

2011 Robert L. Sigmon Service-Learning Award Recipient
Dr. Della Pollock

Professor Della Pollock's "work in community-based collaboration is revolutionary and has made a difference in Chapel Hill, particularly in the Northside community," according to a community partner. Dr. Pollock has deepened an initial 2004 service-learning experience with a local church to establish, and now direct, the Marian Cheek Jackson Center for Saving and Making History, a community-based center for the collection of oral histories. A number of community events, including an annual May Day celebration and Facing our Neighbors, have fostered the relationship between the community, the church and the university. The Jackson Scholars introduces high school students to public history and community activism.



Dr. Pollock is the 2008-11 Bank of America Term Professor at UNC Chapel Hill, recognized for her innovative pedagogy and service to the university Honors program. She has served at UNC since 1999 as professor in Communication Studies, since 2007 as Director of Graduate Studies, and for nine years as director or co-director of the University Program in Cultural Studies. She has a two year appointment as Faculty Engaged Scholar for development of the Jackson Center, and in 2009 received the Office of the Provost Engaged Scholarship Award. She earned her Ph.D. in Performance Studies at Northwestern University. Included in her multiple publications is a book in progress on the role of service-learning and engaged scholarship in sustained activism and community development in a historically African-American community.

In the November 2010 Quarterly Journal of Speech (Vol. 96, No. 4, pp. 462-468), Dr. Pollock shares: "Teaching has increasingly become a matter of facilitating relationships with world teachers, community scholars, people who are experts on their own histories — and engaging students in the deep, often dark arts of really listening to them... The productivity of the larger effort with whatever name one may wish to call it — service-learning, engaged scholarship, community-based research, performance ethnography — may be counted in this: a small, passing incident, incidental to planning, production and publication that required us suddenly to incorporate new ways of thinking, being and speaking..." Her work — in the classroom, in the community, on the page — challenges us each to think deeply about the importance of building community-campus partnerships in which student learning is life changing.

A former student writes, "The way Della has guided students into deep service in the Northside community and through so many complexities of identity is remarkable — but she does it by example, and that cannot be reiterated enough... Professor Pollock's influence reaches across the country, but it is because her vision is grounded; her knowledge and creativity is immense; and her

care for all individuals, especially her students is endless. I cannot imagine a better teacher, mentor, and visionary for the field of service-learning, and a more deserving professor for the Sigmon Award.” We are pleased to present the 2011 Sigmon Award to Dr. Pollock for her significant efforts to further the field of service-learning.

2011 Selection Committee

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