



SERVICE LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

DR. MARY JO PARKER | UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON - DOWNTOWN

STEM MAJOR ADVOCATES AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL: LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING THROUGH SERVICE

ABSTRACT:

This session will describe how a core seminar course integrates service learning to the benefit of STEM majors and middle school-aged students. Focus is given to how course groups advance to own their projects, integrate their academic major into the project, use the Texas state curriculum as underpinning the content brought into the middle school environment, and finally how career skills, such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving, are practiced through the service learning project.

THEMATIC FOCUS:

Convergence and Intersections: How increasing or decreasing hyperconnectivity can impact community engagement.

BIO:

Mary Jo Parker, Ed.D., is a first-generation, Hispanic, and faculty member in the Natural Sciences at University of Houston-Downtown, a federally designated Hispanic-serving and Minority-serving institution. She also is the Executive Director of the Scholars Academy, an academic unit in the supporting STEM majors. She has been in higher education at Rice University's Center for Science and Technology and at UHD. She currently is PI on several active federal (NRC MSIG, DOED MSEIP2021, DOED MSEIP 2023) and state Texas Talent Connection awards. She advocates for service learning at the middle school level as well as community engagement.

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