The Civic Engagement and Service Education Partnerships program continued its successful Engaged Luncheon series this year with presentations from Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago, founder and Executive Director of Rutgers-Camden's LEAP Academy, and Dr. Daniel Goldstein, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Director of Rutgers' Latin American Studies Department. Engaged Luncheons offer the opportunity for scholars to share their publically engaged work with other faculty members, students, staff, and community partners.

Entitled “Breaking Ground: Building Successful Campus-Community Partnerships,” Dr. Santiago’s talk traced the development of the LEAP Academy, a community-based K-12 charter school, which has expanded its services to provide preschool, medical, and other social services to the Camden community. She also discussed the critical role that universities can play by offering a neutral space where different sectors of the community can come together. Dr. Santiago offered practical advice on how to weave service learning opportunities and scholarship into community-based work. More than 40 people attended the luncheon.

Dr. Goldstein’s presentation focused on his work in Bolivia and how he involves students in his summer program where they help to build community centers. His students also spoke, describing how witnessing the poverty and lack of basic services faced by Bolivians had radically altered their perspective. Working with the New Brunswick-based community organization, Lazos America Unida, Dr. Goldstein has also brought his work back home, providing training in community-based research methodology to empower New Brunswick residents.