

Service-Learning and Teacher Education

Alan Bates
Miranda Lin
Guest Editors

This special issue of the *New Waves Journal of Educational Research and Development* is dedicated to the integration of service-learning into teacher education programs. Service-learning as a teaching strategy has been integrated into many teacher education programs across the globe. It can help preservice teachers explore the connections between theory and practice and offers them the opportunity to connect to a community. Community-based service-learning helps preservice teachers become aware of social issues a community faces, the needs of a community, and their students' educational needs. Moreover, service-learning can have an impact on preservice teachers' dispositions toward teaching in diverse settings, cultural awareness, social issues, and social responsibility. The purpose of this special issue is to encourage open discussion of the issues involved in service learning and to explore the implementation and various ways to have preservice teachers engage in service-learning. The articles selected for inclusion in this issue were written by faculty who teach preservice teachers and share a passion for service learning. The articles focus on different types of service-learning and impacts on preservice teachers. The first three articles are research papers that affirm the effectiveness of service-learning in teacher education programs. The last article is a report on how an international service-learning experience can help preservice teachers better prepare themselves as future teachers.

Elizabeth Anderson and Youjung Lee present their findings focusing on how service-learning can help preservice teachers

understand nontraditional families, specifically grandparent-headed families. Their study also provides a unique perspective in that it involved interdisciplinary collaboration between preservice teachers and students in a school of social work. This collaboration although not without its challenges proved beneficial to all involved. Sandra Rodríguez-Arroyo and Ashley Vaughns used service learning to help preservice teachers learn more about working with English Language Learners (ELLs) but did so across two different courses. Including two courses allowed preservice teachers more opportunities to interact with the ELLS and helped the preservice teachers learn more about working with that population thus reducing any fears they may have had initially. Miranda Lin and Alan Bates' study examined first year preservice teachers enrolled in a multicultural education course and the impact service-learning had on their ideas of working with students from diverse backgrounds and on their ideas of social justice. Although preservice teachers learned to further appreciate students' diversity, their ability to connect service-learning with social justice was not enhanced by the experience. Finally, in his report, Tung-Hsing Hsiung, describes his international service learning project that took place in Nepal and its impact on preservice teachers in Taiwan. Hsiung's report provides a different perspective because of the international experience and shows us how impactful such an experience could be. He also describes the challenges of setting up such a project.

This special issue also includes two book

reviews, one by Miranda Lin who reviewed *Transforming teacher education through service-learning* edited by V. Jagala, J. Erickson, and A. Tinker and another by Judith Briggs who reviewed *Making civics count: Citizenship education for a new generation* edited by D. Campbell, M. Levinson, and F. Hess. The book reviewed by Judith, although not specific to teacher education, provides readers with diverse perspectives on civics education and its importance. The book reviewed by Miranda is specific to teacher education and provides discussion of various theoretical frameworks and descriptions of various approaches and assessments to service learning. Both these books would be great resources for faculty that seek more information on civics and service-learning.

As the co-editors of this special edition, we believe all of the articles included add to our understanding of the kind of impact service-learning can have on preservice teachers. These studies focused on different populations and different outcomes, all which make this special issue diverse in itself. We appreciate the contributions of the many scholars who shared their research findings or reviewed articles for this special issue and would like to take this opportunity to encourage all educators to consider how we can further improve the quality of service-learning within teacher education programs and how we could strengthen the impact service-learning can have on preservice teachers in relation to the many aspects of teaching and teacher education.