THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR QUALITY

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMMING

By

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Abstract

This exploratory study closely documents and examines two afterschool programs (Tech Kids Unlimited and Los Promotores P.S. 20 Literacy Program) that were developed using a community-university partnership model with the Wagner College Education Department during the 2014-2015 academic year. Using a framework that closely documents, analyzes, and assesses program quality, this study explores how such partnerships can help meet the growing demand for high-quality afterschool programs and highlights the need for addressing and supporting at-risk groups, specifically in urban areas. Using a three-part mixed methods approach, the study included participant observer fieldwork, two pre-service educator surveys, and interviews from associated professors and program leaders in these community-university partnerships. Seventeen Wagner College pre-service educators were surveyed after working in one or both educational partnerships to explore how they were prepared and to learn more about their experiences in the programs. Findings highlight the need for college students to perceive they are participating in a clear, organized structure in order to effectively plan and support these afterschool populations. Furthermore, findings suggest that when college students have relevant professional development activities, previous background with the population, and opportunities for reflection, they have a more positive sense of the impact the community-university model. Program improvements are discussed to promote positive adaptations for college students in future partnership programs. This study found that qualitative research can potentially improve current programs and shed light to the potential impact of the community-university model for quality afterschool programming at small, urban universities.

Chapter I: Conceptual Framework

Growing Demand for High-Quality Afterschool Programs

A need for high-quality afterschool programs is rapidly increasing according to a February 2008 publication by the Harvard Family Research Project. The national estimate suggested that 6.5 million children and youth, in kindergarten through 12th grade, participated in afterschool programs nationwide (Harvard Family Research Project, 2008). While this number is staggering, estimates capturing data only a short time later show there was an even greater need for high-quality afterschool programs. The estimated attendance for afterschool programs in 2009 skyrocketed to nearly 8.4 million children yearly (Afterschool Alliance, 2009). In 2014, the attendance grew to 10.2 million K-12 children, 18 percent of all school-aged children, participating in afterschool programs, with an additional 19.4 million that were surveyed as hopeful participants if a quality program were available in their community (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). As this need increases, programs need to adapt strategies and support student growth, particularly within literacy development (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). Nationwide, there are numerous afterschool programs, but ongoing issue remains with accessibility, sustainability, scale and overall quality of the programs (Reisner et al. 2004). In order to benefit children nationwide, there must be careful consideration of the effectiveness and variety of high-quality afterschool programs available for youth literacy growth in the United States and attention to how these programs can be implemented in areas of need.

This is an issue that must be addressed, as the annual afterschool research has highlighted that youth need access to programs. According to "America After 3PM," a national survey commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, there is a significant gap

between demand and supply of afterschool programs. In the 2014 edition of this survey, which surveyed 30,000 U.S. families, for every child in a program, there are two more who are not and whose parents would enroll their child if a program were available (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). This new data from the nation's most comprehensive longitudinal survey of how America's children are spending their afternoons provides pivotal information on how participation and demand for afterschool have changed over the last decade and how they vary by state, income level, ethnicity, and more. The findings from the 2014 report show that 15.1 million children are unsupervised when the school day ends. Also for the first time this year, "America After 3PM" will include detailed data on STEM (science, technology, education and mathematics) and physical activity in afterschool (Afterschool Alliance, 2014, p. 2). This report is funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The Wallace Foundation and the Noyce Foundation, with additional support from the Heinz Endowments, The Robert Bowne Foundation and the Samueli Foundation. Together, the commitment of these major foundations signals a recognition of the impact that afterschool programs can make on the development of youth nationwide.

As shown by the results of this insightful study, this demand is greatest among African American, Hispanic and low-income families. The demand is strong among these groups precisely due to the understanding of afterschool program benefits. Notably, more than five in six parents with children in afterschool programs agree that the programs keep kids safe and out of trouble, and more than eight in 10 agree that the programs help working parents keep their jobs (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). While there may be varying motivations for enrolling in programs, many students come from homes where both parents

are working or struggle with the literacy skills at home (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). The body of evidence demonstrates improvements in attendance, behavior, academic achievement and more among children who participate in afterschool programs, while researchers have also found that afterschool programs encourage increased parental involvement which is an important building block for student success (Afterschool Alliance, 2014).

Addressing the Needs of Children and Families in Urban Areas

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time shows that there is a lack of affordable, accessible afterschool opportunities for school-age children (de Kanter et al, 2000). It is estimated that up to as many as 15 million "latchkey children" on any given day go home to an empty house after school, while 44 percent of third graders spend at least a portion of their out-of-school time unsupervised (de Kanter et al, 2000). In 2000 the supply of afterschool programs for school-age children in urban areas met as little as 20 percent of the demand (de Kanter et al, 2000). Although the Clinton-Gore Administration was active in establishing new initiatives to meet this need in the early 2000's, more action must be taken.

More specifically in New York City, nearly three in ten children (28%) participate in an afterschool program, though parents overwhelmingly support more afterschool funding compared to national averages (Afterschool Alliance, 2008). The national statistic shows that 83 percent of parents support public funding for afterschool programs, while an astounding 91 percent of New York City parents support this type of funding (Afterschool Alliance, 2008). The city uses funding from the Department of Youth and Community Development, which garners resources from city, state, and federal funding, while also

enjoying Advantage After-School Program monies through state funds. The partnerships with the After-School Corporation (TASC) also provides promising models to expand time and ways that children learn throughout New York City (Afterschool Alliance, 2008). Still, programs citywide are being cut due to budget constraints.

Spielberger and Halpern (2002) state that, "Afterschool programs can utilize reading and writing as a way for children to reflect on their family and culture and explore the links between their heritage and the customs and cultures of other in their community by providing access to mentors and community partners." This connection of community, culture, and family is one aspect of afterschool that is essential in urban neighborhoods that feature various socioeconomic and cultural groups. Afterschool programs present a unique educational outlet to encourage cultural expression in a safe, supervised location in bustling metropolitan regions nationwide.

In vastly diverse and populated regions like New York City, afterschool programs have the potential to meet the affinities and needs of many unique learners. Sadly, budget cuts impact out-of-school learning and can potentially eliminate quality afterschool programs at the expense academic regimes in this standardized high-stake testing era. Consider the story of Oghenakpobo Efekoro, a 15-year-old sophomore at Forest Hills High School and alumnus of Brooklyn, New York's I.S.318 that experienced budget cuts for his nationally established afterschool chess team. Their school suffered a 1.6 percent cut that threatened to discontinue many of the afterschool programs. In a reflective piece presented by the Afterschool Alliance (2014), Efekoro poignantly stated that, "Education is not a bargaining chip to be used by politicians. It is a necessity that ensures the next generation can excel in an increasingly competitive world. It is a pathway, a gateway to success" (p.

4). He goes on to state that everything in life begins with a good education, and that includes, "every aspect of education, including extracurricular activities and learning programs that happen after the 'school day' has ended" (Afterschool Alliance Storybook, 2014, p. 4). These budget cuts continue to occur despite various public funding streams available in cities like New York. In order to address shortfalls, those wanting to extend afterschool educational programming must connect with other like-minded groups to form partnerships to promote quality education afterschool in all five boroughs and beyond.

U.S. Department of Education Involvement

Over the past 15 years, the United States Department of Education has realized the importance and urgency of providing afterschool programming but has missed the mark on meeting the nationwide demand. One major educational endeavor created by the U.S. Department of Education was the 21st Century Community Learning Center, which offered grants for afterschool programming to give students more time to learn, improve their academics, and engage in other educational activities outside of the structured school day (de Kanter et al, 2000). To ensure the high-quality nature of these programs, the grantees were trained twice a year on quality elements of an afterschool program, including how to best provide academic enrichment. The creation of this initiative was based on the unique philosophy of collaboration that was implemented between the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation of Flint, Michigan and the U.S. Department of Education in 1997. This government-supported initiative was created with collaboration as the cornerstone of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, since both rural and inner-city schools benefit from collaborative partnerships. This partnership program initially provided $550 million in direct services, training, technical assistance, best practices

identification, evaluation, and access/equity; the public-private partnership with the foundation far outweighed what federal funds alone could offer (de Kanter et al, 2000).

In 2000, there was sufficient funding for only 310 of the 2,253 applications for afterschool programs through the 21st Century Community Learning Partners, and more than 1,000 high-quality applications were unfunded. Additionally, of the $1.34 billion in funding requested by schools across the nation to start afterschool programming in 2000, only $185.7 million was available (de Kanter et al, 2000). The Clinton-Gore Administration requested $1 billion for the 2001 fiscal year, with hopes that the increase in funding could potentially eliminate as much of a quarter of the nation's afterschool demands (de Kanter et al, 2000).

More recently, the United States Department of Education announced a joint signing of a Memorandum of Understanding detailing a plan to strengthen partnerships among federal and local governments, schools, families, and other organizations with the goal of advancing learning, enhancing student engagement, and improving schools (NLC, 2014). At the Congressional City Conference in Washington, the National League of Cities (NCL) held community conversations in a number of cities nationwide to discuss strategies to meet three major concerns, one being afterschool programs. One focus of this discussion was to evaluate strategies for providing children with access to high-quality afterschool learning experiences, especially those including increasing student outcomes, closing achievement gaps, and improving social-emotional skills (NCL, 2014). According to the NCL Strategy Guide for Strengthening Partnerships, mayors and city leaders should promote partnerships by engaging a broad set of partners, keeping afterschool time on the public agenda, and leading efforts by city, school, and community leaders to establish a

common set of outcomes and a shared vision for out-of-school time (NLC, 2014). The U.S. Department of Education and national research institutes like NCL may have recognized the importance of quality indicators, but the access for quality afterschool programs remains a problem still because of major funding concerns.

Need for Federal Funding

While the national spotlight has shone on afterschool in recent years, the essential federal investment in programs across the country has been far from adequate. The current chief federal funding stream for afterschool and summer programs is 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC). Studies show that in 2007, the No Child Left Behind Act authorized $2.5 billion for CCLC; however actual appropriations leave current funding at less than half that today (Afterschool Alliance, 2008). Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant has noted the shortsightedness of underfunding afterschool programs, stating that, "When afterschool programs struggle without enough resources to meet the needs of children and families, schools, communities and the country suffer" (Afterschool Alliance, 2008, p. 1).

Furthermore, Grant stated that, "Quality afterschool programs keep students safe and supervised, provide opportunities for them to learn and grow, prepare youth to succeed in school and in life, and help them expand their horizons through hands-on, engaging activities that are both educational and fun. It is clear that every penny invested in an afterschool programs pays dividends for years to come" (Afterschool Alliance, 2014, p 2). Increased funding should thus be a goal to encourage consistent programming nationwide. Still, a more immediate and realistic approach may be to explore implementation models that offer sustainable and cost-effective for quality programming.

Creation of the Afterschool Alliance

In an effort to further strengthen the national spotlight on afterschool education, The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation partnered with the U.S Department of Education to create an even broader partnership concept, the Afterschool Alliance. Established in 2000, this organization also partnered with J.C. Penney Company, Inc., the Open Society Institute/The After-School Corporation, the Entertainment Industry Foundation and the Creative Artists Agency Foundation (Afterschool Alliance, 2015). This is a coalition devoted to raising awareness and expanding resources for afterschool programs, with an initial vision that every child in America would have access to quality afterschool programs by 2010. While this vision was created nearly fifteen years ago and remains unmet, it is crucial to explore the ways that this vision was approached and how this partnership attempted to close the gap of access, quality, and equity in afterschool programming nationwide. Some programs that the Afterschool Alliance began included a national public service advertising campaign ("Finding the Hero Within"), a national day of recognition on October 12th ("Lights on Afterschool"), and the identification and deployment of a cadre of practitioner "Afterschool Ambassadors" in every state to provide technical assistance and influence public will for supporting increased quality afterschool programming (Afterschool Alliance, 2015). The current vision of this organization is to ensure that all youth have access to affordable, quality afterschool programs, while the mission is to engage public will to increase public and private investment in quality afterschool program initiatives at the national, state and local levels (Afterschool Alliance, 2015).

Additionally, the Afterschool Alliance is the only organization dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of afterschool programs, while also advocating for improvements in existing programs. The Afterschool Alliance works with government agencies like the U.S. Congress, governors, mayors and other educational advocates across the country. With more than 25,000 afterschool program partners, this organization also boasts an national online petition that has produced a database of afterschool supporters; a sustained media campaign; and a series of briefing papers, reports and fact sheets used widely by media, policy makers, concerned organizations and individuals. In recent years, the Afterschool Alliance has helped conduct some of the largest longitudinal studies to survey quality afterschool programs across the country.

As documented in their policy briefs, the Afterschool Alliance has introduced the nation to more initiatives to address this national issue of afterschool educational programming. The Afterschool Alliance has also played a major role in highlighting how afterschool programs can directly address and focus on literacy education for at-risk student populations like English language learners and students with special needs. It promotes nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. With each yearly study, the Afterschool Alliance demonstrates that afterschool programs are uniquely positioned address opportunity gaps and support the acquisition of reading and writing skills among underserved youth to help them build a brighter future.

As part of the recognition for awareness of afterschool programs, the Afterschool Alliance organizes an annual nationwide event. On October 23rd in 2014 more than one million people nationwide participated in Lights On Afterschool, attending science fairs,

rallies, fun runs, community service events, music and dance performances, open houses and other events at schools, community centers, malls, parks and recreation centers, museums, state capitols, and other settings (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). These events were structured to raise awareness and celebrate the afterschool programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families. Programs that are supported by afterschool initiatives such as this have highlighted the need for funding, high-quality programs, and dedicated program coordinators. Public awareness is growing, but unfortunately so is the number of students who are marginalized and underexposed to appropriate educational opportunities. As a result, afterschool programming increasingly focuses on the most pressing issues for these underserved populations.

Students at Risk: English Language Learners

High-quality afterschool literacy programs that support low-income, English language learners provide a unique opportunity to help children and families that have fallen behind, giving them a second chance to refocus towards successful literacy development. If using innovative literacy enrichment opportunities, the academic advances in the classroom and developmental advances in life are unmatched. According to the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), English language learners (ELLs) are the fastest growing segment of the student population as they now comprise 10.5 percent of the nation's K–12 enrollment, up from five percent in 1990 (NCTE, 2014). Furthermore, ELLs do not fit easily into simple categories, comprising a very diverse group. ELLs have varied levels of language proficiency, socio-economic standing, and expectations of schooling, content knowledge, and immigration status (NCTE, 2014). Formerly, large ELL populations were concentrated in a few states, but today almost all states have populations

of ELLs. In 2005, four percent of ELL eighth graders achieved proficiency on the reading portion of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) versus 31 percent of all eighth graders who were found to be proficient. Non-native English speakers 14–18 years old were 21 percent less likely to have completed high school than native English speakers (NCTE, 2014).

Specifically in Staten Island's Port Richmond neighborhood, many families of Mexican descent face challenges as English language learners. These students encompass a group that would benefit greatly from a quality, appropriate afterschool programs that promote literacy skills. Furthermore, research and anecdotal evidence show that afterschool programs with structured literacy components can contribute positively to children's' success in school, improvement in reading, and their overall social skills (de Kanter et. al, 2000).

Students at Risk: Learners with Special Needs

Children with special needs have historically been educated separately from their non-disabled peers, sometimes being institutionalized and not educated at all. With the civil rights movement, however, a shift began with parents demanding that their exceptional children have access to free and appropriate public education. Students with disabilities were finally given access to free and appropriate public education through legislation in 1975, but despite these advances children with significant disabilities are grossly under-represented in afterschool programs (Afterschool Alliance, 2008). According to the U.S. Department of Education, only 14 percent of students with disabilities ages 3 to 21 were served in programs in 2003-2004. Even so, the Afterschool Alliance (2008) noted that more

than 2.8 million families nationwide are raising at least one child with a disability between the ages of 5 and 17, representing 1 out of every 10 American families raising children.

Additionally, youth with disabilities face significant challenges both in the school environment and in the transition to adult lives. With these at-risk factors, students with disabilities are less likely to receive a regular high school diploma compared to their non-disabled peers and as many as sixty five percent of individuals with disabilities are unemployed or underemployed (Afterschool Alliance, 2008). More specifically, there is an incredible need to discern what will happen to the post- school age population of youth with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).   With the current Center for Disease Control rates of verified autistic children at 1 in 68, the nation is now faced with large numbers of young people on the spectrum who will need to find employment in the next decade (CDC, 2014). According to Paul Shattuck, a lead autism researcher at the A.J. Drexel Autism Institute, "Young people with an ASD had the highest risk of being completely disengaged from any kind of postsecondary education or employment. This risk remained greater than 50% for the first 2 years after high school" (Shattuck et al, 2012, p. 144). Furthermore he states that, "It appears that youth with an ASD are uniquely at high risk for a period of struggling to find ways to participate in work and school after leaving high school" (Shattuck et al, 2012, p. 142).   One way to begin addressing these needs is through quality, appropriate afterschool programming to support social, technical, and relevant academic skills.

Afterschool programs must reach students of all various ages and needs. There are promising practices for implementing or incorporating successful strategies to support students with special needs in afterschool programs. The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (1995) states that inclusive settings promote

improved performance on standardized tests, mastery of individualized education goals, higher grades, improved behavior, and increased motivation to learn. While this notion is geared towards in-school inclusive settings, there is also validity that educators and program leaders can implement these practices in out-of-school programs. Furthermore, afterschool programs can use supplemental services and assistive technology to support learners with special needs (Gardner, 1997). Certain successful factors include, "afterschool programs positively impacting students with special needs in key areas of academic, cognitive and social skills" (Afterschool Alliance, 2004, p. 2). It is clear that afterschool programming can make a pivotal impact on academic and social growth, but this programming must not just be available, it must be quality.

This study examined two afterschool models that support learners with English learning and special needs in the Staten Island community. The intent of this study was to closely document and examine ways that these programs implemented programs to meet their goals and support youth through the community-university partnership model. The demand, as seen in the national statistics, is evident, and the community-university partnership model has the potential to create, support, and grow quality programs. In this study, the researcher hoped to explore each program in terms of quality and overall experiences from levels of participation and programming. Specific study questions were as follows:

- What successes and challenges existed in two current Wagner Education Department community-university partnerships that provide afterschool programs for youth (Los Promotores Afterschool Literacy Program and Tech Kids Unlimited Workshops)?

- What were specific program goals, implementation processes, and structures of the programs?

- How did program coordinators, faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students experience program quality?

- How could these programs potentially increase their quality delivery of their community-university partnership model?

Chapter II: Review of Literature

The overwhelming data about the national demand and need for quality afterschool programs create a strong case for increased programming. However, in meeting these needs, it is important to understand what is known about models of successful afterschool programming and cost-effective ways to sustain programs. This literature review will explore the conceptual development, program curriculum, development, and participant feedback of successful afterschool programs nationwide. In addition, the literature will explore various themes to inform ways to sustain, support, and establish strong afterschool program models by reviewing what ways successful afterschool programs nationwide achieved quality and how this idea of quality is defined. Furthermore, it will specifically consider the community-university model in coordination with small universities in urban settings to see how afterschool programs can be implemented using this model.

Defining, Assessing, and Evaluating Quality in Afterschool Programs

Afterschool programs can define and assess quality through careful program evaluations. There are three basic reasons to define quality in out-of-school programs, according the Harvard Family Research Project (2008). These major reasons include making management decisions, demonstrating accountability, and building a case for sustainability. Although there is no definitive approach to evaluating a program, there are some basic principles for approaching this matter. All programs have the ability to evaluate, but the type of evaluation often depends upon the degree to which program services are established (HFRP, 2008).

Whether collecting attendance data or administering participant surveys, the process of data collection does not need to be especially complex. Young programs must

examine start-up concerns like implementation and staff training, while more stable programs can assess effects of their services. All programs must consider their stakeholders when planning evaluations in order to establish consensus about their importance and help avoid resentment when concerns may arise about evaluation processes or findings. Evaluations can also be empowering because they can make stakeholders feel they are involved with a program that matters, helping to make these missions stronger and more developed over time (HFRP, 2008).

One of the initial steps in any evaluation is to define program goals and how services aim to meet them. As explained by the Harvard Family Research Project, convening all out-of-school time stakeholders for the program and clarifying goals together helps all stakeholders, including staff, specify program content and intentions. A useful approach to goal setting is the development of a logic model, which is a clear way to design and summarize key elements of a program and show the cause-and-effect relationship between the program and its intended results. A productive logic model example from which programs can learn was created in 2000 by the Child Care Partnership Project and features the elements of desired results, motivating conditions and causes, strategies, activities, performance measures, and indicators (HFRP, 2008).

Another option for programs to help assess and evaluate their level of quality is the Five-Tiered Approach to Program Evaluation, which can provide a helpful contextual guide for assessing afterschool models. All programs are able to do at least some evaluation, but the various tiers allow different types of program to explore quality. The only tier recommended for all programs is tier one, pre-implementation planning, which is something that every program can and should do. The various tiers include Tier One: Pre-

Implementation Planning, Tier Two: Service Documentation, Tier Three: Program Clarification, Tier Four: Program Modification, Tier Five: Program Impact (HFRP, 2008). In overall evaluation planning, though, a program's information needs evolve as it develops and, therefore, its evaluation approach must accommodate program change (HFRP, 2008). Using this tiered model, programs can identify many ways to assess their level of impact, quality, and sustainability.

Evaluation is an ongoing cycle of process-feedback that requires phases of evaluation to shape the next phase. Programs can use any number of program evaluation approaches to assess, define, and achieve quality, but the considerations vary by each program size, type, and model. There are various ways that programs can achieve quality, but having clear goals and serving a population in need are often major features in definitions of quality programs. Nationwide, there are many afterschool programs that have achieved quality and set a standard of excellence.

Literacy Based Programs for Urban, Low-Income, and ELL populations

Background

Effective programs have the ability to support language growth and literacy acquisition for English language learners and native speakers. The following afterschool program examples provide insight to the literature documenting national successes in afterschool programming related to literacy development. As literacy now encompasses many digital aspects, this review of literature includes both digital and more traditional literacy content. The specific programs detailed below have established strong afterschool program models, which while using different approaches, have proven successful according to close evaluations.

CORAL Initiative

In California, The James Irvine Foundation launched the Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning (CORAL) initiative in 1999 with the goal of improving the academic achievement of children in the lowest-performing schools in five California cities. CORAL adopted a targeted approach toward reaching this goal by integrating a regular schedule of literacy instruction into its afterschool programs. This tightly focused literacy program ran three to four days a week and resulted in "pronounced gains in achievement for a range of students" (Arbreton, A., et. al., 2008). CORAL implemented high-quality and consistent literacy programming. To assess the impact of their focus on literacy achievement, their evaluations examined participants' characteristics, program experiences, engagement, outcomes, and program quality and costs, based on child surveys and assessments, program observations, parent surveys and focus groups, and staff surveys and interviews.

One major approach that helped the CORAL Initiative was the constant documentation and quality review of all afterschool program functions. Sheldon, Arbreton, Hopkins, and Grossman (2010) effectively examined the relationship between the implementation quality of after-school literacy activities and student reading gains. Using the focus of the CORAL initiative, they evaluated this multi-site afterschool program in California, ultimately helping this program improve the delivery of their balanced literacy program. Some research highlights include specific strategies that programs should implement, including targeted staff training throughout the year, regular observations and coaching of staff, and the use of data to measure progress (Arbreton et. al., 2008). The evaluation was realistic and provided an additional view of the CORAL program, which

initially struggled to successfully implement strategies early in the initiative. However, with careful monitoring and program adaptations, the afterschool model at this site gradually improved quality and consistency. Results suggested that the size of student reading gains were positively correlated with the quality of literacy programming provided by each instructor (Arbreton, A., et. al., 2008). Clearly, the training and skill level of the quality instructors in low income, urban California cities made a major impact in the balanced literacy model for their afterschool student population.

21st Century Community Learning Centers

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program was a key component of the Clinton-Gore administration's commitment to help families and communities keep their children safe and smart, supported by grants from the U.S. Department of Education (de Kanter et al, 2000). This program enabled school districts to fund public schools with afterschool access, funding over 3,600 schools in more than 900 communities (de Kanter et al, 2000). Through this partnership, grants were provided to fund public schools as community education centers. These centers included student access to afterschool homework centers, tutors, cultural enrichment, and recreational and nutritional opportunities (de Kanter et al, 2000). About 60 percent of these centers operated at least 15 hours each week, with the vast majority focused on boosting achievement in core subject areas.

A successful aspect of these 21st Century Community Learning Centers was the communication with the regular school day program, found to be evident in several collaborative activities. One of the most surprising statistics relating to this afterschool program was that approximately 90 percent of the learning centers collaborated with

community-based organizations (NCL, 2014). The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program demonstrates that partnership models can be sustained with grant funding to provide expanded support for children and their families in the crucial afterschool hours (NCL, 2014).

Writing Rock Stars

At George Mason University, Gring-Pemble and Gardner (2010) show how the development, implementation, and preliminary findings of an innovative writing program that drew upon a peer collaborative model and a community literacy perspective. While this effort was developed as an afterschool program, the project demonstrated the value of a community-university partnership, which was designed to provide an enjoyable forum for teaching and learning writing techniques, including principles outside of strict state curricular guidelines. Some of the most relevant and helpful data suggested that important benefits of this type of partnership are for young children, parents, and the surrounding community. It was applicable and relevant to the after-school literacy programs and provided insight to the partnership model.

This program aimed to improve basic grammar and high-level writing skills by providing an enjoyable forum for teaching and learning writing techniques and principles beyond state curricular guidelines (Gring-Pemble & Garner, 2010). The writing instruction program aim was created due to the community outcry for quality writing instruction, as the Virginia Public schools' writing guidelines were lacking the instructional strengths parents and educators felt were necessary. This pilot program earned praise from school administration and teachers, inspiring Fairfax County Schools to request writing program support from other community stakeholders.

Literacy Loop

Another successful afterschool program is Literacy Loop. This program engages cross-age tutors to complement Open Court, which is their dominant system of a phonics-based reading and writing curriculum implemented in students' regular school day. Linking the afterschool program to the in-school curriculum created a sense of continuity to the literacy instruction (Madsen, 2011). In this program, tutors were randomly paired with afterschool children who were mostly identified as being low in reading skills and/or reading fluency. Weekly, each dyad participated in a one-on-one session for 30 to 50 minutes lasting for 10 weeks. The participants used cross-age tutoring, which is noted as one of many useful tools for specifically enhancing reading achievement and is also successful for reading remediation (Ritter et al., 2009). At the end of the 10-week period, each child was asked to write a short paragraph describing their reading experience, while each college student was asked to write a lengthier description of their experiences (Madsen, 2011). During the study, these college tutors were under the daily supervision of the regular after-school elementary teacher who supervised the entire program (Madsen, 2011).

KidzLit

A California based program known as KidzLit has found success in their approach using a literature-based curriculum (Sheldon et. al, 2012). This particular afterschool program used similar features found in the phonics-based Literacy Loop. KidzLit provided high-quality literature through read-alouds, independent reading, and additional extension activities that included role-playing, writing, and creating music and art. Within Kidzlit, instructors completed read aloud as a focus of the program, which also included "cool

words" vocabulary exercises and writing exercises (Sheldon et. al, 2012, p. 397). Kidzlit also emphasized additional strategies that allowed youth to think more deeply about texts— for example, discussion, art, drama or music activities related to the read aloud books (Sheldon et. al, 2012, p. 399). Kidzlit provided books to use for read alouds, as well as accompanying guides with suggested activities that relate to those books.

Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools

During a pilot afterschool program at Los Angeles Unified School District's Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools, the use of digital literacies was studied using a combination of field-notes, instructor and student reflections, photographs, video recordings, and student work to illustrate the program's culture of participatory learning (Felt et al, 2012). Students were supported with acquisition of digital literacy skills, new media literacies, and social and emotional learning competencies. In essence, this program shows that afterschool programs can simultaneously build relationships with citizenship while enhancing literacy skills for learners both online and offline (Felt et al, 2012).

Part of the successful theoretical framework included practicing the 4 C's of Participation, which invited and often demanded twelve new media literacies (NMLs). This unique set of cultural competencies was based on the social shifts and skills that young people need and recognized the participatory culture of online and offline "affinity" spaces (Felt et al, 2012, p. 212). The interest driven curriculum established heightened motivations for new forms of engagement, while also, "creating opportunities for creating and solving problems with a variety of media, tools, and practices" (Felt et al, 2012, p. 215). Overall, the flexibility of the afterschool program contributed to the culture of participatory learning and supported creative growth.

Integrating Digital Literacies in After-School

Another successful afterschool program that aimed to address literacy skills occurred through a New York graduate program for pre-service educators. McDermott and Gormley (2013) show how instructors can integrate the digital literacies into afterschool programs, providing evidence that digital literacies can be successfully integrated into lessons to help struggling learners in afterschool programs. The program used a model of community-university partnerships with pre-service college students participating in an after-school practicum over a six-week period with a local elementary school. This practicum was part of a required program for teachers completing their master's degrees in literacy education or literacy and special education. In order to identify the structure of their lessons and the impact of the types of digital literacies with the children, pre-service educators helped students gain oral reading fluency, which helped them compose multimedia texts.

A typical structure of a digital lesson included lesson openings, fluency practice, graphica, and composing and comprehending (Gormley & McDermott, 2013). These reoccurring features introduced children to digital recorders like Audacity and graphic panels of comic creator websites like Make Beliefs Comix. Students and pre-service educators also used collaborative work on webquests and composed multimedia texts using Animoto. Some additional features of the digital literacy program included mini-lessons on graphic novels, acrostic poems, independent reading of conventional books, and challenge questions. Teachers were able to capitalize on the social nature of digital literacies while also recognizing the collaborative efforts of students to complete these projects.

John W. Gardner Youth and Communities at Stanford University

Another successful afterschool program initiative was created through a community-university partnership between the John W. Gardner Youth and Communities Program with Stanford University. Research has found that this community-university partnership is vital to improving the lives of youths, supporting community-development initiative, and engaging civic leaders (Anyon & Fernandez, 2007). Furthermore, their research shows how college students can impact different afterschool programs. In two San Francisco Bay-area communities, Redwood City and West Oakland, programs highlight how universities can be positively impacted by community partnerships. More specifically, this program was based on a youth-leadership model called Youth Engaged in Leadership and Learning (YELL) that supported young people to lead projects on social justice (Anyon and Fernandez (2007). This study showed how universities can connect to communities while improving the program goals through documentation and research.

Quality Afterschool Programs for Students with Special Needs

Background

Effective collaboration among professionals can result in improved services and enhanced quality of life for children with disabilities (Forlin & Hopewell, 2006). Furthermore, collaboration has become an essential skill for serving all children within schools and beyond (Friend & Cook, 2009). Community-university partnerships provide a valuable model that may include businesses, health care facilities, and not-for-profit organizations, as well as individuals (Hands, 2005; Sanders, 2001). Hands (2005) describes such partnerships to support students with disabilities as a "win-win situation" (p. 13).

Kids Included Together (KIT)

Kids Included Together (KIT) is one example of an afterschool model that actively supports special needs youth. This non-profit organization supports recreational, child development and youth development programs that include children with and without disabilities (Afterschool Alliance, 2008). One of the strengths of this program is the training and support on best practices for the out-of-school time. KIT also recognizes the power of partnerships and focuses on sustainability so that organizations continue to provide inclusive environments.

Orange County Public School Afterschool

The county government established a fund to ensure all students, including children with disabilities, have access to quality public education during afterschool hours. This fund also ensures that programs are adequately funded and have a staff that is trained through the county and school system to best meet the need of all students. Elizabeth Fulmer of the School Age Child Care Services in Orange County, Florida, stated that, "Afterschool program that include children with special needs allow all children to develop social skills as well as participate in enrichment activities" (Fulmer, 2008, p. 3). It is strongly based in the philosophy that all children have the opportunity to participate, since modifications can always be made.

Community-University Partnerships and the Potential Impact

As seen in many of the previously explored afterschool programs, the use of community-university partnerships can provide a wide array of options for informal educational programming. According to Novak, Murray, Scheuermann, and Curran (2009), three essential characteristics are present in authentic service learning experiences for

university students partnering with schools and community-based organizations. These characteristics include a reciprocal relationship through which a specific community-based need is met, the integration of academic content within the service learning experience, and ongoing reflection connecting the content and the experience to personal growth (Novak et al, 2009). At universities like Stanford, University of Pennsylvania, University of South Carolina, Carleton College, and George Mason University, education departments are placing significant emphasis on the role of valuable partnerships. These education departments are paving the way for pre-service educators to gain valuable experience, while also focusing on supporting local evaluation efforts and engaging major community-development initiatives. As found in many cases, these initiatives resulted in powerful new knowledge for the academic field and transformative experiences for community members. Although the partnerships in many of these communities evolved differently, they strove to support all stakeholders involved.

Using the hub of community-university partnerships to blend academic support with community need, several afterschool programs have found an effective method. Stanford University and University of South Carolina were able to succeed using clear program outlines and attainable objectives. Another feature was to use professional learning communities and professional development site-inquiry based teacher training, which was explained and used effectively with Project RAISSE. In order to partner effectively with local elementary schools, the University of South Carolina used the theory base of their professional development and applied it to direct practice on site (Clary et al, 2012).

At the University of South Carolina, Clary, Stylsinger, and Oglan (2012) created a literacy learning community model that developed between two educational partnership sites and their large southern public university. This successful program showed how teacher collaboration and shared learning across content areas in the first year impacted teachers' learning about literacy instruction and each K-12 schools' vision for literacy. Similar to other successful literacy programs, they embedded staff development characterized by collaborative approaches to teachers' learning located in professional learning communities; such an approach is effective especially with respect to teaching content area reading (Clary et al, 2012). It was shown how teacher collaboration that honors continuous professional learning, either in a school-university partnership or within a wider group at the school or district level, offers rich possibilities for generating viable literacy-based learning communities. The opportunities can be modeled after a working program for literacy education.

Similarly, Harkvay (2005) presented the importance of researching and evaluating university-community collaboration in an urban setting. Over a series of two decades, the University of Pennsylvania, community organizations, and the public schools in Philadelphia Penn's Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) have worked with other neighborhood resources to create university-assisted community schools that are centers of education and engagement. Not only does this type of partnership provide a range of additional services for students, their parents, and other community members, it is backed by credible research. The specific partnerships described are the school-based community health promotion and disease prevention program at Sayre Middle School and the literacy program at Drew Elementary School. Most specifically, the literacy program offers insights

into how the university and the community have worked together to create meaningful change. Former U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley even said that, "Public schools, working with community partners, are the best place for afterschool programs . . . they are at the center of the community and in a great position to offer high-quality learning opportunities in a safe place" (de Kanter et al, 2000, p. 6). The University of Pennsylvania and the surrounding community have gained a sense of trust and shared growth over these two decades of partnerships.

At Bowling Green University, the education department used the service-learning model to partner with their surrounding community. In two different special education teacher preparation approaches, teacher candidates were supported in community-university partnerships. Notably, the undergraduate version involved an afterschool learning program for students in need of additional skill development while the graduate candidates developed and implemented specific projects of value to the community agency. The collaborations prepared candidates to engage in service learning while combining the experience with specific learning goals (Gonsier-Gerdin & Royce-Davis, 2005). Students also had clear course guidelines and used a consistent format of parent conference checklists, student assessments, lesson planning, progress reports, and reflection logs to complete their curriculum goals.

Carleton College's Commitment to Community-University Partnerships

Another strong example of successful community-university partnerships is The CCCE Volunteer Tutoring Program provided at Carleton College ("Carleton College Center for Community and Civic Engagement", 2015). According to the 2015 edition of college rankings in the *U.S. News and World Report*, Carleton College was awarded the

number one spot for undergraduate teaching at a national liberal arts college. As a small private college, Carleton enrolls approximately 2,000 undergraduate students, and their mission is strongly rooted in community engagement. Their education department and civic engagement department coordinate a free tutoring program that matches Carleton student volunteers with local Northfield students in need of one-on-one academic assistance in any subject.

In this afterschool program, tutoring sessions are individualized to the student's needs and can include review of concepts learned in school, preparation for upcoming tests, help with homework, or other academic matters ("Carleton College Center for Community and Civic Engagement", 2015). All information about this program is concisely outlined on their education website and also explained in Spanish. Students and families that have interest from the community are provided a link to the tutoring request forms, pairing them with specific collegiate tutors. Beyond this partnership, Carleton College has numerous community connections and opportunities, including Project Friendship. This program matches college students with elementary school youth (2nd-7th grades) from the community district of Northfield schools. The goal of the program is to develop strong friendships between college students who have made positive choices in their lives and children who need such role models. In this program, pairs meet once a week, and additionally participate with other pairs in a large group activity a few times a term. Volunteers in this program must also receive training through an orientation and complete an application ("Carleton College Center for Community and Civic Engagement", 2015).

This higher education institution places a strong value on building, strengthening, and maintaining partnerships. They even highlight best practices and principles of good partnerships for other universities and community partners to consider. Some of the recommendations of best practices include allotting time for relationship building, learning to talk together about inequality and its causes with candor; identifying trust established partnerships; understanding organizational contexts to explore norms, culture, traditions and value; ensuring fairness in the exchange of resources; sharing in the role of expert; and being meticulous about the details of specific goals of the partnership ("Carleton College Center for Community and Civic Engagement", 2015).

Themes of Quality Program Models and Implementation

These afterschool programs from across the country offer a rich picture of how program providers have striven to ensure students have quality afterschool learning opportunities. Six themes stand out across the literature: Clear goals and vision, active evaluation plans, inclusion of 21st century literacies, use of balanced literacy approaches, strong staff and professional development, and rigorous research agendas.

Clear Goals and Shared Vision from Stakeholders

Having a collective goal with a sustainable vision creates a seamless partnership for communities and universities. Stakeholders must develop positive relationships and provide effective practices to confirm the value and contextual relevance of these partnerships. In further developing the research of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH), Carleton College has highlighted he principles of good community-university partnerships. Some of the principles of good community campus partnerships include, "partners having agreed upon mission, values, goals and measurable outcomes for

the partnership; the relationship between partners being characterized by mutual trust, respect, genuineness and commitment; the partnership building upon identified strengths and assets, but also addressing areas that need improvement; the partnership balancing power among partners and enabling resources among partners to be shared" ("Carleton College Center for Community and Civic Engagement", 2015). It also states that there must be strong feedback to, among, and from all stakeholders in the partnership, with the goal of continuously improving the partnership and its outcomes ("Carleton College Center for Community and Civic Engagement", 2015). Such clarity and transparency help further the partners to share credit for accomplishments and taking time to evolve over time. For participants in the programs, the shared vision and goals make the process run more smoothly.

Staff, Student, and Program Evaluations

One of the biggest benefits of the community-university model is the opportunity to establish a strong learning agenda. Successful afterschool programs using the community-university partnership model consistently pursue collaborations that support evaluation of practice for both students and the broader community (Anyon & Fernandez, 2007). A consistent argument of researchers shows that the most effective and influential afterschool programs were able to reflect, evaluate, and critique their programs. For example, in the KidzLit program, the programmers completed internal evaluations of staff members and their impact on student development. In addition, all the programs and curricula studied approach literacy differently and use different measures to determine impact on students. Although the overall scope of the studies varied greatly, the focus for student growth and literacy development was consistent. While some studies were

nationwide, others like the CORAL initiative, were conducted locally to meet specific needs of the community.

Use of 21ˢᵗ Century Literacies in Afterschool Model

In this technological era, literacy's definition continues to grow to encompass more types of literacy beyond the classic notion of reading and writing. Now, literacy encompasses the digital age and addresses new literacies like blogging, wikis, e-readers, and computer-competency skills. However, the constant seems to remain that low–income, disenfranchised students across the U.S. are behind in literacy skills—including these new literacies—due to unequal opportunities to learn both at home and in the classroom. Quality afterschool programs often include these new literacies and promote innovative learning experiences in an informal setting.

The NCTE Definition of 21st century literacies was adopted in February 2013, noting the growth and change of the literacy skills needed in society. As they note in their definition, since "literacy has always been a collection of cultural and communicative practices shared among members of particular groups . . . society and technology change, so does literacy" (NCTE, 2014, p. 12). Furthermore, the updated NCTE definition states that, "Because technology has increased the intensity and complexity of literate environments, the 21st century demands that a literate person possess a wide range of abilities and competencies, many literacies" (p. 13). This is one aspect of engaging afterschool programs that could be considered for appropriate afterschool curriculum.

Effectiveness of the Balanced Literacy Model

Within several effective afterschool literacy programs, balanced literacy was used as a program model. For the CORAL afterschool Initiative, "each lesson had to include, at

a minimum, an opportunity for staff to read aloud to youth and an opportunity for youth to read individually with leveled book, while also including other key balanced literacy strategies" (Sheldon et. al, 2012, p. 399). Some of these effective tools within balanced literacy included book discussion, writing, vocabulary building, and "fun" activities to encourage the development of literacy skills. During any given balanced literacy lesson, in the first year of implementation, the CORAL instructors generally led youth in about three of those literacy activities.

CORAL used this model following the effective balanced literacy models of past afterschool programs including Kidzlit and YET (Youth Education for Tomorrow). These programs implemented the balanced literacy model with the support of one-on-one tutoring and leveled classroom texts. Although Kidzlit does not contain an independent reading component as part of its standard curriculum, the CORAL cities included this component in their programming in order to offer a complete balanced literacy curriculum.

Another use of the balanced literacy model was used and proven effective by afterschool research is from Youth Education for Tomorrow (YET). This structured program included five primary activities such as read alouds, youth reading independently, skill activities to build youth's literacy skills, opportunities to talk about books during "shout out," and writing (Sheldon et. al, 2012, p. 398). Within this structure, instructors were free to choose their own books, lesson topics and skill activities, although YET did not provide additional suggestions. For independent reading, YET worked with 100 Book Challenge, an organization that provides sites with bins of leveled books to ensure that youth are reading at appropriate levels.

Meaningful Professional Development and Dedicated Staff

One of the most consistent themes in successful afterschool programs was the incorporation of highly qualified and trained staff for programs. According to the 2014 NCTE, "Professional learning of educators is necessary for high-quality literacy instruction and student learning at all academic levels," as this experience, "depends upon tapping the substantial expertise that already exists and upon sharing constantly emerging knowledge about literacy teaching and learning" (NCTE, 2014, p. 3).

The inclusion of trained, prepared program volunteers is essential for quality afterschool programs. Whether supporting pre-service educators or paid employees, the staff participants in successful afterschool programs were provided meaning instruction prior, during, and after program implementation. One method that has been used is the TEARS framework. This was originally defined by Leggett and Persichitte (1998) as a set of implementation factors for classroom educational technology using five factors including time, expertise, access, resources, and support (Gutierrez, N. et al, 2008). Since afterschool programs have unique schedules, programs, and needs, professional development should help afterschool staff members to address program needs and student learning needs. By having an intentional planning process, high quality professional development can help support a concise framework for detailed curriculum and well-prepared staff members. This planning process impacts the student learning outcomes and makes the process of afterschool professional development a worthwhile endeavor.

Within the same idea of highly trained staff, the use of university partnerships can provides a group of staff participants with specific skill sets. For example, schools of education can provide assistance in staff training and development to guide curricula and

link programs to standards (NLC, 2014). Having students that are being supported with related coursework, especially in educational afterschool settings, provides a unique opportunity for all stakeholders.

Ongoing Research of Programs

Another feature of successful afterschool programs and partnerships is the accountability and rigorous quantitative indicators of program benefits through quasi-experimental or experimental research designs. In recent evaluations of the After-School Corporation's (TASC) programs (Reisner et al, 2002), evaluators combined quasi-experimental impact estimates with interviews, focus groups, reviews of program documents, and in-depth site observations. This approach enabled evaluators to identify both likely program impacts (e.g., increased math performance and school attendance) and strong program components that seemed likely to have contributed to these impacts (e.g., intensity of activities and integration with host schools). Mixed-methods approaches provided a more holistic picture of the program and of how features of program quality might lead to youth outcomes. This approach helps establish program quality, whereby quantitative results are enriched and expanded through qualitative inquiry (Rossman & Wilson, 1994).

Chapter III: Methods

The literature guided this study design in an effort to identify and research supports

the beneficial use of the community-university partnership model for educational

afterschool programs. More specifically, this project explored and closely documented two

afterschool programs offered through the Wagner College Education Department during

the 2014-2015 academic-year. The two programs being analyzed included the Los

Promotores P.S. 20 Afterschool Literacy Program and Tech Kids Unlimited Workshops

(also referred to as Wagner TecKids U Lab and TKU). The goal of this study was not to

compare and contrast these partnerships, but rather to engage readers in each program's

complexities. While each program had a specific focus group of students, both programs

strove for developing participants' lifelong literacy skills, the former supporting English

language learners and the latter supporting learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Each

of these afterschool programs used different approaches to increase academic language,

social-emotional development, technical skills, and real-life applications of the knowledge

and skills being learned. Though different in these respects, each program was

implemented in the community through a partnership with the education department and

provided experiences to benefit pre-service educators. While all associated pre-service

educators were invited to the study, they were not required to participate. With that in mind,

the results show only a portion of participants and not the complete experiences of the

population.

With careful planning and implementation, successful afterschool programs can

support youth with rich experiences. Therefore it is necessary for researchers to help these

programs assess core factors of quality and explore outcomes to create even higher quality

programs (Afterschool Alliance, 2011). This action research project strove to use document analysis and participant feedback for each program, exploring intended and actual experiences of undergraduate students, graduate students, professional educators, and program coordinators. The goal was to create quality documentation to support program improvement in each afterschool program, highlighting successes of each initiative based on the college students' feedback, and showing areas that were most productive and/or challenging for future programs using this model.

It is important to note that this research did not address the quality of the school-aged populations' experience or, in the case of Los Promotores, parents' experiences. The focus of the study was strictly on the college students' perceptions, based on the reality that such college-community partnerships rely heavily on college student particppation.

There are a variety of community-university partnership models that offer afterschool programs, but research remains limited for how smaller universities can utilize the models specifically for youth education. This research hoped to provide insight as to how high-quality afterschool programs can function through the community-university partnership model in smaller institutions. Although funding is limited in many of these circumstances, community-university partnerships allow exciting educational collaborations in a cost-efficient model. This is a model that can support the development of pre-service educators by allowing quality, experiential learning to occur. The afterschool program environment presents young learners with an unmatched arena with academic, social, emotional and physical development, but quality matters; extra time spent in program in not enough (Afterschool Alliance, 2011). One possible way to help bridge the

gap for communities that lack quality programming is to consider the community-university partnership model.

More specifically, the questions of the study included the following:

- What successes and challenges existed in two current Wagner Education Department community-university partnerships that provide afterschool programs for youth (Los Promotores Afterschool Literacy Program and Tech Kids Unlimited Workshops)?

- What were specific program goals, implementation processes, and structures of the programs?

- How did program coordinators, faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students experience program quality?

- How could these programs potentially increase their quality delivery of their community-university partnership model?

Beyond these program specific questions, the research also strove to compare these two local programs compare to the national literature on community-university partnerships. Additionally, the study hoped to explore, if possible, the ways these two local programs might learn from and more closely emulate, where appropriate, the national literature on community-university partnerships.

Participant Selection, Risks and Benefits

This study was completely voluntary, inviting the 24 undergraduate and graduate participants in the programs, with the hope of obtaining approximately 10 total participants. Each program had a different context and focus for participants, as Tech Kids Unlimited

was a paid weekend opportunity while Los Promotores stretched over the course of the entire semester as part of a graduate program requirement. In all, 17 undergraduate and graduate students participated in the confidential survey portion of the research. Seven participants from the graduate program were survey participants for Los Promotores while 10 participants from both undergraduate and graduate programs partook in the Tech Kids Unlimited survey. The survey respondents for Los Promotores showed only a small sample of willing participants over one semester of the program, though all pre-service educators were invited. This study did not intend to survey participants from the four semesters of the program, but their experiences could benefit future studies.

As was made clear in the consent email for the participant survey (see Appendix A), if individuals did not choose to participate, there was no negative outcome. Furthermore, the study used no deception and it ensured transparency for participants, as stated in the email consent and survey agreement.

In addition to the pre-service educators, this research included program coordinators, faculty, and program facilitator interviews. They were also invited through a voluntary invitation process and contacted via email. Three key program leads participated, two from TKU and one from Los Promotores. These interviews were conducted with initial assurances of confidentiality and a follow-up member check to allow full publication of the data (Appendix B).

Setting

Each program took place at different settings over the course of the 2014-2015 academic year. The Tech Kids Unlimited Workshops took place in the Spiro Hall Mac Lab

at Wagner College on a series of four Sunday afternoon sessions form November 2014

through February 2015. Los Promotores Afterschool Literacy Program took place in two

classrooms of P.S. 20 in the Port Richmond community of Staten Island, New York. This

program was an afterschool program that took place from 4:20-6:00 pm on Monday

afternoons from August 2014-December 2014.

Participant Observer

A participant observation methodology following the guidelines of Patton (2002)

was used in this study. The research used participant observer notes and document analysis.

The participant observer data was inclusive of all the researcher's own documents from

August 25th, 2014 through February 25th, 2015 (Patton, 2001). The timeline allowed each

program to complete one full cycle of each afterschool program. The Los Promotores

Afterschool Literacy Program used participant observer notes from September 2014-

December 2014. The Tech Kids Unlimited Workshop included participant observer notes

from November 2014 to February 2015.

Instrumentation Design

Based on the review of literature, two surveys were developed by the researcher for

pre-service educator participants in the two afterschool programs (See Appendices D and

E). The researcher used online surveys created through Qualtrics. Each survey was

designed with five blocks of questions divided into the following conceptual areas:

"Preparation and Motivation to Participate," "Outreach and Communication," "Logistics,"

"Benefits and Strengths of the Program," and "Challenges and the Future of the Program."

The questions consisted of the same structure for each afterschool program, using a

combination of sliding scale, multiple choice, and text entry to provide themes for analysis.

The only variants were related to the program population (English Language Learners and students with special needs). Each survey was emailed to pre-service educators and Wagner College participants involved in the Los Promotores P.S. 20 Afterschool Literacy Program (Appendix D) and the Tech Kids Unlimited Workshops (Appendix E). These data, along with participant observer notes, form the basis for Chapter IV of the study.

The process for outreach and communication was completed through documented program reflection, email consent forms, and written documentation, with surveys being distributed through Qualtrics. The researcher emailed the program providers seeking willing volunteers of both undergraduate and graduate level pre-service educators. The consent forms for all surveys were distributed through email invitation (Appendix A).

In addition to these two surveys, the researcher also created an interview protocol. This document consisted of interview questions for program facilitators, associated professors, and program coordinators for each program. The questions, which were designed to help inform interpretation of the surveys, had some similar themes to the pre-service educator surveys. These data are incorporated in the discussion in the final chapter of this study to help elucidate trends and themes throughout the programs.

Design and Procedure

Permission for the researcher to conduct this study was granted through approval of the institutional review board (IRB) created by the Wagner College Education department to review the use of human participants in research. All participants were contacted via email and informed of the consent prior to the study. There was no deception in the study design and it ensured anonymity for participants, as stated in the email consent

and survey agreement (See Appendix A and B). All participants were also notified about the purpose of the study and their right to cease participation at any time.

This study followed a three-part, mixed methods approach. The first component of the study included participant observations that took place for both community-university partnership programs over the course of seven months. The observations allowed the researcher to learn more about each program's format and helped establish context for surveys and interviews that took place later in the study.

The second part of this study used two surveys to learn more about the education students' experiences participating in the community-university partnerships. These surveys were created using Qualtrics. To inform the pre-service educators, the researcher emailed the list of program participants that was assembled for Los Promotores P.S. 20 Afterschool Literacy Program and the Tech Kids Unlimited Workshop.

The third part consisted of interviews with willing program coordinators, community partners, and associated professors for each afterschool program. These individuals were asked to participate via email for consent, explaining that the study was to learn more about their experience with the specific community-university partnership but that the researcher would be using their insights to further evaluate the programs. This interview was voluntary and conducted either in-person or through virtual conferencing for a close interview opportunity.

Chapter IV: Analysis and Results

This chapter explores two parts of the research. First, this section includes a description of the programs based upon literature and participant observer notes. Second, major survey results from both Tech Kids Unlimited and Los Promotores are presented. Data from interviews are included in the final chapter as part of the discussion of themes.

Description of Programs

The following overviews of Tech Kids Unlimited and Los Promotores are based upon program literature, such as grant documents, associated syllabi, and reports, and participant observer notes.

Tech Kids Unlimited at Wagner College Program Overview

The Tech Kids Unlimited Program at Wagner College was a first-time community-university partnership geared toward students with special needs. Wagner College and Tech Kids Unlimited offered this afterschool program using the name Wagner TecKids U Lab. This program was made possible by an Adventure grant that was provided by New York Community Trust and the HIVE NYC Learning Network. The aim of the project was to teach 21st century technology skills to youth in Staten Island. The program took place from November 2014 to February 2015. The goals of the project as outlined in the Hive Adventure grant proposal were to complete the following: Expose youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder to 21st century technology skills through project-based learning such as building websites and games; explore the interest level of maker fair activities with special needs learners; teach future classroom teachers from the Education Department at Wagner College how to teach technology to youth on the spectrum via professional development training; provide future educators with a new and unique opportunity to work

with youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders; and explore the interest level and need on the borough of Staten Island for this type of technology weekend programming.

Overall, The Wagner TecKids U Lab had 31 total participants over a series of four workshops. While some workshops had as many as five more families registered, last minute cancellations due to travel transportation issues and illness hindered students, making some unable to attend the workshops at the very last moment. Some parents acknowledged that there was a large gap between session 2 and session 3 (December 7, 2014 and January 26, 2015 respectively) and that it was difficult to coax their child to attend subsequent events due to the extended timeframe between workshops.

From a family perspective, parents were thrilled that there was a safe and nurturing place for their children to be dropped off and learn about technology on various Sundays and continually asked when more programs would be available at Wagner College on Staten Island. All students who participated in the workshops were from Staten Island, even though some of them went to school during the week in other boroughs or in New Jersey. Wagner College education students were given an opportunity to take their special needs classroom studies and apply their knowledge to working with students. Tech Kids Unlimited was also able to expand programming into a borough that is noted for its large special needs population.

The Wagner TecKids U Lab was created to offer young people with autism some exposure to technology skills and a chance of creating a successful and meaningful career through a work-based learning program. Special needs students are rarely given the opportunity to be creators and makers in typical youth in-school or afterschool programs. Conversely, it is exactly these students who seem to have a natural proficiency for

technology concepts because of their neurological differences. The Wagner TecKids U Lab is seeking to change the paradigm of technology learning from typical high-achieving students who are often exposed to technology concepts in school and afterschool programs to a set of special needs youth who are often marginalized in this area.

One major benefit of this program was the support of the Wagner College Education Department. A total of 21 Wagner students expressed interest in being a part of this program. Sixteen Wagner students attended the original professional development night, and five additional students showed serious interest in the program but had scheduling conflicts so could not attend that night. Included in this number were eight education department graduate students and 13 undergraduate education students (with various dual majors including mathematics, psychology, and Spanish). Based on the program staffing needs, TKU was able to include 13 of the interested students in the actual program.

Following the completion of the workshops, many of the education majors reflected positively upon their experience with TKU. One graduate student noted that working with TKU was educational, enriching, and fun. Furthermore, the group reflected that it was truly wonderful to watch the students build and customize their own video games (Fieldnotes, February 1st, 2015). From the undergraduate perspective, one student expressed that she loved getting to work with the kids and collaborate with the TKU staff. She explained how the students clearly benefitted from the workshops academically and socially, giving them the opportunity to interact with other kids their age with similar interests, while still being in a controlled academic setting that allowed them freedom of expression and freedom to choose the outcome of their game (Fieldnotes, February 1st, 2015). These positive

reflections were also shared by parents of participating "tech kids," as many expressed gratitude for having a technology, interest-driven program tailored for their children was finally available on Staten Island.

Los Promotores Program Overview

This program was organized through a September 2013 grant from Deutsche Bank to support the local Port Richmond community through educational and literacy based programming. Various organizations including Wagner College, El Centro, Project Hospitality, Make the Road New York, and Public School 20 were recognized as participating groups. Over the past two years, the program developed an appropriate curriculum to help families learn specific strategies to assist their children with their educational needs. Graduate students modeled literacy practices in both individualized and small group instruction, supported through dyadic training with ongoing supervision from two professors.

The P.S. 20 Afterschool Literacy program was one facet of this larger grant, aiming to support the Port Richmond community and overall acquisition of literacy skills for immigrant families. The documented version of the program took place from August 2014 to December 2014 on Monday afternoons from 4:20pm-6:00pm. The goals of this portion of the program, as explained by associated professors, was to engage the students and families in literacy development, to build a sense of cultural responsiveness among pre-service teachers, and to foster mutual respect.

As a major course component of the Wagner College Education Department, this partnership grew over several versions and semesters, all with the goal to promote strong literacy skills in Port Richmond families. Los Promotores was structured with adaptations

from each semester, as seen in the various syllabi. For context of this study, the Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 syllabi were most relevant, though previous years' would reflect the growth and changes made over time. Within each syllabi, specific goals were expressed to define learning outcomes, goals for class sessions, and resources available for participants. More specifically, there were three face-to-face sessions with pre-service educators before participants worked with children and families. Within these sessions, pre-service educators were involved in exploring the background of the program, information about collaboration with stakeholders, culturally responsive practices, and instructional information. The syllabi clearly stated that, "All materials used must be culturally responsive," and that, "All teacher candidates are required to work collaboratively and professionally with colleagues, families, students, community members, and professors."

Some specific goals and assignments that required deep reflection and insight included Learning Centers Lesson Plans. These plans allowed for pre-service educators to collaborate with colleagues for planning, implementing, and evaluating three learning centers focusing on literacy learning in conjunction with varied disciplines. These lessons were aimed to incorporate specific language related to the disciplines being addressed and scaffolded based on students' abilities and challenges. Teacher candidates were expected to "plan, implement, and evaluate the learning center in order to receive full credit for the specific center." Another aspect of the syllabi was the inclusion of Collegial Coaching, which was observed during learning centers with reflection in pre-observation and post observation conferencing. Furthermore, the addition of ongoing "Supervisor Observation and Conferencing" helped pre-service educators to collaborate with professors for post-observation conferencing.

Some of the most powerful reflections occurred in a shared online forum through Moodle. Using "Paired Reflective Practice" with Brookfield's lenses after each class session, pre-service educators had the chance to reflect on both learning and teaching in the classroom (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009). Through ongoing online Moodle sessions and additional email contact, pre-service educators were able to provide support and extend participants' learning through assignments and activities. These sessions involved specific input from professors, including supporting resources such as print, media, and comparable lenses of experiences. Every session of the Los Promotores program was supported with teacher candidates, children, families, coordinator, and associated professors present. Furthermore, there was availability of program and course professors for consultation and assistance during office hours and by arrangement, as well as onsite support for associated professors.

Each week, students were given guidelines and email instructions with academic resources to develop culturally responsive lessons. Pre-service educators were sometimes paired in groups, but the attendance of program participants varied so the groups constantly adapted. Professors provided literature, articles, and research to model various instructional approaches to include in these afterschool literacy lessons. One specific approach that these lessons incorporated was graphic organizers to help students extract and manipulate essential information from the text. Another frequent strategy was the use of a word wall to provide vocabulary support in a collaborative setting. According to Gaskins (2005), word walls scaffold to help students develop their sight word and word identification knowledge. Professors also supported the use of total physical response and critical thinking skills that engaged students to examine, think, contribute observations and ideas,

listen, and build understanding together. More specifically, the total physical response helped to bridge the language acquisition gap by engaging full body movements and body language. This strategy was used for warm-up activities that often included clapping, arm movements, or stomping of feet to model different patterns. Together, these research-based approaches supported learners and engaged families in culturally responsive lessons. At the end of each weekly session, Wagner pre-service educators reflected using a four-part framework that provided their personal reflection, reflection on students, reflection on fellow colleagues, and the reflection on relevant literature. This was posted in an online forum for professors and classmates to read, respond to, and further reflect.

Overall, this program served nearly forty participants including many siblings and families. Pre-service educators worked with children as young as two and as old as 12 alongside parents, often times young mothers. From a family perspective, mothers seemed thrilled that there was a safe and nurturing place for their family to learn about literacy skills afterschool. It also provided pre-service educators a valuable practicum to practice literacy theories in an authentic setting with English language learners. All Wagner students who participated were enrolled in the graduate program for various Wagner College education majors including Teaching Literacy and Early Childhood (B-2) focuses. Students were given an opportunity to provide support, learn about the Port Richmond community, and engage in valuable balanced literacy models.

Survey Analysis of Pre-Service Educator Participants, Tech Kids Unlimited

The following sections will explore the results of the Qualtrics survey taken by pre-service educators who participated in the Tech Kids Unlimited Program at Wagner College. These results are structured into five sections. Raw data for all of the survey responses are

included in Appendix G. Results helped inform the interview questions for program leaders

and subsequent data, which are included in Chapter 5.

Preparation and Motivation for the Program

Participants in the Tech Kids program were a combination of undergraduate

students (45%), though substantial proportions also came from graduate programs in

literacy (27%). The remaining participants identified as graduate students pursuing

adolescent education (14%) and those pursuing a combination of graduate programs

including childhood education and adolescent education (14%). These classifications are

not dramatically different from the general population in the Education Department,

making this program an interesting pilot for general experiences all education students

might take advantage of. Participants for Tech Kids were recruited through personal

relationships. These relationships included those with classmates (27%) and education

professors (64%).

The participants' backgrounds with afterschool programs, special education, and

technology education varied. Regarding prior experiences with populations of students or

with educational afterschool programs, only one participant expressed not having previous

experiences. Five different participants expressed experience in self-contained classrooms,

District 75 schools, and field hours at Hungerford, a school dedicated to serving students

with low-incidence disabilities. One participant student noted that a parent was "a physical

therapist specializing in pediatrics, so I have been familiar with the jargon and background

of ASD from listening to [discussions] my entire life. In terms of physical experience I

was limited to a few hours of volunteer work" at the school where her parent worked.

Furthermore, two participants noted their experience with afterschool programs for

students with developmental disabilities focused on a religious curriculum. Another participant had more educational experience as a paraprofessional during the summer for an education consortium, working with children with severe disabilities, both mentally and physically. This experience also included working with non-verbal students.

Another student also had experience in informal environments, including "experience with special needs students in an athletic setting. I taught swim lessons and coached a special needs swim team. I have also tutored students with autism." Other out-of-school experiences described by two participants were working with Lifestyles, a local organization that supports adults with intellectual disabilities. Another previous experience that an undergraduate student shared was working with a 12 year old girl with autism at her home on academic, daily living skills, and assessing the community.

Exactly opposite the pattern of experience with the student population, only one student noted having had experience in "tech-related programs" as a counselor and teacher using various computer programs.

Participants provided feedback regarding their direct preparation for the program after they decided to be involved. Responses showed that most participants felt prepared and confident working with their peers and towards the program goals. However, slightly less than half of survey participants felt that they learned about the technology aspects of the workshops through programmatic training. The following table depicts feedback from the total number of pre-service educators that identified with the statements regarding direct preparation.

TABLE 1: PRE-SERVICE EDUCATORS PREPARATION FOR TKU
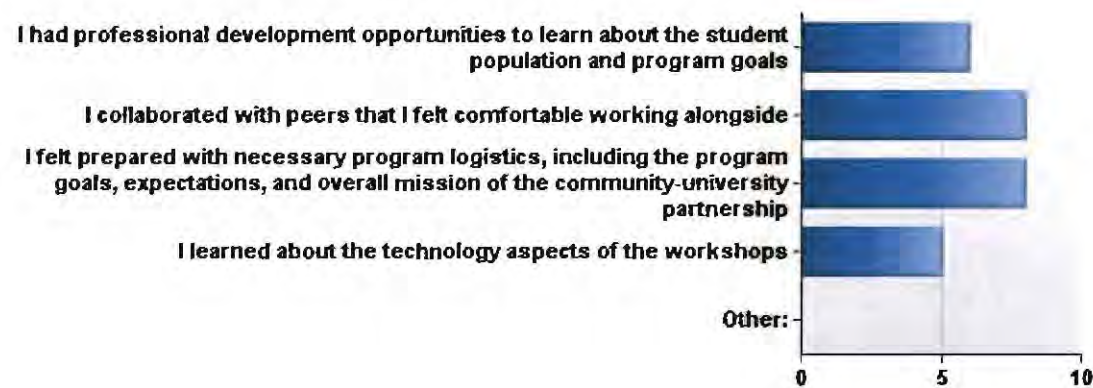
Regarding motivation, the majority of participants (five) noted that their interest in the special needs population was their biggest motivation for being involved with Tech Kids Unlimited. An additional three participants recognized experience in an informal educational environment as their highest motivator. Only one participant noted an interest in technology for educational purposes as the biggest motivator. The following table shows the varying rankings of survey participants.

TABLE 2: RANKING PRE-SERVICE EDUCATOR MOTIVATIONS

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Responses
*1 as the lowest motivator, 6 being the highest							

Real-life application of classroom theories	1	2	0	3	3	0	9
Professional experience/Resume	1	1	5	1	1	0	9
Earning desired compensation (paid hourly rate	2	2	0	0	5	0	9
Experience in informal educational environment (afterschool program)	1	1	2	2	0	3	9
Interest in special needs population	2	2	0	0	0	5	9
Interest in technology for educational purposes	2	1	2	3	0	1	9
Total	9	9	9	9	9	9	-

Outreach and Communication

Collaborating is a major aspect of community-university partnership model, as seen in the quality examples from the literature. The majority of survey experiences showed that pre-service educators in the Tech Kids Unlimited Program felt they experienced effective communication during outreach and preparation on several levels including those with professors, community partners, peers, and program students and families. Table 3 shows the average values of their survey feedback. The most effective collaboration, according the survey results, was that collaboration with the students and families was most effective (87.40%).

The least effective collaboration, according to the average value of survey results, was the collaboration with program leaders and community partners (77.30%). In further feedback, one participant noted that, "the program ran smoothly, but I didn't feel that we were included in the preparation process with the specific curriculum. I felt a little thrown

into the experience and I think we could have given beneficial feedback to the instructors from Tech Kids. A lot of the wording of the instruction was unnecessarily confusing and didn't always hold the attention of the students. More collaboration between the technology expertise of the Tech Kids staff and the Wagner students could have helped." Another participant expressed that, "At times it felt like there was a distance between the TKU technology teachers and the Wagner volunteers. In terms of peer collaboration, we did the best we could, but for the most part we were working 1:1 with the students and did not understand the technology fully."

Additionally, all other average values regarding collaboration with peers and professors were above 80%. One participant even noted that, "It was great to work with different students and families while still seeing repeat visitors during the workshops." The following table depicts the perceived effectiveness of these collaborations from the view of pre-service educators in the Tech Kids Unlimited Program.

TABLE 3: PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLABORATIONS

Logistics of the Program

Logistically, 40% of Wagner students had been involved with Tech Kids Unlimited for two sessions, while 20% were involved in three sessions. The remaining 40% of participants were involved with Tech Kids Unlimited for four or more sessions. When asked to describe the goals and objectives of Tech Kids Unlimited, participants were fairly consistent in their feedback. Three participants were able to confidently state objectives or goals. Participants in the Tech Kids program expressed relatively similar goals when asked to describe the objectives of the workshops. Their descriptions were not dramatically different from the vision that the community partners at Tech Kids Unlimited expressed in later interviews. One participant noted that, "TKU works to teach students with ASD technology skills while offering a safe environment where they can communicate and foster social interactions with peers that have similar interests." Another participant stated, "Tech Kids Unlimited strives to teach students who learn differently to engage in social skills and exciting applications of technology in a supportive environment. The students and teachers worked together to engage in these technology skills and leave each workshop with some type of created project or model. It helped teachers learn more about the population but really gave these students a chance to socialize and be part of something they enjoy." Another response was, "The TKU program aimed to introduce the students to interactive programming and other technological opportunities that engaged their minds and built their skill set for the future. While the program was specifically meant to children on the spectrum, we worked with students with all different challenges and it was beneficial for everyone." Each survey participant expressed clear goals that directly related to technology and social skills that matched the mission of Tech Kids Unlimited.

Participants were also asked to consider a quote by Little, Wilmer, and Weiss (2008) that stated while afterschool programs "have the potential to impact a range of positive learning and development outcomes," some programs do not "maximize this potential." Participants were asked if this quote related to their experiences with the Tech Kids Unlimited program and the idea of maximizing potential. Six of the survey participants found this quote to be an accurate statement and further elaborated on the idea of maximizing potential.

One participant stated that, "I think this quotation is accurate, because while the program was engaging for the students it may not have been as effective as it could have been. I only say this because the students seemed to be enjoying themselves, but often times they were only sitting at a computer screen which is not the most engaging form of activity." Another participant expressed that, "I agree with this quote as I do believe that classroom instruction is just the warm up and that the real learning happens by applying that base knowledge after hours and in the outside world." Beyond this idea of expanding socialization beyond the computer screen, some participants recognized the potential based on resources and experience at the new program site.

Another participant explain that the program was sometimes too simple for more advanced coders. She expressed that, "I think that this program maximized the potential for the resources that were provided. Each week the number of participants grew, and we had a few students continue to come back. The students were genuinely interested in coding and building games and talked about pursuing a future career in game building. My only criticism is that some of the coding was too easy for certain students, so they spent a good deal of time complaining and asking to go on other sites like YouTube."

There was additional feedback from one participant who felt, "this program was a pilot project and it was over a span of 4 different sessions. My experiences with this program was very positive and it was a great learning experience for me. I was learning more about technology that I never knew about. I worked with the population, but working with this population and technology at first I was nervous to know how the program would start. After doing the program I can say there is way to maximize potential of the program. The students that I worked with were extremely happy to be working with the technology. I felt the environment was a positive learning experience for the staff and the students that were involved in the program. Overall I think that this quote shows that it takes a while for a program to come about to produce positive learning and development outcomes. A program is a growing experience and I think that this program would be a great asset to Wagner and can help many students in the future." This feedback related to the idea of maximizing potential and gaining momentum for future programs.

In looking forward, two participants expressed feedback that could inspire future adaptions of the Tech Kids Unlimited Programs. One participant stated that, "I would say that this program is working toward having that positive impact. The idea behind it is positive and while I think it was very successful, it was just a few sessions of the program so the true impact could not be fully determined. I think that with some more development that an expanded version of the program, which is in the works for the summer, would be more beneficial." Beyond repeated programming and continual impact, one participant expressed the need for more differential for higher skill levels of "tech kids." This participant noticed that, "A few students moved past the goals of each session within 15 minutes and were left to their own devices for the rest of the session."

Benefits and Strengths of the Program

The clear goals made for positive collaborations. When asked to describe one of the best examples of how pre-service educators collaborated with professors, peers, students, families, or the community during this program, the feedback varied. All survey participants recognized that collaboration was key for effectiveness. Some feedback stated that, "If there is no communication among everyone, then there cannot be an effective program. I collaborated with professors before the workshops. I collaborated with the TKU team before and during the workshops. I collaborated with my peers that I was working with, so that the workshops can go smoothly for the students. I collaborated with parents asking if their child liked the program and what can be some improvements."

Two participants also recognized how the professional development evening had a major impact on their community-university partnership experience. The one participant expressed, "I really enjoyed the professional development experience. It was clear how dedicated [the director] is to her organization and I think it was a great opportunity for our Education Department to be a part of. This gave us a chance to collaborate with a new population, practice classroom theories, and give back to our local community in Staten Island. It's not often that we get something like this on campus that is so connected to our coursework. I loved collaborating with the students and seeing how proud they were to share their projects with friends and family after each session. That made this partnership really valuable for everyone involved." Similarly, another survey participant explained that, "Prior to the beginning of the program, there was a professional development where the leader of TKU came to our school and informed us of the purpose of the program and

how the partnership would work. This gave us a clear idea of what would be expected from us and what the goal was."

Survey participants also shared various rewarding experiences that they had over the course of the Tech Kids Unlimited Program. When asked to describe how this positive impact was valuable to them, all participants expressed the connections to the students. More specifically, one pre-service educator expressed that, "It was an honor and a privilege to be able to make the connection I made with my student. It was an incredible experience that taught me so much about the Autistic population and also taught me so much about myself and my abilities as a future educator." Another participant shared that she was impressed with the rewarding outcomes and, "getting a chance to see students who don't necessarily succeed in the traditional classroom setting excelling and exceeding their own expectations."

Several other pre-service educators expressed their personal experience with a particular student they had worked with. "One of the students was very hesitant to come into the lab at the beginning of the workshops. He took a long time to warm up to the staff, and the idea of being separated from his parents made him very uncomfortable. He would roam around, complain, and moan because he wanted to go home. By the last workshop, he was walking in and doing work on his own with little (if any) fuss. He engaged in conversations with the Wagner students, and successfully built his own game. Personally, watching his comfort in the social situation and change was a huge positive experience to have as a future educator." The second participant shared that, "My favorite experience was seeing one of the students respond so well to the counselors and projects. There was a student with Down's Syndrome and this workshop was a new experience for him. Whether

it was using Photoshop techniques, playing Twister and or practicing socialization games that we learned in classes, this was a great experience. I think he was an example of how students gained social connections, while still gaining valuable technology skills."

Other participants expressed their excitement about using new types of technology. One survey participant shared that, "Working with students with special needs and learning about programming was amazing to see . . . these students were capable working with technology and creating things that they were proud of. I was glad I was given the opportunity to work with TKU and learning about their program. Working with students with special needs and watching them maneuver technology was most valuable and rewarding to me." Parents seemed to respond well to the program also, and one of the survey participants shared that, "One of the most rewarding experiences that I had during this program was hearing from the parents about their child's experiences. Yes, the kids said they had fun but hearing that they could not stop taking about what they did when they got home was really rewarding to hear. It showed me that we were making a memorable experience for the students.

As the following table indicates, pre-service educators identified several benefits associated with their involvement in the Tech Kids Unlimited Program. When identified by pre-service educators, they believed that working with students with special needs and their families was the largest benefit (90.67% average) on a scale of zero to 100. The smallest benefit recognized the collaboration with community partners at Tech Kids Unlimited (65.38% average). Falling between these two percentages was the real life application of theory (72.33% average), the successful experience in an informal learning

environment (79.44% average), and the great additional to their educational resume (83.78%).

TABLE 4: BENEFITS OF TKU PROGRAMS FOR PRE-SERVICE EDUCATORS
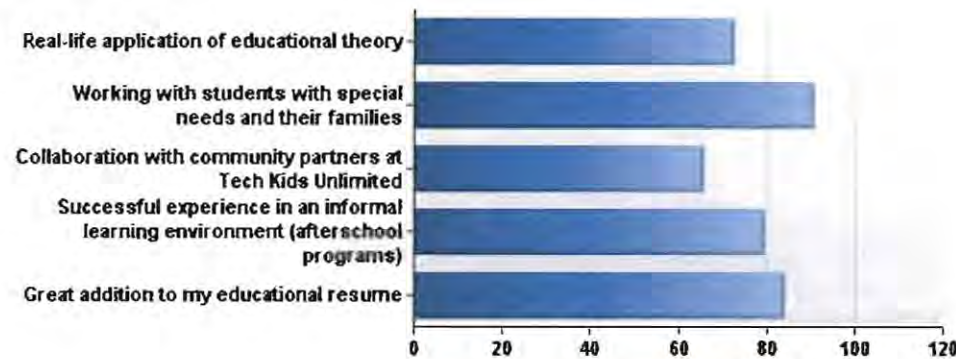
Challenges and the Future of the Program

When asked to reflect on the challenging aspects of this program, most participants expressed the struggle to understand some of the technology. Four participants expressed their challenges, with one sharing that, "I found that it was sometimes challenging to work with the technology aspects of the workshop. I thought that our lead technology counselor was really talented, but it came very naturally to him. I think in the future, it would be helpful to have a sheet of technology tips for counselors and educators to refer to. This could help us help the students complete their tasks without interrupting the technology teacher repeatedly." Another pre-service educator claimed, "I found it most challenging not knowing what to be doing on the computers. I constantly had to ask the TKU staff exactly what to do. I wish I had prepared more on doing the programming before the workshops, so that I could have easily helped the student." Furthermore, a third participant

believed that she "wasn't completely competent in everything programming wise that we were teaching the students. It was cool to learn alongside the students but when they had questions, I wasn't able to help them right away. While this was challenging, it was also good for them to see that everyone needs help sometimes and not to be afraid to ask."

Another reoccurring challenge in this program was keeping the students focused. Three survey participants expressed this challenge and one noted that, "Keeping the students on task was particularly difficult. They are all tech savvy, but were not necessarily interested in the coding activities. They each had their own favorite site that they would go consistently go to (YouTube, Sesame Street, Google Earth, etc.) and I did my best to use those sites as a reward for completing their game. It was also occasionally difficult to engage the students in social conversations. Some students did not want to talk at all, and some students got frustrated if they had to wait their turn to speak." Another participant expressed difficulty with, "encouraging students to stay focused during the preliminary presentation. It didn't hold their attention." Additionally, one participant expressed frustration about the struggle to provide separate instruction in reference to a non-verbal student. She said that because her student, "was not on the part of the spectrum that the program had desired I felt as though we were cast out to fend for ourselves alongside instruction from the amazing professors and counselors. We managed but it was a bit disheartening."

Despite these challenges, 78% of survey participants stated that they would be interested in learning about more opportunities, while 11% said that they would possibly be involved if some small changes were made. The remaining 11% stated that they are only uninterested in future programs because they are graduating and moving out of the area.

Survey Analysis of Pre-Service Educator Participants, Los Promotores

The following sections explore the results of the survey taken by pre-service educators who participated in Los Promotores at P.S. 20 in Port Richmond during the Fall 2014 academic semester. The following participants represent a small portion of willing pre-service educators over the course of one semester (Fall 2014) with Los Promotores. Results are structured into five sections and helped frame the subsequent interview questions for program leaders.

Preparation and Motivation to Program

Of the seven participants who completed the Los Promotores Pre-Service Educator survey, 100% of the participants were involved in the graduate program. Of those seven participants, there were students pursuing degrees in Teaching Literacy (57%), Childhood Education 1-6 (14%), and Early Childhood B-2 (29%). Furthermore, 100% of survey participant stated that their involvement in this program began out of a graduate class requirement

Survey participants were requested to provide any relevant educational backgrounds in afterschool or with populations of English language learners. In this sample, three participants expressed some background with English language learner populations through student teaching. Additionally, one participant expressed that they were involved in the first ever Los Promotores Program several semesters ago. However, the remaining three participants expressed no background with this population.

100% of survey participants believed that they collaborated with peers that they felt comfortable working alongside. Only 14% of participants believed that they felt prepared with the necessary program logistics including program goals, expectations, and overall

mission of the community-university partnership. Additionally, 14% felt that they had professional development opportunities about the student population and program goals. In reference to learning about the flipped model of instruction, only 29% of survey participants felt comfortable using this model. Another participant added that, "There was not a lot of preparation prior to the beginning of this program. The program goals were explained but the preparation for how to reach these goals was lacking."

The following table describes the motivation for involvement in the Los Promotores P.S. 20 Afterschool Literacy Program. Two participants expressed earning a desirable class grade as the highest motivator, while two participants ranked experience in an informal education environment as their lowest motivator.

TABLE 5: MOTIVATIONAL RANKING FOR INVOLVEMENT IN LOS PROMOTORES

Answer *1 as the lowest motivator, 5 being the highest*	1	2	3	4	5	Total Responses
Real-life application of classroom theories	1	2	0	1	1	5
Professional experience/Resume	1	1	2	0	1	5
Earning desired class grade (requirement for coursework)	1	0	1	1	2	5
Experience in informal educational environment (afterschool program)	2	0	1	1	1	5
Interest in working with ELL and Spanish speaking community members (students, families, etc.)	0	2	1	2	0	5
Total	5	5	5	5	5	-

Outreach and Communication

Collaborating is a major aspect of the community-university partnership model, as seen in the examples from the literature. The majority of survey respondents showed that pre-service educators in the Los Promotores Program felt they experienced ineffective communication during outreach and preparation on several levels including those with professors, community partners, peers, and program students and families. The table below shows the average values of their survey feedback. The most effective collaboration, according the survey results, was that collaboration with their peers (71.00%).

All Los Promotores survey participants explained some collaborative challenges during the program. Using sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe their experience, the average response from graduate students for collaboration with professors was the lowest score (44.29%). The average collaboration with community partners was slightly higher (45.83%), but the higher average scores for collaborative experiences related to collaboration with peers (71.00%) and collaboration with students and families (66.0%). The following table depicts how positively pre-service educators viewed the levels of effectiveness in the partnership.

TABLE 6: LEVELS OF EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION, LOS PROMOTORES
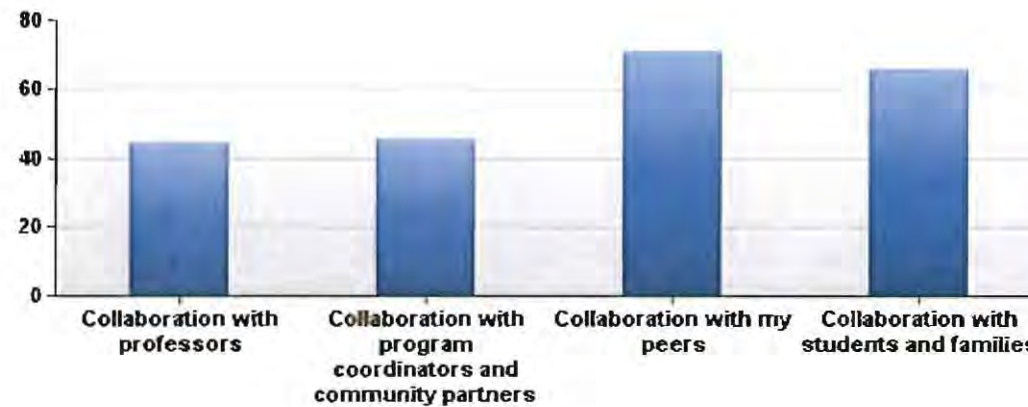
These responses were further clarified by some survey participants. One participant expressed, "I think it was helpful to work closely with a specific group of students and parents throughout the time at P.S. 20. However, I think it would have been more helpful to learn about the profile of the students or have access to their reading levels before starting the program. This way, we could effectively group students to teachers that have strengths in different age groups and subjects. I think the benefit of our collaboration in this program is having educators from every possible program (literacy, early childhood, etc.) and learning how to support the population best." Another participant regarded the frustrations of organization by stating, "Once arriving with plans I felt a lack of communication with professors and partners which sometimes led to an issue communicating with the families." This same participant noted that there were successful collaborations as she, "was able to collaborate with peers during all assignments and together we would have a plan for our students."

Another valuable piece of feedback described that although there was some collaboration, "the concept behind it was strong but the actual implementation wasn't. Groups were not able to get together to do work and one person always ended up doing most of the work. Also the way the program is run, collaboration and working with group did not always work out as students were absent and teachers were shuffled around. I felt that while the teachers wanted us to do specific work with the students and parents it was more to fit the needs of the attached class then actually help the student with a specific need."

Logistics of the Program

Logistically, 71% of participants had been involved with Los Promotores for two semesters, while 14% were involved three semesters. The remaining 14% of participants were involved with Los Promotores for one semester. When asked to describe the goals and objectives of the Los Promotores Program, participants varied in their feedback. Three participants were unable to confidently state objectives or goals as they were "not reinforced and unclear." These participants stated similar sentiments that they were, "often confused about the goals and objectives as they seemed to change frequently. My understanding is that we were to create a line of communication between families, students, and teachers in order to work on the common goal of improving literacy skills." Despite this feedback, three other participants were able to state goals and objectives. One participant noted that the goal was, "to support families and students at P.S. 20/Port Richmond to learn valuable literacy skills and prepare for academic rigor before higher grade levels," while another stated that, "program is intended to improve the literacy skills

of students while collaborating with the parents on how to better support their children's literacy development at home."

This feedback about unclear goals appeared to inform participants' responses to the question relating to research by Little, Wilmer, and Weiss (2008) that described the potential of community-university partnerships. The quote participants responded to stated that while afterschool programs "have the potential to impact a range of positive learning and development outcomes," some programs "do not maximize this potential." Pre-service educators were asked how this quote either related, or did not relate, to their experiences with the Los Promotores program and the idea of maximizing potential. This quote was reinforced and agreed with by all survey respondents. One participant reflected that, "I think the quote is accurate in describing the PS 20 partnership. It was a positive experience for the students, teachers, and moms in academic and social ways." Another positive remark noted that, "I believe that this program offers an enriching experience to help develop their oral language abilities and facilitate engaging discussions to further their academic growth"

However, some of the most constructive responses shared that the intention of Los Promotores was promising, but the implementation was lacking. One participant stated that, "I agree with the quote and I think the program is approaching potential but needs to be more organized in the implementation. I think we did the best we could with the format, but I think having set objectives for each week planned beforehand would help us clearly plan. I also believe that picking our partners and groups could be helpful to maximize potential and work around difficult graduate schedules." Another linked piece of feedback expressed that, "I think the idea of the program is great and it could be extremely beneficial

as the students, parents, and Wagner students are eager to work together. I feel that the lack of organization cripples a lot of the beneficial outcomes that could occur."

Another view about maximizing potential recognizes the unique opportunity of this type of partnership. The participant expressed, "I WHOLEHEARTEDLY agree with this quote. I believe that the basic setup for the Los Promotores has a lot of potential, but I feel like the current program is not reaching its goals and is allowing for a lot of opportunities to slip by. In order to maximize the potential, there needs to be so much more organization than what exists. There is entirely too much time wasted with people having no idea what they are supposed to be doing/need to be doing. There is also a real lack of consistency. This program would work a million times better with two things: A) a clear curriculum/focus on lesson planning and B) A consistency and commitment between students and teachers so that the students can really progress and the teachers can mark this progression."

Two more participants further stated feelings of potential and organizational flaws. One expressed, "I agree. This program had great potential. The students in this community could truly benefit from an after school literacy program. However, I felt it was extremely unorganized to the point where very little or none of the objectives were met." Another survey participant noted that, "the idea behind this program is a good one but the implementation is not. The assignments given were more to fill class requirements and not serve the specific needs for the children we are working with . . . the program is simply chaotic and unorganized. They either need to give you the freedom to do what you feel is necessary to help improve that child's literacy skills or making it completely structure with detailed plans. The in-between that currently exists does not work." These views correlate

that community-university partnerships need clear structure, vision, and implementation to succeed.

Benefits and Strengths of the Program

When asked to describe one positive experience that they had during the program relating to collaborations, participants had various feedback. Three participants stated working closely with their peers to develop lessons was their best experience. They enjoyed "the ability to collaborate with my peers on lesson plans. I really think this allowed for things to go more smoothly. Additionally, the P.S. students were always willing to learn and work with the teachers, so that was some nice collaboration." Two participants expressed strong collaborations with the mothers. One experience described how, "each week after the lesson was completed, we would provide the parents with translated notes on things that they could do at home with their child in order to improve the skill worked on for the day." Another participant noted the relationship with the mothers and stated that, "I found that working closely with the moms was a valuable experience. I loved seeing our group's mother participate and practice vocabulary practice alongside her children. It was a great opportunity to see growth and passion as an educator."

All survey participants recognized a connection with their students as the most reward experience during the Los Promotores experience. One participant stated, "I loved learning that my student achieved two levels higher in his reading level during the course of the program. It felt like our hard work was paying off as educators. It was also a chance to let the student see that their dedication to the program was for something great. Watching his mom smile and grow together was really special." Another participant shared this perception and stated that, "the best experience was when one of my students told my peer

and myself that we were the best teachers and that she wanted to become a teacher and go to college because she wanted to be just like us and make learning fun. It was such a rewarding moment for the both of us." Other similar responses included seeing the students grow from the various semesters and learning how to interact in meaningful experiences with ELLs. One participant added that, "It provided me with opportunities to implement some of the things that I had learned during my career as a student in order to prepare me for future employment as a teacher."

Another participant remarked that, "this was rewarding to me because I enjoyed seeing how happy the students were when they succeed in anything from learning new vocabulary to understanding a difficult sentence in a book. I'll take what I learned about how to reach ELLs with me into my career as an educator. I plan to continue my education for a certification in TESOL in the future." These benefits encompass a love of teaching and a true dedication to the professional and personal experiences that can occur in informal educational settings.

Challenges and the Future of the Program

Looking at the challenges of this program, almost all participants stated communication and structure were the most frustrating. The levels of communication varied from communicating with professors to communicating with coordinators. One participant stated that, "it was very unclear what was expected from me week by week," and, "that the lack of communication and organization was the most challenging." Another participant added to the theme of communication, stating that at times, "I would think we were doing one thing, as would my peers, and then the expectation would be very different.

Many would come prepared with certain activities and then the goal of the day would change without notice."

Regarding the challenge of structure, one participant noted that, "It was chaotic and unorganized and I felt that hindered the impact that could have come from this program." The aspect of planning and not always having the space needed to implement a lesson was sometimes frustrating to the survey participants of Los Promotores. One participant expressed that, "I wish we had more concrete and defined goals to meet for each session, rather than the more general goals in literacy. Having too many students also made the flipped model difficult to meet every grade and specific need of students. With a short time frame, it was important to work closely with a small group to be successful.

Consequently, the interest of involvement in future programs like Los Promotores varied. 14% of participants were interested in learning about more opportunities. 14% of participants would consider being involved if some small changes were made, while 29% would consider being involved if major changes were made. The largest statistic was 43% of survey participants that had no interest in participating in future programs.

Chapter V: Discussion

As a form of evaluation and discussion, this section will explore strengths, areas of improvement, and general recommendations for both Los Promotores and Tech Kids Unlimited. These insights build on the surveys of the 17 Wagner College pre-service educators from the two community-university partnership programs that are part of this study, creating an analytic synthesis of survey responses and three interviews with associated program leaders from Los Promotores and Tech Kids Unlimited. These individuals will be referred to as LP (Los Promotores) Leader A, LP Leader B, TKU (Tech Kids Unlimited) Leader A, and TKU Leader B. The Los Promotores leaders were interviewed together, while the Tech Kids Unlimited leaders were interviewed individually. Each section will also incorporate literature to further highlight strengths, areas of improvement, and further implications for both Los Promotores and Tech Kids Unlimited.

Context of Both Programs

It is important to recognize the contexts of each program before discussing major strengths and areas of improvement. The goal of this study was not to compare and contrast these partnerships, but rather to engage readers in each program's complexities for further growth. In Tech Kids Unlimited, pre-service educators are a combination of volunteers and paid counselors, supporting a program that is aimed to be a fun, educational weekend experience. Children are brought in with parents for these sessions and they are intended to be singular workshops, although many students participated in multiple Sunday workshops. From the perspective of pre-service educators, there is the expectation of paid work that could influence various perceptions and motivations. These counselors involved

in TKU are actively engaged in a program of their choosing, while also earning experience and/or payment during in a defined, singular frame of work.

Within Los Promotores, however, there is a further complexity to the partnership. Wagner College is linked to P.S. 20 and all that this entails. These factors include student exhaustion in the afterschool setting, less control over logistics due to public school protocol, and families that are actively involved in the program. Additionally, the outlook from pre-service educators may vary, as there is the worry of earning class grades and weekly expectations of lesson planning, student illness, and ongoing stressors of extended partnerships. Furthermore, it is exceedingly difficult to fully prepare for the vast ages, reading levels, and needs of students involved in a program of this scale for only one session per week. Although the educators, families, and associated program leaders are passionate, the relationship is complex since specific pre-service educator and student pairings are limited over the course of one semester.

Strengths of Both Programs

In looking into the various experiences from pre-service educators in both Los Promotores and Tech Kids Unlimited, it appears that pre-service educators enjoyed some similar themes of the community-university partnership programs. Most enjoyed exposure to new educational groups, working with their peers, and interacting closely with children and families of specific populations. Additionally, pre-service educators may have had various motivations for participating, including earning a desired course grade or gaining valuable educational experience, but a constant theme was a sense of passion for supporting students and families to reach their program goals in an authentic setting. Each Wagner

College partnership had moments of genuine success, especially relating to the aspects of a dedicated and engaged staff.

Strengths of Tech Kids Unlimited Partnership

As explained in the literature review, young programs must examine start-up concerns like implementation and staff training, while more stable programs can assess effects of their services (HFRP, 2008). In the case of Tech Kids Unlimited, this was a unique partnership because the two partner groups had different experiences and strengths. This was a new program in terms of Wagner College, based on the new site, new counselors, and Education Department-focused version of a partnership. However, Tech Kids Unlimited was more familiar with their program expectations from past partnerships with local universities like Pace and New York University Polytechnic School of Engineering. With these prior experiences, various strengths could be applauded from the partnership.

Although this partnership was not a brand new program, it was unique and successful in several ways. This was the first time that Tech Kids Unlimited offered a program on Staten Island. Additionally, this partnership was the first one that focused solely on an education department for counselors and connections. Interestingly enough, this strength could also be viewed as an area for improvement based on the pre-service educator feedback, which will be explored later in this discussion. The benefits of involving pre-service educators, from the view of Tech Kids Unlimited program leaders, was outstanding. TKU Leader A even expressed that, "Working with education students in and of itself was a new experience for the group. We had amazing women who got the program very quickly and learned how to address the goals immediately. It was a thrill to see and

they seemed natural in the program. Having a set of experienced educators that attached to the program was a real joy and that's why the program ran so well at Wagner." This positive feedback helped the Tech Kids Unlimited leaders recognize that importance of blending counselors of different backgrounds to strengthen the group experience. Tech Kids Unlimited includes counselors, social workers, and technology teachers, but TKU Leader A was truly impressed with the level of passion and patience exhibited by the Wagner pre-service educators.

Another strength of this partnership was the consideration of stakeholders and the planning process. Wagner and Tech Kids Unlimited modeled Harvard Family Research Project's findings in that they considered their stakeholders when planning evaluations and program goals. As explained in this research, leaders must convene all out-of-school time stakeholders for the program to clarify goals together, as this helps all stakeholders, including staff, specify program content and intentions (2008). TKU Leader B strongly believed that, "I think we had very clear organization. We worked so well and knew our roles. I also think that utilizing the pre-service educators was awesome because our partners had never done that before. It was great for all involved, a different level of staffing and people that really understand learning objectives. Pre-service educators are always looking for practice and this program really involved the community standpoint on Staten Island. I hope to grow it in the next chapter."

Clarifying goals was something that Tech Kids Unlimited and Wagner College Department of Education did from the first conversation. TKU Leader B even noted that, "By using goal setting, our program leaders were able to identify key elements of this technology-based program and show the relationship between the partners for its intended

results. Having students really understand what they are working towards sets direction, goal, and tone. It's not just about doing hours; you are helping them reach objectives and learning about helping students achieve their goals." He went on to state that, "The whole premise of getting a grant, philosophically, is about collaboration. Wagner and TKU realized that it needed to be a strong communication with expectations, goals, and planning to get 'there.' It is such an essential part, and I would not want it any other way, but it needs to feel right. And we found it. We knew our shared goals for the project and because we were clear on future goals and objectives. I think that knowing the vision and having a clear direction made the challenges more doable. Additionally, pre-service educators and kids benefited from the experience. We were dedicated to the collaborative roles and we bought in which made it easier and more valuable for all stakeholders involved." Furthermore, this program used many principles of good community-university partnerships, including "partners having agreed upon mission, values, goals and measurable outcomes for the partnership," while also ensuring that the partnership balanced, "power among partners and enabling resources among partners to be shared" (CCPH, 2014, p. 9). The partners at Wagner College and Tech Kids Unlimited established clear goals and organizational features to ensure a smooth pilot partnership.

The strength of focusing on interest-driven programs helped this program engage with students who learn differently. As explained in the NCTE Definition of 21st Century Literacies, the growth of literacy skills needed in society is constantly evolving since, "literacy has always been a collection of cultural and communicative practices shared among members of particular groups . . . society and technology change, so does literacy" (NCTE, 2014, p. 2). In this technological era, literacy's definition continues to grow to

encompass more types of literacy beyond the classic notion of reading and writing, and Tech Kids Unlimited recognizes this movement. This specific program has had success in part because of their relevant curriculum and incorporation of computer-programming, web design, and gaming skills. The inclusion of students and the incorporation of relevant and engaging activities helped this partnership thrive.

Strengths of Los Promotores

Los Promotores continues to impact a community of learners in Staten Island's Port Richmond neighborhood and provide authentic opportunities for growth of pre-service educators. According to Novak, Murray, Scheuermann, and Curran (2009), there are certain essential characteristics present in authentic service learning experiences for university students partnering with schools and community-based organizations. In the case of Los Promotores and the afterschool literacy program at P.S. 20, the characteristics of a reciprocal relationship in which a specific community-based need was met, as well as the integration of academic content within the service learning experience (Novak et al, 2009). In addition, there was ongoing reflection connecting the content and the experience to personal growth (Novak et al, 2009). Each of these aspects positively impacted pre-service educators. This program gave a truly authentic experience that could not be replicated in traditional classroom instruction.

Another strength of this program was the connections made with families. LP Leader A and B shared that, "The entire program is just a beautiful collaboration. These parents are really making strides at home that help their kids' literacy. I think that these reading level improvements are just a small part of a larger intercultural development." They continued to expand on the theme of connections and stated that, "We are just

building on the strategies they are already using to encourage additional growth and everyone involved something valuable to share. There are clear academic goals and growth of the students, but what is amazing is how we learn and connect with one another's cultural background, values, and traditions." These connections and relationships formed over various semesters remained one of the most consistent responses in the pre-service educator feedback.

LP Leader A and B also shared that, "We provided relevant assignments for students but really hoped the collaborations with their peers and respective families would be the most valuable." This was fully supported by pre-service educator feedback, as most participants expressed their collaborations with families and peers as the most positive and beneficial. This program also highlighted one of the principles of good community-university partnerships by valuing "the relationship between partners being characterized by mutual trust, respect, genuineness and commitment" (CCPH, 2014). LP Leaders A and B expressed that, "Seeing the mutual respect and relationships that have been built in our Wagner education department and this community is astounding and truly touching." Moments like this were powerful and the program encouraged constant reflection from families, students, professionals, and pre-service educators, helping help the program to achieve growth.

Ongoing reflection was a major strength of Los Promotores that impacted group experiences. Through connecting the content and the experience to personal growth, Wagner pre-service educators, families, and professors engaged in ongoing development (Novak et al, 2009). LP Leader A and B recognized that, "There were a variety of opportunities to reflect. We are now in the fourth version of this program with a new set of

graduate education students each time; the program implementation and objectives have blossomed." These leaders also expressed their excitement about the reflections that pre-service educators shared in their online journals, where they responded and professionally critiqued one another in their lessons. LP Leader A and B stated that, "Using the reflective online posts from our graduate students each week, we were able to see their reactions and experiences over time. As each semester had some new and some familiar graduate students, we were careful to adapt the program and provide support when needed. The pre, during, and post conversations were the most valuable moments of reflection because we were with families, students, and using the resources available to the best of our ability." This type of deep reflection also occurred with the lead professors, as they were, "active observers and participants, supporting our pre-service educators as we surveyed each group. It became evident that our graduate students were prepared and comfortable making last minute adaptations, which is the sign of a confident and caring educator. We also provided relevant assignments for students but really hoped the collaborations with their peers and respective families would be the most valuable. As professionals, we grew in every aspect of the partnership."

Some powerful observations and reflections occurred in these written passages, and the associated professors often noticed how the role of families was discussed in the reflections. LP Leaders A and B believed that, "The role of parent involvement and meaningful intercultural connections became new objectives, and there is a sense of comfort in the families led to greater acquisition of literacy skills. Children and mothers are now more likely to speak openly with their associated pre-service educator, especially if they felt a sense of respect, care, and appreciation of one another."

This program also highlighted several principles of good community-university partnerships. One of the principles of good community campus that this program truly valued was, "the relationship between partners being characterized by mutual trust, respect, genuineness and commitment," in addition to, "the partnership building upon identified strengths and assets, but also addressing areas that need improvement" (CCPH, 2014, p. 3). This program encouraged constant reflection from families, students, professionals, and pre-service educators, which will certainly help the program continue to achieve continued growth.

Areas of Improvement for Both Programs

There are several areas of improvement based on the challenges that arose in the two programs. Regarding Los Promotores, pre-service educators were often frustrated by organization and a need for more guidance with weekly objectives. In reference to Tech Kids Unlimited, pre-service educators did not feel fully prepared to use more advanced aspects of technology with the program participants. These broad areas of improvement could largely be attributed to the nature of community-university partnerships and the idea of "trial and error" that often occurs in new partnerships, but it is important to recognize repeated challenging feedback for future improvements.

In successful partnerships, there should be dedicated, passionate, and engaged staff. This is one of the biggest factors for quality programs and a way for all stakeholders to benefit. National literature recognizes this need for community-university partnerships, and many programs have approached this through specialized and relevant professional development. In reference to Los Promotores and Tech Kids Unlimited, one of the most effective ways to improve these programs would be to improve specific professional

development. Each program's pre-service educators expressed certain areas they felt unprepared approaching, including aspects of technology support for Tech Kids Unlimited and truly understanding the daily objectives and tasks for Los Promotores. Ongoing, relevant, professional development and ongoing support of the program logistics could improve these programs based on the feedback of pre-service educators that were involved.

Furthermore, clear goals and attainable objectives could be improved for each program, specifically regarding the role of pre-service educators. These are developing programs, so the structure is often growing alongside these objectives. Still, each program should always promote target outcomes with clearly organized and engaging activities. This cannot be stressed enough in afterschool settings, as the timeframe is especially limited. For Los Promotores and Tech Kids Unlimited, a shared vision, clear goals, and daily objectives for the programs are essential, as is a valued, prepared, and organized staff. Each program could have more defined expectations for participants and it is evident that shared values from all stakeholders can make all the difference. Wagner College and the target communities have the potential to make a difference through these valuable partnerships, especially with consideration to supporting families and using examples from successful programs nationwide.

Areas of Improvement for Tech Kids Unlimited Partnership

The Wagner College pre-service educators that expressed challenges were most critical of their lack of preparation with specific technology used in the workshops. This was not especially surprising after interviewing TKU Leader A. When discussing her experiences with finding counselors in these programs, she traditionally partnered with technology-centered schools such as NYU Poly and Pace. In these versions of the Tech

Kids Unlimited partnership, she works with undergraduate and graduates from various departments that are technology-based. TKU Leader A describes these traditional counselors as, "hybrid kids, often graduate students with multiple interests within computers, game design, and digital marketing." She also expressed that they have practical technology skills and when working with them, the focus is "training the educational pieces as we learned together." Additionally, she noted that, "Sometimes, our training involves educational aspects of translating goals and objectives to the group and kids. For other groups, it's teaching about the nature of ASD and what the literature says works for informal education. I'm willing to take on anyone that has a desire, but we have to continue valuing the professional development of these individuals, teach the training, and support the vocabulary growth of new terms for our students." TKU Leader A was strongly invested in ongoing training and professional development of counselors and staff, but at Wagner College the focus of this professional development could be improved for future programs.

Notably, the Wagner College partnership with Tech Kids Unlimited was the first partnership that was training and working almost exclusively with an education department. TKU Leader A explained that, "It was a really amazing experience, despite the technology proficiency. That piece always helps, but with the education students, there is a new sense of proficiency and it runs so efficiently. They bring another set of skills that counselors were not previously bringing our program."

With that in mind, it seemed that the professional development process was not adapted enough for the Wagner population of counselors. Unlike the professional developments and training that Tech Kids Unlimited has at other university partner sites,

most of the pre-service educators are minimally trained or exposed to cutting edge technology and computer software. In future collaborations, it would be beneficial to train the Wagner pre-service educators more deeply in the technological aspects than in the educational and programming pieces, as most felt comfortable working in an informal educational setting.

Areas of Improvement for Los Promotores

Some improvements that pre-service educators involved in the Los Promotores P.S. 20 afterschool partnership with Wagner College included the desire for more organization and clear objectives. Participants felt strongly about the need for the program in the Port Richmond community, but many recognized the stress and lack of planning that often occurred. Pre-service educators noted that there was not enough time during each session to achieve their desired objectives, and while the potential was there, the need is not quite being met with the current model.

LP Leader A and B shared valuable feedback regarding maximizing potential. They shared that, "I think every semester we are reaching new goals and making stronger connections. We are now in the fourth version of this program and the role of parent involvement has grown and meaningful intercultural connections are incredible. We promote these positive learning outcomes, but it is a sense of shared understanding and compassion with our students and families that are maximizing the potential. It's the work with the returning families, the connections we are making to these communities, and the many ways that they teach us every day that are helping us reach our potential. There's always room for growth, but we couldn't be happier with the bonds that everyone is

forming at P.S. 20." This sentiment reflects with many responses regarding the gained relationships, but also reinforces the fact that is it an ever-changing program.

As the previous quote explains, each semester the objectives and goals are evolving with Los Promotores. However, pre-service educators are not always aware of the subtle changes and are struggling to adapt lessons or approach the class with a clear sense of structure. These aspects of planning are hindering the experiences of pre-service educators and leaving them feeling frustrated and often discouraged in their preparations.

In future programs, there could be value to sharing and creating a vision, mission, and goal together on the first meeting. Having written, weekly objectives and a shared calendar of weekly goals could also positively enhance this experience for stakeholders. There must be ongoing adaptations and quick thinking in the education field, but a level of compromise could be met in regards to planning alongside pre-service educators.

General Recommendations, Implications, and Future Research

The purpose of this exploratory study was to closely document, examine, and assess two afterschool programs utilizing the community-university partnership model. The specific aims of this study were to provide documentation and close analysis to improve these current programs and shed light to the potential impact of the community-university model for quality afterschool programming at small, urban universities. The researcher recognizes that in closely documenting two afterschool programs (Tech Kids Unlimited and Los Promotores P.S. 20 Literacy Program), some features may lack full detail based on the length and experiences of various pre-service educators.

There were some implications and limitations of this study. By nature, a small exploratory study of two afterschool programs cannot draw conclusions that can be

generalized to broader populations. Additionally, the survey analysis for each program only accounted for about 50 percent of the potential Wagner College pre-service educators involved in each program, so it was not a full depiction of program feedback. Still, this study allowed the researched to consider national literature and assess these programs based on larger scale models. These two different afterschool programs also ranged in size, scope, and demographics, as did programs within the national literature. Still, it is clear that program leads appreciated the evaluation and documentation process in order to continue program growth. Some additional limitations occurred in part due to the levels of the three-part mixed methods approach; the study included participant observer frameworks, two pre-service education surveys, and close interviews from associated professors and program leaders in these community-university partnerships. These were ambitious goals and were layered in different program contexts. An alternative or supplemental approach might have been to identify a closer examination of one subject group for closer focus. The researcher also reflected that the pre-service educator survey could have included a pre and post survey to assess baseline knowledge rather than just reflective growth and feedback.

Valuable research and feedback from pre-service educators and program leaders is paramount to having quality programs. As explored in earlier sections of this study, The Harvard Family Research Project (2008) identified these three critical factors as access to and sustained participation in program, quality programming and staffing, and strong partnerships. As referenced in both the interview protocol and surveys, "Afterschool programs can promote positive learning and developmental outcomes, but some programs are not maximizing their potential." Programs must make an effort to tailor their goals, "to

their interests, needs, and schedules, as well as from those providing exposure to new ideas, challenges, and people." Throughout this study, the researcher found aspects of Tech Kids Unlimited and Los Promotores that tailored their goals to interests while providing exposure to sometimes challenging situations.

Some general recommendations can be made about community-university partnerships, as found in the literature and discovery of this study. Communication is the basis of any strong partnership. Providing concrete instructions, setting structured blocks of time to reflect, and sharing a common mission each are evidence-based practices for improvement. Additionally, partnerships of this kind must promote growth through "sub" goals to support smaller objectives within often "big-picture" missions. This shared sense of goals can strengthen that essential trust that is necessary for successful partnerships.

There are several general recommendations about Los Promotores that are suggested for future improvement. One specific example is that pre-service educators could learn more about the profile of the students or have access to their reading levels before starting the program. This way, the program leads could effectively group students to pre-service educators that have strengths in different age groups and subjects since the program includes pre-service educators from every possible program (literacy, early childhood, childhood/special education, etc.). This could truly impact the expertise of different pre-service educators and help the groups learn how to support the population best.

Regarding Tech Kids Unlimited, there are also general recommendations suggested for future improvement. Pre-service educators expressed their wish to have a technology-focused seminar before the start of the program to prepare their skills in order to best support students. One simple way to reinforce this improvement would be to provide a one-

page list of technology tips for the counselors to access when working with students. This could mitigate confusion and help to alleviate stress when they are approached with technology questions. Another possible solution, though more focused towards the university, is to include more technology-based professional development on campus for interested undergraduate and graduate students.

In future research, studies could use experiences of families, students, and parents involved in afterschool programs. It would be interesting to see the impact and feedback while still considering critical factors for successful outcomes. Additionally, it would be interesting to revisit programs that are reoccurring in the Wagner Education Department or to see the growth of Los Promotores and Tech Kids Unlimited in further programming. The community-university partnership model is one that can be effective and successful if implemented carefully. However, challenges may arise and, as poignantly described by TKU Leader B, "You have to be okay with failure and you need to learn that it happens . . . we need to have all experiences. That's what these community-university partnerships offer, these excited students taking on beautiful unexpected moments." This study helped the researcher gain a wealth of knowledge regarding afterschool programming, community-university partnerships, and the importance of preparation for quality implementation in any successful program, while also appreciating the dedication of educators and community partners that make this a valuable and worthwhile endeavor.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Informed Consent Email for Pre-Service Educators

Good Afternoon,

I hope this email finds you well and that you are having a great week. As part of my master's degree requirements at Wagner College, I am conducting research to learn how community-university partnerships can be a strengthened for quality afterschool programming. If you are willing, I hope you will consider participating in this research project. This email will provide you with information that will help you decide whether or not you wish to participate.

In this study, I will be using an "action research" model, where participants are co-learners with me around the question at hand. During the course of this project, it is assumed that you have participated in either the P.S. 20 Afterschool Literacy Program or Tech Kids Unlimited Workshop. If you were to participate in this research study, you would be asked to complete a brief online program survey. This survey will take about 10 minutes and consists of various multiple choice, ranking, slider scale, and open ended reflections. In clicking the link below to this survey, you consent to participating in the research, though you may stop participation at any point.

In addition to the survey, you will have the chance to attend an informal professional dialogue to discuss results from the surveys and future goals for these programs. This reflective conversation is not expected if you participate in the survey, but I hope you will consider attending to discuss your views with fellow pre-service educators and also have a chance win a Barnes and Noble or Dunkin Donuts gift card. My goal is to create a conversation about afterschool programming and how our experiences as pre-

service educators can be learned from and help improve future community-university efforts in educational programming.

This project does not carry any foreseeable risks beyond those associated with everyday life in our profession. If for any reason you felt uncomfortable, you could leave this study at any time with no penalty. All data collected will remain confidential and will not be associated with your name. If you leave the project after having provided data, all your data will be destroyed immediately on your request to exit participation. When this study is complete, you will be provided with the results of the study if you request them, and you will be free to ask any questions.

If you have any further questions concerning this study please feel free to contact me through phone or email: Tatum Colitz at tatum.colitz@wagner.edu (610-301-3918) or Karen DeMoss at Karen.demoss@wagner.edu (718-420-4070). Thank you for considering being part of my study.

Sincerely,

Tatum Colitz, Investigator

Appendix B: Informed Consent for Associated Program Leaders

Good Afternoon,

I hope this email finds you well and you are having a great week. As part of my master's degree requirements at Wagner College, I am conducting research to learn how community-university partnerships can be strengthened to improve the quality of afterschool programming. If you are willing, I hope you will consider participating in this research project. This document will provide you with information that will help you decide whether or not you wish to participate.

In this study, I will be using an "action research" model, where participants are co-learners with me around questions of improving after school programming quality in community-university partnerships. During the course of this project, I will be surveying Wagner College undergraduate and graduate students that have participated in either the P.S. 20 Afterschool Literacy Program or Tech Kids Unlimited Workshop. These participants are the co-learners with me on the project.

If you were to participate, you would be asked to complete an in-person, phone, or video-conferenced interview. This interview will take about 15 minutes to complete and consists of open-ended reflections to learn more about your experiences in the program that will hopefully help guide improvements and strengthen the goals in the future. The other participants would have access to unidentifiable, aggregated perceptions from program leaders like you to help inform their understandings of program goals and possible improvement areas.

This project does not carry any foreseeable risks outside normal, everyday work risks related to comfort with discussing things. If for any reason you felt uncomfortable,

you could leave this study at any time with no penalty. When this study is complete, you

will be provided with the results of the study if you request them, and you will be free to

ask any questions.

If you have any further questions concerning this study please feel free to contact

me through phone or email: Tatum Colitz at tatum.colitz@wagner.edu (610-301-3918) or

Karen DeMoss at Karen.demoss@wagner.edu (718-420-4070). Thank you for considering

to be a part of my study related to research for a master's thesis in Education at Wagner

College. I truly appreciate it!

Sincerely,

Tatum Colitz, Investigator

Additional Data Follow-Up

Good Afternoon,

In reviewing my final thesis revisions, I was hoping to follow up regarding confidentiality
with my data results. From the interview that we conducted several weeks ago regarding
community-university partnerships, I have been actively editing my study. However, I
wanted to check to see your willingness to allow full publication of your interview data in
the appendices. While your name is not listed within the study for confidentiality reasons,
the appendices could include details and full disclosure of our informal conversation based
on my notes.

Please let me know your willingness to consent as soon as possible. If you would like to
see a copy of your interview data in order to make an informed decision, I would be happy
to send you a copy! Thank you again and have a wonderful day!

Sincerely,
Tatum

Appendix C: Interview Questions for Associated Program Leaders

1.   How did you learn about this opportunity and first become involved with this program?

2.   Before this project, did you have any other experiences with afterschool education models, community-university partnerships, or this population?

3.   What are some of the most successful ways that you have found to prepare pre-service educators to work with students from diverse and special needs backgrounds?

4.   Were there any aspects of this program that made collaboration difficult?

5.   In your opinion, what aspects of the program were most successful when implemented?

6.   What opportunities did you have to reflect on your practice as the program progressed?

7.   What role did collaboration play in the planning and delivery of this program? How would you describe the success of collaboration with professionals, coordinators, pre-service educators, and program participants?

8.   What are your thoughts about having more community-university partnerships, whether at Wagner College or more generally across the country?

9.   What was the most memorable experience for you in this program?

10.   Little, Wilmer, and Weiss (2008) wrote that while afterschool programs "have the potential to impact a range of positive learning and development outcomes," some programs "do not maximize this potential." How does/doesn't this quote relate to your experiences with this program and the idea of maximizing potential?

Appendix D: Tech Kids Unlimited Program Survey

Q1.1 How would you describe your current academic standing at Wagner College? Please check all that apply

❑ Undergraduate Student (if so, please identify current major or dual majors and year in the space below) _____

❑ Graduate Student, MS Ed in Early Childhood /Special Ed

❑ Graduate Student, MS Ed in Teaching Literacy

❑ Graduate Student, MS Ed in Childhood 1-6/Special Ed

❑ Graduate Student, MS Ed in Adolescent/Special Ed((if so, please identify concentration the space below) _____

❑ Graduate Student, MS Ed in Educational Leadership

Q1.2 Which answer best describes how you learned about the Tech Kids Unlimited Workshop at Wagner College?

○ This program was part of a class requirement

○ I was invited by an education professor

○ I heard about this program through classmate

○ I was recommended to participate from the program coordinator.

○ Other: _____

Q1.3 Did you have any prior experiences involving this population of students or with educational afterschool programs? Please list and describe any experiences that may be applicable.

Q1.4 In what ways were you directly prepared through programmatic efforts once you knew you would participate in it?

❑ I had professional development opportunities to learn about the student population and program goals

❑ I collaborated with peers that I felt comfortable working alongside

❑ I felt prepared with necessary program logistics, including the program goals, expectations, and overall mission of the community-university partnership

❑ I learned about the technology aspects of the workshops

❑ Other: _____

Q1.5 Please rank which aspects of the Tech Kids Unlimited Workshops most motivated you in your participation. *Please use 1 as the lowest motivator, 6 being the highest.

_____ Real-life application of classroom theories

_____ Professional experience/Resume

_____ Earning desired compensation (paid hourly rate)

_____ Experience in informal educational environment (afterschool literacy program)

_____ Interest in special needs population

_____ Interest in technology for educational purposes

Q2.1 How effectively did you feel you collaborated with the following groups during this program. Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.

_____ Collaboration with professors

_____ Collaboration with program coordinators and community partners

_____ Collaboration with my peers

_____ Collaboration with students and families

Q2.2 Are there any aspects of the previously listed collaborations that you would like to clarify?

Q2.3 How would you describe the ways the program planning logistics (time, location, objectives for the session) were communicated to you? Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.

_____ I received helpful email communication

_____ I engaged in reflective conversations following each session

_____ I had the chance to have one-on-one support from professors, program coordinators, and/or peers.

Q3.1 How would you describe the goals and objectives of the Tech Kids Unlimited program?

Q3.2 About how much time did you spend preparing for each session of this program?

	Never	Less than Once a Month	Once a Month	2-3 Times a Month	Once a Week	2-3 Times a Week	Daily
Average time spent preparing for one workshop	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Q3.3 How many sessions have you been involved with Tech Kids Unlimited?   (Please include any professional development sessions as well as actual workshops)

O 1 session

O 2 sessions

○ 3 sessions

○ 4 or more sessions

○ Other: _____

Q3.4 Little, Wilmer, and Weiss (2008) wrote that while afterschool programs "have the potential to impact a range of positive learning and development outcomes," some programs do not maximize this potential." How does this quote relate to your experiences with this program and the idea of maximizing potential?

Q4.1 Collaboration is essential for effective community-university partnerships. Can you describe one of the best examples of how you collaborated with professors, peers, students, families, or the community during this program?

Q4.2 How would you rank the benefits of this program? *Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.

_____ Real-life application of educational theory

_____ Working with students with special needs and their families

_____ Collaboration with community partners at Tech Kids Unlimited

_____ Successful experience in an informal learning environment (afterschool programs)

_____ Great addition to my educational resume

Q4.3 What was one of the most rewarding experiences you had during this program? Please describe how this positive aspect of the program was valuable to you.

Q5.1 What aspects of this program did you find most challenging? Please be as specific as possible.

Q5.2 Would you have any interest being involved with this program in the future?

- ○ Yes, I am interested in learning more about opportunities.

- ○ Possibly, I would consider being involved if some small changes were made.

- ○ Maybe, but I would like to see some major changes before I would participate.

- ○ No, I would not be interested in participating in the future.

- ○ Other: _____

Q5.3 As a source or feedback and professional development to assist my thesis research, would you consider attending a brief and informal forum (with coffee, tea, and desserts) to voice your experiences with fellow Wagner pre-service educators involved in community-university partnership programs? All attendees will be provided with a chance for a Dunkin Donuts or Barnes and Noble gift card.

- ○ Yes, I would like to learn more about logistics of this brief event and the chance to win a gift-card.

- ○ No, I would not like to participate in this brief event.

- ○ Other: _____

Appendix E: Los Promotores Afterschool Program Feedback Survey

Q1.1 How would you describe your current academic standing at Wagner College? Please

check all that apply

    1. Undergraduate Student (if so, please identify current major or dual majors and year

in the space below) _____

    2. Graduate Student, MS Ed in Early Childhood /Special Ed

    3. Graduate Student, MS Ed in Teaching Literacy

    4. Graduate Student, MS Ed in Childhood 1-6/Special Ed

    5. Graduate Student, MS Ed in Adolescent/Special Ed((if so, please identify

concentration the space below) _____

    6. Graduate Student, MS Ed in Educational Leadership

Q1.2 Which answer best describes how you learned about the P.S. 20 Afterschool Literacy

program (Los Promotores)?

    1. This program was part of a class requirement

    2. I was invited by an education professor

    3. I heard about this program through classmate

    4. I was recommended to participate from the program coordinator.

    5. Other: _____

Q1.3 Did you have any prior experiences involving this population of students or with

educational afterschool programs? Please list and describe any experiences that may be

applicable.

Q1.4 In what ways were you directly prepared through programmatic efforts once you

knew you would participate in it?

o   I had professional development opportunities to learn about the student population and

     program goals

o   I collaborated with peers that I felt comfortable working alongside during class

     assignments

o   I felt prepared with necessary program logistics, including the program goals,

     expectations, and overall mission of the community-university partnership

o   I learned about the flipped model of instruction and felt comfortable using this model

o   Other: _____

Q1.5 Please rank you motivation for the involvement with the Los Promotores P.S. 20

Afterschool Literacy Program *Please use 1 as the lowest motivator, 5 being the highest.

_____ Real-life application of classroom theories

_____ Professional experience/Resume

_____ Earning a desirable class grade (requirement for coursework)

_____ Experience in informal educational environment (afterschool literacy

program)

_____ Interest in working with ELL and Spanish speaking community members

(students, families, etc.)

Q2.3 How effectively did you feel you collaborated with the following groups during this

program. Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.

_____ Collaboration with professors

_____ Collaboration with program coordinators and community partners

_____ Collaboration with my peers

_____ Collaboration with students and families

Q2.4 Are there any aspects of the previously listed collaborations that you would like to clarify?

Q20 How would you describe the ways the program planning logistics (time, location, objectives for the session) were communicated to you? Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.

_____ I received helpful email communication

_____ I engaged in reflective conversations following each session

_____ I had the chance to have one-on-one support from professors, program coordinators, and/or peers.

Q2.1 How would you describe the goals and objectives of this program?

Q3.2 About how much time did you spend preparing for each session of this program?

	Never	Less than Once a Month	Once a Month	2-3 Times a Month	Once a Week	2-3 Times a Week	Daily
Average time spent preparing for one session at P.S. 20							

Q3.3 How many semesters have you been involved in this program? (If you are currently involved with this semester, you may count that as "1" semester)

- o 1 semester

- o 2 semesters

- o 3 semesters

- o 4 or more semesters

- o Other: _____

Q3.1 Little, Wilmer, and Weiss (2008) wrote that while afterschool programs "have the potential to impact a range of positive learning and development outcomes," some programs do not maximize this potential." How does this quote relate to your experiences with this program and the idea of maximizing potential?

Q2.2 Collaboration is essential for effective community-university partnerships. Can you describe one of the best examples of how you collaborated with professors, peers, students, families, or the community during this program?

Q4.1 How would you rank the benefits of this program? *Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.

_____ Real-life application of educational theory

_____ Working with low income, ELL students and families

_____ Collaboration with community partners at Port Richmond

_____ Successful experience in an informal learning environment (afterschool programs)

_____ Great addition to my educational resume

Q4.2 What was one of the most rewarding experiences you had during this program? Please describe how this positive aspect of the program was valuable to you.

Q5.1 What aspects of this program did you find most challenging? Please be as specific as possible.

Q5.2 Would you have any interest being involved with this program in the future?

o   Yes, I am interested in learning more about opportunities.

o   Possibly, I would consider being involved if some small changes were made.

o   Maybe, but I would like to see some major changes before I would participate.

o   No, I would not be interested in participating in the future.

o   Other: _____

Q5.3 As a source or feedback and professional development to assist my thesis research, would you consider attending a brief and informal forum (with coffee, tea, and desserts) to voice your experiences with fellow Wagner pre-service educators involved in community-university partnership programs? All attendees will be provided with a chance for a Dunkin Donuts or Barnes and Noble gift card.

o   Yes, I would like to learn more about logistics of this brief event and the chance to win a gift-card.

o   No, I would not like to participate in this brief event.

o   Other: _____

Appendix F: Interview Data for Associated Program Leaders

Tech Kids Unlimited

A. Tech Kids Unlimited Progam Leader A, Phone Interview, April 13, 2015

1. How did you first become involved with the Wagner version of this program?

"Basically I was began my community involvement from my experiences with a son that has ASD. I technically created TKU in 2009, then in 2014 received non-for profit status. I was making rounds in digital media grants and learned about Leah Gilliam and I reached out to Brooklyn office to hear about the partnerships that the HIVE NYC Learning Network had to off. We talked and I wanted to hear if I was eligible for grants and the chance to continue these projects for children who learn differently. I learned then that you could apply for grants at HIVE with larger, "lead" organizations and that's where I found out about Wagner College.

I had had experience with New York Hall of Science through consultant work regarding ASD. With the six degrees of separation, an educator that works closely with Wagner at NYSCI (Anthony Negron) connected us to Wagner College. During our initial phone call, it was clear we had similar goals and motivations for learners. Our proposal happened overnight and it was a fast process, but it was a clear no brainer. This gave the ASD community another chance for programs and gave TKU the perfect opportunity for borough expansion (having already organized technology workshops in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens). The best place to partner, in my opinion, is with these universities."

2. Before this project, how would you describe your other partnerships with colleges? How was it different working with the Education department and education students specifically?

"Tech Kids Unlimited developed organically in 2009. I had programs at the JCC Manhattan media lab followed by Pace as I pursued my education technology degree. At this time, I applied for internal grant through Jonathan Hill and earned an internal grant with Verizon with a faculty member. This gave me a taste of the university partnership model and it worked even better at Pace. This partnership helped tremendously, using students as counselors that are already are trained in so many aspects of technology. It was a better experience. JCC was practical, I was using my daughter and her friends in NYC for community service as our counselors. This was social activity for them, and free volunteers for our program. The program participants were much younger and counselors were also young. But wow, has it developed! At universities we have specialized computer science majors, like those I often hire at Pace with the technology lab and program. Two years ago, in 2013 at NYU Poly, my educational consultant work led to new exciting partnerships. My director was opening a new space and wanted a program in this technology based ability lab. The K-12 STEM program opportunity helped TKU partner with NYU Poly in Brooklyn, working with undergraduate and graduates in their various departments. These were hybrid kids, often graduate students with multiple interests within computers, and marketing, social media, with any previous undergraduate majors. This program infused practical technology skills and we really just started working with those students closely, training the educational pieces as we learned together.

More specifically, Wagner was first time with just education students. It was a really amazing experience, despite the technology proficiency. That piece always helps, but with the education students, there is a new sense of proficiency and it runs so efficiently. They bring another set of skills that counselors were not previously bringing our program.

This opened my eyes to new structural aspects of staffing; there needs to be a mix of students. We need to have technology specialist, education students, speech therapy, educational therapy, computer science majors! This even mix of departments, and other departments at these schools wanting to be involved, is so exciting. The program improves as we begin pushing out to find counselors with skill sets from a variety of disciplines. Looking back from 2009 to 2015, it has been an incredibly wonderful trajectory, having started with my daughters and her high school friends to now having specialized graduate students."

3. What are some of the most successful ways that you have found to prepare pre-service educators to work with students from diverse and special needs backgrounds?

"It always goes back to training counselors. Having teachers in STEM is vital and we need train more teachers in STEM who can also teach special needs. This is a totally different way, but finding great teachers is like finding a needle in a haystack. Finding counselors from this program is easier because there is almost a science of what your specialty is (computer science/engineering/education). It is hard to train counselors that do not have a passion for the population or a real love of interacting with children and supporting their goals. We also know there needs to be respect for the population. Ultimately, the trial and error of counselors that works well with population and want to be there makes the difference."

Our bi-yearly training is paid, with all counselors and pre-service educators to have quality training. The goal to is to train all students and we only allow 30 people into each training program. In the afterschool and informal education world, our counselors are constantly evolving and having programs at different sites changes the types of training

that are needed. Still, we all can learn from one another and from different sets of learners. I also believe that communication effectiveness and technology teacher training are essential. I make sure our lead counselors are training in the lesson plans that work well in this workshop and that the objectives are clear. Sometimes, our training involves educational aspects of translating goals and objectives to the group and kids. For other groups, it's teaching about the nature of ASD and what the literature says works for informal education. I'm willing to take on anyone that has a desire, but we have to continue valuing the professional development of these individuals, teach the training, and support the vocabulary growth of new terms for our students.

4. Were there any aspects of this program that made collaboration difficult?

"Like in any first time with a new partnership, there is a lot of unknown. Whether that is with the new students, location, or organization goals, it is a learning experience. The hardest aspect of this program was the quick turnaround from a grant standpoint and only having certain resources available at the new Wagner site. We were spoiled in some of the technology-centered universities and the space was brand new here, so it was just a lot of learning. Not a bad thing, but always something to consider in a new partnership."

5. In your opinion, what aspects of the program were most successful when implemented?

"This was our time working with education students, both graduate and undergraduate. I think that the Wagner version of TKU had a strong bond with the students. Working with education students in and of itself was a new experience for the group. We had amazing women who got the program very quickly and learned how to address the goals immediately. It was a thrill to see and they seemed natural in the program. Having a

set of experienced educators that attached to the program was a real joy and that's why the program ran so well."

6. What opportunities did you have to reflect on your practice as the program progressed?

"As in any grant-based partnership, we are expected to evaluate and assess every level of the program. This makes for constant reflection, whether in informal phone conversations or written reports to funders. It's something I have grown accustomed to over the years and having that analytical eye is huge."

7. What role did collaboration play in the planning and delivery of this program? How would you describe the success of collaboration with professionals, coordinators, pre-service educators, and program participants?

"David Gordon was a great partner and our Wagner program coordinator Tatum were always willing to work hard and make it work. This partnership was a seamless transition and we were able and willing to find ways that worked. Their previous relationships with the schools that made it so easy to market and helped us become familiar with the community on Staten Island. These department connections, with schools like Hungerford, made the marketing work so well, even the fact that there was a place for each kid. Seeing how our unexpected non-verbal student connected with an education student was amazing. She essentially created a program on the spot for Michael. Amazing work. Above and beyond connections. Education students are able to see the need, create it, and love every second of doing it. This mini pilot would not have happened without education pre-service teachers, and that was the great part about the program at Wagner. It was a great example of a new experience from educators and a collaborative dream team."

8. What are your thoughts about having more community-university partnerships, whether at Wagner College or more generally across the country?

"It's the best way to learn and grow in these type of partnerships. In my experience, there are these stellar students that bite off anything placed in front of them. The community-university partnership, I love it. It combines the interests of world educators, community, connects minds and shared interests of every stakeholder. Seeing what happens at university, with the most innovative learning and minds, incredible hardware, technology needs, these are aspects that are not always available to communities and nonprofits that want to make these connections. This is significant part of my program model. I prefer colleges more than anywhere because the community served in a way that people are learning, assessing, and caring.

Communities gain the programs and access to great educational opportunities, while colleges like Wagner make an impact and learning about people behind the figures in the surrounding community. This type of partnership model also helps non-for profits to grow, pilot, and experiment. It is paramount. Beyond donated space and items, it is just a space that supports learning and colleges provide that in spades. It is not just a quality professional experience for counselors, but for universities like Wagner, NYU, and Pace that embrace, support, and connect to the community."

9. What was the most memorable experience for you in this program?

"This entire experience was really memorable since Wagner was first time having exclusively education students as our counselors. It was a really amazing experience since they bring another set of skills that counselors were not previously bringing our program. I was also was thrilled at the response from parents and the reactions I was hearing from

the reflective moments. I had parents asking me when TKU would be back on Staten Island and how their children could sign up for more programs when the grant project had completed. Those moments remind us that we are doing something right and supporting the community in a respectful, caring way."

10. Little, Wimer, and Weiss (2008) wrote that while afterschool programs "have the potential to impact a range of positive learning and development outcomes," some programs "do not maximize this potential." How does/doesn't this quote relate to your experiences with this program and the idea of maximizing potential?

"I think it is a great point about any type of partnership or informal educational program because there is a constant need to evolve and meet new goals, especially since so many programs are based out of grant-funding. Afterschool and out-of-school activities give children a chance to pursue their affinities and find what makes them the best version of themselves. I think the TKU program really focuses on interest-driven learning and finding a way to maximize the potential of these super talented children. The technology and career goals of the program are what drives the learning outcomes and developmental pieces."

11. What are your goals for your program?

"My ultimate goal is to change the paradigm of employment for kids who learn differently. Kids of all backgrounds have a hard time finding employment. But for students that are in school until 21, parents of students with special needs ask, "then what?" If 1/7 of your life is controlled, how can we ensure that the rest of that life is meaningful and wonderful? We want these kids to contribute to society. Whether that is volunteering, part-time jobs, having a chance to be productive and happy members of society. The technology

aspect gets kids excited, but in the long run, TKU gets them the skills to be literate in tech skills, life skills, and get them jobs. My next dream is to make a "work boot camp" in the summer. With would help them meet a real client and help design company websites. This is for real clients, with our kids looking at website and change it through wire frames, so on. Having a chance to map it out is a real resume experience. This is a first step for down the line internships at video software companies or gaming networks that these kids often admire. In a perfect world, everyone has a chance for employment, but it's just not the case. Clearly our kids have unique characteristics and need more focus to learn. While this program began out of fear that my son would not have this meaningful life experience, I am reminded every day that there is hope and programs like TKU have a chance to change the stigma."

B. Tech Kids Unlimited Program Leader B, Phone Interview, April 10th, 2015

1. How did you learn about this opportunity and first become involved with this program?

"My involvement with Beth and Tech Kids Unlimited happened very quickly through our connection HIVE, which is a great connective learning network in New York City for digital based learning and non-profits. Essentially, Beth contacted us and they were looking to partner on a grant-based HIVE project. As a new Hive member they wanted to reach out to a lead organization and Wagner seemed like a great fit from both ends. They wanted to partner and it sounded good so we set up initial meetings that really made us click. We had similar goals and visions for the community on Staten Island, so it was a no brainer. My involvement with our undergraduate and graduate education students also helped us connect to new counselors for the program."

2. Before this project, did you have any other experiences with afterschool education models, community-university partnerships, or this population?

"Yes, most of my experiences in education have been through partnerships. I've been involved in projects at New York Hall of Science (NYSCI) with Wagner, and with various non-profits at Wagner. This population of special needs is a newer experience, specifically with ASD. My background is really with chronic medical conditions so working so closely with ASD and technology was a new experience. I've also worked in partnerships with adults with intellectual disabilities like at Lifestyles, but I was very open to a new type of practice."

3. What are some of the most successful ways that you have found to prepare pre-service educators to work with students from diverse and special needs backgrounds?

"I have found that the most effective way is getting students in there with real experiences. By having pre-service educators observing, then participating, and then really doing the work, there is a sense of trust and creativity. This helps them to get a sense of the population and working in program. In this type of workshop, the space and opportunity to actually work with the population is key. There should always be a real, practical, tangible piece that is very hands on and focused towards a clear goal. Grant-based projects should have students participating but there is a need to have a learning objective clarity. This also provides pre-service teachers with learning objectives. Having students really understand what they are working towards sets direction, goal, and tone. It's not just about doing hours, you are helping them reach objectives and learning about helping students achieve their goals."

4. Were there any aspects of this program that made collaboration difficult?

"Any time that you involve different types of people, interpersonal collaborations and specific goals and agendas need to be considered. Sometimes, stakeholders have their own goals for their professional growth and communication sometimes needs to be worked on. Partners must be conscious of goals and continue to make sure everyone is focused on the same direction. Conflicting goals is the biggest issue that can occur in these types of partnerships. Another difficult aspect was that our project was funded through another non-profit, so the level of reporting from a specific timeline was a very new experience. Due to the tight timeline, we needed to adjust to the quick turnaround of HIVE expectations. The grant timeline really pushed us to create the program quickly and rushed us to carry out grant before the next round of grants. We were rushing to get all four sessions in, as expected by the funder, but it would have been nice to have spaced out our grant and ran two sessions of TKU in the spring. The need for quick feedback to HIVE and New York Community Trust (funder) was a stressful but necessary aspect of the grant game."

5. In your opinion, what aspects of the program were most successful when implemented?

"The strengths of the lead members made it work and I think we had very clear organization. We worked so well and knew our roles. I also think that utilizing the pre-service educators was awesome because our partners had never done that before. It was great for all involved, a different level of staffing and people that really understand learning objectives. Pre-service educators are always looking for practice and this program had the community standpoint on Staten Island. I hope to grow it in the next chapter."

6. What opportunities did you have to reflect on your practice as the program progressed?

"In some ways, we had a forced opportunity due to participant that wasn't necessarily appropriate for population. This student arrived on the first day of the workshop and made us change advertisement and assess our outreach. It really forced us to re-calibrate and think on our feet quickly. Our immediate reflections made us challenge ourselves and really create a new program need and provided clarity for the original project. In those first 15 minutes on the first day of the program, we were reflecting deeply. Additionally, after the end of each session we thought through success and challenges of the day with the counselors and program leaders. This was huge to learn about their experiences and helped us as we put in the next size of the grant. With the grant-writing process, we were able to reflect on what we did and assess the future. We had both forced and natural reflection, through the expectations of detailed grant reports and close conversations with our program participants."

7. What role did collaboration play in the planning and delivery of this program? How would you describe the success of collaboration with professionals, coordinators, pre-service educators, and program participants?

"The whole premise of getting a grant, philosophically, is about collaboration. Wagner and TKU realized that it needed to be a strong communication with expectations, goals, and planning to get 'there.' It is such an essential part, and I would not want it any other way but it needs to feel right. And we found it. We knew our shared goals for the project and because we were clear on future goals and objectives. I think that knowing the vision and having a clear direction made the challenges more doable. Additionally, pre-service educators and kids benefited from the experience. We were dedicated to the collaborative roles and we bought in which made it easier and more valuable for all

stakeholders involved. This worked well because Beth is clear in her role as a parent with a child that has ASD needs. She is very straight-forward and we bought into shared goals; neither of the partners are in it selfishly but for the kids first and other stakeholders second. That's part of what people responded to so positively and it's always about improving kid's experience."

8. What are your thoughts about having more community-university partnerships, whether at Wagner College or more generally across the country?

"Non-profits are going to survive through this and giving the best of both worlds. Education and informal education is the way of the future and how people learn. You take the best of the skill sets of each organization and work towards a common goal that everyone wants to serve. This is the type of work I've done for eight years and I know this model just as this idea was coming into forefront. This is how everyone moves forward and its part of our world. Colleges can bring such a value of the research component and chance to study this type of learning and understand what is really effective."

9. What was the most memorable experience for you in this program?

"Having a kid who was non-verbal show up every single session and just smile ear to ear. It was not the goal of the program but it worked. Just a beautiful failure, but it was so different than our expectations and we had to deal with it so quickly. We were thoughtful, did right by the kid who was not the best fit, we wanted him to have a good experience and the others that were more the ideal situation. It was exciting to see the one-on-one collaboration and we took what could have been a deal breaker turn into a caring, education student doing the right thing. It was so memorable and speaks to the fact that doing this type of work and a risk gives a chance for failure, but we need to be willing to

take a risk. My philosophy really played out and it was a great experience. You have to be okay with failure but you need to learn that it happens, but need to have all experiences. That's what these community-university partnerships offer, these excited students taking on beautiful unexpected moments."

10. Little, Wilmer, and Weiss (2008) wrote that while afterschool programs "have the potential to impact a range of positive learning and development outcomes," some programs "do not maximize this potential." How does/doesn't this quote relate to your experiences with this program and the idea of maximizing potential?

"It's pretty accurate in my experience I think that our work with TKU really is about maximizing potential of students and having a program that does just that. We hope to give students access to technology and to support the ASD community. Youth don't always have access to these expensive computers and programming aspects but they have an affinity. Getting it into their hands can spark interest and career skills down the road. Out of school programs are always about maximizing potential of students, and this program in-particular is about gaining skills to live a happy independent life. It matches so well to who we are and who we want go and where we want to head."

Appendix G: Interview Data for Survey Analysis

Tech Kids Unlimited Pre-Service Educator Survey Results

1. How would you describe your current academic standing at Wagner College? Please check all that apply

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Undergraduate Student (if so, please identify current major or dual majors and year in the space below)		5	45%
4	Graduate Student, MS Ed in Teaching Literacy		3	27%
5	Graduate Student, MS Ed in Childhood 1-6/Special Ed		2	18%
6	Graduate Student, MS Ed in Early Childhood /Special Ed		0	0%
7	Graduate Student, MS Ed in Adolescent/Special Ed (if so, please identify concentration the space below)		2	18%
8	Graduate Student, MS Ed in Educational Leadership		0	0%

Undergraduate Student (if so, please identify current major or dual majors and year in the space below)	Graduate Student, MS Ed in Adolescent/Special Ed((if so, please identify concentration the space below)
Childhood Education & Psychology	
Elementary Education/ Special Education/ Psychology	
Elementary/Special Education and Psychology	
Childhood education and Spanish	
Freshmen	
	English

2. Which answer best describes how you learned about the Tech Kids Unlimited Workshop at Wagner College?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	This program was part of a class requirement		0	0%
2	I was invited by an education professor		7	64%
3	I heard about this program through classmate		3	27%
4	I was recommended to participate from the program coordinator.		0	0%
5	Other:		1	9%
	Total		11	100%

3. Did you have any prior experiences involving this population of students or with educational afterschool programs? Please list and describe any experiences that may be applicable.

Text Response

No experience with afterschool programs, but experience in self-contained classrooms in District 75 schools.

Prior to working with TKU I had observed and also helped out in classes at the Hungerford school on Staten Island.

I had a good amount of knowledge about this population before coming to TKU. My mom is a physical therapist specializing in pediatrics, so I have been familiar with the jargon and background of ASD from listening to her my entire life. In terms of physical experience I was limited to a few hours of volunteer work at Children At Play (the school my mother works in).

I had experience with special needs students in an athletic setting. I taught swim lessons and coached a Special Needs swim team. I also have had experience with the Hungerford School and various field hours with special needs students. Additionally, I have tutored students with autism.

Yes. I worked with Lifestyles with the disabled during my freshman learning community. As well I work for A Very Special Place with a 12 year old girl with autism at her home on academic, daily living skills, and assessing the community. During my observation hours I have also worked with students with disabilities.

I have not.

I have worked in other tech related programs prior to this one. I have taught in some and was a counselor in others. My prior experience with Student on the Spectrum include my interaction with family friends who have children on the spectrum and some interaction in practicum experiences

I worked with disabled students in high school, but never specifically with Tech Kids Unlimited

I've been working with students with developmental disabilities for about 6 years. I have experience working at an afterschool program, religious education program, and respite work.

I am a para during the summer for an education consortium. I have worked with children with severe disabilities both mentally and physically. I have also worked with non-verbal students.

4. In what ways were you directly prepared through programmatic efforts once you knew you would participate in it

#	Answer		Response	%
	I had professional development opportunities to learn about the student population and program goals		6	55%
	I collaborated with peers that I felt comfortable working alongside		8	73%
	I felt prepared with necessary program logistics, including the program goals, expectations, and overall mission of the community-university partnership		8	73%
	I learned about the technology aspects of the workshops		5	45%
	Other:		0	0%

*5. Please rank which aspects of the Tech Kids Unlimited Workshops most motivated you in your participation. *Please use 1 as the lowest motivator, 6 being the highest.*

#	Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total Responses
	Real-life application of classroom theories	1	2	0	3	3	0	9
	Professional experience/Resume	1	1	5	1	1	0	9
	Earning desired compensation (paid hourly rate)	2	2	0	0	5	0	9
	Experience in informal educational environment (afterschool literacy program)	1	1	2	2	0	3	9
	Interest in special needs population	2	2	0	0	0	5	9
	Interest in technology for educational purposes	2	1	2	3	0	1	9
	Total	9	9	9	9	9		-

Statistic	Real-life application of classroom theories	Professional experience /Resume	Earning desired compensation (paid hourly rate)	Experience in informal educational environment (afterschool program)	Interest in special needs population	Interest in technology for educational purposes
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	5	5	5	6	6	6
Mean	3.56	3.00	3	3.44	3.89	4.00	3.11
Variance	2.28	1.25	3.53	3.36	5.75	2.61
Standard Deviation	1.51	1.12	1.88	1.83	2.40	1.62
Total Responses	9	9	9	9	9	9

6. How effectively did you feel you collaborated with the following groups during this program? Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
1	Collaboration with professors	70.00	100.00	88.00	10.19	10
2	Collaboration with program coordinators and community partners	40.00	99.00	77.30	15.54	10
3	Collaboration with my peers	60.00	99.00	81.60	13.37	10
4	Collaboration with students and families	80.00	98.00	87.40	5.99	10

7. Are there any aspects of the previously listed collaborations that you would like to clarify?

Text Response

The program ran smoothly, but I didn't feel that we were included in the preparation process. I felt a little thrown into the experience and I think we could have given beneficial feedback to the instructors from Tech Kids. A lot of the wording of the instruction was unnecessarily confusing and didn't hold the attention of the students. More collaboration between the Tech Kids staff and the Wagner students could have helped.

No thank you

The TKU staff were not as flexible and open as they initially seemed.

At times it felt like there was a distance between the TKU technology teachers and the Wagner volunteers. In terms of peer collaboration, we did the best we could, but for the most part we were working 1:1 with the students.

It was great to work with different students and families while still seeing repeat visitors during the workshops.

I enjoyed the collaboration with all aspects that are listed above.

No

The program coordinator and program leader was very active in preparing us to work in the program. There was great communication with the professor in change as well as with students that we were working with. We worked one on one or in small groups with students so there was not much interaction between me and my peers as far as collaboration goes but when we did interaction was effective and helped work toward the program goal.

8. How would you describe the ways the program planning logistics (time, location, objectives for the session) were communicated to you? Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.
(0=far too little, 50=about right, 100=far too often)

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation		Responses
	I received helpful email communication	6.00	0.00	8.50	6.62		10
	I engaged in reflective conversations following each session	0.00	4.00	8.40	11.89		10
	I had the chance to have one-on-one support from professors, program coordinators, and/or peers.	0.00	0.00	5.90	11.02		10

9. How would you describe the goals and objectives of the Tech Kids Unlimited program?

Text Response

I thought it was to teach them skills that could be used in the computer programming workforce, but it came off as more as guided free time on the computer.

To provide HIGH FUNCTIONING Autistic children with technological tools to help them find employment later in life.

TKU works to teach students with ASD technology skills while offering a safe environment where they can communicate and foster social interactions with peers that have similar interests.

Tech Kids Unlimited strives to teach students who learn differently to engage in social skills and exciting applications of technology in a supportive environment. The students and teachers worked together to engage in these technology skills and leave each workshop with some type of created project or model. It helped teachers learn more about the population but really gave these students a chance to socialize and be part of something they enjoy.

The goals and objectives of TKU was to have students with disabilities working with technology. Having students working with the programming and collaborating with the TKU team and the Wagner college students. There was a heavy focus with working with students that were higher functioning. It is a technology and educational based program. Kids are in love with technology this program allows them to use what they love in an educational way. One objective was allow the students to create what they wanted with the help of the TKU team.

Very clear and effective

The TKU program aimed to introduce the students to interactive programming and other technological opportunities that engaged their minds and built their skill set for the future. While the program was specifically meant to children on the spectrum we worked with students with all different challenges and it was beneficial for everyone.

To help children with disabilities become engaged through working with technology

10. About how much time did you spend preparing for each session of this program?

#	Question	Never	Less than Once a Month	Once a Month	2-3 Times a Month	Once a Week	2-3 Times a Week	Daily	Total Responses
	Average time spent preparing for one workshop	4	2	2	2	2	1	1	10

11.   How many sessions have you been involved with Tech Kids Unlimited?   (Please include any professional development sessions as well as actual workshops)

#	Answer		Response	%
	1 session		0	0%
	2 sessions		4	40%
	3 sessions		2	20%
	4 or more sessions		3	30%
	Other:		1	10%
	Total		10	100%

12. Little, Wilmer, and Weiss (2008) wrote that while afterschool programs "have the potential to impact a range of positive learning and development outcomes," some programs do not maximize this potential." How does this quote relate to your experiences with this program and the idea of maximizing potential?

Text Response

A few students moved past the goals of each session within 15 minutes and were left to their own devices for the rest of the session. Planned scaffolding for students who need the extra support and extra activities for students who finish early will help maximize the potential of this program.

I agree with this quote as I do believe that classroom instruction is just the warm up and that the real learning happens by applying that base knowledge after hours and in the outside world.

I think that this program maximized the potential for the resources that were provided. Each week the number of participants grew, and we had a few students continue to come back. The students were genuinely interested in coding and building games and talked about perusing a future career in game building. My only criticism is that some of the coding was too easy for certain students, so they spent a good deal of time complaining and asking to go on other sites like Youtube.

I think this program did a great job of maximizing potential, based on the first time experience at Wagner. I think the professors, program coordinators, and TKU staff were really engaging and dedicated to the program. It was clear that they were passionate about the workshop and mission of the program. They created a positive environment for students, families, and all people involved. I also enjoyed that students left every workshop with a completed project. It was amazing to see how well the students responded to the activities.

I feel this program was a pilot project and it was over a span of 4 different sessions. My experiences with this program was very positive and it was a great learning experience for me. I was learning more about technology that I never knew about. I worked with the population, but working with this population and technology at first I was nervous to know how the program would start. After doing the program I can say there is way to maximize potential of the program. The students that I worked with were extremely happy to be working with the technology. I felt the environment was a positive learning experience for the staff and the students that were involved in the program. Overall I think that this quote shows that it takes a while for a program to come about to produce positive learning and development outcomes. A program is a growing experience and I think that this program would be a great asset to Wagner and can help many students in the future.

I would say that this program is working toward having that positive impact. The idea behind it is positive and while I think it was very successful, it was just a few sessions of the program so the true impact could not be fully determined. I think that with some more development that an expanded version of the program, which is in the works for the summer, would be more beneficial.

I think this quotation is accurate, because while the program was engaging for the students it may not have been as effective as it could have been. I only say this because the students seemed to be enjoying themselves, but often times they were only sitting at a computer screen which is not the most engaging form of activity.

13. Collaboration is essential for effective community-university partnerships. Can you describe one of the best examples of how you collaborated with professors, peers, students, families, or the community during this program?

Text Response

This didn't occur in my personal experience, but it could in the future: collaboration between Wagner student volunteers and TKU staff when planning sessions/presentations.

The student I personally worked with, Michael, brought me to collaborate with peers, professors, and his parents to ensure he was benefitting from our program.

After one of the TKU sessions we debriefed and talked about what worked best in preparing us for the workshops. I commented on a poem that one of the TKU workers read, saying that it helped me put the students and their families in perspective. Having the initial meeting with the TKU teachers was really beneficial before starting the workshops. We collaborated from the very beginning and things went smoothly throughout the duration of the program.

I really enjoyed the professional development experience. It was clear how dedicated Beth is to her organization and I think it was a great opportunity for our Education Department to be a part of. This gave us a chance to collaborate with a new population, practice classroom theories, and give back to our local community in Staten Island. It's not often that we get something like this on campus that is so connected to our coursework. I loved collaborating with the students and seeing how proud they were to share their projects with friends and family after each session. That made this partnership really valuable for everyone involved.

Collaboration is key. If there is no communication among everyone, then there cannot be an effective program. I collaborated with professors before the workshops. I collaborated with the TKU team before and during the workshops. I collaborated with my peers that I was working with, so that the workshops can go smoothly for the students. I collaborated with parents asking if their child liked the program and what can be some improvements.

Prior to the beginning of the program, there was a professional develop where the leader of TKU came to our school and informed us of the purpose of the program and how the partnership would work. This gave us a clear idea of what would be expected from us and what the goal was.

I collaborated with a peer in working with a nonverbal student.

*14. How would you rank the benefits of this program? *Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.*

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
1	Real-life application of educational theory	39.00	100.00	72.33	18.55	9
2	Working with students with special needs and their families	50.00	100.00	90.67	15.83	9
3	Collaboration with community partners at Tech Kids Unlimited	47.00	99.00	65.38	20.87	8
4	Successful experience in an informal learning environment (afterschool programs)	49.00	100.00	79.44	18.08	9
5	Great addition to my educational resume	50.00	98.00	83.78	14.37	9

15. What was one of the most rewarding experiences you had during this program? Please describe how this positive aspect of the program was valuable to you.

Getting a chance to see students who don't necessarily succeed in the traditional classroom setting excelling and exceeding their own expectations.

It was an honor and a privilege to be able to make the connection I made with Michael. It was an incredible experience that taught me so much about the Autistic population and also taught me so much about myself and my abilities as a future educator.

One of the students was very hesitant to come into the lab at the beginning of the workshops. He took a long time to warm up to the staff, and the idea of being separated from his parents made him very uncomfortable. He would roam around, complain, and moan because he wanted to go home. By the last workshop, he was walking in and doing work on his own with little (if any) fuss. He engaged in conversations with the Wagner students, and successfully built his own game. Personally, watching his comfort in the social situation and change was a huge positive experience to have as a future educator.

My favorite experience was seeing one of the students, Tommy, respond so well to the counselors and projects. Tommy was a student with Down's Syndrome and this workshop was a new experience for him. Whether it was using Photoshop techniques, playing Twister and or practicing socialization games that we learned in classes, this was a great experience. I think Tommy was an example of how students gained social connections, while still gaining valuable technology skills.

Working with students with special needs and learning about programming. It was amazing to see that these students were capable working with technology and creating things that they were proud of. I was glad I was given the opportunity to work with TKU and learning about their program. Working with students with special needs and watching them maneuver technology was most valuable and rewarding to me.

One of the most rewarding experiences that I had during this program was hearing from the parents about their child's experiences. Yes the kids said they had fun but hearing that they could not stop taking about what they did when they got home was really rewarding to hear. It showed me that we were making a memorable experience for the students.

One of the most rewarding experiences I had during the short time I spent with the program was working with a nonverbal student. We worked with him on getting to use his communication device by asking him questions alone in a room. Then we got him up on campus and tried to get him to communicate with others, which he was hesitant with at first. However, after a few attempts he started to use his speech device more with strangers, and that was rewarding to watch.

16. What aspects of this program did you find most challenging? Please be as specific as possible.

Text Response

Encouraging students to stay focused during the preliminary presentation. It didn't hold their attention.

Because Michael was not on the part of the spectrum that the program had desired I felt as though we were cast out to fend for ourselves alongside instruction from the amazing Professor Gordon. We managed but it was a bit disheartening.

Keeping the students on task was particularly difficult. They are all tech savvy, but were not necessarily interested in the coding activities. They each had their own favorite site that they would go consistently go to (YouTube, Sesame Street, Google Earth, etc.) and I did my best to use those sites as a reward for completing their game. It was also occasionally difficult to engage the students in social conversations. Some students did not want to talk at all, and some students got frustrated if they had to wait their turn to speak.

I found that it was sometimes challenging to work with the technology aspects of the workshop. I thought that our lead technology counselor was really talented, but it came very naturally to him. I think in the future, it would be helpful to have a sheet of technology tips for counselors and educators to refer to. This could help us help the students complete their tasks without interrupting the technology teacher repeatedly.

I found it most challenging not knowing what to be doing on the computers. I constantly had to ask the TKU staff exactly what to do. I wish I was prepared more on doing the programming before the workshops, so that I could have easily helped the student.

The most challenging aspect of the program was that I wasn't completely competent in everything programming wise that we were teaching the students. It was cool to learn alongside the students but when they had questions, I wasn't able to help them right away. While this was challenging, it was also good them to see that everyone needs help sometimes and not to be afraid to ask.

The most challenging part of the program was sometimes not knowing how to work the computer programs myself.

#	Answer		Response	%
	17. Would you have any interest being involved with this program in the future?			
1	Yes, I am interested in learning more about opportunities.		7	78%
2	Possibly, I would consider being involved if some small changes were made.		1	11%
3	Maybe, but I would like to see some major changes before I would participate.		0	0%
4	No, I would not be interested in participating in the future.		0	0%
5	Other:		1	11%
	Total		9	100%

Other:

No because I'm graduating.

Los Promotores Pre-Service Educator Survey Results

1. How would you describe your current academic standing at Wagner College? Please check all that apply

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Undergraduate Student (if so, please identify current major or dual majors and year in the space below)		0	0%
4	Graduate Student, MS Ed in Teaching Literacy		4	57%
5	Graduate Student, MS Ed in Childhood 1-6/Special Ed		1	14%
6	Graduate Student, MS Ed in Early Childhood /Special Ed		2	29%
7	Graduate Student, MS Ed in Adolescent/Special Ed((if so, please identify concentration the space below)		0	0%
8	Graduate Student, MS Ed in Educational Leadership		0	0%

2. Which answer best describes how you learned about the P.S. 20 Afterschool Literacy program (Los Promotores)?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	This program was part of a class requirement		7	100%
2	I was invited by an education professor		0	0%
3	I heard about this program through classmate		0	0%
4	I was recommended to participate from the program coordinator.		0	0%
5	Other:		0	0%
	Total		7	100%

3. Did you have any prior experiences involving this population of students or with educational afterschool programs? Please list and describe any experiences that may be applicable.

Text Response

Student Teaching

I worked in academic tutoring settings with youth in ELA support. I also worked in a ELL classroom during my student teaching experience in Rosebank at P.S. 13.

Yes, I worked with the first group of P.S. 20 families when this program first started.

None

I have had experience working with ELL learners during my practicum experiences.

I worked with an after school group in Richmond, VA consisting of the struggling readers of a diverse population. I've never worked with another group from Port Richmond.

No

4. In what ways were you directly prepared through programmatic efforts once you knew you would participate in it?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	I had professional development opportunities to learn about the student population and program goals		1	14%
2	I collaborated with peers that I felt comfortable working alongside during class assignments		7	100%
3	I felt prepared with necessary program logistics, including the program goals, expectations, and overall mission of the community-university partnership		1	14%
4	I learned about the flipped model of instruction and felt comfortable using this model		2	29%
5	Other:		1	14%

Other:

There was no a lot of prep prior to the beginning of this program. The program goals were explained but the prep for how to reach these goals was lacking. 4

5. Please rank you motivation for the involvement with the Los Promotores P.S. 20 Afterschool Literacy Program.
Please use 1 as the lowest motivator, 5 being the highest.

#	Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Total Responses
1	Real-life application of classroom theories	1	2	0	1	1	5
2	Professional experience/Resume	1	1	2	0	1	5
3	Earning a desirable class grade (requirement for coursework)	1	0	1	1	2	5
4	Experience in informal educational environment (afterschool literacy program)	2	0	1	1	1	5
5	Interest in working with ELL and Spanish speaking community members (students, families, etc.)	0	2	1	2	0	5
	Total	5	5	5	5	5	-

Statistic	Real-life application of classroom theories	Professional experience/Resume	Earning a desirable class grade (requirement for coursework)	Experience in informal educational environment (afterschool literacy program)	Interest in working with ELL and Spanish speaking community members (students, families, etc.)
Min Value	1	1	1	1	2
Max Value	5	5	5	5	4
Mean	2.80	2.80	3.60	2.80	3.00
Variance	2.70	2.20	2.80	3.20	1.00
Standard Deviation	1.64	1.48	1.67	1.79	1.00
Total Responses	5	5	5	5	5

6. *How effectively did you feel you collaborated with the following groups during this program? Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.*

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
	Collaboration with professors	9.00	72.00	44.29	26.71	7
	Collaboration with program coordinators and community partners	5.00	77.00	45.83	28.94	6
	Collaboration with my peers	55.00	91.00	71.00	11.92	7
	Collaboration with students and families	0.00	96.00	66.00	30.96	7

7. Are there any aspects of the previously listed collaborations that you would like to clarify?

Text Response

I think it was helpful to work closely with a specific group of students and parents throughout the time at P.S. 20. However, I think it would have been more helpful to learn about the profile of the students or have access to their reading levels before starting the program. This way, we could effectively group students to teachers that have strengths in different age groups and subjects. I think the benefit of our collaboration in this program is having educators from every possible program (literacy, early childhood, etc.) and learning how to support the population best.

I felt I was able to collaborate with peers during all assignments and together we would have a plan for our students. Once arriving with plans I felt a lack of communication with professors and partners which sometimes lead to an issue communicating with the families.

There was some collaboration and while the concept behind it was good the actual implementation wasn't. Groups were not able to get together to do work and one person always ended up doing most of the work. Also the way the program is run, collaboration and working with group did not always work out as students were absent and teachers were shuffled around.   I felt that while the teachers wanted us to do specific work with the students and parents it was more to fit the needs of the attached class then actually help the student with a specific need.

I felt the professors did not successfully collaborate with the Wagner students. I felt I was not as useful to the students and/or moms as I could have been.

8.   How would you describe the ways the program planning logistics (time, location, objectives for the session) were communicated to you? Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.   (0=far too little, 50=about right, 100=far too often)

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
1	I received helpful email communication	1.00	71.00	31.14	27.01	7
2	I engaged in reflective conversations following each session	9.00	72.00	35.00	25.77	7
3	I had the chance to have one-on-one support from professors, program coordinators, and/or peers.	5.00	50.00	31.57	19.38	7

9. How would you describe the goals and objectives of this program?

Text Response

Promoting literacy skills to enhance their oral language development

To support families and students at P.S. 20/Port Richmond to learn valuable literacy skills and prepare for academic rigor before higher grade levels

I was often confused about the goals and objectives as they seemed to change frequently. My understanding is that we were to create a line of communication between families, students, and teachers in order to work on the common goal of improving literacy skills.

I am mostly uncertain of the goals of this program but I would say it was to help the individual students advance in their literacy skills while also helping their second language mom's prepare to help their children at home with their school work.

This program is intended to improve the literacy skills of students while collaborating with the parents on how to better support their children's literacy development at home.

Unclear and not reinforced

10. About how much time did you spend preparing for each session of this program?

#	Question	Never	Less than Once a Month	Once a Month	2-3 Times a Month	Once a Week	2-3 Times a Week	Daily	Total Responses
1	Average time spent preparing for one session at P.S. 20	0	0	2	0	4	1	0	7

11. How many semesters have you been involved in this program? (If you are currently involved with this semester, you may count that as "1" semester)

#	Answer		Response	%
1	1 semester		1	14%
2	2 semesters		5	71%
3	3 semesters		1	14%
4	4 or more semesters		0	0%
5	Other:		0	0%
	Total		7	100%

12. Little, Wilmer, and Weiss (2008) wrote that while afterschool programs "have the potential to impact a range of positive learning and development outcomes," some programs do not maximize this potential." How does this quote relate to your experiences with this program and the idea of maximizing potential?

Text Response

I believe that this program offers an enriching experience to help develop their oral language abilities and facilitate engaging discussions to further their academic growth.

I think the program is approaching potential but needs to be more organized in the implementation. I think we did the best we could with the format, but I think having set objectives for each week planned beforehand would help us clearly plan. I also believe that picking our partners and groups could be helpful to maximize potential and work around difficult graduate schedules.

I think the idea of the program is great and it could be extremely beneficial as the students, parents, and Wagner students are eager to work together. I feel that the lack of organization cripples a lot of the beneficial outcomes that could occur.

I WHOLEHEARTEDLY agree with this quote. I believe that the basic setup for the Los Promotores has a lot of potential, but I feel like the current program is not reaching its goals and allowing for a lot of opportunities to slip by. In order to maximize the potential, there needs to be so much more organization then is existing. There is entirely too much time wasted with people having no idea what they are supposed to be doing/need to be doing. There is also a real lack of consistency. This program would work a million times better with two things: A clear curriculum/focus on lesson planning and B) A consistency and commitment between students and teachers so that the students can really progress and the teachers can mark this progression.

Yea like stated before the idea behind this program is a good one but the implementation is not. The assignments given were more to fill class requirements and not serve the specific needs for the children we are working with. Also they was the program is run is chaotic and unorganized. They either need to give you the freedom to do what you feel is necessary to help improve that child's literacy skills or making it completely structure with detailed plans. The in-between that currently exists does not work.

I agree. This program had great potential. The students in this community could truly benefit from an after school literacy program. However, I felt it was extremely unorganized to the point where very little or none of the objectives were met.

I think the quote is accurate in describing the PS 20 partnership. It was a positive experience for the students, teachers, and moms in academic and social ways.

A. Benefits and Strengths of the Program

13. Collaboration is essential for effective community-university partnerships. Can you describe one of the best examples of how you collaborated with professors, peers, students, families, or the community during this program?

Text Response

Learning Centers and class discussions.

I found that working closely with the moms was a valuable experience. I loved seeing our group's mother participate and practice vocabulary practice alongside her children. It was a great opportunity to see growth and passion as an educator.

My best collaborative experiences was with my peers when we developed our lessons to meet the needs and interests of our students. We both loved seeing how excited and how much our students were able to learn from the experience.

One thing that I was allowed to do this semester that greatly improved from last semester is the ability to collaborate with my peers on lesson plans. I really think this allowed for things to go more smoothly. Additionally, the students were always willing to learn and work with the teachers, so that was some nice collaboration.

Each week after the lesson was completed, we would provide the parents with translated notes on things that they could do at home with their child in order to improve the skill worked on for the day.

I worked well with my two partners to create effective lessons for our days at PS 20. I never truly felt a strong connection with the moms and I had very little collaboration with the professors.

I worked with my peers, the students, the moms, and the professors each week in a comfortable environment.

*14. How would you rank the benefits of this program? *Please use the sliding scale labels from 0-100 to best describe your experience.*

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
1	Real-life application of educational theory	5.00	72.00	37.86	21.29	7
2	Working with low income, ELL students and families	14.00	95.00	55.43	27.20	7
3	Collaboration with community partners at Port Richmond	9.00	89.00	36.86	28.50	7
4	Successful experience in an informal learning environment (afterschool programs)	5.00	87.00	35.00	29.01	7
5	Great addition to my educational resume	1.00	94.00	50.57	35.91	7

15. What was one of the most rewarding experiences you had during this
program? Please describe how this positive aspect of the program was valuable to you.

Text Response

Engaging with the students and their families; Observing their growth as students over the course of three semesters.

I loved learning that my student achieved two levels higher in his reading level during the course of the program. It felt like our hard work was paying off as educators. It was also a chance to let the student see that their dedication to the program was for something great. Watching his mom smile and grow together was really special.

The best experience was when one of my student told my peer and myself that we were the best teachers and that she wanted to become a teacher and go to college because she wanted to be just like us and make learning fun. It was such a rewarding moment for the both of us.

The most rewarding experience is the bonds I was able to make with the students.

This program was valuable in that it gave me some more meaningful experience with ELL learners. It provided me with opportunities to implement some of the things that I had learned during my career as a student in order to prepare me for future employment as a teacher.

I really enjoyed working with the students as individual learners. They want the best for themselves and work hard to achieve it.

This was rewarding to me because I enjoy seeing how happy the students are when they succeed in anything from learning new vocabulary to understanding a difficult sentence in a book. I'll take what I learned about how to reach ELLs with me into my career as an educator. I plan to continue my education for a certification in TESOL in the future.

16. What aspects of this program did you find most challenging? Please be as specific as possible.

Text Response

Time management.

The aspect of planning and not always having the space needed to implement a lesson was sometimes frustrating. I wish we had more concrete and defined goals to meet for each session, rather than the more general goals in literacy. Having too many students also made the flipped model difficult to meet every grade and specific need of students. With a short time frame, it was important to work closely with a small group to be successful.

Communication. Many times I would think we were doing one thing as would my peers and then the expectation would be very different. Many would come prepared with certain activities and then the goal of the day would change.

The lack of communication and organization was the most challenging. And watching such an opportunity be wasted.

The most challenging aspect was how it was structured. It was chaotic and unorganized and I felt that hindered the impact that could have come from this program.

It was very unclear what was expected from me week by week.

I found communicating with the moms to be the most challenging

#	Answer		Response	%
	17. Would you have any interest being involved with this program in the future?			
1	Yes, I am interested in learning more about opportunities.		1	14%
2	Possibly, I would consider being involved if some small changes were made.		1	14%
3	Maybe, but I would like to see some major changes before I would participate.		2	29%
4	No, I would not be interested in participating in the future.		3	43%
5	Other:		0	0%
	Total		7	100%

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