

2016-2017
IMPACT REPORT



WORKING TOGETHER. CHANGING LIVES.
10 YEARS OF **EXPONENTIAL IMPACT**



VCU Community Engagement



Message from the Vice Provost



Catherine W. Howard, Ph.D.

Vice provost, Division of
Community Engagement
Associate professor,
Department of Psychology

WHAT CAN HAPPEN IN A DECADE? Have we provided tools and resources so that faculty, students, and staff can create partnerships with the community that generate innovative solutions to societal challenges? Have we created learning opportunities for students that will prepare them to be the engaged citizens of tomorrow? Are we a national model for Community Engagement as we have aspired to be in Quest for Distinction? Much of our work in the Division of Community Engagement over the last ten years has been like planting of seeds, nurturing the growth of ideas and collaborations, and then observing the amazing outcomes.

The data and the stories affirm that we have made tremendous strides as a community-engaged campus and that community engagement is truly a defining element of Virginia Commonwealth University. In fact, VCU is one of 37 universities with an academic medical center that Carnegie has classified as community engaged and very high research.

What has changed in ten years?

- 4,000 students a year are enrolled in service-learning courses, compared to 1,894 in 2005-06. The number of departments that offer service-learning courses has increased from 19 in 2005-06 to 40 in 2015-16.
- 943 youth participated in programs at Mary and Frances Youth Center compared to 36 in 2006. MFYC now provides professional development to youth serving organizations, the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI). Last year 60 agencies that serve about 4,000 youth in the region, participated in the program.
- 22,000 hours of service were completed by VCU ASPiRE students in one year. The first living-learning community at VCU has assisted 125 community organizations during its initial five years.
- \$1 million dollars in community engagement grants have been distributed to VCU faculty to develop university-community partnerships that address critical community needs. These projects have generated \$3 for every dollar of seed funding and have created unique research and learning opportunities – plus many positive ripple effects.
- While celebrating a 20-year partnership with the Carver community, our efforts to build positive relations with neighboring communities have expanded to serve the five neighborhoods surrounding the Monroe Park Campus.

The Division of Community Engagement is grateful for the opportunity to serve VCU and our community. We look forward to the next decade.

Sincerely,

Catherine W. Howard

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

from 2016-2017



BRIDGING RICHMOND

This year, the division deepened its relationship with Bridging Richmond (BR) by becoming the VCU hosting unit, welcoming BR to the DCE and providing support for the alignment of University contributions.

BR was founded by VCU in 2004 and now has multiple anchors, including United Way of Greater Richmond and Petersburg, The Community Foundation and Robins Foundation. The partners work together to ensure that every person in the Richmond Region will have the education and talent necessary to be successful from cradle to career. Partners are dedicated to improving equity in education and workforce participation as a means of reducing poverty, improving social mobility and ensuring that the region is economically competitive.



Since its inception in 2007, the Council for Community Engagement has awarded more than \$1 million to 69 projects. In turn, these projects have:

- Leveraged more than \$2.7 million in external funding – a roughly \$3 return on investment per dollar granted.
- Provided opportunities for community-engaged scholarship, teaching and service to 1,350 students and 2019 faculty members.
- Served as catalysts for 199 community-engaged scholarly products, including journal publications and symposium presentations



In partnership with The United Way of Greater Richmond and Petersburg, the Mary and Frances Youth Center manages the implementation of the Youth Program Quality Intervention quality improvement process for out-of-school-time service providers across the region. In 2016-17, 534 youth development professionals from 60 organizations were trained in positive youth development best practices.

PLANTING A SEED, WATCHING IT GROW

VCU FACULTY AND STAFF REFLECT ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT'S IMPACT



“We’re really challenging how traditional health care is delivered. Instead of asking people to come to us, we’re bringing care to them. Members of the community are receiving access to quality care, we’re gaining valuable insight and data about whether enhanced care coordination decreases ER visitation and improves chronic conditions, and in the midst of all of it, we’re teaching. When you can leverage your expertise to assist another human being, that’s true impact—that’s why I’m here at VCU.”

– **KC Ogonna**, associate dean for admissions and student services, School of Pharmacy



“When I was brand new to VCU, Cathy Howard [vice provost of community engagement] heard about my research interests, and scheduled a meeting with various stakeholders. It was my first connection to the community, and it was the start of it all. For me, research, teaching and service are totally integrated. The impact of my scholarship is not just in journal publications, but rather how many people within the community have access to care.”

– **Rosalie Corona**, associate professor in clinical psychology and director of the Latino Mental Health Clinic



“When I started my academic career, I didn’t have the words to put to my world view of being an academic. I didn’t have ‘community-engaged research’ in my toolbox. But what I knew was that I was my best academic self when I could work on projects and research and teaching that made a difference for somebody. I also knew I was my best self when I had my students in that space with my community partners. Then I found the Division of Community Engagement. I went to my first Community Engagement Institute. Now I have the words, the resources—a platform for my work.”

– **Meghan Gough**, associate professor and chair of urban and regional studies in the Wilder School



“This is about a larger social movement. We have to work together to raise awareness and hear the voices of older people. I can’t imagine doing my job in any way, shape or form without being engaged with the community, and the DCE has really moved the needle in establishing that trust.”

– **Tracey Gendron**, associate professor, Department of Gerontology, School of Allied Health



“As a research field station located off the main campus, we are devoted to environmental research, teaching and public service. Many of the community engagement and outreach programs we have were initially funded through the Division of Community Engagement. As I work to raise funds for infrastructure, donors see the connections we’re making with the community—schoolchildren and their teachers engaged with our faculty and partners here—and that can be a driving force for deciding to lend their financial support.”

– **Catherine Dahl**, director of development, VCU Rice Rivers Center

PRIMARY CARE PSYCHOLOGY TRAINING COLLABORATIVE

Currents of Change Recipient Grows From Pilot Idea to Program that Attracts Major Grant Funding and National Student Talent.



Liz Sadock (right), a former clinical psychology doctoral student, collaborates with nurse practitioner Mary Simmons at Health Brigade (formerly the Fan Free Clinic).

SMOKING CESSATION, INSOMNIA, PAIN MANAGEMENT, WEIGHT LOSS, ANXIETY, GRIEF AND PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS.

These are just some of the behavioral and mental health issues that the VCU Primary Care Psychology Training Collaborative has assisted patients with on a pro bono basis since 2008. In addition to integrating mental health services with primary care for underserved populations in Richmond, the collaborative helps to equip future psychologists to meet the current national workforce demands for psychologists who are trained to work in primary care.

“This is really an example of a project that started small and has really grown,” said Bruce Rybarczyk, a professor of clinical psychology who helped launch the collaborative. “Back in 2007 we had a graduate student who was married to a resident working at the VCU Ambulatory Care Clinic, and she relayed the need that the patients there could really benefit from greater access to mental and behavioral health assistance. So we started by sending one or two of our graduate students down there to work alongside physicians.”

Now the collaborative has 27 doctoral students in clinical/counseling psychology and five different licensed supervisors operating in eight safety net primary care locations, both within the VCU Health System, as well as other community primary care clinics. More than 100 doctoral trainees have been trained in primary care psychology since 2007.

In addition to working with community partners, the collaborative has formed partnerships within VCU, working with other departments to broaden reach and impact. Most recently, the collaborative joined with the VCU Department of Pharmacotherapy & Outcome Science and CrossOver Healthcare Ministry to improve smoking cessation rates in the Latino population. The project was awarded a 2017-18 Community Engagement Grant by the Council for Community Engagement.

It's this type of initial funding that proves to be beneficial when seeking external funding avenues and grants. After initial pilot funding, the collaborative has been able to secure more than \$2.1 million in grants, including a recent award from the Health Resources and Services Administration to expand outreach in pediatric care and the Latino population. In addition to securing funding, the collaborative has served as a jumping board for scholarly publication and the development of the next generation of clinical psychologists.

“It has really changed the culture of training in our department,” Rybarczyk said. “The students are coming back with tremendous knowledge and enthusiasm for underserved care, and it's given us a window into the underserved world that we couldn't get otherwise. Masters theses and dissertations are emerging from the collaborative, and large numbers of research papers and book chapters have been published. Moreover, talented students from around the country are attracted to our program because of our unique training model and engagement with the community. We are part of this larger national conversation on how we can use this integrated care model to really transform healthcare and reduce disparities for low-income, underserved patients.”

GRANTS AND CURRENTS OF CHANGE

2017-2018 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GRANTS AWARDED

The VCU Council for Community Engagement provides \$100,000 in one-year Community Engagement Grants to enhance and increase university engagement with the greater Richmond community and contribute to the research and teaching of VCU units. Awards are up to \$20,000 each.

VCU Sculpture Outreach Program

Community Partner: Art 180

VCU Partners: Department of Sculpture + Extended Media; Institute for Contemporary Art

Building Interactive Environments for Older Adults with Autism that Promote Stress Management and Engagement

Community Partner: A Grace Place Adult Day Care Center

VCU Partners: Departments of Gerontology and Interior Design; Rehabilitation Research and Training Center

An Interprofessional Intervention with Behavioral Health and Pharmacy Trainees to Reduce Smoking Rates in the Latino Population of a Free Health Clinic in Richmond

Community Partner: CrossOver Healthcare Ministry

VCU Partners: Departments of Pharmacotherapy & Outcome Sciences and Psychology

Touching the Past: Enhancing Accessibility for Richmond's Visually Impaired Community and Others to Virginia's Heritage through 3D Printing

Community Partners: Department for the Blind & Vision Impaired; Virginia Historical Society (VHS)

VCU Partners: Leadership for Empowerment and Abuse Prevention; Schools of Education and World Studies

Asset-Based Community Development: A Model for Community Strengthening

Community Partners: City of Richmond Office of Sustainability; Embrace Richmond; Engaging Richmond

VCU Partners: Center of Society and Health; Department of Urban & Regional Studies & Planning

Building on Sacred Ground: The Art of Remembrance

Community Partner: Shockoe Bottom Center for Historic Reclamation (SBCHR)

VCU Partners: Departments of African American Studies, Art Education and History

Community Forestry Project

Community Partners: Carver Area Civic Improvement League (CACIL); Capital Trees; Richmond Tree Stewards

VCU Partners: Center for Environmental Studies; Office of Sustainability

2017 CURRENTS OF CHANGE AWARD WINNERS

The VCU Council for Community Engagement highlights and celebrates partnerships that benefit students, staff, faculty, alumni, and community partners on local, state, regional, national and global levels.

For more information or to nominate a partnership, visit community.vcu.edu/council/currents-of-change-award.

EXEMPLARY PARTNERSHIP IN OUTREACH

Hands Up Ministries with VCU ASPIRE

Community Partner: Hands Up Ministries

VCU Partner: VCU ASPIRE

EXEMPLARY PARTNERSHIP IN TEACHING

Preparing Urban Educators

Community Partner: Youth Life Foundation of Richmond

VCU Partner: Department of Teaching & Learning

EXEMPLARY PARTNERSHIP IN RESEARCH

Center for Cultural Experiences in Prevention

Community Partners: Health Brigade; Nia Inc. of Greater Richmond

VCU Partners: Departments of Kinesiology & Health Sciences and Psychology; Wellness Resource Center

OVERALL WINNER, EXEMPLARY PARTNERSHIP — STUDENT INITIATED

CARES Clinic at VCU

Community Partners: Center for Healthy Hearts; CrossOver Healthcare Ministry; Health Brigade

VCU Partners: Department of Physical Therapy

Meeting a need in the community for physical therapy services that cannot be fully addressed by other free clinics in the city, the CARES Clinic was conceived, planned, developed and is now operated by students in VCU's Doctor of Physical Therapy Program. The clinic provides services to uninsured patients in the Richmond metro area and provides students an opportunity to enhance clinical skill development through guided practice.

SERVICE-LEARNING



SERVICE-LEARNING NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

SERVICE-LEARNING FACULTY FELLOW

Lindsay Chudzik, assistant professor in the University College Department of Focused Inquiry, was recognized as the 2017 Outstanding Faculty Member by the Gulf-South Summit on Service-Learning and Civic Engagement.

THE CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY FARM

(formerly Community Food Collaborative, CCF) was awarded a \$50,000 grant by the National Association of Conservation Districts. CCF received the Council for Community Engagement's Award for Exemplary University-Community Partnership, Student-Initiated, in 2015 and is a longtime community partner for Professor Joseph Cates' UNIV 211 "Food for Thought" service-learning course.

THREE SERVICE-LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS

were supported by Service-Learning Partnership Grants in 2016-17:

- Bee Coston, Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, "Improving the Lives of LGBTQ+ Young Richmonders of Color: Post Traumatic Healing and Wellness through Community-Based Participatory Research," in partnership with the Virginia Anti-Violence Project.
- Michelle Peace, Department of Forensic Science, "STEM in Out of School Time and Extracurricular Activities," in partnership with Communities in Schools-Richmond and NextUp.
- Marcia Winter, Department of Psychology, "Developing and Extending the Scope of Seymour's Living Lab at Children's Museum of Richmond," in partnership with the Children's Museum of Richmond.

SERVICE-LEARNING STUDENT ENROLLMENT

in 2016-17 exceeded 4,000 – surpassing the University's 2018 strategic goal a year early. Since 2012, student enrollment has increased by 58%.

About Service-Learning Service-Learning is a high-impact educational practice that engages students in organized service activities and guided reflection. The service activities benefit the community and enhance the academic curriculum of the participating students.

Vision To become a leader in the development of mindful and engaged citizens who contribute to a more just and humane world.

Mission To deepen our understanding of civic responsibility and enhance our capacity to act as locally responsive and globally aware citizens.

For more information, visit servicelearning.vcu.edu.

BY THE NUMBERS

4,091 students enrolled in service-learning courses.

251 service-learning class sections offered students engaged learning opportunities.

Service-learning students provided **81,820** hours of service.

\$23,650 in grants supported innovative, community-engaged teaching.

132 faculty taught designated service-learning courses.

Chelsea Ortiz Gains Skills for Medical Career through Service-Learning



FOR CHELSEA ORTIZ, a rising senior majoring in chemistry with a minor in psychology, the “big picture” has always been going to medical school.

But during her first year at VCU, she enrolled in a section of Focused Inquiry that was taught by Assistant Professor Jamie Fuelein. The course was a service-learning course.

“I had no clue what service-learning was or how it would impact my life,” she said. “Little did I know that service-learning would eventually teach me the skills that I will need as a doctor - empathy, passion, patience - skills I would have never developed solely in the classroom.”

Since taking the service-learning course her first year, Ortiz has continued to develop her community engagement, serving for four semesters as a Service-Learning Teaching Assistant (SLTA) for Fuelein’s service-learning courses.

“The class works in Carver Elementary School with a program called Carver Promise, which provides mentoring so each student gets one-on-one interaction to work on math, reading, problem solving skills and to just have someone to talk to,” Ortiz said. “When I hear a student ask me if I can come extra days, I can’t help but smile, because I know that I am making a difference in the children’s lives and that they look forward to our time together.”

For more information on Ortiz’s work with Carver Promise, watch the video her service-learning class created at <http://bit.ly/2urvx2t>.



ASPIRE



About ASPIRE

Academic Scholars Program in Real Environments (ASPIRE) enriches and deepens student's understanding of their capacity to create positive change in communities through coursework, co-curricular experiences and a vibrant residential environment.

For more information, visit aspire.vcu.edu.

BY THE NUMBERS

Total current number of ASPIRE students: **169**

Total number of hours: **11,230**

Total number of co-curricular events: **~1,000**

Total number of partners served: **120**

Anticipated student enrollment for 2017-18: **200**

ASPIRE NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Since 2015, VCU ASPIRE has partnered with St. Mary's Woods retirement community as part of the Opening Minds through Art Initiative. Students work one-on-one with seniors with varying stages of dementia, completing artistic projects that culminate in a showcase attended by family, friends and community members. The partnership has allowed VCU ASPIRE students to form inspiring intergenerational relationships that have shaped how they view art, health and aging.

This past Spring, six VCU ASPIRE students presented at the annual William and Mary Active Citizens Conference in Williamsburg. Submitting proposals for the peer-reviewed undergraduate conference marked the first time that these students had formally presented to an audience. More than 150 students attended the three ASPIRE-led presentations on the topics of healthcare disparities, microaggressions and using social media for student activism.

During the DCE's 10-year anniversary celebration, Hands Up Ministries was celebrated as the Exemplary Partnership in Outreach. The award recognizes the nearly five-year partnership between Hands Up Ministries and VCU ASPIRE. The partnership has led to 252 students providing more than 1,600 hours of service supporting the building and maintenance of 10 homes in Richmond's Highland Park neighborhood.

In 2015, VCU ASPIRE began working with the Richmond City Justice Center (RCJC) through a series of book clubs and workshops that paired VCU students with residents of RCJC to discuss and learn about current events. This past Fall, that partnership was deepened when a section of the Foundations of Community Studies Course, CMST 300, became a part of VCU's Open Minds initiative. Eleven students in CMST 300 took classes at RCJC where they discussed community issues with residents that ranged from civil discourse and citizenship to mass incarceration, as discussed by Bryan Stevenson in this year's common book, Just Mercy.

Students Work on Election Initiatives



The first cohort of ASPIRE students partnered with the Mosby Tenant Council in 2012 to start a non-partisan Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) effort in Mosby. The number of Mosby residents already registered to vote may be partly due to the efforts started by the first ASPIRE class.

The idea for the GOTV effort came directly from the leaders of the Mosby Tenant Council. Patricia Williford, president of the Mosby Tenant Council, approached VCU ASPIRE about partnering with the residents to mobilize voter turnout.

“It is critical that the Mosby residents understand that their vote is the most important way for their voices to be heard,” she said. “We are very grateful for the support of the ASPIRE students because we cannot turn things around by ourselves.”

For the past five years, the students have worked in Mosby to help conduct voter registration drives, organize voter education events and help residents exercise their right to vote on Election Day. This year the students worked with the residents to plan a voter education luncheon in mid-October. Representative Robert C. “Bobby” Scott was the featured speaker.

As Election Day approached, both the students and the Mosby residents received surprises. The first sweet surprise came from a Ben & Jerry’s franchise owner from the Charlottesville area. The owner showed up unannounced in Mosby to hand out ice cream to celebrate National Voter Registration Day. The residents were reminded to vote as they indulged in their free scoops of Empower Mint, a new ice cream flavor.

The second surprise came when a group of British Journalists sponsored by the U.S. State Department and the International Center for Journalists requested a meeting with VCU students the first Saturday in November at the ASPIRE building. The journalists were traveling around the U.S. to learn how the presidential and local elections looked through the eyes of college students.

The day before the election, ASPIRE student Wesley Huie walked door-to-door in Mosby passing out nearly 300 flyers to remind people to vote on Tuesday and to instruct them on where they could catch rides to the poll.

WHAT ASPIRE PARTNERS SAY:

“SPARC is so grateful to be a community partner with VCU’s ASPIRE program for the last four years. We had an amazing time working with the ASPIRE students in our inclusive performing arts program, LIVE ART. The ASPIRE students are some of the most willing and capable community partners that we have the privilege of working with, and we value the integrity and service they provide for our students and hope to continue and expand our partnership in the future.”

- Courtney Vollmer, director of creative play, School of the Performing Arts in the Richmond Community



Photo credit: Jim Hale

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community-engaged outreach is the application and provision of institutional resources, knowledge or services that directly benefits the community.

BY THE NUMBERS

The Mary and Frances Youth Center (MFYC) served **943** youth, representing six cities and counties in the greater Richmond region.

VCU Recreational Sports partnered with MFYC to support the annual Young Aces Open event and Summer Programs. VCU Recreational Sports provided more than **\$7,000** in-kind annually in facility space for these programs to operate. This allows for more than **900** elementary and middle school youth to come to VCU each year to participate in enrichment programming at MFYC.

VCU AmeriCorps partnered with **six** out-of-school time youth service providers: Blue Sky Fund, Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Richmond, Friends Association for Children, Higher Achievement, St. Andrew's School and the YMCA of Greater Richmond.

Thirty VCU AmeriCorps members provided more than **14,500** hours of service, focusing on literacy and environmental science education. Members completed more than **3,500** group tutoring sessions with assigned students.

On Nov. 1, more than **15** VCU employees joined with VCU students to create **260** birthday cards to distribute to students at Carver Elementary School. The VCU Institute for Contemporary Art helped organize the project, creating the day of service for students, faculty and staff to create cards. The project was in partnership with Communities in Schools Richmond (CIS-R), which supports K-12 students in 39 Richmond City and Henrico County high poverty neighborhood schools.



The Virginia Mentoring Partnership trained more than **1,800** new mentors to serve youth in Virginia. VMP supported **50** mentoring programs with technical assistance and quality coaching. On average, matches within mentoring programs following the Elements of Effective Practice (EEP) last 15 months, whereas programs not following the EEP report an average match length of eight months.

OUTREACH NEWS HIGHLIGHTS



Lobs & Lessons began its first Junior Tennis Team in the Spring of 2017. The group of 12 & Under division boys and girls got their start in Lobs & Lessons Open and Summer programming. After participating for several years, Lobs & Lessons wanted to offer a continuing pipeline for tennis participants to advance their playing skills and compete against other teams in the area. The parent response from the season was overwhelmingly positive and will likely lead to more Junior Team Tennis teams and participants in 2018.



More than 200 fourth and fifth graders from Richmond showcased their QuickStart tennis skills April 27 at the eighth annual Young Aces Open at Virginia Commonwealth University's Mary and Frances Youth Center.

VCU's No Car Protocol for first-year residential students will go into effect in Fall 2017 and was largely informed by meetings with neighborhood residents prior to the construction of a new Gladding Residence Center. Past Fan District Association President Brian Baird said, "This announcement is appreciated by those who live and work in the Fan as well as surrounding neighborhoods, and it shows how VCU and those neighborhoods can find common ground together. The Fan District Association is looking forward to ongoing community engagement with VCU."

The Neighborhood Outreach office held several community stakeholder meetings, including a session on the University's Master Plan and Strategic Plan, a meeting for surrounding neighborhoods on VCU's parking study and the annual Neighborhood Forum for the Monroe Park Campus.

Neighborhood outreach director Tito Luna worked closely with VCU Police external relations officer Greg Felton and off-campus student services coordinator Lisa Matthews-Ailsworth to represent VCU at neighborhood association meetings and inform residents on VCU activities and respond to inquiries. The trio attended more than 55 neighborhood association meetings in '16-'17.

Richmond YPQI Celebrates Successful Year

60 YOUTH-SERVING PROGRAMS PARTICIPATED

Richmond Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) hosted its annual “Reflect and Close” Celebration June 6 to gather youth development professionals to reflect on the YPQI process, hear about successes, share new insights and preview changes for the fall.

Managed through the VCU Mary and Frances Youth Center, YPQI is a partnership with The United Way of Greater Richmond and Petersburg that provides a quality improvement process for out-of-school-time service providers across the region.

“Research tells us that quality in the out-of-school-time program really matters,” said Shekinah Mitchell, YPQI coordinator. “Youth in high quality programs see an increase in positive youth outcomes, which range from academic advancement to social emotional learning.”

In 2016-17, 534 youth development professionals from more than 60 agencies were included in the YPQI professional learning community and provided with training that included professional development, assessment, coaching and data review and evaluation. Agencies included Blue Sky Fund; Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Richmond; Hanover County; Sports Backers; St.

Andrew’s School; and the YMCAs of Greater Richmond and Petersburg.

Program participant Jessica Smith of YMCA Woodville said of her experience in the program: “We’re a community, and as a community, even though we’re working in different areas, we need to be collective in our information so we can make our programs better for our kids.”

“YPQI is a conduit for advancing the professionalization of the field and equipping passionate, caring adults with the best practices needed to move the needle for our youth,” Mitchell said. “As a result of the Richmond YPQI process, more than 5,000 youth across our region have access to higher quality programs.”



Lisa Mathews-Ailsworth with the VCU Division of Student Affairs volunteers in a Kindergarten classroom.

VCU DEPARTMENTS ADOPT NINE CLASSROOMS IN THE CARVER COMMUNITY

MORE THAN 150 CARVER STUDENTS in Kindergarten through 2nd grade have benefited from a new VCU Adopt-a-Classroom program, which launched in Fall 2016 as a partnership between the Council for Community Engagement, Communities in Schools of Richmond and George Washington Carver Elementary School.

Nine Carver classrooms were paired with eight VCU units/ departments, including the Division for Health Sciences Diversity; Division of Student Affairs; Facilities Management Division; Institute for Contemporary Art; School of Education - Professional Staff Council; School of Social Work; Staff Senate; and VCU Libraries. More than 60 VCU employees and ASPIRE students volunteered, helping students with literacy activities and class assignments in all subjects.

More than 80 percent of the VCU employees who participated last academic year intend to continue with the program in the future. One VCU employee from VCU Libraries said, “It was very easy to

become involved. My only regret is not being able to spend more time with the children in the classroom we adopted.”

Carver Elementary School Kindergarten Teacher Kate O’Connell said, “It was great to have volunteers help students during stations while I worked one-on-one with students. It made me feel great knowing that students were on task and getting assistance when needed.”

In 1996, the university launched the Carver-VCU Partnership, an agreement between Dr. Eugene Trani, president of VCU at the time, and Ms. Barbara Abernathy, president of the Carver Area Civic Improvement League. The partnership aimed to create a shared urban community with a commitment to improving the neighborhood’s quality of life, while providing learning opportunities for students. The legacy of this partnership is being carried on through an expanded vision that incorporates additional neighborhoods surrounding campus.

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.



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 leading the university as a national model for community engagement and regional impact. VCU is one of only 37 universities with an academic medical center to be designated by the Carnegie Foundation as "Community Engaged" with "Very High Research Activity."



Contact us

Division of Community Engagement
Ginter House, 901 W. Franklin Street
(804) 828-8824
community.vcu.edu

FACEBOOK



[/VCUCommunityEngagement](https://www.facebook.com/VCUCommunityEngagement)

TWITTER



[@VCUCommunity](https://twitter.com/VCUCommunity)

YOUTUBE



[/VCUDCE](https://www.youtube.com/VCUDCE)