



# VCU

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

Office of the Provost | Division of  
Community Engagement



**Carnegie Foundation**  
for the Advancement of Teaching

Virginia Commonwealth University is recognized as a Carnegie Community Engaged Institution and a President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll Member.



WORKING TOGETHER. CHANGING LIVES.

## 2013-2014 IMPACT REPORT



“High quality university-community partnerships is the key to generating innovative solutions to the challenges facing our communities and to preparing students to be tomorrow’s engaged citizens.”



**Catherine Howard, Ph.D.**  
Vice Provost, Division of Community Engagement  
Associate Professor,  
Department of Psychology

## 2013-2014 HIGHLIGHTS

- VCU and three other universities are finalists for the national **Engagement Scholarship /W.K. Kellogg Foundation Engagement Award** and will compete for the C. Peter Magrath University Community Engagement Award.

VCU’s entry reflects efforts by the School of Pharmacy’s Pharmacist Collaborative Care and Outreach in the Community program, which includes seven academic-community partnerships with independent senior-living facilities and underserved clinics, five large-scale community outreach programs and programs to train the next generation of health professionals.

- Lynn Pelco, associate vice provost of community engagement, was selected for the Gulf-South Summit’s **2014 Outstanding Practitioner Contributions to Service-Learning in Higher Education**. Pelco’s leadership in establishing the vibrant Service-Learning program at VCU was cited in her nomination.

The School of Dentistry was also recognized for Outstanding Service-Learning Collaboration in Higher Education. Kim Isringhausen, associate professor and chair of the Oral Health Promotion and Community Outreach Program, described the award as having a phenomenal impact on faculty and students by recognizing their tireless efforts over the years.

- Kelly Lockeman, a VCU doctoral student, received honorable mention for the **2013 Dissertation of the Year** from the International Association for Research in Service-Learning and Community Engagement for her study, “The Impact of Service-Learning Among Other Predictors for Persistence and Degree Completion of Undergraduate Students.”

- Ninety-six VCU ASPIRE students qualified for the **Presidential Service Award by completing 100 hours of community service** in a calendar year. VCU ASPIRE was also awarded the **Governor’s 2014 Volunteerism and Service Award** for Outstanding Educational Institutional Volunteer Program and the Richmond Public and Community Service Award from the Richmond City Council.

- **Sixty-two scholarly activities and presentations related to community engagement** were led by staff within the division. View many of the articles/presentations at [community.vcu.edu](http://community.vcu.edu).

- A survey of previously awarded **Community Engagement Grants** revealed that the funds helped to **develop successful university-community partnerships** that impact the community, engage students and contribute to scholarly products.

- VCU was included on the **President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with distinction** for 2012-2013.
- VCU reported **1 million hours of student community service** for the 2013-2014 Honor Roll application.
- The “Service-Learning at VCU” video received a **bronze Telly at the 35th Annual Telly Awards** in the category of best education video. Nearly 12,000 entries from all 50 states and numerous countries were received.
- The Mary and Frances Youth Center Lobs & Lessons program was awarded the United States Tennis Association Mid-Atlantic Section Virginia District’s 2013 **Organization of the Year** award.
- The division led the effort to apply for VCU’s re-classification as a **community-engaged campus by Carnegie**.
- VCU became a member of Imagining America, a consortium of universities and organizations **dedicated to advancing the public and civic purposes of humanities, arts and design**.

# TEACHING AND LEARNING



Community-engaged teaching connects students and faculty with activities that address community-identified needs through mutually beneficial partnerships that deepen students' academic and civic learning. The Division of Community Engagement supports the implementation of community-engaged teaching through innovative programs including ASPIRE, Continuing Studies, Health Sciences Academy and Service-Learning.

## ASPIRE

VCU ASPIRE is a living-learning community promoting community engagement through academic coursework and co-curricular activity. VCU ASPIRE enriches and deepens students' understanding of their capacity to create positive change in communities and address critical societal needs through long-term sustainable partnerships.

- ASPIRE students completed **17,085** community engagement hours since the start of the program. These hours were the result of **707** co-curricular events, with **397** events taking place in the community.
- The overall GPA for ASPIRE students increased from **3.01** to **3.16**.
- **96** VCU ASPIRE students qualified for the Presidential Service Award by completing **100 hours of community service** in a calendar year. VCU ASPIRE was also awarded the Governor's 2014 Volunteerism and Service Award for Outstanding Educational Institutional Volunteer Program and the Richmond Public and Community Service Award from the Richmond City Council.

## Health Sciences Academy

Through a 15-week VCU course, the VCU Health Sciences Academy (HSA) allows high school students to participate in lectures delivered by health care professionals, receive mentoring on college success skills and attend field trips to the science departments on the Monroe Park Campus, VCU Critical Care Hospital and the professional training programs on the MCV Campus.

- **103** high school students from Cosby High School Health Sciences Specialty Center, Richmond Community High School and John Marshall High School participated in the program from three high schools.
- **74** VCU student mentors served in the program, resulting in **4,740** hours of service.

*Effective beginning the 2014-2015 academic year, the Health Sciences Academy will move out of the Division of Community Engagement and become part of the VCU Division for Health Sciences Diversity.*

## ASPIRE STUDENTS SAY...

"I have gotten closer to a lot of my fellow students here at VCU, and I have been able to get significantly involved in the community."

"ASPIRE has helped me solidify my career choice by allowing me to volunteer in areas and with populations of people that I wasn't previously exposed to."

"ASPIRE has changed me into a more culturally competent individual. I have become inspired to fight for the underrepresented and less fortunate, and I feel as if I am part of a giant family."

The Health Sciences Academy program now boasts more than **560** alumni.

## Continuing Studies

The Office of Continuing Studies acts as a liaison between the university's academic units and external communities, providing program coordination to deliver timely, unique, flexible and affordable courses to meet community need and interest.

- **Arabic** and **American Sign Language** added to Language and Cultural Competency course offerings.
- New Partnership with the **Smithsonian American Art Museum** to deliver courses for k-12 teachers.

*Effective beginning the 2014-2015 academic year, the Office of Continuing Studies will move out of the Division of Community Engagement and become part of the VCU Office of Continuing and Professional Education.*

## Service-Learning

Service-Learning is an intentional teaching strategy that engages students in organized service activities that benefit the community and enhance academic curriculum.

- **67,760** service hours were provided by **3,388** Service-Learning students.
- **224** class sections; 174 distinct courses; 10 international settings.
- More than **130** sustained community partners.
- A new **Faculty Fellows Program** helped to increase understanding and campus support for service-learning and community engagement.
- **41** conference presentations and **nine** journal articles were disseminated by faculty, staff and students.
- **Two** annual institutes provided professional development for **34** faculty members.

Nonprofit Learning Point, which provides high quality, affordable professional and leadership development for the nonprofit community of the greater Richmond region, offered **96** classes and enrolled **1,194** students. NLP transitioned to **100** percent noncredit offerings and a new pricing structure and course delivery model were implemented.

The "Service-Learning at VCU" video received a **bronze Telly** at the **35th Annual Telly Awards** in the category of best education video. Nearly 12,000 entries from all 50 states and numerous countries were received. View the video at [youtu.be/p9398PnhsU4](http://youtu.be/p9398PnhsU4)

Lynn Pelco, associate vice provost of community engagement, was selected for the Gulf-South Summit's **2014 Outstanding Practitioner** Contributions to Service-Learning in Higher Education.

## OUTREACH

Community-engaged outreach actively enlists students, faculty and community members in efforts to identify social issues and provide innovative solutions through targeted community-university partnerships.

- **78** volunteers with Project Clean & Green Move partnered with Richmond's Clean City Commission, Department of Public Works, area neighborhood associations, local elected officials, the VCU Neighborhood Team and local charities to collect **44** tons of trash during four clean-up events this summer. **11,000** pounds of household items were donated to Goodwill through donation bins placed in residence halls.



Photo credit: Frank Anderson of Anderson Studios



- VCU Neighborhood Liaisons is a new entity that encompasses **five** adjacent neighborhood associations and helps address issues of common concern.
- More than **700** students and community members participated in two Paint the Town Green events in the fall and spring. The success of these events is due to the collaboration between DCE, the neighborhood associations and the School of Business Management 319 service-learning class.

**1,394** VCU employees took advantage of their community service leave hours provided to state employees in 2013, which is an increase of **5** percent over 2012. These employees accounted for **14,722** hours of service, an increase of **5.4** percent over 2012.

## AmeriCorps

VCU AmeriCorps is part of a national service corps and is the largest and longest-running AmeriCorps program in Virginia, focusing initiatives around children's literacy.

- **26,005** service hours; **500** volunteers recruited; **34** events that helped to strengthen families.
- Number of members: **40**, with **85 percent** retention rate.

Literacy support service to:

**10** elementary schools

**69** classrooms

**1,023** students

## Mary and Frances Youth Center

The Mary and Frances Youth Center offers two private tennis courts and classrooms designed to provide programming and training to enhance the lives of youth in the Richmond metro area.

- **12** agencies and **30** sites completed the YPQI continuous improvement process, which helps out-of-school time programs assess operations, create improvement plans and improve quality through staff training and technical assistance.
- The Discovery summer program served **182** middle school youth and partnered with **14** university programs to provide in-depth experiences and skill development opportunities to engage youth in career exploration in the STEAM-H fields.
- **249** youth and **253** afterschool programs participated in Lobs and Lessons summer camp, supported by **147** volunteers providing **2,360** service hours.

**109** volunteers supported the

5<sup>th</sup> Annual Young Aces Open.

**158** 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders

participated from **26** Richmond Public Schools elementary schools.

## Virginia Mentoring Partnership

Virginia Mentoring Partnership provides training and technical assistance to mentors and mentoring programs to increase the quality and quantity of mentoring for Virginia's youth.

- **1,705** mentors and mentoring program staff trained.
- **15** VISTA members built program capacity and recruited new mentors.



View the State of Mentoring report at [vamentoring.org/about/mentoring-matters/need](http://vamentoring.org/about/mentoring-matters/need).

# COMMUNITY-ENGAGED RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

As a premier, urban research institution committed to community engagement, in 2013-2014 VCU prioritized enhancing, supporting and providing professional development for the continued growth of community-engaged research (CEnR), scholarship and creative expression as a key strategy in advancing the Quest for Distinction.

Several efforts contributed to building the infrastructure necessary to engage in high-quality, high-impact CEnR.

- **80** faculty members attended the CEnR Institute held May 8 and 9. The institute educated participants on best practices to promote CEnR, including models of engagement, evaluation methods, funding, sustainability and how to best document CEnR for promotion and tenure. View institute documents at [scholarscompass.vcu.edu](http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu).
- Guidance documents were developed to help faculty, staff and students address barriers to successfully engage in CEnR. View the resources at [community.vcu.edu](http://community.vcu.edu).
- The CEnR Federation was established this year. Co-chaired by Valerie Holton, director of Community-Engaged Research, Division of Community Engagement and Alex Krist, co-chair of the Community Engagement Core, Center for Clinical and Translational Research, this committee aims to design and advocate for infrastructure to advance high-quality, high-impact CEnR. Membership is from across the university and includes representatives from the Council for Community Engagement.

## Community Engagement Grants

The Council for Community Engagement (CCE) grant program was established to build university-community partnerships that address community-identified needs. An evaluation completed this year shows the program has been successful. The final report is posted on the DCE website and will be shared at upcoming conferences.

### Key Findings

#### Impact Evaluation of Grants Awarded in 2007-2012

- **16** of the 34 grants awarded have continued past the funding period.
- Grantees obtained **\$648,400** in additional funding; **76%** of which were from external funders. For each dollar invested during 2007-12, grantees were able to leverage **\$1.36** to sustain projects.
- As a result of the grants, faculty developed **115** scholarly products.
- **792** VCU students have been involved with the projects.



### Community-Engaged Research: the VCU definition

Community-Engaged Research (CEnR) is a collaborative process between the researcher and community partner that creates and disseminates knowledge and creative expression with the goal of contributing to the discipline and strengthening the well-being of the community. CEnR identifies the assets of all stakeholders and incorporates them in the design and conduct of the different phases of the research process.

**185** listserv subscribers get the latest CEnR news at VCU. To subscribe, e-mail [engage@vcu.edu](mailto:engage@vcu.edu) with "subscribe to CEnR" as the subject line.

### 2012-2013 Grantees: Notable Accomplishments

Not included in the CCE grant evaluation were two notable accomplishments from 2012-2013 grantees: A \$1.5 million grant to the School of Nursing from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to expand the "Community Health and Wellness Program for Older Adults" and the "CMoR Learning: Developing Interdisciplinary Partnerships for an Inclusive Learning Community" being ranked in the nation's top 10 as a model for children's learning museum.

# Community Engagement Grants Awarded

## Funded Projects for 2014-2015:

### **"Agri-Culture": Growing Food and Community with Richmond Refugees**

**Community partner:** ReEstablish Richmond (ReR)

**VCU partners:** School of Social Work; The Wellness Resource Center

### **Beautiful RVA Partnership: Co-creating Livability in Richmond Communities**

**Community partners:** Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden; City of Richmond, Office of Sustainability; Groundwork RVA; TMI Consulting, Inc.

**VCU partners:** L. Douglas Wilder School of Government & Public Affairs; VCUarts, Dept. of Fashion, Dept. of Graphic Design, Dept. of Interior Design

### **Crossing the River: Bridging the Education Gap – Enhancing the First Spanish GED Preparation Program in Richmond**

**Community partner:** Sacred Heart Center (SHC)

**VCU partners:** Office of Continuing Studies; College of Humanities and Sciences, Dept. of Physics

### **Expanding Trauma-Informed Intervention for Preschoolers: An Inter-Disciplinary Best Practice Approach**

**Community partner:** Greater Richmond Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN), Circle Preschool Program (CPP)

**VCU partners:** School of Allied Health Professions, Dept. of Occupational Therapy; School of Social Work

### **Social Practice in the Museum: A Service-Learning Course for VCU Students and Young People in the Museum**

**Community partners:** Church Hill Activities & Tutoring (CHAT);

Valentine Richmond History Center

**VCU partners:** VCUarts, Dept. of Art History, Dept. of Photography & Film, Anderson Gallery

### **A Welcoming Richmond**

**Community partners:** The Bridge Community Development Corporation (Bridge CDC); City of Richmond, Office of Multicultural Affairs

**VCU partners:** School of World Studies; L. Douglas Wilder School of Government & Public Affairs

## Currents of Change Awards

### **The VCU Clark-Hill Institute for Positive Youth Development was the 2014 winner.**

The Clark-Hill Institute's mission is to develop and evaluate evidence-based practices to empower youth, schools, families, and other stakeholders to promote the healthy, safe and positive development of youth, with a special emphasis on the middle school years. The Institute currently implements the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program to reduce levels of aggressive behavior and associated risk factors among students.

**Community partner:** Richmond Public Schools

**VCU partner:** College of Humanities & Sciences, Dept. of Psychology

### **Exemplary Partnership in Service: VCU Mini-Economy Market Day**

**Community partners:** Martin's; Union First Market Bank; Virginia Council on Economic Education (VCEE); Henrico County, Richmond Public, Chesterfield County, Hanover County, Lunenburg County, King George County, Steward, Charles City County, Blessed Sacrament Huguenot Catholic, Amelia County Schools

**VCU partners:** School of Business, Dept. of Economics, Center for Economic Education; School of Education

### **Exemplary Partnership in Teaching: VCU Votes Campaign**

**Community partners:** Virginia Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP); WTVR-CBS 6

**VCU partner:** Richard T. Robertson School of Media & Culture

### **Exemplary Partnership, Student Initiated: Food Landscapes**

**Community partner:** Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC); Transitions Day Support Center

**VCU partners:** School of Social Work

## Promoting community engagement news

Approximately 200 community engagement stories were posted on the Division of Community Engagement's website this academic year, highlighting teaching, service and scholarship activities on campus. Visitation to the website has increased more than 50 percent over last academic year. Read the stories at [community.vcu.edu](http://community.vcu.edu).

E-mail your community engagement project, service or research news to [engage@vcu.edu](mailto:engage@vcu.edu) and we'll highlight it on our website and social media.



## VCU: A national model for community engagement and regional impact

Community Engagement involves mutually-beneficial partnerships that impact our teaching and learning, our scholarship and our outreach efforts that strive to improve the human condition and support the public good at home and abroad.

As outlined in VCU's Quest for Distinction, the Division of Community Engagement is prepared to lead the university in becoming a national model for community engagement and regional impact. VCU is one of only 28 universities with an academic medical center to be designated by the Carnegie Foundation as "Community Engaged" with "Very High Research Activity."

### Contact us

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 @VCUCommunity

 /VCUCommunityEngagement

## VISION

VCU is a community of engaged citizens, working together, changing lives.

## DCE MISSION

The VCU Division of Community Engagement mobilizes university-community partnerships that generate innovative solutions to societal challenges and prepares the engaged citizens of tomorrow.