

Center for Student Involvement & Leadership
Memphis Alternative Spring Break

Paul J. Mintner

Memphis, TN Alternative Spring Break

- **Three facilitators**

- Full time CSIL staff member
- CSIL graduate assistant
- Graduate practicum student (HESA)

- **16 trip participants**

- 3 Graduate/Professional students
- 13 undergraduate students
 - **First Year, Sophomore, Junior, Senior**
- **Variety across areas of study, though a concentrated number of students pursuing fields in health care or the helping professions (social work).**
- **Five pre-departure sessions, focusing on different themes each session.**
- **Shared reading project: *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*.**

The Active Citizen Continuum

MEMBER



VOLUNTEER



**CONSCIENTIOUS
CITIZEN**



ACTIVE CITIZEN

Not concerned with her/his role in social problems.

Well-intentioned but not well-educated about social issues.

Concerned with discovering root causes; asks *why?*

Community becomes a priority in values and life choices.

Pre-Break Transformation

Prepare students for on-site experience and provide basic education about site-specific social issues.

- Education, Orientation and Training
- Pre-break service projects
- Icebreakers and groupbuilding activities
- Preflection: Goals and Expectations

On-Break Transformation

Encourage participants to look critically at the root causes of social issues and challenge participants to evaluate the role that they can play in the community.

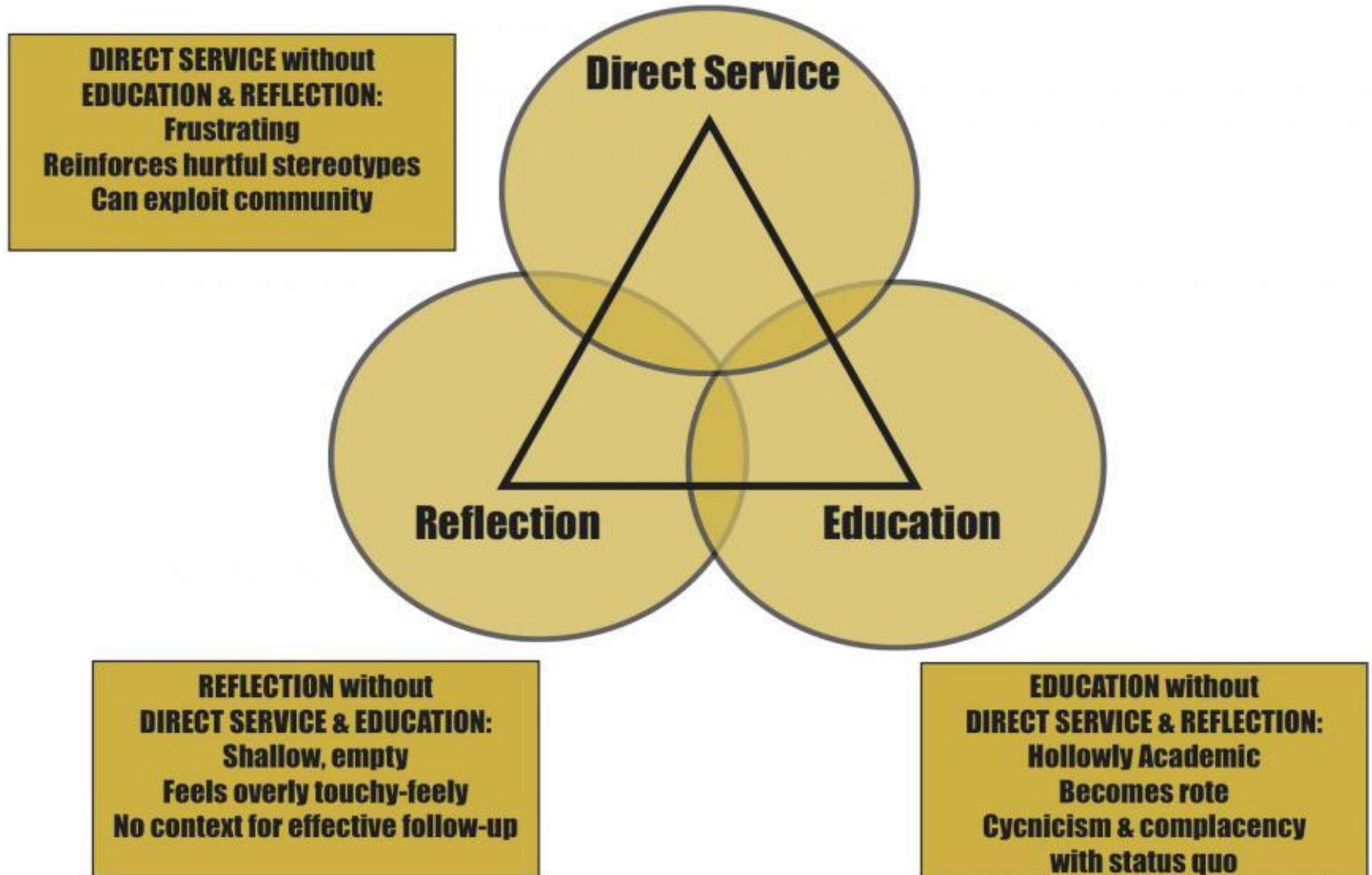
- Strong Direct service
- Ongoing education
- Community involvement
- Daily reflection linked to service activities and education

Post-Break Transformation

Help participants find avenues for continued community involvement and support participants' efforts to take the next "action steps."

- Reorientation
- Continued education
- Reflection about reentry process
- Post-break service project
- Challenge to make changes in life choices to benefit the community

Triangle of Quality Service





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A tall, teal-colored sign structure stands on a brick-paved area. At the top is a red, triangular arrow pointing upwards. Below it is a yellow oval sign with the word "Lorraine" in a black cursive font. Underneath that is a sign with the word "MOTEL" in red, block letters, each letter contained within a white circle. At the bottom of the structure is a white rectangular sign with a grid pattern and the word "WELCOME" in red, block letters.

LORRAINE MOTEL



Take-Home Messages for Students

- Perspective is true for the people who hold it, even when it isn't congruent with the 'reality.'
- Service without education and reflection can reinforce stereotypes; education without service and reflection can make content seem disconnected; reflection without education or service can be too 'touchy-feely.'
- Experiential learning with emphasis on social justice requires an understanding of culture and context paired with understanding of the relationship between both policy's and individual's intent versus impact.
- At the core of service learning is cultivating a capacity for empathy.