North Carolina Campus Compact Strengthens Partnerships, Campuses, Communities

Colleges and universities are struggling with difficult decisions about what to cut from already strapped budgets. As North Carolina and the nation confront challenges related to the economy, education, the environment, health care, immigration, and social justice, our state’s community colleges, independent colleges and UNC institutions are working together with their communities to make an impact on these issues locally. NC Campus Compact works to strengthen these partnerships.

Community engagement – students and faculty contributing their skills and knowledge, learning with and from the community – makes an impact. At Appalachian State University our community partners routinely talk about how they could not exist without the help of the University, going so far as to say they would have to close their doors. Students in service-learning and community-based research courses provide close to 104,000 hours of service annually locally and globally. This spring break, 300 students will participate in 26 Alternative Spring Break trips in 12 states and 8 countries. Our international service-learning includes developing unique partnerships with institutions in India and South Africa where Appalachian State University faculty and staff conduct forums on civic engagement and spur enhanced service-learning and community-based research opportunities.

Last year, over 65 tons of “stuff” was diverted from landfills during the “Don’t Throw it Away” collections. At the end of the spring semester, students can donate items no longer needed to the BIG Sale. On the Saturday before classes begin in the fall semester, student volunteers “recycle” these goods and donate the proceeds from the sale to local non-profits. This past fall $15,000 was earned through the BIG Sale and contributed to energy conservation initiatives of the selected non-profits.

Chair Peacock and Robert Sigmon with Wake Forest Prof. Michele Gillespie, 2010 Sigmon Service-Learning Award winner

Another example of our commitment to community engagement is the annual blood drive held in the fall semester. Appalachian faculty, staff, students and alumni continue to set new records for blood collection in North Carolina – 1,135 pints in September 2010. I am proud of the action and advocacy of our campus community. We are making a difference in our local community, our state, and throughout the nation and world.

Working closely with other presidents and chancellors that are members of NC Campus Compact, I hear similar stories from across the state. Campus engagement in and with our communities is making a significant impact. I hope you will enjoy reading this issue of The Engager that highlights the conferences, AmeriCorps programs, and local work that demonstrates that impact!

— Kenneth E. Peacock, Chair, NC Campus Compact Executive Board
Chancellor, Appalachian State University

Highlights from the February 9 Pathways to Achieving Civic Engagement Conference

Thomas Ross, president of the University of North Carolina; R. Scott Ralls, president of the NC Community College System; and A. Hope Williams, president of the NC Independent Colleges and Universities opened the annual Conference talking about how colleges and universities can engage with the community. They all reinforced the need for a highly trained and educated workforce, challenging participants to contribute to developing students’ creativity. States fostering innovation will emerge stronger from the ongoing recession. “And if that doesn’t happen, the state will fall way behind,” Ross said. “If it doesn’t happen in this country, the country will fall way behind.”

Nicole Gallant, director of Learn and Serve America at the Corporation for National and Community Service, preceded the presidents. “Our work in education is both for its own sake and for the benefit of every other challenge. Education must involve a civic component. It’s not just about learning how to hold down a job . . . It’s about getting your hands on the world and learning how to improve it.”

Over 300 faculty and staff from 44 NC and VA campuses participated. Twenty college and university presidents and chancellors attended, meeting together to think about their campus’ engagement with communities. Morning workshops addressed some of NC’s most challenging issues, while afternoon workshops featured the work of NC faculty and staff.

UNC Chapel Hill’s Professor Della Pollock was awarded the Robert L. Sigmon Service-Learning Award, acknowledging significant contributions to furthering service-learning. Elon University’s Mary Morrison won the Civic Engagement Professional of the Year Award.
Sixteen Campuses Receive National Recognition

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has selected 115 U.S. colleges and universities for its 2010 Community Engagement Classification. A total of 311 institutions have received the classification since 2006, including these NC campuses (all members of NC Campus Compact):

- Appalachian State University
- Duke University
- Elon University
- Eastern Carolina University
- Elizabeth City State University
- Garner-Webb University
- North Carolina Central University
- North Carolina State University
- Pfeiffer University
- UNC Chapel Hill
- UNC Charlotte
- UNC Greensboro
- UNC Pembroke
- UNC Wilmington
- Wake Forest University
- Western Carolina University

Colleges and universities with an institutional focus on community engagement were invited to apply for the classification. The six states with the greatest number classified are: California (29), Pennsylvania (23), New York (20), Massachusetts (19), North Carolina (16), and Ohio (16).

Western Carolina University Wins National Award

The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars named Western Carolina a recipient of a 2010 Higher Education Civic Engagement Award. Presented at the annual academic award luncheon at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., the award recognized the university’s Center for Service Learning, which develops campus-community partnerships, monitors engagement initiatives and assesses project outcomes. Campuswide efforts have included planting a garden to help reduce regional food insecurity, assisting the municipality of Dillsboro with economic recovery, and participating in post-hurricane revitalization efforts in nearby Canton.

Civic Engagement Linked to College Access, Success

Chancellor Willie J. Gilchrist, Elizabeth City State University, and Lisa Keyne, Executive Director of NC Campus Compact, attended the national Presidential Leadership Summit convened by Campus Compact at which 100 college presidents and Campus Compact state directors gathered to focus on a single thesis: college students who participate in civic engagement and service-learning as part of the curriculum, earn higher grade point averages and have a better chance of staying in college and earning degrees.

Hosted by Georgetown University President John J. DeGioia, chair of the National Board of Campus Compact, the Summit centered on how civic engagement offers a promising avenue for increasing access to and success in college, especially among first-generation college attendees, students of color, and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The new Campus Compact white paper, “A Promising Connection: Increasing College Access and Success through Civic Engagement,” was released at the Summit, encouraging attendees to consider what additional research might be needed to learn more about this connection.

NC Campus Compact Celebrates 10 Years in 2011!

Stay posted to the website for upcoming events. Sign-up to receive E-news on the homepage.

Join us on Facebook by searching for North Carolina Campus Compact.
VISTAs Engage Campuses & Communities

NC Campus Compact is hosting 32 full-time AmeriCorps*VISTA members and 15 part-time VISTA Summer Associates. Serving on campuses across North Carolina, as well as at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg and Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, VA, VISTAs devote a year of service to develop campus responses to alleviate poverty and address local human needs. These VISTAs have been immersed in learning about their communities, and will facilitate completion of a food insecurity survey on their campuses as part of a statewide initiative.

In 2009-2010, NC Campus Compact AmeriCorps*VISTAs generated and supported nearly 50,000 volunteers totaling over 530,000 hours of service to communities across North Carolina. Eight CERT team were created on campuses to assist in mobilizing volunteers in response to a regional disaster.

With over 400 applications for 33 VISTA positions, from college graduates across the country, NC Campus Compact knows the VISTA program not only meets local community needs, but provides a way for those without a full time job to contribute to addressing those needs, and building their own skills. Kara Quick, VISTA Leader, shared that she served for three years for two primary reasons. “I love to know I can make a significant impact in peoples’ lives, and I learn so much in the process.”

“Through VISTA, my eyes have been opened to so many needs in our community, our nation and our world,” said Stephanie Richey, 2010-2011 VISTA at Gardner-Webb University.

Through the summer 2010 Summer Associate VISTA program, 15 first-generation college students volunteered fulltime to improve access and success for future first-generation college students at universities across the state.

At Elon University, UNC Charlotte, Wake Forest University, UNC Greensboro, NC Wesleyan and East Carolina University the Summer Associates worked in service and leadership offices, multicultural affairs centers, and local non-profits to support college access and success of under-represented students. Over the two summers, 100% of participants have returned to college, each continuing their volunteerism.

Short Term Service Impacts NC

Since NC Campus Compact launched NC-ACTS!, a CNCS education award program in 2004, over 1,200 non-profits and schools have benefitted, almost 18,000 volunteers were recruited, and close to $2,000,000 in AmeriCorps education awards have been earned by 1,963 college students. During their 300 hours of service, students have created publications for rape victims, conducted character development classes for middle school students to reduce their school suspensions, helped to feed and clothe the homeless, provided health education, and made homes healthier for low income families. One student planned and implemented the first Walk for Autism in one community — with over 800 attending!

MLK Grants Mobilize Over 50,000

NC Campus Compact was one of six organizations in the U.S. to receive funding over three years to support volunteering on the MLK Day of Service. Close to 300 projects in North Carolina have been supported through $50,000 in mini-grants to campuses. An additional $200,000 went to campuses across the nation, mobilizing over 50,000 volunteers in service. A large percentage of college students have committed to a MLK Semester of Service.

Duke University Receives $1.6 Million

Duke University’s International Center for Service-Learning in Teacher Education (ICSLTE), housed in the Program in Education, was recently awarded a three-year, $1.53 million Learn and Serve Higher Education grant to partner with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) to train 1,750 future teachers across the country to use service-learning projects. The goal of the project is to help increase academic engagement, reduce the achievement gap and address dropout prevention among 7,000 K-12 students.

“This is a good opportunity for teacher candidates to get out in the community in a variety of ways — not just to observe or practice teaching, but to connect academic content to civic engagement and make it relevant and motivating for kids,” said Kathy Sikes, ICSLTE executive administrative director.

NC Central Prepares Youth for College

Almost 150 middle school students participated in a four week program during summer 2010 at NC Central University through a $300,000 three year Summer of Service grant from the CNCS. The four week full day academic service-learning experience introduced these “first generation” students to the concept of college attendance and each received a $ 500 college scholarship. Participants built community gardens at five sites in under-served communities, including one Habitat for Humanity site. This summer the program will expand to 200 students and 8 community gardening sites in a one-mile radius of the campus.

Learn more about the Corporation for National and Community Service at http://www.nationalservice.gov
NC Campus Compact & Carolina Advising Corps Enter Partnership

Through a grant from national Campus Compact and the Lumina Foundation, NC Campus Compact will recruit students through its AmeriCorps program to comprise a Compact Mentoring Cohort promoting college readiness. They will receive training from Carolina College Advising Corps advisers, recent UNC-Chapel Hill graduates placed as full-time advisers in NC high schools to help low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented students find their way to college. The Corps helps students plan their college searches, complete admissions and financial-aid applications, and enroll at schools that will serve them well. NC Campus Compact’s Mentoring Cohort will host a four-part series in high schools in the eastern part of the state in which no adviser has been placed.

2010-2011 Highlights: Engagement Across North Carolina

**Bennett College** has begun a Grow Green Get Fit Garden of Hope. Students have the opportunity to get fit and donate food to the campus community members and the community at large.

**Elon University** opened their Campus Kitchen on February 8. They join **Wake Forest** and **East Carolina Universities** in bringing student-powered hunger relief to two NC communities.

**High Point University** was honored by United Way with the 2010 Spirit of North Carolina Award for exceptional commitment and support to communities through volunteering.

**North Carolina Wesleyan University** is hosting its first Alternative Break trip this spring. Participants will serve in northwestern NC with Allegheny Partnership for Children, DANA Program focused on domestic abuse awareness, and Grayson Children’s Center.

**Brevard College** hosted its first annual Dance Marathon event on February 19. Nearly 100 students participated, bringing clothing and food donations for local non-profits and dancing for 13 hours straight.

**Western Carolina University** faculty, staff and students logged more than 3000 volunteer hours in one year in an economic revitalization effort in Dillsboro, NC, coordinating a community-based partnership committee, and now focusing on a longer-term strategic plan with a wider regional focus.

**Wake Technical Community College** established an office focused on community engagement, appointing their first full-time Coordinator of Community and Civic Engagement.

The APPLES Service-Learning Program at **UNC-Chapel Hill** celebrated its 20th anniversary in October, reviewing state and global impact of student volunteerism.

**Pfeiffer** and **Wingate Universities** have created a service exchange program model that builds unity between their campuses and their service student leaders.

College students and graduates participating in AmeriCorps programs — including NC Campus Compact’s VISTA, Summer Associate, and NC-ACTS! education award programs — earn between $1,175 and $5,500 towards college expenses. **Duke University** and **Bennett College for Women** match those awards, providing double the financial impact!

For information about joining NC Campus Compact, go to: [http://org.elon.edu/nccc/members/becomingaM.html](http://org.elon.edu/nccc/members/becomingaM.html)