

# CHAMPIONING

P-16+



## SERVICE-LEARNING MOVEMENT IS SPARKED

A powerful forest fire can be ignited by a simple spark, just as the sowing of a new forest can begin with one acorn. In the world of education reform, both sparks and acorns are needed. Sparks symbolically get things moving; acorns provide consistent stable growth. Like a spark, one person has the ability to instigate change by championing a movement.

In an August symposium led by Keith Sanders, executive director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, education leaders became sparks for P-16+ service learning. State Superintendent Glenn “Max” McGee; President and CEO Joseph Cipfl, Illinois Community College Board and Deputy Governor Hazel Loucks joined forces to champion service learning. Senator Lisa Madigan, a member of the Senate Education Committee chaired the meeting.

Sanders kindled the movement with his words, “In higher education, we can complain about the readiness of students coming in our doors, or we can roll up our sleeves and do something about it,” and he added, “the Illinois Learning

Standards and the Prairie State Examination are a good place to start.” State Superintendent Glenn “Max” McGee also emphasized standards as an important task for service learning. “In order for service learning to work in Illinois it must be embraced as a natural part of the curriculum, one that addresses existing priorities.” Hazel Loucks, Deputy Governor of Education said that P-16+ service learning “helps create a seamless system of education, one that fosters the efforts of students rather than creating barriers.”

The heads of key state education agencies spoke with a single voice about the challenges for education and commended service learning as a way of addressing the priorities, particularly the learning standards and citizenship.

Skeptics will say that service learning is an add-on, that it just makes more work for everyone. Proponents say it gives new life to teaching and learning. Seneca, a Roman philosopher said, “if you want to reach the fruit, you have to go out on a limb.” Clearly the fruit of educational reform and achievement is worth going out on the service-learning limb.

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# SERVICE LEARNING



Joe Cipfl greets participants of the symposium: "In service learning we are adding an essential dimension to students' education through community involvement and civic responsibility." Leading the P-16+ Service Learning Symposium were (l to r) Keith Sanders, Executive Director, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Joseph Cipfl, President and CEO, Illinois Community College Board; Senator Lisa Madigan, Minority Spokesperson for the Senate Education Committee and symposium chair; Deputy Governor for Education Hazel Loucks, and State Superintendent Glenn "Max" McGee. Educators P-16+ participated in the symposium. Fifteen regional symposia will follow.

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## Purpose for P-16+ Service-Learning Symposia

- To tell the stories about the good things happening in education through P-16+ service learning
- To develop a common understanding of P-16+ service learning
- To discuss the potential for service learning as a way of addressing the Illinois Learning Standards and preparing college-ready and work-ready graduates
- To discuss the ways that the community, particularly retirees, can work more closely to foster learning and citizenship

### P-16+ Service-Learning Symposium Participants

August 7, 2000 – Illinois Board of Higher Education Springfield, Illinois

**P-12:** Heidi Biederman, Large Unit Districts Association; Mary Joe Diamond, Sylvia Sullivan, and student, Andrew Banks, Unity Point; Brenda Diehl, Illinois PTA; Marlene Dutton, Illinois Assoc. of School Administrators; William Garcia, Illinois State Board of Education; Phillip Jackson, Office of Mayor, Chicago; Michael Long, Illinois State Board of Education; Ben Schwarm, IL Association of School Boards; Ken Swanson, Illinois Education Association, and Sylvia Walter and Jennifer Avenetti, Academy for Learning, Blue Island  
**Higher Education:** Kim Armstrong, Black Hawk College; Nancy Bragg, Illinois State University; Michael Carl, President, IL Colleges of Teacher Education, Northeastern IL University; Don Crist, Council of Community College Presidents, Carl Sandburg College; Stuart Fagan, Governors State, Council of Presidents; Bernie Ferreri, City Colleges of Chicago; Kathy Engelken, IL Campus Compact; Michael Monahan, IL Community College Trustees Association; Lee Newsom, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale; and Belinda Wholebin, Rockford College

**Business:** Ed Schwarze, Caterpillar

**Community-Based Organizations:** Joe Dunn, IL Coalition for Community Services; Tim Krieger, Corporation for National Service; and Dan Miller, IL Department of Human Resources

**Intergenerational:** Jane Angelis, Intergenerational Initiative, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale