

27/63.2

A Critical Look at how Kalamazoo College has  
Interacted with the Kalamazoo Community  
1940-1975

Frank E. Kisslinger  
Local History Research Project  
Kalamazoo College  
7 June 1976

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Ever since the disturbances of the past decade that have disrupted so many of our college campuses, there has been an increasing number of people who have studied the question of the nature and role of the American institution of college. One of the most frequently asked questions pertains to how much, and what type of interaction should there be between a college and the surrounding community. There are almost as many answers as there are people studying the question. Some people believe that a college has an obligation and a responsibility to both the students and the community to be active in civic affairs. Others maintain that the college should not get involved in community affairs, that a college has the responsibility to the students and society to be a place where students can take a critical look at our society without being personally involved. Still others say that it is not the college's responsibility to be involved in the community, but just the opposite. That the community should be involved in the life of the college.

This paper is an attempt to answer these questions by asking the more direct question of how has Kalamazoo College interacted with the surrounding community during the period 1940-1975.

The initial interest for this paper grew out of the fact that upon arrival at Kalamazoo College, I found that my own contact and that of most

of the students that I knew, was basically limited to an occasional shopping trip into the city. During these few ventures off the college campus I found to my great surprise, that most of the people that I talked to, thought that I said that I went to KVCC instead of "K" College. I found myself asking how could a nationally known liberal arts college be so unknown in its own town? The only conclusion that I could come up with was that if the college was so unknown, it must be because the college did nothing in the community which would make itself known.

Once the research into how the college has interacted with the community was started, another more basic question was unearthed. Why has the college been involved in the community? What is the nature of a liberal arts college and is it part of that nature to be involved in civic affairs? Why would a student or professor want to get involved in the life of a town, especially if that person was not originally from that town.

As soon as the research was started, it was quickly realized that extreme care was needed in how the various terms being used were defined. I could not simply ask what sort of interaction there had been between the college and the community, but I had to explain what was meant by "interaction", "involvement", and "community".

Because of the limited amount of time for this project, I was forced to limit my research to how the students and professors of Kalamazoo College have been involved in community affairs. While it is quite obvious that the Trustees and the alumni of the college have always been

extremely active in the Kalamazoo area, I shall not deal with them to any great extent. Likewise, I shall not spend a great deal of time talking about how the town has been active in the life of the college. It is the purpose of this paper to talk about the interaction of the students and faculty of the college and the surrounding community.

When talking about involvement, I found it extremely important to carefully define what type of involvement I was looking for. There are many different types and levels of involvement for both the individual and the college. It would be ridiculous to say that there has been no involvement between the college and the town. Every time a professor votes he is involved.

However, the main emphasis of my research is to what extent have the students and faculty of Kalamazoo College been involved in the civic affairs of the community. Civic affairs itself is a very broad term. It can, and does, mean everything from volunteer help at the State Hospital to serving on the City Commission.

There were three basic groups within the college whose involvement was researched. First, the student body of Kalamazoo College, its programs and work in the community was looked at. Then the professors at Kalamazoo College were researched to find out what sort of involvement there had been on a personal and professional level. Last, but by far not least, research was done into what type of involvement there has been by both the students and the professors through courses and programs developed and taught at Kalamazoo College.

Not only are there many types of involvement, but there are also many ways of defining what a community is. Many people define the word to mean society as a whole without geographic boundaries. Others, when asked about college involvement in the community, talk about the academic community made up of educated people everywhere. While these are both valid definitions, in this paper the word community shall be defined as the surrounding geographic Kalamazoo area.

#### METHOD OF RESEARCH

The actual research took two forms. First, an attempt was made to find any written record of involvement by the three groups mentioned earlier. This was done primarily at the Baptist and College Room at Kalamazoo College's Upjohn Library and Kalamazoo Public Library. Second, and most important, an attempt was made to interview as many of the professors as possible in order to get their recollection of past and present involvement.

There were four areas of written records looked into. First, in order to get an idea of the student involvement, the records of the many different student organizations on campus were studied. Next, in an attempt to get at what faculty involvement there has been, the minutes of the faculty meetings for the period being studied were gone over. The third area looked at was the course catalogues of the college what courses were being taught that got the students and the professors involved in civic affairs.

In an attempt to get an overall view of college involvement, the Boiling Pot and Index were read. They are Kalamazoo College's yearbook and newspaper, respectively. Also looked at was any reference to involvement by Kalamazoo College in the Kalamazoo Gazette.

While going through these records, it quickly became obvious that there was almost no written material pertaining to my topic. Therefore, a major portion of the research took the form of interviewing the various faculty members. At first, I interviewed the professors who have been teaching at Kalamazoo College the longest in an attempt to get some sort of long term view of the college's involvement. Later, I interviewed the various professors to find out their ideas about the nature of the liberal arts college and to find out what sort of involvement they have had in the community.

In the course of a typical interview, questions were asked first about what type of interaction the professor had with the community and what type had his particular department had in civic affairs. Next, it was asked if that interaction had changed any during the time the professor had been at Kalamazoo College. Then I asked if the professor had any ideas as to why that change had or had not taken place.

Then I asked questions about the nature, purpose, and responsibilities of a liberal arts college in general and how well Kalamazoo College fulfilled these ideals of the college. This generally led into a discussion of some of the strong and weak points of Kalamazoo College and some possible solutions.

## RESULTS

In all of my research, the thing that surprised me the most was the acute lack of any student organized involvement. Up until the late 1960's when they died out due to lack of interest, Kalamazoo College had several "literary societies". These were for Kalamazoo College what fraternities and sororities were for larger universities. After reading through the records left by these societies and by reading the newspapers, one can not help but come to the conclusion that during the 1940's and 50's, the only thing that these societies were interested in was having dances and teas. During these years, no record of any student organized activity in the civic affairs of the Kalamazoo area can be found.

No student sponsored activity whatsoever can be found until the late 1960's. At that time, students at Kalamazoo College joined with college students all across America in protesting the war in Viet Nam. Action came to a peak in 1968 when students protested America's entry into Cambodia. Protests took place both on campus and in town. Even though many students and townspeople took part in the protests, it is not really fair to say that the students were involved in civic affairs. Rather, they were taking part in a nationwide movement.

The first real student involvement in community affairs is not to be found until the early 1970's with the formation of the Student Volunteer Bureau. This bureau, run by students, acts as a clearinghouse to bring interested students and community agencies together. The bureau has never had that great of a response from the student body. It's size

fluctuates from quarter to quarter depending upon how many interested students are on campus.

It is not quite as easy to discern just how much the professors and faculty of Kalamazoo College have been involved in community affairs. Since most of the professors live in town, they must be active some manner. However, there are many different types and levels of involvement that must be carefully looked at.

When interviewing professors about their involvement in community affairs, one of the first points that was stressed was the fact that, as one person put it, the faculty "does not drink their beer alone". There is a great deal of interaction on an informal, social level. Several professors said that they belonged to informal discussion groups that contain a cross-section of the community. However, while having an occasional cocktail party may be very interesting, it really can not be considered as civic involvement.

Another point which was just as strongly brought out was the religious life of the faculty. Considering the background of Kalamazoo College, it is not surprising to find that a great many of its faculty have been very active in religious affairs.. It is also not surprising that a rather large percentage of Kalamazoo College's faculty have attended the First Baptist Church. But, the faculty of Kalamazoo College seems to be no different than most of our society. As with the national trend, the faculty of Kalamazoo College are not as devout churchgoers as they used to be.

While it is true that the social and religious make-up of a community is very important, it can not be considered to take the place of some of the more important types of involvements such as political or cultural action.

It is impossible to talk about the political involvement of the faculty of Kalamazoo College without saying something about Dr. Raymond Hightower. Dr. Hightower was chairman of the Sociology department from the time of his arrival in 1934 until his retirement in 1970. During the 1940's and 50's, little was done by the college in the way of civic affairs that Dr. Hightower was not involved in. In 1957 Dr. Hightower was convinced by some friends to run for the City Commission and has served on it ever since. He won enough votes to be elected Mayor in 1963 and again in 1965. Dr. Hightower is, however, the only professor to serve on the City Commission during the period under research. 1971

That is not, however, to say that there has been no other political involvement by the professors of Kalamazoo College. Starting in 1938 and running until the late 1950's, Kalamazoo College ran the Municipal Research Bureau for the city of Kalamazoo. It was directed first by Dr. Elton Ham and then later by Dr. Donald Flesche. The Bureau, which was staffed by Kalamazoo College, had several functions. First, as its name implies, the Bureau did all the reasearch for the city government. Second, it put out the annual report for the city. While it was no longer true by the time Dr. Flesche took over, when Dr. Ham was running the Bureau, he acted as an unoffical advisor to the city manager.

There is still another type of political involvement which is much harder to trace. Throughout the entire period under study, there have always been a number of professors from Kalamazoo College who have served on many of the committees and commissions instituted by City Hall. The reason that these professors are so hard to trace is not because there have been so few of them, but because their work for the city has never received that much publicity. I found that most of the professors that I talked to did not know of the work of other professors unless they happened to be friends or close associates of the professor in question.

Equally hard to trace is faculty involvement in state and national politics. This is mainly because the records are unavailable. As far as I have been able to ascertain, professors at Kalamazoo College have been active in politics as local supporters and co-ordinators. But, they have never had that big a role in either national or state politics.

Besides Dr. Hightower, there are two other names that must be mentioned when talking about how the professors of Kalamazoo College have been active in the community. They are Dr. Wen Chao Chen and Dr. Lewis Batts, Jr.. Both have been extremely active in the community and the results of their work is quite obvious in the life of the town.

Dr. Chen has had many positions at the college since his arrival in 1950. Dr. Chen is probably best known today for his work as the director of the Center for Management Studies which will be discussed later. Dr. Chen recently received an award from the Small Business Administration for his work in the community. Dr. Chen is the only member of the faculty during the period studied who has ever been a member of the Chamber of Commerce of Kalamazoo.

Dr. Batts also came to Kalamazoo College in 1950 as a member of the Biology department. Almost every student in the Kalamazoo public school system today has made at least one visit to Dr. Batts' brainchild, the Kalamazoo Nature Center. The Nature Center, which was opened up in 1962, is the result of Dr. Batts' concern for ecology and land preservation.

Virtually every professor interviewed mentioned the names of Drs. Hightower, Chen, and Batts. There is no question that in the period studied, these three men have done the most with the community. However, it is a little surprising that out of thirty-five years, only three professors are named.

The third type of interaction researched was student and professors involved through courses and programs instituted by Kalamazoo College. These courses have been of a very wide variety. The most notable point is the lack of such courses or programs during the 1940's and 1950's.

The most outstanding program during the 1940's and 50's was the previously mentioned Municipal Research Bureau. Also mentioned previously was the political involvement of Dr. Hightower. But, Dr. Hightower's involvement in the civic life of Kalamazoo goes far beyond the political sphere. Little was done in the 1940's and 50's from the college that Dr. Hightower was not involved in.

Probably the most important course which Dr. Hightower was involved with was Sociology 123. This course was instituted in 1938 by Dr. Hightower's predecessor and continued until 1963, when the quarter system was adopted by the college. Sociology 123 was a course of supervised

1928

field work for the student.. The student would get credit for spending one semester working for a social work agency. This was a required course for all Sociology majors. It gave the students a chance for some practical experience to go along with their academic studies.

Another course which got students involved in the community in a slightly different manner was the Local History Seminar instituted by the History department and under the direction of Dr. Ivor Spencer. The course was started in 1947 and ran until 1962. The course enabled students of the college to do research in local history. One of the most important factors of the research was that the students were only allowed to use primary sources of information. This meant that the students had to get out into the community and gather the information themselves. These histories are considered to be quite good and still receive wide usage today.

It appears that during the 1940's and 1950's the college was not as involved in the town as the town was in the college. The various plays and social programs of the college were regularly attended by a rather large number of townspeople. There are three areas which need special note. They are the Bach Festival, the sports program, and the Mock Political Conventions.

The Bach Festival, which was started in 1947 under the direction of Prof. Overley, is a week long festival put on jointly by the Music department of Kalamazoo College and by a committee of interested townspeople. It has become a tradition in the community and is seen as one major social and cultural events in the entire Kalamazoo area.

With the exception of the tennis program, sports at Kalamazoo College have never been known for their excellence. However, especially during the 1940's and 50's, before Western Michigan University started increasing their sports programs, the sports at Kalamazoo College were enthusiastically supported by the town. The college has always used volunteers from the town as time- and scorekeepers for the various events.

A special word needs to be said about the tennis program at Kalamazoo College. During the entire period studied, tennis has been extremely popular at Kalamazoo College. It has also become very important to the community. Almost every major tennis tournament in Southwestern Michigan is held at Kalamazoo College's Stowe Stadium. This includes the State High School Championship and the USLTA Juniors and Boys Tournament. Both of these have become important events for the town for both their entertainment value and for their commercial and financial as well.

The third program of the college which was very big in the town was the Mock Political Conventions which were held every election year. This program lasted until 1968. Students from all over would come to take part in the nominating of the next president of the United States. The conventions were greatly supported by the town which enjoyed watching the whole process and took part in some of the merrymen that always accompanied.

The 1960's saw a slight increase in the number of community related courses and programs. While many of the programs were short-lived, they

gave the students and faculty the chance to get directly involved in community affairs.

During the 1960's the Theatre department had several programs involving them in the community. First was the institution of the Summer Festival Playhouse. For the Playhouse, the department brings in professional theatre people to work with the students. Many of these people come from the Kalamazoo community. Also, while the plays put on during the rest of the year are aimed at the students, the Festival Playhouse is aimed mainly at the community.

In the summer of 1968 the Theatre department formed a "Street Theatre". While it only lasted one year, the program was highly successful. It enabled students and faculty to go out to some of the many area parks and schools and perform. There was even some improvisational theatre done at the downtown mall. The topics for the Street Theatre were areas of local and national concern of that time.

Also in the late 1960's the Theatre department worked with the city government to try to start a Black Theatre in the predominately black north side of town. Due to a lack of interest, the program failed.

There were several attempts made at helping educate the youth of the community. In the summer of 1965, the Chemistry and English departments of Kalamazoo College held seminars for local high school students. In 1966 the college instituted a tutoring program to help underprivileged students. Tutoring was done on both the student and faculty level. Like the Black Theatre, the tutoring program quickly died due to lack of interest.

In 1972 the Psychology department started teaching two "Practicum". These courses allow the student to experience first-hand many of the situations which they had studied about on a theoretical basis in their other classes. Under the direction of Dr. Supnick, students work at the State Hospital as volunteers in many different roles.

At the present time, the most frequently cited example of community involvement by the college is the Center for Management Studies and Educational Services under the direction of Dr. Chen. The Center, which was started in the late 1960's, has several purposes. First, it gives students practical experience in the workings and problems of running a small business. Second, the Center helps area businesspeople improve their business through a series of educational seminars. Third, the Center gives interested students, professors, and community people a chance to do research in areas of personal interest. Fourth, the Center acts as a clearinghouse whereby the community can make use of faculty and student expertise.

The Center for Management Studies is a major effort by the college to increase the interaction between the various members of the college and the community.

While they are not established programs of their own, two other ways that students have been involved in the community are by working at local companies and by student-teaching in area public schools. This is done usually during the Career Service and S.I.P. quarters. Many of the companies in the area, such as the Upjohn Corp., are eager and willing to hire on Kalamazoo College students in many capacities, especially in research.

There has always been a long standing agreement between Kalamazoo College and the Kalamazoo Public Schools whereby seniors doing their S.I.P.'s have a chance to student-teach in area public schools. This is especially common for English and History majors.

### CONCLUSIONS

After looking at these results, there are many things that can be said. First, it would be impossible to say that there has been no interaction between Kalamazoo College and the surrounding area. However, one is forced to question the nature of that interaction.

That there has been involvement by the college, there can be no doubt. But, that involvement has been limited, to the most part, to people who have had a personal interest in their involvement. Even though it is now an official college policy to be actively involved in civic affairs, there has never been any consistent program of involvement. Most of what has been done in the town was done on a temporary basis. There has never been any long range program of involvement. Instead, the level and type of involvement by the college at any one given point in time is dependent upon the private interests of a few professors.

Moreover, the interaction that there has been has, for the most part, been very nicely hidden from most of the public. People mention Drs. Hightower, Ham, Chen, and Batts because they don't know about anybody else. It would almost appear that the professors have purposely made an effort to remain invisible. Neither the students nor the townspeople really know what the professors are doing.

This lack of visibility and lack of any consistent policy of involvement leads to several questions. First, is there anything in the nature of being a professor which would either encourage or discourage civic involvement. Next, does the nature of a liberal arts college inhibit or encourage involvement in community affairs.

When asked why they were involved in the manner in which they were, almost all the professors gave one of two responses. First, their involvement is a matter of private interest in that certain area. The second response was that the involvement came with the job. That is, the involvement was started by someone else before they came to Kalamazoo College and when they were hired it was assumed that they would continue the program or course. Few thought that there was anything special about being a professor that would either encourage or discourage involvement.

When asked about the second question, almost everyone that was interviewed described a liberal arts college by using six terms. First, a liberal arts college is by its very nature an elitist institution. It sets its admission standards high, so that only a selected group of students can get in. Also, since it is a private institution, a liberal arts college must raise its own funds from private sources. This means that the cost of attending the college will be quite high so that not everyone will be able to afford it.

The second, third, and fourth descriptions of a liberal arts college are all closely inter-related. It is hard to have one without having the other two as well. The liberal arts college is a place to learn how to think, mature, and develop a sense of ethics. The idea is to produce a

rationally thinking individual who is a moral and responsible citizen.

The fifth term used states that a liberal arts college provides and trains future leaders for society. The students who graduate from a liberal arts college are prepared, or theoretically should be, to take over positions of authority.

The final, and most often expressed purpose of a liberal arts college, is that it is not a place where the student gets vocational training. The liberal arts college does not train a student for a job, but rather how to be a response individual. A degree from a liberal arts college by itself is really worthless. It does not mean that the student is prepared to hold a job. What it does mean is that the student is aware of the various choices available to him and can make a reasonable decision.

However, when asked about what responsibilities a liberal arts college has to the community to be active and involved, there is not such a wide agreement. Some of the professors questioned felt that a college has no responsibility to the community whatsoever. Most, however, felt that a college does have certain responsibilities. But, these responsibilities are not the same as for a state supported school. Since the liberal arts college is a private institution with its own financial resources, it does not have to listen to public opinion the way a state supported school does. The responsibilities that a liberal arts college does have are more in the order of a social and moral obligation to act like a co-operative and responsive citizen. Also, a college has responsibilities to the community just like any privately owned business does. Most professors stated that they believe that a college should not be an isolated entity. But instead, an active citizen.

When asked about what responsibility a liberal arts college has to its students to be active in community affairs, there is even more more controversy. Some of the professors believe that the college has a responsibility to the student not to be involved. They say that the best way to learn about society is to stand back and take an objective view of society. These professors believe that a college should be like a monastery. That is, it should give the student a chance to divorce himself from society and study what other people say about society.

The counter argument against this states that the college has a responsibility to the student to be involved in community affairs. If the purpose of a college is to train future leaders of society, then it must give those up and coming leaders a model by which they can live. A college must not only teach the students theoretical ideas and values, but give the students the chance to see those values in action as well. Also, to give the students a chance to find out for themselves what they believe. These professors believe that it is not enough to say to a student that Descartes said this or Locke said that about society, the college must give the student a chance to what those ideas mean when put into the context of the day to day life of our modern society.

There is also quite alot of controversy over whether "academic" or "experiential" education should be taught at a liberal arts college. On this question the professors are more evenly split. Some believe that college is a place to learn the theories by which one can live. One can get all the experience needed after college. They say that it is impossible to get a valid look at a situation if you are involved in that situation.

The other side of the argument says that the theories must be tempered with a certain amount of first-hand experience. These professors do not suggest that the student be allowed to go off on the slightest whim and do anything. What they do say is that there is more to life than what is written in a book and that there is some educational value in any experience. So, if a student goes into a situation with a background of the theories and looks for the educational aspects of the situation, the student can get more out of the situation than if the student simply studied the problem from a book.

The next question is how well does Kalamazoo College fit into these ideals of a college. Before this can be completely answered, there are two points which must be looked at. First, a special word must be said about the position of Kalamazoo College in the town. Next, some decision must be made about what that ideal is. Should a college be active or should it remain passive?

From its early beginnings, Kalamazoo College has always received a tremendous amount of support from the Kalamazoo community. Except for the Stone Affair of the 1800's, the town has enthusiastically supported the college. What is most notable is the almost total lack of the traditional "Town-Gown" conflict between the town and the college. Even when the students at Kalamazoo College were protesting the Vietnam War in 1968, most people's support of the college did not stop. For the most part, those who did stop supporting the college let the past go and have resumed their support.

Until Western Michigan University grew to the enormous size that it is now, Kalamazoo College was seen as the main school of the area by the town. It is only because of the size of the student body that W.M.U. has been able to overshadow "K" College. Even today many townspeople see Kalamazoo College as number one in the community. It is not that Kalamazoo College has lost any of its prestige or honor in the eyes of the town, but rather that it must now share that place of honor with three other institutes of higher education.

When it comes to deciding on what type and level of involvement there should be by a college, I can find no reasonable answer except that the college has a responsibility to both the student and the community to be active in civic affairs. Moreover, Kalamazoo College has a special obligation to the town to return the town's support.

If the purpose of a liberal arts college is to train people how to think rationally and be able to analyze a situation logically, then the college should not be active in civic affairs. However, if the purpose of a liberal arts college is to train responsible leaders of society, then the college must be involved in that society. It is extremely important not only to teach the ideas but to show them in practice. The students need a model by which they can guide themselves. Also, if the purpose of a liberal arts college is to train people how to live in this society, it is important to give them a chance to see what that society is all about.

Kalamazoo College not only has this responsibility to its students, but it has an obligation to the community as well. It is both unfair and

unrealistic to expect a community after 143 years to continue to give its support without getting anything in return. In a way, Kalamazoo College is no different than any other privately owned business. Since it lives in the community, it is responsible for improving the community. No-one would think of questioning the civic responsibility of the Upjohn Co., so why would they question that same responsibility for Kalamazoo College. As a college, this responsibility takes on a sense of moral and social obligation.

Now, once again we return to the question of how well does Kalamazoo College fit into the ideal of the college. The general consensus among the professors questioned was that the college should receive a grade of "B-". The basic ideas are right, and what it is doing is good, but it simply is not doing enough. The policies must be developed further. Nobody can deny that Kalamazoo College has done a lot with and for the community. However, it is not enough to point to three or four men and say what a good job the college has done.

At this point in time, there are several factors which severely discourage involvement both by the students and by the professors. To go into all the complaints would entail a critique of Kalamazoo College which this paper is not. However, some of the major problems need to be discussed here.

One of the biggest problems for both the students and professors is the lack of time. There is a vicious circle from which there appears to be no escape. For the student, there is so much pressure from homework, grades and classes that there is virtually no time left for any

outside activity. For the professor, there are also many pressures. There is a pressure to keep the over all academic standards of the college as high as possible, a pressure to keep his classes from becoming known to the students as an easy course, and a pressure to keep his reputation within the department and within the school as a whole. As one professor put it, he puts in two to three hours of preparation for every hour of homework he assigns. Because of this there is little time for the professor to get involved in outside activity, especially if the professor is married and has a family.

Another complaint, while not as universal, involves a feeling of risking tenure by getting students involved. Several of the younger professors related to me that in their department, where academic education is held higher than experiential, any sort of experiential course is looked on with a great deal of suspicion. While it is certainly true for a very small minority of departments, it is still interesting to note that while the by-laws state that involvement in the community is a factor in tenure, some professors feel that they are taking a risk by offering a course that would involve students in the community.

In the past several years the Kalamazoo College Plan has been subjected to a lot of criticism. Some of that criticism is because of the limitations the Plan puts on involvement. I will not attempt to air all the complaints against the Plan, that is not the purpose of this paper. Instead, I shall give what I consider to be two very good examples of the criticisms leveled at the Plan. They deal with the on-off campus program and its problems and the Career Service quarter.

The main complaint with the on-off campus program as it now stands, is that there is no continuity between the two. The on campus classes fail to pick up where the off campus programs leave off. This acute lack of flow between quarters leads very quickly to a sense of disjointedness. The student quickly loses all sense of community, both in the school and as a member of society. Because of this, a feeling of apathy sets in. This makes it very hard to get the student involved.

Another major complaint is with the Career Service quarter. The reason that courses like Sociology 123 were stopped was because the Career Service was supposed to take their place. However, today's Career Service is nothing more than a job placement with the emphasis on making money, not on the experiential education. This is more in the line of vocational training which is not supposed to be found at a liberal arts college.

At the beginning of the research, the main question asked was how was the college involved in the community. It was quickly realized that this question could not be answered until the question of why Kalamazoo College has been involved was answered. The answer to that is that there really is no why. There are many individuals within the College that are active but the College as a whole really is not.

Assuming that the premise that a college should be involved is correct, Kalamazoo College has its work cut out for it. There is a lot of work to be done before Kalamazoo College is even close to where it should be in terms of its involvement.