

The deliberate decentralization of the Milwaukee Idea process has made accountability difficult. The horizontal structure, while useful for overturning the "silos" in which faculty often operate, may create a scenario in which people want to be consulted on everything but be responsible for nothing. As Milwaukee Idea projects become more plentiful and more diffuse, UW-Milwaukee will

need a review mechanism to ensure that people are acting in accordance with good definitions of partnership and engagement.

Strategy 4

Work to balance public relations with infrastructure capacity.

Fairly or not, many people both at UW-Milwaukee and in the Milwaukee community continue to regard the Milwaukee Idea as being stronger in style than in substance. As the First Ideas begin to take hold and as Round 2 Ideas gain strength, the substance will likely become more apparent.

As noted earlier, Zimpher feels comfortable delegating implementation tasks to others and trusting them to carry out these tasks appropriately. At the same time, other campuswide initiatives have foundered when leaders assumed that everyone had the same understanding of what had to be done and the same commitment to making it successful. With this in mind, the university should commit to a periodic (perhaps annual) review to reflect on what the Milwaukee Idea has accomplished to date, how it has evolved, and how key priorities might need to be adjusted. In addition, the review should include a discussion of what the Milwaukee Idea has come to mean. This is especially important because the Milwaukee Idea has grown to encompass virtually all campus initiatives. Care must be taken to ensure that the Milwaukee Idea does not become so diffuse that it loses its punch.

Strategy 5

Redouble efforts to include more community-based initiatives in the Milwaukee Idea.

To date, the community partnerships developed through the Milwaukee Idea are fragile. Because UW-Milwaukee personnel dominated the original Affinity Groups, the campus community took the lead on virtually all of the First Ideas. To date, only the

Nonprofit Management Education Center has come directly from the community, creating an obvious imbalance. UW-Milwaukee should pay particular attention to the origin and development of the Nonprofit Management Education Center to learn how similar initiatives might be started.

Conclusion

From the outset, the Milwaukee Idea has been guided by current theories about organizational change. On several occasions Chancellor Nancy Zimpher herself referred to the book *Change Forces: Probing the Depths of Educational Reform,* by Michael G. Fullan (1993). Fullan and other theorists are also quoted extensively in UW-Milwaukee's internal case study, *A Time for Boldness: A Case Study of Institutional Change* (Zimpher, Percy, and Brukardt, 2002). The story of the Milwaukee Idea, while still unfolding, highlights and reinforces many of the principles found in these and other sources. For example, Robert Birnbaum's classic book on successful college presidents, *How Academic Leadership Works: Understanding Success and Failure in the College Presidency* (1992), emphasizes how important it is for university leaders to capture and articulate the unique culture of a campus rather than attempt to transform that culture. Zimpher has done that by consciously following a number of familiar change principles. She has:

- Come up with a big idea.
- Gone public with it and stayed on message.
- Paid attention to the importance of process.
- Sought alignment rather than consensus.
- Remained action oriented.
- Cultivated key constituencies.
- Attacked vertical organizational structures.
- Held herself accountable.

The American Council on Education series *On Change,* which presents the results of institutional change efforts in select colleges and universities, suggests the following criteria for transformative change (Eckel et al., 1999):

- *Change begins with an exploration of why a particular change is necessary or important.* In UW-Milwaukee's case, the Milwaukee Idea was never presented as a change. Instead, it was pitched as a way to articulate, legitimize, and extend a culture of engagement that had been growing for some years. This approach had both benefits and drawbacks for the Milwaukee Idea. On the positive side, transformation never was a part of the public agenda. Thus, the Milwaukee Idea was more palatable to the larger faculty culture. On a more problematic note, downplaying the transformation theme led some constituents to view the Milwaukee Idea as little more than an exercise in public relations.

- *The change is anchored in the institution's mission and values.* This is probably the single greatest strength of the Milwaukee Idea.

- *Stakeholders participate in developing and implementing the agenda for change.* Early in the Milwaukee Idea process, Zimpher took great pains to identify and involve key stakeholders in meaningful ways.

- *A critical mass of campus stakeholders supports the agenda for change.* This critical mass is still developing, and the nature and strength of its support is still in doubt.

- *Leaders lead by persuasion, through other leaders, and by building trust.* This is Zimpher's style through and through.

The problem with these or any other criteria is that they do not apply to every institution of higher learning. Most observers would agree that the time was ripe at UW-Milwaukee for a big idea that would shake the campus out of its doldrums. However, big ideas may not work in institutions that are going through difficult times or are exhausted from recent upheavals. What, then, can other institutions learn from UW-Milwaukee's experience to date?

The answer is simple: *Be patient and remain focused*. Any organization, but especially an academic one, changes slowly. True transformation is even slower.

To date, an enormous amount of time, energy, and money has been poured into community partnerships through the Milwaukee Idea. Nearly 3 years into the Milwaukee Idea, evidence of change is tangible. The campus looks different, it portrays itself differently, and it is surely seen differently by the Milwaukee community. Internally, the depth of change is less clear. Some, but not many, of the people on campus work and think about their work differently. However, most of those closely associated with the Milwaukee Idea were already active in community engagement in one form or another before 1998.

Most community members remain cautious about whether the university has made a real commitment to community engagement. Some people, the authors included, are concerned that Zimpher may have succumbed to the temptation to exaggerate promises and inflate expectations. This tendency seemed particularly apparent when the Milwaukee Idea morphed into a strategic plan covering virtually everything the university does. The chancellor took a huge gamble by counting on a large increase in State appropriations for 2001–03. Despite receiving only about one-half of the requested amount (as of June 2001), Zimpher probably can claim victory. Sooner or later, however, tough decisions will have to be made and reallocations are inevitable. This may be a time to slow down, pay attention to disaffected constituencies by opening up the process again, consolidate, and unify. The next 3 years will be crucial.

Endnotes

1. The senior author (Wergin) made a 1-day visit to the campus in August 2000 to meet the key participants, including Zimpher and Percy. At this time, he undertook a preliminary review of documents and negotiated a protocol for data collection. Both authors

then made two 2-day visits to campus, the first in October 2000 and the second in February 2001. On the first visit, they met with most of the leaders of various Milwaukee Idea initiatives and learned their personal histories with the institution, how they became involved in the Milwaukee Idea, their personal assessment of that work and of the Milwaukee Idea as a whole, and their prognosis for long-term change. If possible, the authors asked interviewees to back up their comments with evidence. Using a so-called *snowball* strategy, they also asked for the names of others who might help and used this list as the basis for a second round of data collection. The February visit included a wider range of interviewees: opinion leaders from faculty and staff (including people opposed to many, if not all, of the Milwaukee Idea initiatives), administrative officers, and community representatives. Both authors typically participated in interviews, although they occasionally separated in the interest of time. None of the interviews were recorded, but both authors made independent notes during the conversations. All interviewees were assured that their comments would be kept confidential. At the end of each round of data collection, the authors compared notes and observations. In an effort to protect anonymity, the report usually identifies those quoted only generally (for example, "senior faculty member" or "team leader"). The names of all interviewees are listed in the appendix.

> Be patient and remain focused. Any organization, but especially an academic one, changes slowly. True transformation is even slower.

2. Quick Wins were short-term initiatives designed to gather momentum for the Milwaukee Idea.

3. Readers should note that *forces* and *barriers* are not necessarily judgmental terms. A *positive force* may have negative long-term consequences for an institution. A barrier may exist for reasons that are in the institution's long-term interest.

Response to the Case Study Description

Stephen L. Percy
Chancellor's Deputy for the Milwaukee Idea

Nancy L. Zimpher
Chancellor
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UW-Milwaukee) is pleased to have been selected by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Office of University Partnerships, as the second institution of higher education to be studied with regard to institutionalization of university-community partnerships. Through the Milwaukee Idea, UW-Milwaukee has launched a universitywide commitment to embrace community partnerships, with the expectation that these partnerships will positively contribute to the university's core research and teaching missions and facilitate the application of university-based knowledge and expertise to solving problems and improving quality of life in the community, region, and State.

Professor Jon F. Wergin and his colleague, Jane M. Grassadonia, have undertaken extensive research, reviewed documents, and conducted many interviews to create their case study of the Milwaukee Idea as a vehicle for creating sustainable university-community partnerships. We are impressed with the work they have done and find that their analysis captures the opportunities and challenges that we have faced as we worked with many people and organizations from both campus and community to conceptualize, plan, and implement the Milwaukee Idea. We find their observations and assessments to be generally on target. Although we might debate some fine points here and there, we believe the strategies offered by Wergin and Grassadonia for advancing the

Milwaukee Idea to be appropriate and useful. UW-Milwaukee and the Milwaukee Idea have undertaken several activities in the past few months since the case study was completed that parallel the strategy recommendations offered by Wergin and Grassadonia.

Some of these recent strategies, as well as reflections on what we have learned from the change process, are described below.

Recent Strategies: New Conversations

During a recent visit to UW-Milwaukee to speak about institutional change, Madeleine Greene of the American Council on Education wryly noted that "the dangers of conversation are overrated." UW-Milwaukee is testing that theory in a series of new conversations begun across the campus to address specific needs raised during our own change process. These include the nature of engagement and its relationship to scholarship and the impact of engagement on the campus climate.

Conversations on engagement and scholarship

The first recommended strategy in the case study calls for UW-Milwaukee and its constituencies to engage in conversations about key concepts that underlie the Milwaukee Idea, including engagement and scholarship, "in an atmosphere in which participants are encouraged to learn from one another rather than talk at one another." Wergin and Grassadonia further urge UW-Milwaukee to explore two key questions: How can both pure and applied research be sustained under the Milwaukee Idea umbrella? and Can those who pursue engagement do so without risking exploitation by those with whom they are engaged? Without doubt, questions like these are critical in the academic world, where initiatives like the Milwaukee Idea sometimes are perceived as a threat to the traditional scholarly mission of the universities.

During the 2001–02 academic year, four UW-Milwaukee units sponsored an effort to begin discussions on the meaning and implications of the scholarship of engagement. The Milwaukee Idea

Office, the Division of Academic Affairs (Office of the Provost), the University Committee (Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate), and the Center for Instruction and Professional Development organized 16 individuals into a learning circle whose members committed themselves to examining the scholarship of engagement and its implications for faculty careers, roles, and responsibilities, and for assessments undertaken as part of tenure and promotion reviews. Group members represent many different organizational perspectives on the scholarship of engagement, including faculty and academic governance groups, Milwaukee Idea initiative leaders, academic affairs administrators, and representatives of the four divisional committees—humanities, natural sciences, social sciences, and the professions—that review promotion and tenure recommendations made by academic departments.

Members read common materials and meet to discuss their meaning and relevance to the scholarship of engagement at UW-Milwaukee. The group traveled to Phoenix, Arizona, in January 2002 to attend the annual Faculty Roles and Responsibilities Conference organized by the American Association for Higher Education. The theme of the 2002 conference, *The Engaged Scholar: Knowledge for What?* presented an ideal forum to learn from national leaders in the scholarship of engagement movement and to acquire knowledge about how other universities across the Nation are being transformed by new understandings of scholarship based on strong community-university collaborations. The learning circle met once before the conference to discuss *Scholarship Assessed,* the group's first joint reading (Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff, 1997). Following the conference, the learning circle members agreed to meet three or four times to discuss ideas and learn from each other what the scholarship of engagement can mean at UW-Milwaukee. The work of the learning circle concluded in April 2002 when the Center for Instruction and Professional Development devoted its annual forum to the scholarship of engagement, providing an opportunity for learning circle members to present their views and findings to a wider group of UW-Milwaukee faculty and academic staff.

The ultimate purpose of this dialogue is to expand awareness of the issues surrounding the scholarship of engagement and to examine its implications for our university's mission and faculty responsibilities. Early discussions have been candid and reflect a diversity of opinions about the contributions and assessment of engaged scholarship at the university. We will know more about how the discussion may change thinking and practice at UW-Milwaukee concerning university-community engagement by the professional development conference. It is clear that the dialogue will go straight to the heart of issues such as the meaning and relevance of engaged scholarship, the connection between engaged scholarship and the institution's research ambitions, the challenge of assessing engaged scholarship, and the value of this scholarship in faculty promotion and tenure.

Conversation on the campus community

In their analysis of the Milwaukee Idea, Wergin and Grassadonia recommend that UW-Milwaukee use the Milwaukee Idea to engage in conversations about the nature of the UW-Milwaukee family and what kind of community it wants to be. They also urge the campus to openly consider issues of identity, race, and ethnicity, which are especially sensitive in Milwaukee. The Milwaukee metropolitan area has the dubious distinction of being one of the most racially segregated communities in the Nation. Wergin and Grassadonia correctly identified UW-Milwaukee's potential to be a positive resource for change.

Two recent initiatives are intended to start conversations and reflection on our own internal community, with particular emphasis on the status of women and the student experience. In 2000, Chancellor Nancy Zimpher commissioned the Task Force on the Climate for Women. After extensive interviews and research, the task force issued a report in 2001 that identified important issues faced by women in the past, documented efforts in the past decade to improve the campus environment, and recommended various strategies to deal with problems that remain (www.uwm.edu/ Dept/Acad_Aff/taskforcefindings.pdf). Campus administrators

are committed to exploring and implementing the identified strategies, and, as of this writing, more than 70 percent of the recommendations have been adopted.

In 2001, campus attention focused on the undergraduate and graduate student experience through the chancellor's creation of the Black & Gold Commission (a name reflecting the university's colors) consisting of an equal number of student and nonstudent staff (faculty, academic staff, and administrators). This commission is charged with creating a comprehensive understanding of student experiences at UW-Milwaukee and identifying initiatives and strategies that will enhance student life, facilitate student achievement, and address issues of campus climate in a diverse urban institution (see www.uwm.edu/Dept/Acad_Aff/blackandgold). Campus leaders believe that open discussion about the student experience will generate significant new ideas for making campus life more hospitable and the educational experience more relevant to the needs and aspirations of the campus' diverse student body.

Reflections on Institutional Transformation

In other venues we have reflected on the university's experiences to date in implementing the Milwaukee Idea and creating a sustainable commitment to university-community engagement. We hope to weave this commitment into the university's mission, ambitions, and achievements. Given the analysis of our institutional transformation initiative by Wergin and Grassadonia, it seems appropriate that we share some analysis and reflection of our own. We offer our reflections in the form of six lessons learned, recognizing that these are preliminary lessons that may or may not hold up as implementation proceeds and as we seek to transform ambitious ideas into effective and sustainable outcomes. The lessons are:

1. Be bold, but reflect traditions.

2. Recognize the opportunity and challenge of community partnerships.

3. Be flexible and creative in process and structure, as well as in ideas.

4. Brand and promote.

5. Be open and accountable.

6. Accept risk and tolerate failure.

Be bold, but reflect traditions

Substantial institutional change is not likely to arise from small ideas or from ambitions at the margin of current vision and practice. Boldness of vision can capture the imagination, inspire a willingness to test traditional practices and values, and stimulate reflection on paths yet to be traveled. On the other hand, a bold vision, if disconnected from the traditions and practices of the institution, can overwhelm the university, draining it of the very energy and creativity needed for transformations to be conceived and carried forward.

With the Milwaukee Idea, UW-Milwaukee simultaneously embraced tradition and aspiration for a reinvigorated destiny. In many ways, the Milwaukee Idea was a natural outgrowth of the university's urban mission, its unique role within the University of Wisconsin System, and the mandate under which the institution was created in the post-World War II era. Our initiative also traces its roots to the Wisconsin Idea, the commitment of progressive reformers in the early 20th century to a higher education system where the boundaries of the university are the boundaries of the State. This commitment, which has for decades sustained cooperative extension services in support of the State's agricultural enterprises, is given a contemporary urban interpretation in the Milwaukee Idea. Thus, our transformation had basis in an exciting institutional urban mission and a State tradition of higher education commitment to application of knowledge to practice.

The Milwaukee Idea also challenges traditional conceptions of a university and expands the university vista to community

connections expected to enhance achievement of scholarly and instructional missions.

At the same time, it brings knowledge and expertise to practical application of community challenges and aspirations; as Wergin and Grassadonia point out, the Milwaukee Idea was created through a university-community conversation and joint identification of major initiatives. It also is to be carried out and evaluated through sustained university-community partnerships, again representing a significant departure from traditional academy models.

Because the Milwaukee Idea is anchored in established practice and philosophy, UW-Milwaukee could take actions that were not greeted by apathy, sustained opposition, or fears that the academy was being sold out. At the same time, expanded support by local and State constituencies and policymakers who recognized the potential of the new vision reinforced institutional energy.

Recognize the opportunity and challenge of community partnerships

For an initiative like the Milwaukee Idea to gather momentum and prove sustainable, it is critical that university-community partnerships prosper across the institution and reach deep into the community fabric. The potential power of pairing university-based knowledge, expertise, and learning with the knowledge, experience, and passion of the community presents almost unlimited potential. As those who have engaged in such partnerships know well, however, such collaborations take time to develop, require attentive nurturing, and rely on mutual trust to be sustained.

Community-university partnerships can tax the collaborative spirit of both sides. Community members face a challenge in learning the practices and traditions of the academy, adapting to the artificial timeframe of life in 14-week semesters, and dealing with academics who may not always recognize the real and meaningful

The Milwaukee Idea also challenges traditional conceptions of a university and expands the university vista to community connections expected to enhance achievement of scholarly and instructional missions.

knowledge, based on experience, that community members bring to the table. On the other side, members of the academy must learn how to translate and apply discipline-based knowledge to immediate and often localized problems, understand the expectations of quick response from community members and organizations working under tight timeframes, and learn local cultures, traditions, politics, and circumstances. In short, both university and community first must learn about each other, appreciate each other's assets and limitations, develop trust, and identify situations where collaborations yield mutual benefits.

Building strong university-community partnerships is the lifeblood of the Milwaukee Idea. If space permitted, we could tell about partnerships that quickly grew and prospered, where trust built rapidly, and collaborative action moved forward with ease. Honesty also would compel us to report on partnerships that did not stick, where common interests could not easily be found, and goals remained at odds. We could offer stories of partnerships that grew slowly, demanding energy, patience, and, ultimately, trust by both the community and the university. These partnerships, the most common, are only now beginning to bear fruit with common visions and positive outcomes.

A number of long-term university-community collaborations that were already active when the initiative was conceived have aided the Milwaukee Idea. Several university centers developed strong relationships with elements of the community in the areas of applied research, technical assistance, urban design and planning, and teacher education. These partnerships were strongest in University Outreach, an extension division committed to community connection and partnership and offering noncredit educational programs serving 40,000 students each year. The experiences of the faculty and staff engaged in these partnerships provided lessons, knowledge, community contacts, and "engagement mentors" that proved strong assets to the initial building of the Milwaukee Idea.

UW-Milwaukee also had the advantage of participating in several major grant programs designed to foster university-community

partnerships aimed at urban revitalization. Through successive involvement in programs like the U.S. Department of Education's Urban Community Service Program, the HUD Community Outreach Partnership Centers program, and the Fannie Mae Foundation's University Partnership grant program, UW-Milwaukee learned how to craft multidisciplinary teams and strategies to respond to identified needs in Milwaukee related to education, housing, community development, youth empowerment, and urban redesign. Although earlier work was based in individual units, such as centers and departments, the work stimulated by these grant opportunities pushed us out of disciplinary "silos" into intrauniversity, multidisciplinary collaboration.

We also learned how to create meaningful and sustainable partnerships with community allies. Again, if space permitted, we could tell about experiences in collaboration marked by the university's creating plans and then attempting to sell those plans to people and organizations in an effort to find our partners. Sometimes this worked, but more often this "build it and they will come" approach stimulated distrust by community groups and leaders who wondered whether the university understood the meaning of true partnership. Learning from experience and hindsight, the university's more recent efforts used grants as new opportunities to pull campus expertise and community needs together to build proposals planned together from the ground up. We have discovered that these collaborative initiatives, based on earned trust and the interpersonal relationships they create, are often sustained even when grant programs have ended.

Be flexible and creative in process and structure, as well as in ideas

By this point, it should be clear that at UW-Milwaukee, we have embraced creativity and boldness in crafting mutually beneficial university-community partnerships. We also want to reflect how we have learned to be flexible in the *process* of creating partnerships and in the *structural arrangements* used to govern and promote

them. For example, Wergin and Grassadonia described how the chancellor convened a group of individuals representing diverse constituencies in the community and university (administrators, faculty, academic staff, unionized classified staff, and students) to begin planning the framework of the Milwaukee Idea. The initial plan called for 100 people to spend 100 days in the first stage of planning. The plan had a nice ring to it, suggesting significant involvement in time-delimited, action-oriented planning. In reality, many others wanted to join in, and in the spirit of inclusion, we expanded the 100 to 200, and the 100 days also doubled before the first planning stage concluded. The process needed to be able to expand inclusion and recognize the challenge of group planning in short timeframes.

We learned to be flexible in the face of opportunities we did not anticipate when we started. One of the First Ideas of the Milwaukee Idea focused on Partnerships for Education, a commitment to be a more active partner in efforts to enhance student performance and graduation rates in local public schools. A variety of strategies were proposed and examined. However, before planning was completed, the university received millions of dollars in new Federal grants for urban teacher education and precollege programming, with community partners that included Milwaukee Public Schools and the Milwaukee Area Technical College. These grant awards (some made directly to the university with resources for community partners and some made to partners with resources for UW-Milwaukee) represented unprecedented opportunity for new partnerships with local public schools. These partnerships tapped the resources and expertise of a large portion of the School of Education faculty and drew in faculty from other schools or colleges in the university.

Recognizing the opportunities (and challenges) afforded in these grants, as well as the substantial community involvement embedded in the programs funded by the awards, a strategic decision was made to embrace these new programs as the Partnerships for Education initiative of the Milwaukee Idea. We put our initial

plans on hold in the face of new opportunities that were consistent with the spirit and core themes of the Milwaukee Idea: bold ideas, interdisciplinary approaches, and meaningful community collaboration in planning, execution, and assessment.

Flexibility is also desirable when universities adapt to creating and managing substantial multidisciplinary university-community partnerships. These partnerships represent rich opportunities but often challenge traditional university management and governance practices organized by disciplines, schools and colleges, and, in our case, rules of State government bureaucracy. Moving forward with the Milwaukee Idea was undertaken with an eye toward flexibility in administration and governance, an area in which we continue efforts to improvise, find solutions, and be creative. The following examples illustrate this point.

As the decision to move the Milwaukee Idea forward took hold, the chancellor needed to decide how to provide administrative support to the initiative as it moved first through conceptualization and planning stages, then into action. Rather than create a new office near her office in the main campus administration building, it was decided to vest resources in the Center for Urban Initiatives Research, a campus unit named by the previous chancellor as a focal point for university-community linkage. The director of that center (the coauthor of this response) was asked to take a leadership role in supporting the Milwaukee Idea and connecting this new initiative with appropriate organizations and activities in the greater Milwaukee community.

Approximately a year later, as planning moved to action and the Milwaukee Idea evolved, the chancellor sought to support the initiative and keep it close to her administration. She appointed the director of what had become the Milwaukee Idea Office as the chancellor's deputy for the Milwaukee Idea. The chancellor created this new title to designate the direct relationship of the Milwaukee Idea to her office and to signal a new type of position intended to cut across school and college boundaries, as well as those of particular disciplines.

In due course, the chancellor created the chancellor's deputies for Partnerships for Education and for Campus Design Solutions as she sought to create a more matrixlike organization where chancellor's deputies were assigned responsibility for making initiatives operate on a campuswide basis. The latter two deputies also serve as deans of the School of Education and the School of Architecture and Urban Planning, respectively, suggesting creativity and flexibility in assigning individuals with traditional vertical responsibility to clearly horizontal administrative expectations. *Flexibility* is the watchword in both planning and implementation.

Brand and promote

For an idea to take hold and form the basis for institutional transformation, it must achieve a strong identity. In the case of university-community engagement, this identity must be established both within the university and in the diverse reaches of the community. For this reason, branding and promotion are important strategies for institutional transformation. The Milwaukee Idea has proven an easy concept to brand. Indeed, many in the community wondered why no elected official or community initiative had adopted the name before. UW-Milwaukee created a logo for the Milwaukee Idea at the same time the university redesigned its own logo. The Milwaukee Idea logo incorporates elements of the university logo, and the name and logo have been used extensively to convey in concise and compelling terms that UW-Milwaukee is up to new and exciting things. The logo was placed on new banners hung from streetlights on the campus and neighboring streets, given a prominent place on promotional materials, and featured in specialized materials created to describe the Milwaukee Idea itself.

The chancellor took the Milwaukee Idea on the road placing emphasis on the initiative in a number of speeches, presentations, and visits with government and corporate leaders. Early plans for Milwaukee Idea initiatives were rolled out in vetting sessions where community representatives learned about emerging focus areas for

new partnerships (for example, economic development, scholarship of the Great Lakes, and environmental health) and were offered the opportunity to offer suggestions and comments. The Milwaukee Idea Office created promotional materials to distribute in a wide array of venues, including a special brochure distributed at a Unique Lives of Distinguished Women Series cosponsored by the university and the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* and a 6- by 4-foot backlit sign at the General Mitchell International Airport. This promotion and branding sent a consistent and persistent message to the community that UW-Milwaukee, sometimes unappreciated in its own environs, had committed to new ideas that would aid community and university alike.

After approximately 3 years, the evidence that branding and promotion are making a difference manifests itself in multiple ways. An increasing number of organizational representatives are contacting the university, often through the Milwaukee Idea Office, to ask how to become involved, for assistance, or to become a partner. When new community initiatives are launched, UW-Milwaukee is asked to be involved. It has become commonplace for policymakers, nonprofit leaders, educators, and others in the community to include UW-Milwaukee in new projects. In a relatively short period, branding and marketing of the Milwaukee Idea has raised the visibility of the institution and stimulated increased effort by the community to seek out UW-Milwaukee as a valued partner. It should come as no surprise, then, that recent community polls and press reports about leadership and new ideas in the community have consistently listed UW-Milwaukee and its leadership as a bright spot on the local scene. This type of visibility, unprecedented in UW-Milwaukee's history, demonstrates the power of a bold idea.

Be open and accountable

A bold vision can create a plan for change, but the plan's values shape its implementation. Two of the Milwaukee Idea's key values are openness and accountability. The attention the Milwaukee Idea

received, especially in early months, was not all positive. Naysayers and doubters wondered if there was real change behind the rhetoric and promise. Given that UW-Milwaukee had not been widely perceived as a strong participant in many community initiatives through much of its 45-year history, it was not surprising that some people would question the sincerity and longevity of this newly articulated faith in community-university partnerships.

We faced an early test when a reporter for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* became interested in the work. He attended, and was welcomed at, our public university-community planning meetings. He asked if he could join the e-mail lists that had been set up for individuals working on the Milwaukee Idea to communicate with each other. We knew that the e-mail discussions would be candid, reflect real issues and concerns as they emerged, and range from thoughtfully articulated suggestions to emotionally written tirades.

Believing that a university, at its core, is based on open discussion and debate about theories and ideas, we agreed to give the reporter access to the e-mails, asking only that he agree not to attribute any e-mail statements to identified individuals. We also informed e-mail users of our agreement with the press. In the end, the reporter wrote balanced stories, and we recognized that reflecting divergent views and an openness to discussion actually gave our work more credibility. When Wergin and Grassadonia came to campus to conduct their case study, we set no parameters on whom they could meet or what they could review. We felt confident in our work and believed it was important that it be assessed objectively.

We are also committed to accountability—to reporting back to the community and to ourselves on what we have achieved. We have said this from the beginning, even though we realize the responsibility we place on ourselves by making this commitment. When we asked the community to join us in planning and implementation, we made the commitment, to them and to ourselves, that their participation would count, together we would make a difference, and together we would reflect on that difference.

For example, when UW-Milwaukee asked for a substantial increase in State funds to support the Milwaukee Idea and other campus priorities as an investment in Milwaukee and Wisconsin, we promised to report back on what we had achieved. (The University received an unprecedented 16-percent increase in State General Purpose Revenues in the 2001–03 State budget.) As we approached local foundations, corporations, and individuals for support, we promised to assess ourselves and communicate our achievements.

To remain true to these commitments, we are undertaking several strategies. Using the outcome identification process promoted by the United Way of America, each initiative of the Milwaukee Idea includes a logic model and a set of outcome indicators by which it will assess itself on an annual basis. Every year, each initiative prepares an annual report that describes how community partners advised on and participated in the initiative, obtained extramural funding, and achieved progress in the identified indicators. This information, in turn, is collated into an annual report that reflects the activities and *quantified achievements* of each initiative, as well as information about other university-community partnerships. These progress reports, the first of which was published in February 2002, will be widely shared in the community. They will, over time, bear the burden of demonstrating that an investment in an engaged university yields measurable benefits to campus and community alike.

Not only do we want to demonstrate achievements, we also want to learn from our work in community engagement. In a separate portion of the annual report, each initiative reported on the challenges it faced in implementation. Through these reports, reflection sessions among initiative leaders, and broader university-community discussions, we hope to learn about this enterprise of engagement and to use this information to mold our future work, as well as that of other universities and communities.

Accept risk and tolerate failure

The work of community-university partnerships is not without risk and certainly comes with no guarantee of success. In fact, one must be prepared for some detours, even some failures, along the way. We often talk about this work and the created partnerships as experiments in which learning on new and challenging fronts is embraced. As with any experiment, action sometimes leads to failure. Collaborative work requires learning across cultures, searching for common understanding and purpose, identifying mutually acceptable strategies for action, and sustaining commitment by all parties. These requirements are hard to achieve. When they come together, amazing things can happen, but bringing them together is difficult. Those working in the field must recognize these realities at the start. Patience is important, because it is easy to walk away when things get tough, when difficult issues arise, or, when, most often, it takes huge amounts of time together to gel ideas, strategies, and commitments.

When the requisite elements of collaboration become aligned, the power can be incredible. However, despite hard work, the alignment sometimes does not come. Sometimes the players change. Sometimes common ground cannot be identified. Sometimes the resources to support collaboration are not forthcoming. When things do not work, some reflection is warranted. The reflection should focus on learning, not on incrimination or perceived defeat. If one accepts the idea of a new partnership as an experiment, then the occasions of failure may not seem so daunting, the challenges to achieving success may seem more real, and the patience needed to achieve alignment may be strengthened to sustain work until alignment and positive outcomes are achieved.

For More Information

We have documented the work of creating and implementing the Milwaukee Idea at UW-Milwaukee so that we can learn from ourselves, remember how we started, and remind ourselves how

far we have come. We also want to share our experiences with other universities and communities, just as we have learned from the experiences of others. The authors of this response collaborated with Mary Jane Brukardt to tell the story of the Milwaukee Idea from our own unique—and admittedly biased—perspective. We were joined in the reflection by many individuals at UW-Milwaukee and from the greater Milwaukee community (Zimpher, Percy, and Brukardt, 2002). We also created a Web site with extensive information on initiatives, planning processes, achievements, and much more. (Visit the Milwaukee Idea Web site at www.milwaukeeidea.org to learn about our work.)

We concur with Ernest Boyer (1990) that "it is a moment for boldness in higher education," a time to question the roles and responsibilities of higher education institutions in a time of unprecedented challenge and opportunity. We find congruent thinking in the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities (1999) that "it is time to go beyond outreach and service...to redesigned teaching, research and extension and service functions that are sympathetically and productively involved with the communities universities serve." Our questioning has led us to engagement as a premise of institutional change and renewal.

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Appendix: List of Interviews

Mohammed Aman, Millennium Information Technology Education and Careers (MITEC) proposal; dean, School of Information Studies

Steve Atkinson, academic staff

Stanley Battle, vice chancellor, Student and Multicultural Affairs

Tori Boswell, academic staff

DuWayne Brooks, Student Services Program; manager, Residence Life

Sam Carmen, president, Milwaukee Teachers Education Association

Sachin Chheda, former president, Student Association; staff, the Milwaukee Idea office

Tony Ciccone, director, Center for Instructional and Professional Development

Ron Cisler, Healthy Living Choices; associate scientist, social work

Lynn Dearborn-Karan, graduate student, Campus Design Solutions

Kapila Dharmasena Silva, graduate student, Campus Design Solutions

Barbara Duffy, Center for Urban Initiatives and Research

Ingrid Erickson, assistant director, Enrollment Services

Dan Folkman, director, Center for Urban Community Development

Victoria Frazier, Milwaukee Public Schools

Lauren Glass, former chair, University Committee

Rene Gratz, chair, Quick Wins Initiative; professor, Health Sciences

Ed Green, community member

Robert Greenstreet, chair, Campus Design Solutions; dean, School of Architecture
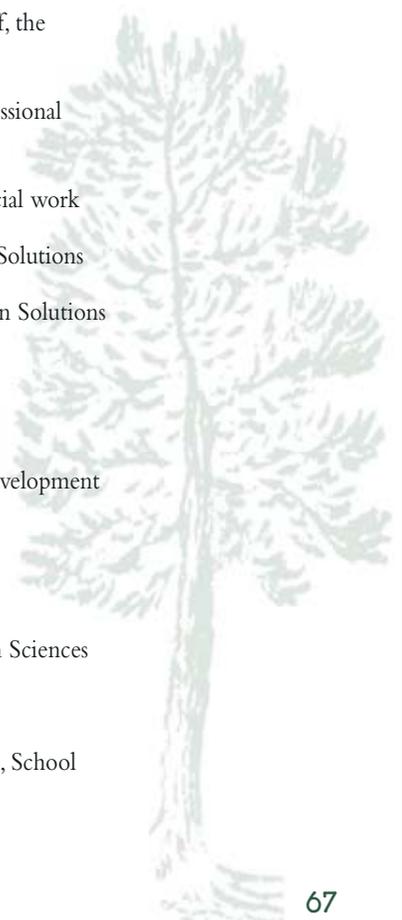
Ann Hains, Partnerships for Education; associate dean, School of Education

Ken Howey, professor, curriculum and instruction, School of Education

Gregory Jay, director, Cultures and Communities; professor, English

Sandra Jones, assistant director, Cultures and Communities

Sharon Keigher, Age and Community; professor, School of Social Welfare

Laty Keodouangsy, former president, Student Association

Val Klump, Great Lakes Water Institute

Amy Kuether, Global Passport Project

Jay Lee, director, Milwaukee Industrial Innovation Consortia; professor, engineering and mathematical science

Marc Levine, director, Consortium for Economic Opportunity

Frances Luebke, associate director, the Milwaukee Idea

Laurie Marks, director, Center for Volunteerism and Student Leadership

William Mayrl, former assistant chancellor, Student Affairs; professor, sociology

Jay Moore, chair, University Committee

David Mulroy, professor, Department of Classics

Ellen Murphy, secretary of the university

Stephen Percy, chancellor's deputy for the Milwaukee Idea

Patrice Petro, Global Passport Project

Beverley Pickering-Reyna, MITEC

Pamela Pletsch, Center for Women's Health Research

Dean Pribbenow, director, Institute for Service Learning

Joan Prince, vice chancellor, Partnerships and Innovation

Kalyani Rai, Center for Urban Community Development

Charles Remsen, professor emeritus, biological sciences

Robert Schwartz, Department of Philosophy

Ajita Talwalker, president, Student Association

Pauli Taylorboyd, academic staff

Jean Tyler, community activist

Devarajan Venugopalan, Milwaukee Technology Center

John Wanat, provost

Nancy Zimpher, chancellor

Allen Zweben, chair, Healthy Living Choices

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