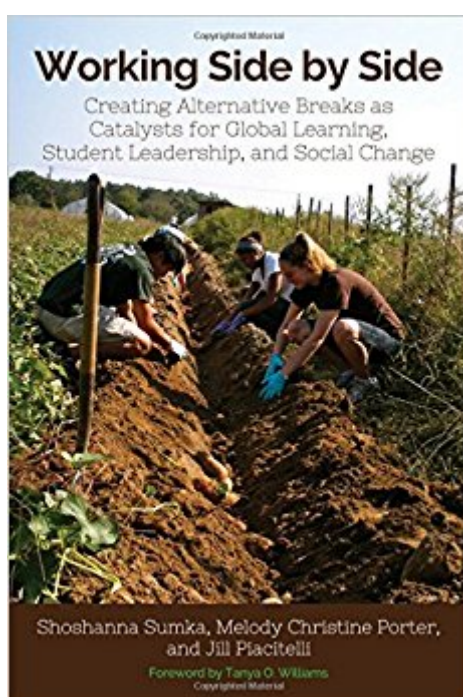


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Working Side By Side: Creating Alternative Breaks As Catalysts For Global Learning, Student Leadership, And Social Change



Synopsis

This book constitutes a guide for student and staff leaders in alternative break (and other community engagement, both domestic and international) programs, offering practical advice, outlining effective program components and practices, and presenting the underlying community engagement and global learning theory. Readers will gain practical skills for implementing each of the eight components of a quality alternative break program developed by Break Away, the national alternative break organization. The book advances the field of student-led alternative breaks by identifying the core components of successful programs that develop active citizens. It demonstrates how to address complex social issues, encourage structural analysis of societal inequities, foster volunteer transformation, and identify methods of work in mutually beneficial partnerships. It emphasizes the importance of integrating a justice-centered foundation throughout alternative break programs to complement direct service activities, and promotes long-term work for justice and student transformation by offering strategies for post-travel reorientation and continuing engagement. The authors address student leadership development, issue-focused education, questions of power, privilege, and diversity, and the challenges of working in reciprocal partnerships with community organizations. They offer guidance on fundraising, budget management, student recruitment, program structures, the nuts and bolts of planning a trip, risk management, health and safety, and assessment and evaluation. They address the complexities of international service-learning and developing partnerships with grassroots community groups, non-governmental and nonprofit organizations, and intermediary organizations. For new programs, this book provides a starting point and resource to return to with each stage of development. For established programs, it offers a theoretical framework to reflect on and renew practices for creating active citizens and working for justice.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“The book is effective and accessible to students, staff, and faculty who are looking to start or strengthen an existing program or learn about the potential transformative power of Alternative Breaks. Even beyond those directly in this field, anyone working with students who are engaging in the community will find *Working Side by Side*

Shoshanna Sumka is the Assistant Director of Global Learning and Leadership at American University, where she oversees the alternative break program and other international immersion programs. At AU, she developed the program from the ground up, created a leadership training curriculum, and increased participation by 300%. As a leader in international & experiential education, she has lived, worked and/or traveled extensively in Kenya, Israel, Indonesia, Venezuela, Zambia, Thailand, Colombia, Haiti, and India. She directed the University of Idaho’s study abroad program in Ecuador where she taught courses on indigenous rights in the rain forest. She has a BA in Sociology and Anthropology from Earlham College and a Master’s in Applied Anthropology from the University of Maryland. Shoshanna was named Break Away Staff Person of the Year in 2012.

Melody Christine Porter is the Associate Director of Community Engagement at the College of William and Mary, where she supervises the alternative breaks program and develops community partnerships. Previously, she served as Director of Volunteer Emory at Emory University, where she developed an alternative fall break program. She has worked in nonprofit administration, ministry, and served as a full-time volunteer for three years after college, in Philadelphia, PA and Johannesburg, South Africa. Melody holds a Master’s in Divinity from the Candler School of Theology at Emory University and a BA in Political Science from Emory University. Melody was named Staff Person of the Year by Break Away in 2010, and her program at William and Mary received the Program of the Year award in 2011.

Jill Piacitelli is the co-Executive Director at Break Away, having led the organization since 2004. Jill has worked with alternative break programs in various capacities for over fifteen years: in various positions with Break Away: The Alternative Break Connection, as a staff advisor while working on the campuses of Johnson State College and the College of Eastern Utah, and as a volunteer coordinator at Provo City Parks.

She studied sociology at Brigham Young University.

We teach a course for our alternative break leaders at our university. This book provides incredible insight based on best practices and well-researched material. The chapters are short and engaging, so students can follow along and connect. I highly recommend this for anyone considering any type of short-term service/mission trip.

I wish this book had been waiting for me when I started with alternative breaks a few years ago. It's a comprehensive guide for those doing the work of service-learning - both on campuses and in communities - and a thoughtful, engaging reflection on how short-term service work can be transformative for all involved.

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