



## **Transcript of Plain Language Podcast: When Students are Community-First**

[Sound up heeled shoes walking down an empty hallway]

According to Natasha Pei, her career success can be attributed, in part, to the community-first skills she learned in CFICE.

Receiving a research assistantship for CFICE's Poverty Reduction hub in 2013, Pei's work consisted of studying, and building, the skills needed to build long-lasting and meaningful relationships between academic and community partners.

[Sound up of children's voices as they play in the distance]

CFICE gave Pei the opportunity to be involved in the kind of projects that she was studying at school, which set her apart from her classmates.

After graduating with a Master's in Social Work, Pei started a job with the Tamarack Institute's Vibrant Communities, a collective network of over fifty cities aimed at reducing poverty and a core partner of the CFICE project.

[Sound up of adults in a crowd, general crowd noise; Sound up of children playing]

As a result of her new position at Vibrant Communities, Pei went from being a research assistant with CFICE's Poverty Reduction Hub to its community co-lead. According to Pei, her experience with CFICE's community-first ethos changed her expectations and methods as a community partner. She now looks to meet Vibrant Communities' partners where they're at, which involves taking time to truly listen and learn about the issues each community is facing.

Pei's advice for students working with communities is to look at themselves and figure out how they can best contribute to communities' goals.

[Ongoing background sound of children playing]

Pei's story demonstrates key recommendations made by CFICE for students looking to become involved in community first work.

These include listening and responding respectfully to community partners, seeking opportunities to improve skills in community-campus engagement, and getting involved in longer-term community-campus engagement projects so students can build deeper connections and relationships.

Like Pei, students should also feel free to share their experiences with other students, and even go so far as to mentor those seeking to become involved in it.

[Ongoing background sound of children playing]

For more information, you can access CFICE's community engagement recommendations for faculty by visiting [carleton.ca/communityfirst/](https://carleton.ca/communityfirst/).



This plain language podcast is brought to you by the Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement project, a 7 year action-research project that investigates how to improve community-campus partnerships.

[End of Podcast]