

UNIVERSITY OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

c/o City Manager
City Hall
New Rochelle, New York

The University of Community Involvement offers a solid and yet dramatic way in which to meet the challenge of the most pressing American domestic problem: Human Attitudes.

The University is dedicated not to any one group alone but to black and white and poor and rich. It is a partnership between private and governmental enterprises. It focuses on youth, but through organization and mechanics it involves the entire community in programs which lead to open hearts and better understanding.

The basic ingredient stems from a 1967 summer operation of 2 separate programs

- a. Student interns in government (20-mostly middle class white)
- b. Police Partners (50-all Negro, but from varying economic strata)

This year the basic unit will be a single group of 70 youth (17 to 25) drawn from all races and economic castes, put to work in all departments of municipal government.

As a condition of employment youth will participate in extra curricular activities in addition to receiving departmental training in government. Classrooms are City Hall and the streets and neighborhoods; faculty includes elected officials, Chamber of Commerce, P. T. A. , League of Women Voters, and neighborhood feudal chieftains.

The mechanics and effects of the involvement process:

Youth to Youth: By mandating weekly luncheon seminars and attendance at Board of Education meetings, City Council sessions, Planning Board, Chamber of Commerce, County Board of Supervisors, etc., etc. and by assigning the responsibility to organize some participation by the younger youth of the poverty programs, this group of white and black and rich and poor mix in a work-study team and begin to evaluate each other as human beings.

Adult to Adult: By arranging the above programs and by arranging for the youth to be guests in the various ethnic neighborhoods at combined picnic-seminar affairs hosted by the local power barons the adults have visible evidence that youth (and therefore youth's parents) are interested not only in the problems of his own race or caste but also in the broad problems of the total community. We shall capitalize on this initial reaction by drawing the parents together into critique and coffee hours in City Hall.

Police to Community: By assigning up to 50 youth (mostly Negro youth) to operate as Police Partners a vital 2-way exchange begins; the beneficial effect on youth might well be outweighed by the beneficial effect upon police.

The Total Community: It is engaged in a giving of self and substance to provide initial funding and to demonstrate to government its willingness and its readiness for commitment to action.