

Collaborative Educational Programs for the Americas
(CEPA) Leadership Consortium
Leadership: Growing the Next Generation of Global Partners
San Antonio, Texas, October 27-28, 2016
Executive Summary



*Dr. Aaron M. Tyler, Provost
St. Mary's University*

CEPA 2016 once again brought together the best and brightest researchers and future leaders to share their ideas on the conference theme: *Leadership: Growing the Next Generation of Global Partners*. It proved to be a most enjoyable and gratifying event with Dr. Aaron M. Tyler, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, St. Mary's University serving as the keynote speaker. A distinguished international scholar, Dr. Tyler highlighted his research on religion and politics, ethics and global security, and conflict resolution. He recounted his three tips for meaningful travel, adding that confusion is actually a good thing! His experiences were fascinating and his remarks set a dynamic tone for the conference.

Participants were inspired when Dr. Tyler returned the following day to be on the Panel of Leaders.

What made CEPA 2016 so unique is that the most important academic leaders in San Antonio worked in partnership to host this special event. The flagship universities co-hosting this year's event were Our Lady of the Lake University and St. Mary's University, working in partnership with universities from across the nation and the Universidad de Puerto Rico Recinto de Aguadilla in the Caribbean. This conference attracted not only established scholars, but undergraduate honor students, as well as doctoral-level future leaders.



Dr. Michael J. Laney, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, Our Lady of the Lake University, served as Conference Director. Dr. Theresa Dorel, Texas A&M University;- San Antonio, served as Mistress of Ceremony.

Collaboration:



OLLU and Others: Our Lady of the Lake University sent an entire class of doctoral students to CEPA 2016 to explore ideas with other thinkers from throughout the nation. Texas A&M University, The University of Texas at San Antonio, Texas A&M University-San Antonio and others also sent doctoral

students. At many top-level universities, the direction has moved to recruit, coach and inspire a new generation of leaders so that they will not only do today's important work but also invent tomorrow's. These young thinkers worked shoulder-to-shoulder with each other and with top-notch professors.

CEPA provided formal and informal opportunities for leaders to learn to be visionary, become risk-takers, and break away from old paradigms to make positive changes. Through CEPA qualities and skills are gained for a strong foundation of leadership: relentless drive to improve education, and a deep sense of integrity and inner strength.

Ana Lopez, a doctoral student at New Mexico State University and an international student from Mexico, gave a presentation entitled, *Guerreras Fronterizas, the resilience of mothers of children with disabilities on the Mexican side of the U.S.- Mexico Border*. This thought-provoking exposition revealed how Mexican mothers are guerreras (warriors), who face different challenges and obstacles in the daily quest for a better life and education for their children with special needs. This young scholar made the connection to the conference theme, as she addressed critical social issues within the Americas. The facts she learned in her research were often shocking.



McNair scholars at Our Lady of the Lake University rallied for discussions, analysis of current events, trends affecting higher education, and to share their vision on leadership. They brainstormed leadership ideas with highly recognized scholars, such

as **Dr. Virginia Garland**, University of New Hampshire. The collaborative setting sparked a feeling of great enthusiasm and eagerness that led one McNair student to ask, “Why can’t we have the same cooperation and friendship like this in our daily lives?” They were honored to be seen as thinkers, where they could share their research with others throughout the Americas. They affirmed that attending CEPA 2016 was a good way to get the mind in shape.

“Together we will build a foundation that will provide others the opportunity to succeed. We must inspire our youth to embrace risk, engage in collaboration and think creatively. Our efforts will inspire a new generation of leaders that will create a better tomorrow, “ stated the Honorable Ivy R. Taylor, Mayor of San Antonio.



Panel of Leaders

This conference pulled together the expertise and experience of leading thinkers to discuss their philosophies of leadership. Serving on the panel were **Dr. Michael Laney**, Our Lady of the Lake University; **Dr. Margo DelliCarpini** and **Dr. Betty Merchant**, The University of Texas at San Antonio, **Dr. Wovek Sean Kearney**, Texas A&M University-San Antonio, and **Dr. Aaron Tyler**, St. Mary’s University. Dr. Theresa Dorel from A&M University-San Antonio, served as moderator, and doctoral student from Texas A&M University at College Station, Samantha Shields, served as respondent.



Panelists



Topics addressed included “How can leadership in higher education continue to employ innovation to meet the challenges of the 21st century student, while maintaining a focus on values and ethical practices?” The ideas put forth by this panel of leaders and the insightful questions posed by the moderator and respondent were extremely relevant and meaningful.

Samantha expressed her opinion about CEPA 2016 by saying, “...I just wanted to take a moment and thank you for the opportunities provided for me at the CEPA conference this past weekend. Presenting, both in my session and poster, as well as acting as respondent, are invaluable opportunities for me to network and grow as a future potential member of academia.”

International Scholars



Dr. Nelson Arnaldo Vera Hernandez, Chancellor, and Dr. Herminia Alemany Valdez, represented Universidad de Puerto Rico Recinto de Aguadilla at CEPA 2016. These highly recognized scholars shared their leadership experiences, describing the dramatic increase in student enrollment and the many improvements at their campus (a former Air Force base). The changes programmed in a five-year plan have already been achieved in two years! “The pride and spirit of the student body are incredible and they have embraced our new mascot and motto *The Sharks!*”

Together, these leaders brought the perfect balance of an energizing performance blended with real-world experience and credibility. Listening to these innovators, it was clear that mentoring is key in growing enrollment and retaining students. They supported the thought that we must inspire our youth to embrace risk, engage in collaboration and think creatively. John C. Maxwell, stated in his book, *Leadership 101*: “Everyone wants to feel that he counts for something and is important to someone. Invariably, people will give their love, respect, and attention to the person who fills that need.” Obviously, that’s what these two scholars have demonstrated. Dr. Hernandez said he personally attends every student activity!





During their visit, Drs. Hernandez and Valdez met with a number of officials from universities in Texas to initiate international partnerships, including: Texas A&M University at College Station, Texas A&M University at San Antonio, and Our Lady of the Lake University.

Puerto Rican author Edgardo Nieves-Mieles contributed a beautiful summary

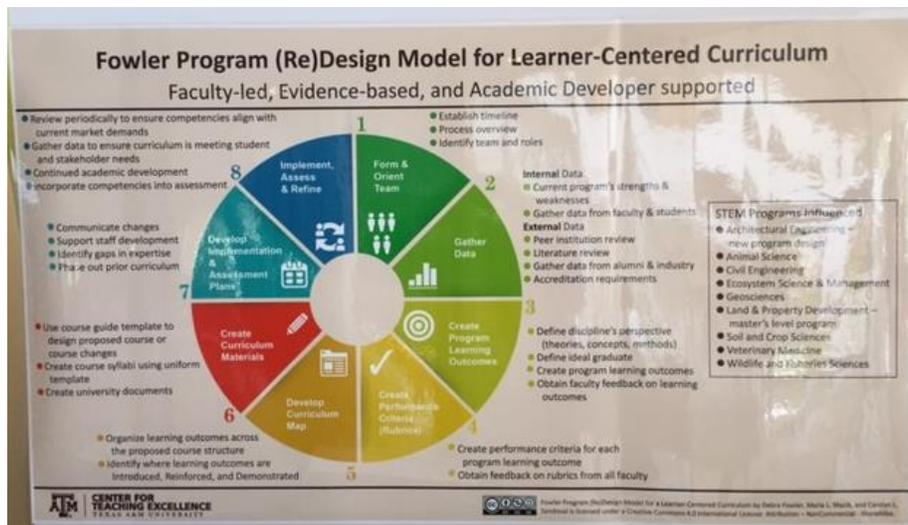
of this year's theme:

Para conseguir una internacionalización efectiva, en estos tiempos posmodernos es imperiosamente necesario exponer a nuestros estudiantes a experiencias que les alimenten el deseo de acercarse, conocer, aprender y desarrollar otros idiomas y culturas distintos a la nuestra.

Al final del camino comprenderán, cuán enriquecedoras habrán resultado esas experiencias para completar su desarrollo personal y profesional como mejores seres humanos al servicio de sus semejantes y de la humanidad.

Poster Session

Innovative educational paradigms describing a research project and/or vision were also encouraged at CEPA 2016. Visionary leaders, possessing bold and adventurous ideas, displayed their unique talent at this conference. Vision is not seeing things as they are, but as they will be!





Publications

Dr. Meghan Carmody-Bubb, Dr. Phyllis Duncan, and Dr. Malcom Ree, OLLU Department of Leadership Studies, held a very informative session on the many benefits of publishing in CEPA's inaugural *Journal of Collaborative Leadership*, scheduled for publication in 2017. Additionally, the conference will have *Proceedings*, which will publish the abstracts of the conference presentations. The deadline for submission is 1 December. CEPA is seeking submissions from researchers, scholars, and leading thinkers for their interdisciplinary journal. The editorial board is comprised of these two scholars, in addition to leading scholars regionally. CEPA delegates, graduate and undergraduate students, faculty and staff, were encouraged to submit their research on leadership to this peer-reviewed publication.



Publication is endorsed under the auspices of the U.S. ISSN Center at the Library of Congress. Two guiding principles — the integration of knowledge and the exchange of ideas — provide a foundation for that vision.

Integration of knowledge: Bold and adventurous ideas are valued in CEPA's ongoing effort to:

- engage scholars and educators from the fields of administration, business, community affairs, education, humanities and the social sciences.
- encourage contributions from all areas of human endeavor while preserving the integrity of each of the various fields.

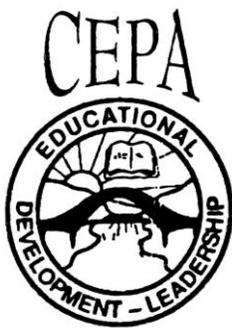
Exchange of ideas: A diverse membership is vital to quality exchange as CEPA continues to:

- promote the interaction of knowledge, ideas and viewpoints,
- provide meaningful personal participation in conferences, publications and activities

Rally Point

The El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel was a perfect setting to host CEPA conferences. A retreat away from an individual's campus is ideal for stimulating futuristic thinking in a collaborative setting. Participants reaped many benefits, to include: socializing with colleagues from other institutions, listening to engaging presentations, and sharing their research with other thinkers. It was inspiring to hear different styles of presentations.

Dr. Theresa Garfield Dorel, said, "This year's conference theme, Leadership: Growing the Next Generation of Global Partners, lends itself to a lively discourse of exactly how to accomplish leadership development in a world that is ever changing, ever present, and by many accounts, ever shrinking. Who can provide the experience to navigate these changes? Where do emerging leaders turn to for guidance?"



Top-level universities providing leadership at CEPA conferences during the past six years in Texas include: Indiana State University, Our Lady of the Lake University, New Mexico State University, Pepperdine University, University of Houston-Victoria, St. Mary's University, Texas Christian University, Texas A&M International University, Texas A&M University at College Station Texas A&M University-Commerce Texas A&M University-San Antonio, Texas Tech University, The University of Texas at Dallas, The University of Texas at San Antonio, University of the Incarnate Word, University of New Hampshire, and Universidad de Puerto Rico Recinto de

Aguadilla.



Building a Winning Team



Like a coach after a winning game, Conference Director Our Lady of the Lake University's Dr. Michael Laney felt the same satisfaction as CEPA 2016 came to a close. He is to be congratulated for an outstanding job! Likewise, Yvette Chiem-Villanueva, Director of Convention Services at the El Tropicano, felt a similar joy as she and her team provided a beautiful venue for our event. At the El Tropicano, the delegates felt important, valued and respected.

Fred J. Rodríguez, Ph.D., can be reached at cepa2000@earthlink.net