Annotative Bibliography:


_The Zen of Education_ was originally a speech given by Andrew Abbott to a freshman class at the University of Chicago. It has since been printed in the University of Chicago Magazine as a reminder of the importance of actually learning in college, a point which many students seem to overlook in their pursuit for A’s. Abbott spoke about the importance of skills rather than the memorization of random facts. He stated, “Everyone over 30 knows that, as far as content is concerned, you forget the vast majority of what you learned in college in five years or so. But, so the argument goes, the skills endure” (54). He went on to emphasize that it is important to do more than just study in college. Abbott states, “To be able to transform and change and renew the ideas you work with, you have to master something that enables you to see them from outside” (56). This is something that we believe the Kalamazoo College Living Learning houses do; they give people an insight to problems, cultures, and issues that often get swept under the rug. Giving these things a forum allows people to think about them from a different perspective and brings awareness. Abbott points out that, “an educated person experiences more than does a non-educated person” (57). We want to incorporate this idea into our house’s goal. Our intent is to both educate the community and provide students with experiences that they would otherwise not experience. We will offer
activities that will provide students with knowledge and help to develop individualism through more than a simple lecture.


This article has three examples of public art working to address pressing issues and bring together communities. It describes what qualities are necessary for public art to be effective in both areas. Incorporating these qualities into those events that include public art could greatly impact their effects. The main qualities listed include: versatility and diversity, universality and familiarity, connective imagination and creativity, nonverbal communication: symbol metaphor, and fun, visibility, anonymity, individuality, and collectivity, duration and reflection, and risk and challenge. Our goal is to incorporate these teachings and suggestions in order to make our events more effective.


This essay takes a philosophical approach to the importance of art in a modern community. It suggests that artistic expressions is an essential human need and strongly asserts that the ideal ethical life should be viewed as a politically creative work of art. By focusing on the many artistic aspects of life, the essay proves how essential artistic expression is and how it unites a diverse community under a common interest.


James Miller looks at how communities function as open interactive systems. He looks for a relationship among interactive units and how that relationship can grow and prosper. Miller’s theory incorporates the idea that information informs and shapes our actions. Therefore, his approach to understanding systems is dependent on an understanding of how systems work. In order for us to work well within our own community (viewed as a system) it is helpful for us to expose ourselves to information like Miller’s so we can work successfully as a community within our house, within our campus, and to take those skills with us beyond college.

Kakkar, Mahira “Reaching Out Through the Arts.” The Juilliard Journal Online 18.6 (2003).

In June 2002 two students at the Juilliard School for the Arts formed an organization called ArtReach that was originally an attempt to use art to help eliminate social, economic and religious barriers. This goal is one that applies to our general mission and to events addressing those issues. It describes how this organization involves “all forms of artistic expression in community outreach efforts – specifically through open discussions, organized volunteer efforts, and benefit performances – [they
demonstrated] the vitality of the arts as a universal tool for initiating and establishing a greater sense of social understanding and acceptance.” Although the group is centered at Juilliard it also works within the larger community, as we plan to. Some of the projects that ArtReach has completed include: a luncheon for homeless and low income families, forums for open discussion about issues that affect the school community, and open mike nights where all students can share their individual gifts. An interesting aspect of this group, which has grown to over forty members, is that there is no designated president. All of the students work towards the same goal and no one person’s contribution is more important than any others.


*My Freshman Year* is an ethnography written by a professor of anthropology who went back to school at an undisclosed university that she calls AnyU. She lives in the dorms, observes students, participates in many campus events, and talks to students about their experiences throughout the course of their freshman year. In one section of her ethnography, she speaks on community and diversity and makes some valid points that we, as a house, would apply to our mission and use to help bring together our community. These points serve as the starting points of conversations that work toward solutions. Nathan describes how students are torn between their studies, allowing time for themselves, and getting involved, “the proliferation of event choices, together with the consistent message to ‘get involved’...Every decision not to join but to keep one’s time for oneself is interpreted as ‘student apathy’ or ‘program irrelevance’ and ever more activities are designed to remedy them. Each decision to join something new pulls at another commitment, fragmenting the whole even further. Not only people but also community are spread thin” (45). Allowing these topics to always be open to discussion within our house will lead to a greater numbers of people thinking about these issues and discussing how to solve them.


*Identity in Adolescence* discusses the psychological side of identity formation. We, as a house, believe that having a strong identity is imperative to having the ability to build a stronger community. The article talks about the importance of being self-reflective. This is why we decided to create On-Going Events and a Facebook group, where we will be able to receive feedback in a helpful and open fashion. When one reflects back on his or her beliefs, values, actions, goals, etc. he or she is able to develop into a stronger individual. Another key aspect of this article was the importance of experimenting with different ideas and groups in order to mold a clear and concise identity. We will provide a variety of events that allow people to do just this, see different ideas and meet new people. Both of these will help people develop individually so that they can contribute to the building of a more community focused campus society.

Elders Share the Arts is a program that bridges together different generations by helping to work "with old and young to create bridges and partnerships between generations". The idea of this is to use an individual's life stories and transform them into works of art to be presented to the community. These events are called "living history festivals" and are said to "provide a place to come together to see, discuss, share, question, think, and appreciate each other". This article is packed with many examples of situations where divided communities, of different levels, are brought together using these skills. Bringing people together to discuss their personal lives allows for commonalities to be found between individuals who may not have had obvious similarities, which eventually leads to a greater sense of individual pride and of community.


This website illustrates the goals of the True Colors program, and how it has helped in schools, the government, businesses, and nonprofit organizations. It also provides a history of the True Colors program and ways to contact them. The website exhibits the main idea of the program, which is to value differences and create unity. Taking pride in individual differences allows people to feel more comfortable when functioning and participating within a larger community.


In this Senior Individualized Project, Andrea Visco discusses the importance of achieving a sense of community in a liberal arts setting. She asks questions such as, Where are the lines drawn between a purely academic approach and ownership in one's own academic community? How does a community nourish that need? This SIP was the basis for much of the focus of our house. It clearly outlines the major weakness within our campus community; and these points are the part of what we plan to address with our house. While many of these problems seem at this time to be inflexible, it is necessary for us to start a dialogue which is what this house sets out to do. Membership and belonging in a community is dependent upon individuals taking steps towards making a difference.


Etienne Wenger defines Communities of Practices as "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly." A Community of Practice has three main characteristics; the domain, which means that "it has an identity defined by a shared domain of interest", the community, which means that "members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information", and the practice, which means "they develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems—in short a shared practice". This approach to community can be used as both a model for our house and for the larger campus community events. Communities of Practice "focus on people and on the social structures that enable them to learn with and
from each other” which is what we hope to look at in order to form a better sense of community on Kalamazoo College’s campus.

Annotated Bibliography
Sample (1 of 2)

Sustainable Culture Research Materials
Annotated Bibliography

The following resources promote the ideals of building a sustainable relationship to nature as well as developing a sense of ecological spirituality:

An Inconvenient Truth. Dir. Davis Guggenheim. 2006. DVD. Lawrence Bender Productions. This documentary presents factual evidence on the harmful effects of certain lifestyle choices in regards to global warming. It calls to mind the urgency in which we need to pursue a sustainable lifestyle.


Quinn, Daniel. Ishmael: An Adventure of the Mind and Spirit. United States: Bantam/Turner Books, 1992. Through this book we hope to recognize our culture’s role in current environmental destruction and know through change of mindset we can reverse the our adverse affects.

Seafood Watch. Monterey Bay Aquarium Foundation. Monterey, CA., 2004. This material will be a critical source in creating a sustainable diet. It provides information as to which aquatic food sources are environmentally and socially responsible to purchase.

Dr. Seuss. The Lorax. New York: Random House, 1971. Though this is a humorous children’s book, the way that Dr. Seuss gives life and voice to the elements of the environment in the same way we hope to give these concerns a place on campus.
These additional resources are useful in strengthening community and advocating current movements of social progress:

This film, based on the book The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power written by Joel Bakan, explores the negative side of a consumer-capitalist society. It serves to justify our decisions to live sustainably.

Paul Farmer makes a great example of how individuals can fight against institutional violence and work towards equality.

We will use this film to encourage our commitment to living sustainably. It correlates agribusiness with fast food corporations and explains their plundering of the natural environment and the complete disregard of human health.

This film exposes the harmful relationships between “third world” countries and the exploitative industries of “developed” countries such as the U.S.

From this documentary, we can realize the current need of energy resources, the contribution to global warming, and more importantly the necessity to work against the power of corporations have over our lives and the future of the planet.

The following books were recommended to us by faculty and students who are also environmentally concerned, and we plan to use them in further research guiding the house education.


