



# Communiversality

## Nurturing the Town and Gown Relationship



The Council of  
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**2024 Presidents Institute** Spouses and Partners Program  
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**guidebook**



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**2024 Presidents Institute** *Spouses and Partners Program*  
Independent Higher Education in a Democratic Society

# Presenter

*Dana Lentini*, Presidential Spouse, Molloy University



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# Communiversality

## Nurturing the Town and Gown Relationship



presented by

**Dana Lentini,  
Presidential Spouse at Molloy University  
Rockville Centre, NY**

# What is Town and Gown?



Photo credit: The Higher Ed Facilities Forum: How Can Universities Strengthen Town-Gown Relations?

By Hannah Chenoweth, December 6, 2017

DANA LENTINI

# Benefits of Town and Gown

Aligning priorities and cultivating stronger relationships with local community

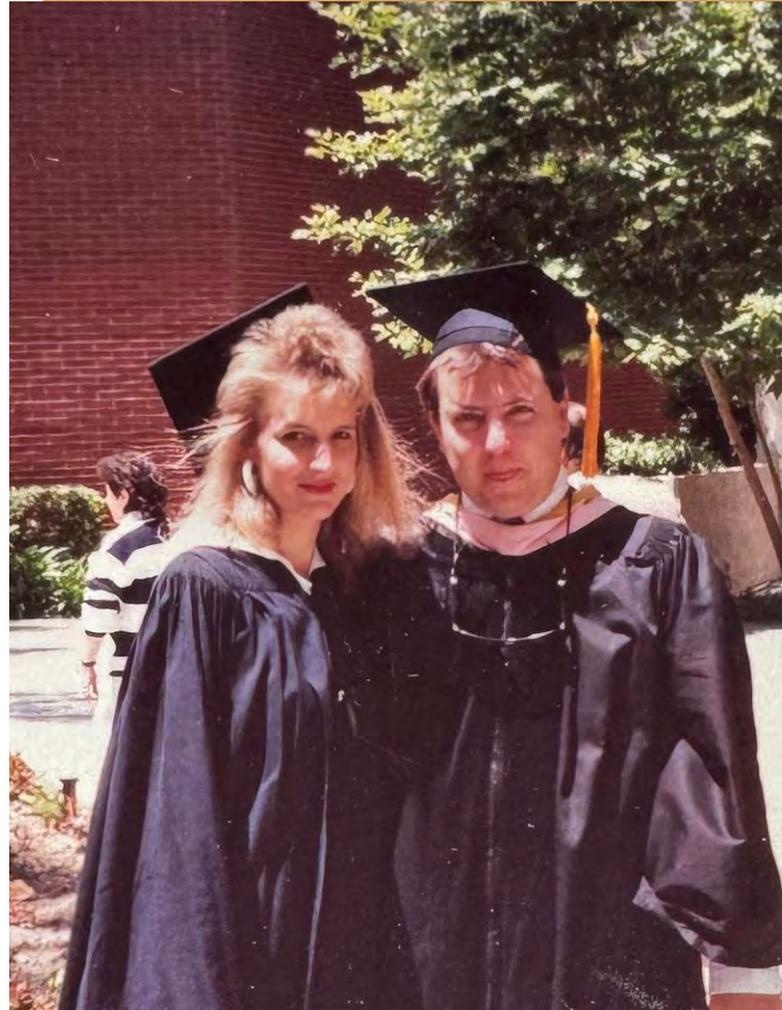
Advantages for both sides include:

- Create more visibility
- Increase capital and financial resources
- Attract and retain world-class talent
- Boost economic development
- Provide jobs for one another
- Elevate the level of both learning and life



# My Journey in Academia

- **5 Universities**
- **5 Different cities**
- **4 Different States**
- **3 Different settings:**  
**Urban/Suburban/Rural**





# WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

- **URBAN**
- **Lived in a nearby suburb**
- **Lifestyle was not connected to campus life and community**
- **President lived on campus in apartment**





- **SUBURBAN**
- **Lived in various places starting right off campus**
- **Lifestyle was not connected to campus life and community**
- **President lived off-campus in a neighborhood**



**OXFORD, OH • EST. 1809**



- **RURAL**
- **Lived on campus at first/ built home near other associates**
- **College town felt settled from day one**
- **Lifestyle was all Miami all the time**
- **President lived in a prestigious home on campus**

# OAKLAND UNIVERSITY™



- **SUBURBAN**
- **Lived near campus**
- **Commuter campus in a large community**
- **President lived in a prestigious home on campus**
- **As provost, we attended many events**



# MOLLOY UNIVERSITY



- **LARGE SUBURBAN (NYC)**
- **Serving as president**
- **Living in a Presidential home off-campus**
- **Make it my own based on my numerous experiences**

# What's your current Campus Environment?

- **Urban, Suburban, Rural?**
- **Do you live on campus?**
- **Are you actively engaged with your campus community?**
- **Are you actively engaged in your local community?**
- **Other?**



# Creation:

## Communiversality at Molloy University

- **Met with Molloy staff to create awareness of the concept**
- **Decided on what to call it**
- **Invited local commerce people to lunch at President's House**
- **Scheduled a follow-up meeting on campus**

# Concept

Enhance the relationship between local businesses and the university by addressing:



**Conversation**

**Collaboration**

**Community**

# Set Goals and Create Action Steps



We Support



Madison Theatre



**MOLLOY  
UNIVERSITY**

Molloy Athletics



# Results



# Other Things we are doing and exploring



# Things to consider before moving forward with an initiative

- Understand the relationship between your university and the community
- Identify who on campus can help connect with the external community
- Understand what your campus is doing already to connect with your community
- Understand the challenges in your community

# Discussion: How can we bloom where we are planted?



# **Additional Resources on Guidebook:**

**Letter to  
Businesses**

**Letter from  
Councilwoman**

**Articles for  
further reading**

**Thank you for your  
attendance today!**

**Happy to connect: [dlentini@molloy.edu](mailto:dlentini@molloy.edu) or [@lentinidana](https://www.instagram.com/lentinidana)**

# Q&A Session



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