

Virginia Commonwealth University

Community Engagement Grant Recipients
2014 - 2015



VCU

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

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Purpose

With support from the Offices of the Provost and the Vice Provost for Health Sciences, the Council for Community Engagement provides grants up to \$20,000 to support interdisciplinary projects that will enhance and increase university engagement to meet community-identified needs in the greater Richmond community and will contribute to the research and teaching of VCU units. Visit <http://www.community.vcu.edu/council-for-community-engagement/community-engagement-grants/> to learn more.

2014-2015 Recipients

“Agri-Culture”: Growing Food and Community with Richmond Refugees

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| Community Partner: | ReEstablish Richmond (ReR) |
| Primary VCU Contact: | Hyojin Im, Ph.D., Assistant Professor |
| VCU Partners: | School of Social Work; The Wellness Resource Center |

The partnership between ReR, VCU Social Work and VCU Wellness Resource Center will promote healthy lives for food insecure Richmond refugees and build a cross-cultural community through gardening and food. VCU students and faculty, community volunteers and refugees will work side by side to expand ReR’s rooftop garden; refugees will be invited to experiential health and wellness workshops; and refugees will lead gardening workshops. This project empowers refugees by recognizing their agricultural knowledge as assets that can contribute to Richmond’s local food system while generating new knowledge on culturally sensitive practices with refugee involvement.

Beautiful RVA Partnership: Co-creating Livability in Richmond Communities

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| Community Partners: | Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden; City of Richmond, Office of Sustainability; Groundwork RVA; TMI Consulting, Inc. |
| Primary VCU Contact: | Meghan Gough, Ph.D., Assistant Professor |
| VCU Partners: | L. Douglas Wilder School of Government & Public Affairs; VCUarts, Dept. of Fashion, Dept. of Graphic Design, Dept. of Interior Design |

In 2012, the City of Richmond adopted its first sustainability plan, “RVAgreen: A Roadmap to Sustainability,” that cites among its primary objectives the need for the creation of a citywide beautification program which must be grassroots, collaborative and not dependent upon city fiscal resources. The BeautifulRVA Partnership will combine the skills of VCU students and faculty with community partners to coordinate a community-based beautification initiative for Richmond.

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

Community Partner: Sacred Heart Center (SHC)

Primary VCU Contact: Edward Howard, Director of Continuing Studies

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

Crossing the River is a partnership aimed to improve and extend the only Spanish GED (General Education Development) preparation program offered in the Richmond area. It opens an opportunity for students who did not complete high school and international students who are unable to fulfill their academic dreams because of the language barrier. The project also gives VCU students a service and learning opportunity to expand their cultural horizons and improve their teaching, tutoring and administrative skills while helping the immigrant Hispanic community.

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)

Primary VCU Contact: Shelly Lane, Ph.D., Professor

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

Early trauma and neglect puts children at high risk for long lasting cognitive, social and emotional challenges. Best practice treatment requires knowledge of trauma-informed care for both child and caregiver. CPP, lone provider of such intervention in Virginia, faces two challenges in the provision of optimal services: limited staff resources and a paucity of professionals with relevant training. This project will address both challenges by guiding students from occupational therapy and social work in assessment and intervention at CPP and by providing inter-disciplinary education and training to emerging professionals and the clinical community.

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

Primary VCU Contact: Margaret Lindauer, Ph.D., Interim Chair of Art History, Museum Studies Coordinator

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

The primary goal of this collaborative, interdisciplinary project is to engage VCU students from the Departments of Art History and Photography & Film with high school students participating in CHAT. Working together in a cross-listed course entitled, "Social Practice in the Museum," these two groups will engage to learn about Richmond's Church Hill neighborhood and its history; obtain new technical photography and filmmaking skills; critically investigate the role of museums as forums for community engagement; and receive professional training in museum work.

A Welcoming Richmond

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

Primary VCU Contact: Anita Nadal, M.L.A., Assistant Professor

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

Many immigrants in the Richmond area are preparing to become citizens. To help these immigrants successfully integrate in Richmond, the Bridge CDC, School of World Studies and the Wilder School will partner to provide preparation services for the citizenship exam and identification of resources to help pay citizenship fees. This project will develop a strong civics component and a volunteer base to complement ESL programs already offered.