

**Partnership Planning Group  
Final Report  
22 April 2022**

**Planning Group Members**

VP for Career Advancement & Athletics Jackie Slaats (Chair)

Disque D. and Carol Gram Deane Professor of Biological Sciences Shubhik DebBurman

Int. Director of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Kate Jackson

Associate Dean of Faculty Matt Kelley

Director, Center for Chicago Programs Jennifer Larsen '07

Professor of Philosophy Janet McCracken

Director of Gift Planning Phil Merlin

Director, Gorter Family Career Advancement Center Colleen Monks

Senior Associate Director of Admissions Molly Noyed

Senior Associate Director for Pathways and Employer Strategy Ben Rohde

Associate VP of Development Kim Weidner-Feigh

Associate VP for Business & Controller Jessica West

Trustee Geoff Curtis '97

Trustee David Gorter '80

Trustee Angelique Richard '85

## **I. Preface**

The Partnership Planning Group met monthly from November 2021 to April 2022, where we considered the following key questions:

- What goals can partnerships help us accomplish?
- Who are our current partners, and should we expand any of these relationships?
- How do we identify, prioritize, and develop future partnerships?
- What makes a partnership successful and how do we ensure its success?
- How do we effectively maintain and keep track of our partnerships?

Based on these conversations, our interim report in February 2022 identified three important goals:

1. Identifying (and defining) key external partnership opportunities for the College and developing strategies to pursue and enhance them.
2. Improving campus communication and collaboration surrounding campus partners and partnerships - as well as developing systems to ensure there is "shared institutional knowledge."
3. Developing systems of accountability for partnership relationship management, campus communication, and stewardship.

Throughout our work, it has become clear that external partnerships are great resources for the College that can accomplish many goals (e.g., academic, enrollment, philanthropic, and workforce) and help us fulfill the College's mission. If tapped more fully, these partnerships could further enhance the reputation of the College and differentiate us in the marketplace, as well as enrich our offerings in novel, efficient ways.

Further, there is tremendous excitement and energy around partnerships, as well as a collaborative community spirit that will serve the College well in development efforts now and in the future. Despite this enthusiasm, there are challenges to overcome. For instance, our processes for partnerships are ill-defined, communication is siloed, information is not centralized or easily accessible, and stewardship and marketing responsibilities are not clear. If we are to achieve our strategic partnership goals, new resources and organization will be required so that we can effectively maintain, develop, and communicate with our external partners.

## **II. Structure of the Report**

- The report begins with a brief list of our key recommendations, which are described in detail later in the document, but highlighted in this first section.
- The report continues with key questions (and some answers), which provide contextual details that helped to inform our recommendations.
- The report concludes with detailed descriptions of our key recommendations.

### III. Key Recommendations

1. Expand Partnerships both *In the Forest* and *In the Loop*
2. Expand Partnerships in the *Health Professions*
3. Expand Partnerships by Forming a *Non-Profit Center of Excellence* at the College
4. Strengthen *Enrollment Partnerships*
5. Hire a Full-Time Staff Member to *Lead Partnership Initiatives*

### IV. Key Questions (& Some Answers)

#### 1. What goals can partnerships help us accomplish?

Our planning group identified that partnerships can accomplish four key goals—academic, enrollment, philanthropic, and workforce. That is, partnerships can help us to:

- Provide our diverse population of students with academic experiences that augment our traditional liberal arts curriculum and elevate student-centered experiential education (e.g., pathway partnerships for health professions, law, etc.).
- Ensure equitable access to meaningful internship experiences and post-graduate employment opportunities.
- Continue to increase enrollment at the College.
- Raise funds for college initiatives and student support.

Whereas some partnerships might address a single goal, others might accomplish many goals. All partnerships are important in unique ways, but those that serve College-wide goals, align with our mission, and address multiple goals should be prioritized.

#### 2. Who are our current partners, and should we expand any of these relationships? How do we identify, prioritize, and develop future partnerships?

In December 2021, we circulated a campus wide partnership inventory, which helped us identify over 200 existing and future partnerships. Given the high volume of partnerships, our committee identified a short list of partners that might provide key strategic external opportunities for the College, both in the near and long term. The committee quickly recognized that alumni are key contributors to many of our current partnerships, and although progress has been made in several areas, there exists enormous untapped potential.

Our planning group then split into four separate working groups and evaluated these partnerships according to the four key goals identified early (academic, enrollment, philanthropy, workforce), as well on the current benefits and future opportunities for these selected partners.

The Committee created a database to house the College's partners. The Partnership Inventory [linked here](#) includes names of all partners that were identified. Those with an \* have completed profiles and this [link](#) provides a snapshot of the information our committee was able to obtain in the timeframe of our work. The database is ready for future information to be added.

An audit of existing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) was also conducted and [linked here](#) for reference.

### **3. What makes a partnership successful and how do we ensure its success?**

The next important step for our committee was to consider what makes a partnership successful. A good partnership must be mutually beneficial to both partners, and it might include a combination of other ingredients, such as: mission alignment, the presence of alumni (especially alumni decision-makers), proximity/locality, variety of opportunities, and connections to other partners. As a helpful exercise, we developed a brief case study of our existing (and growing) partnership with Horizon Therapeutics [linked here](#). This exercise not only helped us to better define the keys to a successful relationship, but it helped us evaluate current partnerships and prioritize future opportunities.

### **4. How do we effectively maintain and keep track of our partnerships?**

To ensure successful long-term partnerships, we will need to establish plans for relationship management, stewardship, communication, and publicity. If we are to truly make progress on key College-wide partnerships, we must hire a dedicated full-time staff member who will assume campus leadership and communication for partnerships. We also must recognize that, even with such a leader, these partnerships will require the efforts of teams of individuals across campus.

Critical to these goals of effective communication and stewardship, we developed a profile in our Slate database for partnerships. Profiles for our partners have been established in Slate, but these will require continued maintenance and updating so that we can better realize our goal of shared institutional knowledge.

## **V. Priority Recommendations**

It became clear in our discussions that we needed to establish some initial prioritization and organization of our partnerships. We decided to focus first on larger partnerships that could serve multiple College-wide goals, specifically as they relate to academics, enrollment, philanthropy, and workforce. We also considered the uniqueness of these relationships, noting that certain partnerships could further distinguish the College from our competitors and provide unique opportunities for our students. Throughout the process, five key themes emerged, which formed the basis for our five priority recommendations below.

For each priority recommendation, we provide a brief description of the goal (with necessary background information), some potential avenues for further exploration, and a sample of relevant partnerships. Our goal was to demonstrate that there are some clear potential paths forward, but without being overly prescriptive or rigid to ensure flexibility in future planning.

## **1. Expand Partnerships both *In the Forest* and *In the Loop*.**

### **Goal:**

The College should strategically enhance the College's footprint through further development, expansion, and marketing of key partnerships in Lake Forest, in Chicago, and in our nearby communities. We need to take better advantage of our proximity to select organizations and companies that are valuable to students' education and career goals, and in turn, align ourselves closely with organizations and companies that want to work with and employ our students. We also need to look more carefully at and widen our lens on funding and philanthropic opportunities for the benefit of our students and sustainability of the College.

### **Potential Avenues:**

- Explore pathway partnerships with other academic institutions so that students, across the disciplines, have access to attractive pathways (e.g., Columbia College; Illinois Institute of Technology; Graduate program partnerships; Accelerated partnerships).
- Expand internship and early career employment opportunities at key companies and organizations. The Career Advancement Center's current employer targets are [linked here](#).
- Develop hiring pipelines and relationships to ensure placement for our increasingly diverse population of students and open doors for internships and funding.
- Enhance academic and internship programs In the Loop. Further information on In The Loop program partners is [linked here](#).
- Seek opportunities from partners, alumni, donors, and community members to fund student internships.
- Expand marketing efforts of these initiatives to ensure top partnerships are well known to both our internal community and external audiences.

### **Sample Partners:**

- Columbia College of Chicago
- Illinois Institute of Technology
- In the Loop Program Partners
- Horizon Therapeutics
- CDW
- Goldman Sachs/Ayco
- Mellon Foundation
- North Chicago Community Partners
- Starcom

## **2. Expand Partnerships in the *Health Professions***

**Goal:** The College should continue to build partnerships to align with the College's new Health Professions Program (HPP), which is a unique partnership with Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science (RFUMS) that prepares students early in their academic career for a variety of professions in healthcare. By Fall 2024, we expect nearly 400 students will be enrolled in HPP. Whereas some of our students will matriculate to RFUMS, others will continue their studies elsewhere. We need to quickly expand and enhance partnerships (e.g., internships,

enrollment/hiring pipelines, etc.) that focus on the growing healthcare industry to support this growing population of students.

**Potential Avenues:**

- Ensure we meet their academic needs and interests (e.g., MD, DO, dental, veterinary, pharmacy, optometry), and expand the array of possible professions in the health industry that our students consider and that we can support.
- Increase internship and early career employment opportunities across all health professions to meet supply and demand (e.g., research, shadowing, nursing).
- Develop unique hiring pipelines and relationships to ensure placement and open doors for internships and funding.
- Expand faculty level collaborations in joint research, grant acquisition, shared equipment, and student training.

**Sample Partners:**

- Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine & Science
- Rush University Medical Center
- Shirley Ryan Ability Lab
- Midwestern University
- Horizon Therapeutics
- Abbott and AbbVie
- Medline
- Northwestern Medicine
- North Shore University Health System

**3. Expand Partnerships by Forming a *Non-Profit Center of Excellence* at the College**

**Goal:** The College should become a partnership hub for the non-profit industry (especially for non-profits in Lake County) and create new opportunities for community service, career related engagement, and philanthropy. Our location and program offerings afford us unique opportunities in this regard, and we see this as a new and important consideration for the College.

**Potential Avenues:**

- Support and expand existing coursework and experiences that relate to non-profits. The College already offers courses in Non-Profit Sales & Fundraising (ENTP 220), Non-Profit Leadership Management (ENTP 255), and Inclusive Innovation (ENTP 340). Our Venture Design Challenge already has a social impact track. The College also offers minors in Social Justice and Public Policy.
- Become a resource for non-profit institutions which may include community service engagement and class or student projects. The College can leverage its James Rocco Quantitative Data Research Scholarship Program to help support non-profit institution data analysis needs.
- Grow our non-profit network, which will lead to more internships, hands-on work experiences, and post-graduation employment for our students who are interested in the non-profit industry.

- Seek opportunities from partners to fund student internships at non-profit institutions (which typically cannot pay for interns themselves).
- Expand our Federal Work-Study program with partners (e.g., North Chicago Community Partners where students are paid to be reading tutors to younger children in the community).
- Leverage our corporate partners' community service connections.

**Sample Partners:**

- North Chicago Community Partners
- Lake County Partners
- Waukegan to College
- Horizon Therapeutics
- Schuler Scholars
- Chicago Botanic Garden
- Ravinia
- Boys and Girls Club
- Gorton Community Center
- Projects for Peace

**4. Strengthen *Enrollment Partnerships***

**Goal:** The College should ensure that we strengthen current enrollment partnerships, and that the College continues to keep an eye on future enrollment related opportunities. This is especially important given expected demographic trends that are not favorable for future enrollment at colleges and universities across the country.

**Potential Avenues:**

- Support our partnership with the Davis United World College (UWC) Scholars Program. Each year, the College welcomes over 50 Davis Scholars to campus from nearly 45 countries. Starting with the Class of 2025, the College will receive \$40,000 per student each year from the program for need-based scholarship support.
- Support our partnerships with local community colleges, which send roughly 100 students per year to the College (with nearly one-third coming from the College of Lake County).
- Ensure that our current programs and new partnerships continue to be attractive to and meet the needs of these students.

**Sample Partners:**

- Davis United World College (UWC) Scholars Program
- Schuler Scholars
- College of Lake County
- Harper College
- Oakton Community College
- Chicago City Colleges
- Chicago Public Schools
- High Schools across Lake County

## 5. Hire a Full-Time Staff Member to *Lead Partnership Initiatives*

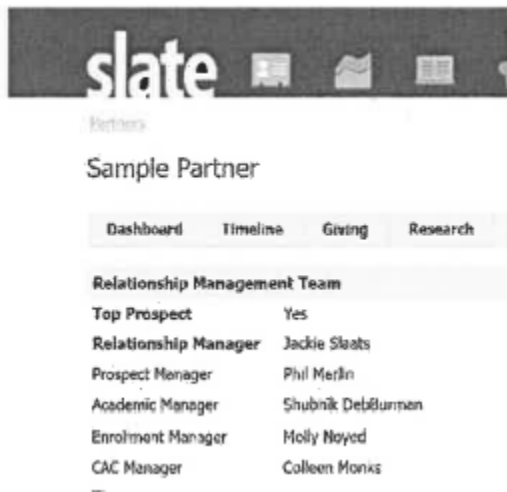
**Goal:** If we are to truly make progress on key College-wide partnerships, we must hire a dedicated full-time staff member who will assume campus leadership and communication for partnerships by:

- Promoting partnerships with business and industry to help identify and develop programs in existing and emerging career areas.
- Providing guidance and support to faculty and staff on how they can contribute to partnerships.
- Serving as a campus resource for opportunities identified in which a specific partner or type of partner would help reach the desired outcome.
- Working collaboratively with our partners to develop shared goals and strategic objectives and invest in partnership activities for mission success.
- Marketing key partnerships on our website and ensure external and internal audiences are aware of the College's current strategic partners.
- Maintaining the partnership database and update pertinent interactions and changes to the relationship and adding new campus partners when needed.
- Identifying relationship managers for the partners in the Slate system and informing these individuals of their responsibilities.
- Reviewing current partnership briefs housed in Slate for future opportunities.
- Facilitating meetings with key members of the College community to determine what is necessary to advance a partnership target and providing support to make these opportunities a reality.
- Providing stewardship to our partners in ways meaningful to them (e.g., recruitment, mentorship, etc.).

In addition, the College will need a team comprised of faculty and staff across campus that have defined responsibility for communication, marketing, and stewardship of key external campus partnerships if we are to truly make them key College wide partnerships.



It would be ideal to have every key strategic partnership to have a sector manager. As an example:



## **VI. Conclusion**

The Partnership Planning Group is pleased by the progress our committee has made in establishing the foundation for partnership development and expansion, but most excited about the potential that lies ahead. We look forward to continued collaboration on our five priority recommendations. We are thankful to all who provided feedback and are inspired by the energy and passion within our community. Our ability to be strategic, nimble, and rally around the needs of our students will continue to be an important trademark of the College, and one we are confident that our partners will appreciate.