



Council on Community Engagement



WE ARE THE **UNCOMMON.**

Agenda

- Welcome
- Provost
- Collaboratory Introduction - Lauren Wendling
- Division's Update and Highlights
- Work group Updates and Reflections
- Workgroup discussion/planning 2024-2025

Collaboratory

<https://cecollaboratory.com/>

Lauren Wendling



UNWAVERING

DCE



Highlights of the Year



Selected Highlights of the Division

Inaugural Newsletter Launch	Carver Community Day Success	Applied Community Engagement Badges Awarded
Student Engagement Council & Student Celebrations	VCU Advanced Certificate in Youth Development Management at MFYC Approved to be launched	Carnegie Community Engaged Classification
Faculty Member Spotlight on Dr. Kathy Tossas	30 Grant Awardees Announced	DCE Team at the Ukrops 10K Run
Community Partner Spotlight: Marvin Harris & Woodland Restoration Foundation	Legacy Builders Academy Launch with Community Partner CWC Group	Successful Design Jams & DCE Book Club



SPOT-LIGHTS

- Marvin Harris I
Woodland Restoration
Foundation
- Dr. Kathy Tossas &
Charles City



Student Celebrations

- Over 50 students volunteered through initiatives and activities within our Division this year, including: MLK Week, Connect Conference, MFYC, VCU Health Hub at 25th and our CE Student Council
- This year, we acknowledge the dedicated service of 17 students who served as members of our CE Student Council, student employees, and student interns.



Engaging Students



Student Council



Internships & Employment



Research & Service

Academic - Community Partnership Planning Grant Awardees

- 10 Awards
 - **Advancing Health Equity: A Sustainable academic-community Partnership Research to Addressing Latino Health Disparities between Virginia Commonwealth University and La Casa de la Salud (CBO)**
 - Richmond
 - Health equity and disparities
 - Nancy Valencia-Rojas & Antonio M. Villa Payares
 - **Empowering RVA Community Fridges with User Data Collection through Collaboration with Little Ram Pantries and VCU Engineering**
 - Manchester, East End, Petersburg (eventually all PPC except Charles City)
 - Health equity and disparities
 - John C. Jones & Taylor Scott
 - **The East Marshall Street Well Project: Community-Engaged Memorialization of the Legacies of Medical Racism**
 - Richmond
 - Health equity and disparities, Partnership development and collaboration, Transformative student engagement
Richmond's history
 - Dr. Christine Cynn & Gwen Whiting



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Academic - Community Partnership Planning Grant Update

- **Richmond Story Exchange: Building Empathy in Community-Engaged Research**
 - East End
 - Partnership development and collaboration
 - Hope Ginsburg & Elizabeth Johnson
- **Combining Research, Engagement, and Art To Enhance Wellbeing (CREATE-Wellbeing)**
 - Richmond
 - Art, social, technological development
 - Sarah Lineberry & Gerry O'Neill
- **EMBRacing the Holistic Wellbeing of Black Youth & Families: Creating a Sustainable, Synergistic Partnership between The Hive & The AYA Collective**
 - Richmond
 - Youth development
 - Shawn C.T. Jones & Trey Hartt
- **Building Partnerships to Build a Healthy Petersburg**
 - Petersburg
 - Partnership development and collaboration
 - Katelyn Schifano & Petersburg Wellness Consortium / Monique Lindsey-Howell



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Academic - Community Partnership Planning Grant Update

- **Partnering with Richmond Public Schools to Improve Graduation Rates and Postsecondary Pathways for Multilingual Learners**
 - Richmond
 - Pre-K-16 student success
 - Dave Saavedra & Jennifer Blackwell
- **Trauma-Informed Academic-Community Partnership to Promote Health Equity among Virginia Youth**
 - Petersburg
 - Health equity and disparities and Pre-K-16 student success
 - Sunny Shin & Wanda B. Stewart
- **Developing the Partnership for Sustaining the RVA Building Wealth and Health Program: VCU and The Salvation Army of Central Virginia**
 - East End (and Jackson Ward, Carver, Blackwell/Manchester)
 - Health equity and disparities
 - Marcia Winter & Stephen Batsche



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Mary and Frances Youth Center Microgrants

- Girls On The Run
- Back to the Garden
- A Better Day Than Yesterday
- Voices Unleashed: A Journey in Podcasting
- Screen printing with The Spot
- Mastering Mindsets: Pickleball Academy
- Empowering Bilingual Educators
- Street Smartz Girlz Exploration
- Family Sunset Paddle
- Circlesounds Connection Through Music

VCU Health Hub at 25th Microgrants

1. Alzheimer's Association: Healthy Brain & Risk Reduction
2. Armstrong Leadership Program: Cultural Immersion History
3. Bellevue Elementary School PTA: Museum Co-Lab
4. Central Virginia Legal Aid Society: Health Equity and Housing Stability
5. Fairfield Baptist Church: Higher Education & Workforce Development at Armstrong High School
6. Fairfield Baptist Church: Rediscovering Our Community Through the Arts
7. Girls For a Change: Peer Advisors: Restore Cohort
8. Henrico County Public Schools: Community Outreach Materials
9. Mercy Chefs: Mobile Health & Wellness Program
10. Richmond Aging and Engaging: East End Bingocize



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Priority Communities

- A "Priority Community," is a special focus area where VCU strategically directs its engagement efforts to create a significant positive impact
- It can be a specific place or a particular issue that requires attention
- Sometimes our efforts are spread thin across various places, and by concentrating on one community or issue, we have the potential to make a more significant impact
- Allows us to achieve better results, measure our progress effectively, and build strong and enduring partnerships

Priority Communities

1. Carver
2. Jackson Ward
3. Shockoe Bottom
4. East End
5. Petersburg
6. Blackwell/Manchester
7. Charles City

Purpose of the Council

1. Strategic Leadership
2. Alignment Facilitation
3. Resource and Advocacy Guidance
4. Impact Assessment



THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Deliver on our commitment to solving social and health inequities in partnership with communities

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Metrics of Success



Supply chain diversification: Increase vendor contracts with local minority and women businesses in priority communities



Community engagement: Increase coordinated programs/interventions in priority communities



Training in standards of excellence: Increase the number of staff, students, and faculty trained (certified/badged) in DEI and community-engaged research best practices

Work Group Reports

Infrastructure & Policy Workgroup Updates

- ❖ Established our collaborative infrastructure.
- ❖ Established a baseline understanding of the Carnegie Process including a review of the 2015 application, the 2026 application and the implementation strategy.
- ❖ Served as a think tank to start building our narrative and common understanding of what community engagement means across our diverse units and positions.

Infrastructure and Policy Goals

- Steward Carnegie Community Engaged University Reclassification and consider how the process can help meet other workgroup goals
- Identify and address infrastructure and policy barriers to community engagement efforts
- Review existing and develop new policies and procedures as needed that support community engagement efforts
- Coordinate with other committees to ensure policies and infrastructure align with strategic goals
- Advocate for resources and support for community engagement efforts

Infrastructure & Policy Workgroup Insights

“Engaging the Community in All We Do,” reflects the Carnegie Community Engaged Classification Goal of institutionalizing community engagement. We explored this as a group, and learned:

- VCU can be understood as a community engagement ecosystem. Those who do community engagement work indirectly support those who do it directly.
- All units, even those internally facing, can find ways to touch the community (e.g. service days).
- Discussion can shift the lens of how individuals and units perceive their connection to community engagement.

Infrastructure & Policy Workgroup Next Steps

- ❖ Discuss core questions related to history, culture, communication and context to feed into application narrative.
- ❖ Help identify partnerships and other relevant information.
- ❖ Review the narrative, which represents our existing and aspirational infrastructure.
- ❖ Identify strengths and gaps in our infrastructure that we will want to work to.

Carnegie Reclassification Update

1. Executive Committee Organized and Engaged.
2. Meetings initiated across campus to locate data and initiate self-study and data collection including meetings with the Council of Deans and the Associate Deans
3. Consultants interviewed and one selected.
4. First of two self-study surveys of the Academic Units was sent to Deans to be distributed to all departments, centers and institute. Due date is May 15. June we will launch a second survey on policies, procedures and assessments for the units
5. Campus meetings tie Carnegie to Collaboratory, both of which will advance the development of our community engagement.

Education/Training

- Identify and establish training opportunities for students, staff, and faculty in community-engaged research best practices
- Operationalize and identify opportunities to develop, coordinate and implement training aligned with the Quest 2028 Thriving Communities metric “to increase training opportunities”
- Identify and define best practices for training approaches in community engagement and outreach
- Identify training opportunities and collaborations that provide community benefit and relevance

Education Workgroup Report

- ❖ Co-create a framework with community members and partners for future training, engagement, and outreach.
- ❖ Establish new training modules in collaboration with community partnerships
- ❖ Host a series of engagement opportunities and round-table conversations with community leadership from VCU's Priority Communities to ascertain collaborative opportunities. (Connect Conference or MLK Celebration Week).
- ❖ Forge a strong collaboration throughout the Carnegie Classification process to comprehensively understand and evaluate the training and research endeavors of university departments and partners.

Education Workgroup Report

- ❖ Create accessible entry points for involvement.
- ❖ Build an accessible website for opportunities and training.
- ❖ Highlight existing campus and community work.
- ❖ Invest in pathways to community projects.
- ❖ Introduce badges and certificates for training.

Education Workgroup Report

- ❖ Insights
 - Foster a culture of community engagement.
 - Focus on our current community expertise, work and resources to promote and celebrate the personal connections and stories of Community Engaged work.
- ❖ Takeaways
 - Seek alignment and shared knowledge with other workgroups
 - Prioritize and define community engagement across VCU.

Economic Development

- Promote equitable economic growth in alignment with civic engagement principles
- Identify how to strengthen collaborations with local communities to facilitate economic development
- Enhance workforce development opportunities in support of economic growth
- Identify how to support innovation and entrepreneurship as drivers of economic development
- Leverage public-private partnerships to advance economic development initiatives

Economic Development Workgroup Report

- ❖ Develop microcredentials to spur economic growth with a focus on credentials that support SWaM businesses
- ❖ Leverage existing and establish new microcredentials in workforce development and economic development
- ❖ Explore opportunities to take advantage of VCU's affiliate status as a mechanism for providing access to community partners
- ❖ Explore and identify opportunity to make VCU physical spaces available to community members
- ❖ Convene cross institutional committee of individuals who contribute to VCU's Economic & Workforce Development mission

Economic Development Workgroup Report

❖ Insights

- Increase communication and establish a more systematic approach to tackling this work
- Establish workgroups that extend beyond the members of the Economic Development Workgroup

❖ Considerations

- Explore how this committee may advance Economic Development beyond the VCU footprint. What can we do to help develop the economic development ecosystem?
- How might we ensure increased departmental alignment and prioritization of Economic Development goals?

Grants and Awards

- Recognize and promote outstanding community engagement and research efforts by VCU faculty, staff, and students, highlighting their contributions to the university's mission and Quest 2028
- Assess the impact and outcomes of funded projects to ensure they align with the community's needs and the university's goals
- Gather feedback from the community and grant recipients to continually improve the grants and awards program

Grants & Awards Workgroup Report

- ❖ Updates on Activities
 - Academic -Community Partnerships Planning Grants
 - [Recognition for Outstanding Community Engaged Research, Teaching, or Partnerships](#)
 - 20 submissions
 - Postponement of celebration to Fall 2024

Grants & Awards Workgroup Report

❖ Insights and Takeaways

- Grants and Awards are two large initiatives
- Grant recipients and CE recognition at the same time
 - News article for grant recipients and the nominee in addition to ceremony
 - Invitation to the community member along with the VCU faculty/staff member
- Need to start earlier in the academic year
 - Develop the yearlong meeting schedule in August

Grants & Awards Workgroup Report

- ❖ Insights and Takeaways
- ❖ Request for grant review committee to be formed prior to the release of the RFP
- ❖ Invitation to the CCE and this committee from the Health System for someone similar to Jose's role next year.
- ❖ Questions about membership on the Council for Community Engagement vs. Committee Membership

Partnerships

- Identify opportunities for synergistic initiatives that align with community needs and Quest 2028
- Identify ways the university can communicate our commitment to coordinated programming in priority communities to the university community and community partners
- Research and review best practices for successful models of coordinated programs and similar interventions in partner communities
- Identify gaps and opportunities for robust and authentic university-community partnership development
- Provide recommendations for resources and collaborations needed to measure the impact of partnership initiatives
- Identify, showcase, celebrate and learn from successful university-community partnerships

Partnerships Workgroup Report

Activities

- Partnership Database Review: Insights from historical analysis.
- Partnership Collaboration: Setting immediate and future goals.
- Strategic Focus: Assessing the impact of Carnegie Reclassification.
- Partnership Definition: Defining partnerships within VCUOne.
- Collaboratory Webinar: Feedback and actionable recommendations.
- Asset Mapping: Ongoing analysis for Priority Communities.
- Exemplary Partnerships: Spotlighting and enhancing key partnerships.

Partnerships Workgroup Report

Insights & Considerations:

- ❖ Partnership Scope Development: Understanding partnerships across VCU and VCU Health communities.
- ❖ Partnership Database History: Analyzing past challenges to improve future implementation
- ❖ Strategic Alignment: Focusing on Carnegie Classification and Collaboratory implementation.
- ❖ Collaboratory Implementation: Exploring the extent of partnerships within Priority Partner Communities with a targeted approach.

Partnerships Workgroup Report

Next Steps: (Fall 2024-Spring 2025 Goals)

1. Partnership Definition: Exploring the meaning, impact, and types of partnerships across our institution.
2. Best Practices: Enhancing connections with universities and partners; promoting strategic engagement. Highlighting Exemplary Partnerships
3. Collaboratory Pilot: Supporting through feedback and recommendations.
4. Asset Mapping & Research: Identifying and leveraging relationships with VCU and Priority Communities
5. Collaboration: Working with other workgroups to provide resources and support.

Research

- Identify and propose solutions for infrastructure barriers in community-engaged research
- Recommend ways to recognize community-engaged research in faculty promotion and tenure processes
- Identify ways VCU can provide robust support to promote community engaged research as well as promoting more community engagement in all research
- Recommend opportunities to showcase, celebrate and build a collective of community engaged research across all units

Research Workgroup Report

- ❖ Engagement in Grant review committee
- ❖ Will review Promotion and Tenure Taskforce guidelines when available
- ❖ Recommend opportunities to showcase, celebrate and support community engaged research across all units
- ❖ Provided input on the nomination process
- ❖ Identified implementation of partnership database and faculty research fellows as priorities
- ❖ Long-term the focus is on measuring impact in community engagement

Research Workgroup TakeAways

- ❖ Work group roles and tasks
- ❖ Develop measurable activities
- ❖ Provide support as needed to other workgroups and community engaged research activities

Workgroup Breakout Session

Set achievable goals for the workgroup

- Role of the Work Group
- Role of work group members
- Monthly meetings
- Membership
- Communication

Piloting Collaboratory Roll Out (sign up)

2024-2025 Council Meeting Dates

- September 24, 2024 (in person)
- January 30, 2025, Zoom
- April 30, 2025 (in person)