

As we consider how we might recover individually and collectively from a global pandemic and continue to address ongoing persecution and active oppression of people of color, Black people, and Queer people in education and research, it is paramount to consider where we are coming from and where we are heading to. Academia and educational research has a long history of producing inaccessible research reports that draw on data from a myriad of partnerships that primarily benefit researcher's careers by gathering data that are used to win grants, publish peer reviewed publications, and present at national research conferences at the expense of supporting practitioners and other community partners who risk their own vulnerability. This is the history we are actively moving away from with this special issue developed in collaboration with the Rising Educational Scholars Helping Advance Partnerships and Equity (RESHAPE) network. In late spring 2021, organizers at RESHAPE approached us to consider how we might work together to develop a special issue for the mentoring and collaborative research that their Summer conference was designed to produce. We at *The Assembly* eagerly agreed! This issue is what has come of both a special call directed toward the participants in the RESHAPE Network Conference and a general call to all researchers, organizers, teachers, families, and anyone else who wanted to submit work considering how to move away from the harmful history briefly noted above.

We are so proud and excited to launch this Special Issue on Research Practice Partnerships into the work because it continues the conversation we began with the URBAN Special Issue published in Spring 2021 and because this issue provides important directions for publicly accessible research to move toward. We began this brief editorial with an acknowledgement of the harmful history of primarily white academic research to establish a trajectory. To understand trajectories, we must understand where we began, but also where we are going. This issue moves away from these histories of primarily white, transactional histories toward specific and immediately useful ways that we can begin to reimagine the work that educational researchers are doing in communities with partners. The two manuscripts in this issue that were developed in the RESHAPE conference draw deliberately on research practice partnerships (RPP). In their recently published report on RPPs, Farrell, Penuel, Coburn, Daniel, and Steup (2021) provide an extended, updated definition of RPPs as:

A long-term collaboration aimed at educational improvement or equitable transformation through engagement with research. These partnerships are intentionally organized to connect diverse forms of expertise and shift power relations in the research endeavor to ensure that all partners have a say in the joint work. (p. 5)

This concise definition Farrell and colleagues provide of RPPs provide educational researchers a starting point in understanding RPPs as not just a way to do educational research that is committed to equity and justice in education, but a way to consider multiple aspects of partnership, research, practice, funding, and organization. These aspects of RPPs are precisely what the articles in the special issue speak to.

The work that kicks off this issue, "Using Mediating Artifacts to Push for Greater Equity in Research Practice Partnerships" by Megan Goeke, Alexandria Muller, Daniela Alvarez-Vargas, and Erica Jeanne Van Steenis examines shared norms and routines for Community Engaged Research, specifically, Research Practice Partnerships (RPPs) by defining what norms and routines are, as well as, *how* to create shared norms and routines equitably within a RPP. The author's use Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Engestrom, 2001) as a theoretical framework to elucidate how small shifts in power distribution have the potential to move toward larger goals of equity. They examine meditating artifacts, which they name "partnership norms"

within a CHAT framework. More specifically, they explain CHAT theory in order for RPPs and various other methods of equity-based partnership to apply it to their everyday practices and partnerships that desire outcomes rooted in equitable power distribution.

The second article in this special issue, “Equitable Research-Practice Partnerships: A multilevel reimagining” by Kemi Oyewole, Sumit Karn, Jennifer Classen, and Maxwell Yurkofsky, analyze the neoliberal and professional logics that compromise equity goals of RPPs using a social justice logic. They argue that a social justice logic framework offers the opportunity to include activist participatory research traditions, respect for community knowledge, and intersectional identity voices in RPPs. This article calls for RPPs to reflect and interrogate their commitment to equity and strive for authentic resource allocation and inclusion.

The final article in this issue, “Reborujando the research process: Re/centering undocumented politics and disclosure”, Maribel Estrada-Calderon, Marcela Rodriguez-Campo, and Alonso Reyna Rivarola analyze the experiences of undocumented researchers working with immigrant communities through a Queer Chicana feminist lens that serves to reborujar or blur the research process. The authors interrogate the colonial logics of the traditional research process and draw from Moraga and Anzaldúa to reimagine how research can fully work for and honor immigrant communities. While not directly addressing RPPs, this article develops an important methods, reborujar and dis/closure, in ways that speak intimately to how research with Undocumented people must shift if it is to serve Undocumented people in meaningful ways.

Thematically, this issue speaks deeply to equity in educational research by reconsidering and redesigning research partnerships in ways that put research into service. We are thankful to the authors for working so hard to make their complex work accessible to and useful for a wide range of readers. We hope that this issue sparks new conversations, shifts old conversations, and pushes our readership to consider where they are heading with their long-term and newly developing partnerships.

Sincerely,

The Editorial Board of *The Assembly: A Journal for Public Scholarship on Education*

From URBAN to RESHAPE

This special issue arising from the RESHAPE conference in 2021 is a continuing conversation from our previous special issue where we collaborated with scholars who participated in the Urban Research-Based Action Network (URBAN) conference in 2019. Our URBAN special issue focused on collaborative community-university research partnerships that tackle issues of place and displacement and how they shape educational outcomes for marginalized youth. Considering place, we specifically described how youth in low-income communities and communities of color face social, environmental, and public health crises exacerbated by school closures, gentrification, immigration enforcement separating families; factors that actively displace communities and contributes to greater educational inequities. The URBAN special issue shed light and a critical lens to the collaborative work between community organizers, youth, educators, and university researchers, and how through participatory research, place-making, and organizing, they respond to these issues in the process of countering forces of displacement and disruption while building community power for social justice. Our goal with the URBAN special issue was to bring these conversations to public scholarship to further disrupt the gatekeeping process that occurs with research.

As the URBAN special issue focused on community-university research partnerships, our RESHAPE special issue continues this work through reimagining how research practice partnerships (RPPs) approach issues of equity and justice in process and design. Like URBAN, RESHAPE focuses on decolonial processes of collaborative work between community and university, while also reimagining ways of approaching the scholarship process in relationship-building, networking, and writing, that further decenters colonial logics. RESHAPE also focuses on research design that centers the strengths and needs of marginalized communities that allows authors to reimagine frameworks. By focusing on the research process, this special issue brings together diverse approaches to RPPs in order to reimagine the ways that educators and educational researchers center anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and decolonial frameworks in partnership work.

It is fitting to follow the URBAN special issue on community-university research partnerships with the RESHAPE special issue focusing on the research process in the development and implementation of RPPs. The release of these special issues in public scholarship is purposeful to remove the institutional barrier to access decolonial frameworks and bring justice to marginalized communities. It is our hope with these special issues that this conversation continues and inspires to rethink community-university research partnerships.