

I am very grateful to Deborah Hirsch, my friend and colleague at the New England Resource Center for Higher Education at UMass/Boston, and to Jamie Price and John Martello, thus far only professional pen pals but, I hope, friends-to-be, for assembling the outstanding collection of articles on service learning in this issue of *Metropolitan Universities*. Many of our readers already know, and many others will learn from these pages, that service learning, i.e., academically based outreach by students, is rapidly growing in colleges and universities throughout the country. It is, for obvious reasons, of particular importance to metropolitan universities.

The articles on service learning presented here will be complemented in a forthcoming issue by three discussions of the use of action learning in professional education. As Deborah Hirsch points out in her Overview, one can draw the same conclusion whether coming from the vantage point of service learning or from that of professional education: there is a growing need for strong links between metropolitan universities and their external constituencies, to the benefit of both. There is a second message, as well, that can be inferred from the perspectives of both service learning and professional education: that faculty engagement in professional service and outreach benefits the university as much as it does the external partners. Indeed, as has been pointed out several times before in my own editorial remarks as well as in various other contributions to *Metropolitan Universities*, we need increasingly to see faculty professional service not just as a laudable exercise of individual initiative, but as an essential element of the collective mission at the institutional level and at the level of every subordinate unit.

With this issue, *Metropolitan Universities* enters its seventh year of quarterly publication. The concepts and the vision that led to the development of the metropolitan university model and to the founding of this journal are emerging with ever greater clarity and importance. I hope that the many interesting, informative, and provocative articles that have filled our pages have contributed to this progress, and am grateful to everyone who has participated.