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# [The Institute for Community Studies Description, May 8, 1969]

Institute for Community Studies, Sarah Lawrence College

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## The Institute for Community Studies

Sarah Lawrence College has always found its Westchester County location significant in terms of its education purposes. Early in the history of the College, courses in the community became a part of the curriculum. Examples of direct community action and involvement are numerous: field work throughout the County has been an integral part of the courses and individual research of many Sarah Lawrence graduates; undergraduates have helped staff local agencies and have played a vital, volunteer role; the Nursery School and work in early childhood education have strengthened ties between the College and the County by providing pre-school education for nearby residents and by using Westchester classrooms for student apprentice teaching. By 1965 it had become apparent that some of the adjacent towns wished to avail themselves of the educational leadership and Westchester background which the College uniquely combined, and requests began to come in for professional assistance in solving community problems. And so the College progressed in a familiar yet extended direction by establishing the Institute for Community Studies to help provide the assistance these localities required. The Institute has opened up additional opportunities for students, both graduate and undergraduate, for study and research in community studies — particularly in the areas of policy-making, planning and teaching. It has, in fact, become a research center where students may begin to pursue sociologically important study. Above all, the Institute responds to the needs of neighboring localities in a variety of community service activities, including workshops and seminars, dealing with such issues as tensions of change in education and anti-poverty programs in the County.

In addition to the sponsorship of County-wide symposiums and forums, the Institute is engaged in three major projects:

1. Administration of the academic year program for our Upward Bound disadvantaged high school students who come from Mount Vernon, Yonkers and New Rochelle. This three-year project, supported by an Office of Economic Opportunity grant, involves a one-to-one tutoring program staffed by Sarah Lawrence volunteer undergraduates. Upward Bound students also meet with Institute staff members bi-weekly in community seminars. Special events are planned regularly both on and off campus. During the summer, the Upward Bound students live at Sarah Lawrence for seven weeks and participate in a total educational program geared to their special needs. The summer residence program is directed by Sarah Lawrence faculty and staffed by local high school teachers and Sarah Lawrence faculty. Sarah Lawrence undergraduates serve as tutor-counselors.
2. Study of "Decision-making in Integration: The Public Schools of New York City." Operating under a three-year grant from the U. S. Office of Education, the purpose of this study, involving Sarah Lawrence graduate and undergraduate students, is to explore parent, community, and school administration participation in integration policies. To separate such research problems by boundary lines between suburban and metropolitan communities is no longer possible. The issue of integration in New York City is a case study basic to Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, White Plains, and Yonkers.
3. A major objective of the Institute is to help local leadership respond more effectively to unmet needs and the demands of minority and disadvantaged groups coming in to Westchester. To carry out this objective the Institute conducts community leadership studies and provides a variety of educational activities including seminars, workshops, county-wide and inter-group conferences and community consultation. These activities are supported by grants received from the Field Foundation and Title 1, Higher Education Act 1965.