

Office of Durham and Regional Affairs
Office of Community Affairs
Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership

“Civic engagement involves true partnerships, often between the institution and the community in which it resides, that serve mutual yet independent interests, thereby honoring the integrity of all parties.”
- Center for Liberal Education and Engagement

Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership

The Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership (DDNP) and the Office of Community Affairs were established in 1996 with a distinctive approach to university-community engagement defined by three main principles:

- Concentrate and leverage Duke resources within a defined geographical area
- Match priorities with those of community leaders, school officials, and other nonprofit and faith-based partners
- Provide meaningful opportunities for Duke students to engage actively in service to others as a component of their educational experience

This approach has strengthened and deepened the relationship between Duke and the surrounding Durham community over the last 13 years. By sustaining long-term, focused partnerships with the 12 neighborhoods and 8 schools nearest its campus, Duke has earned greater trust and good will, and has seen a measurable impact on the quality of life in these communities, including:

- Over 200 homes built and sold to first time homebuyers and low-income residents
- 2,500 young people positively affected, with improved chances for high school graduation and success beyond
- \$732,924 invested in public schools for capital improvements which directly enhance learning
- More than 9,500 adults and 2,700 children receiving health care in neighborhood and school clinics

Transition to Durham and Regional Affairs

In its 2006 strategic plan, *Making a Difference* (Chapter 6, *Durham, Regional, and Global Strategies*), the university outlined its aims for building on this success and expanding its scope; and in January 2008, it reaffirmed its commitment to Durham and the Triangle with the establishment of the Office of Durham and Regional Affairs, with Dr. Phail Wynn as vice president. With an ear to concerns and movements within the Durham community, three new focus areas emerged:

- Academic Enrichment and Youth Development
 - Improve student achievement within schools
 - Build a continuum of programs to ensure children stay “connected” into adulthood
- Neighborhood Growth and Development

- Increase affordable housing and homeownership
- Build the capacity and leadership of community organizations
- Support economic development of downtown and neighborhood corridors
- Latino Community Outreach and Engagement
 - Build the capacity of Latino-focused community organizations
 - Support programs and infrastructure serving the Latino community

The Office of Durham and Regional Affairs

The Office of Durham and Regional Affairs (DARA) oversees the activities of the Office of Community Affairs (CA) and its Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership, and connects its work with broader community goals and issues within Durham and the Triangle, such as economic growth and development and youth support. Primary partners beyond the geographical DDNP include the Downtown Durham Inc, Durham Economic Resource Center, the East Durham Holton Center, New Horizons Program, Disconnected Youth Initiative, and the Middle School Consortium, among others.

DARA-CA carries out its approach to community engagement via several avenues, primarily:

- Commitment of ongoing financial and staff support to primary neighborhood and public school partners
- Coaching and guidance for Duke student leaders engaged in social entrepreneurship initiatives (this includes a partnership with the Hart Leadership Program’s Entrepreneurial Leadership Initiative)
- Recruiting and coordinating Duke work study and student volunteer tutors for in school and after school programs to boost student achievement in partner schools
- Partnership with other Duke departments, including the Facilities Management Department and Auxiliary Services, the Law School, the Business School, the Divinity School and others to leverage service and in-kind resources for community partners
- Engaging Duke employees (Doing Good in the Neighborhood Employee Giving Campaign), Duke retirees (Duke University Retiree Outreach), and the for-profit business community (Duke-Durham Campaign) in the support of Partnership organizations with donated time, skills, in-kind gifts and funds

Interrelationship between Durham and Regional Affairs and Center for Civic Engagement

The Center for Civic Engagement and the Office of Durham and Regional Affairs play closely related roles and operate with similar philosophies. Each shares a commitment to campus-community partnership and takes seriously its responsibility to address the priorities and efforts of the community organizations with which they work. Secondly, each has the interests of Duke students at heart and works to improve the quality of their educational experience through applied learning and meaningful community engagement. And thirdly, each promotes President Brodhead’s university-wide vision to apply knowledge in service to society, in service to the community—this is the highest end of knowledge.

While each entity shares these values, each also has its own unique identity and role to play in the relationship between the university and the community. The Office of Durham and Regional Affairs and the Office of Community Affairs have, together, several distinct attributes:

- Community partnerships are developed selectively and according to a geographic or thematic focus in order to concentrate resources, develop close, long-term relationships, and create a sustained impact
- DARA-CA represents the public commitment on the part of the university to invest in partnership with the public schools, government, and the nonprofit and forprofit communities of Durham
- Addressing the concerns and supporting the efforts of community partners are given first priority, with Duke students and staff benefiting through their service to these
- Community support is given through a variety of means in addition to Duke student volunteerism, including leveraging professional services, funds, in-kind gifts, and non-student volunteers

As new relationships and a new role for the Center for Civic Engagement are developed, DARA-CA would like to see its unique roles, as well as our shared roles, supported and sustained. DARA-CA wishes to work with DCCE to promote civic engagement in the curriculum and within faculty research and instruction, and to recruit and place students in meaningful engagement opportunities. DARA-CA would also seek collaboration from DCCE to provide extra support to the community priorities and partners which exist within the Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership and/or which have a special relationship with the Office of Durham and Regional Affairs.

Vision for a new Center, and a new relationship

Our office would like the Duke Center for Civic Engagement to include in its role the following supportive functions:

- **Facilitate communication and collaboration among departments involved in civic engagement at Duke University**
 - Develop a compelling, coherent vision which can solidify bonds between stakeholders by aligning and supporting their unique missions
 - Help streamline processes and avoid unnecessary duplication (forms, online information, etc)
 - Strengthen DARA's partnership w/ DukeEngage Durham
 - Inform Duke civic engagement practices with current literature/research
 - Initiate and lead umbrella evaluation process based on a few common goals/outcomes, and encourage/coordinate the maintaining of university-community partnership information in a database which enables impact evaluation
 - Facilitate the creation and regular maintenance of an online Duke "Community Engagement Registry," ideally searchable via the DCCE website – VP Phail Wynn considers this a critical tool in evaluating and promoting current practice and activity as new civic engagement projects are developed.

- **Create a more visible face and location for Civic Engagement at Duke**
 - Act as a first point of contact, "Duke Civic Engagement One Call," for Duke members and Community Members and direct them to the appropriate contacts

- Raise awareness inside and outside of the university of Duke's Civic Engagement stakeholders, their roles, and their efforts
- Help sustain Duke's commitment to the DDNP and Durham
- Help send a clear message to Duke members involved in service activities and inform them of their responsibilities as stewards of the Duke-Community Partner relationship

- **Help support activities of common interest to Civic Engagement stakeholders**
 - Help support student engagement projects with funding, counsel, community connections, policy development, and a point of contact within Duke
 - Secure adequate transportation for Duke volunteers
 - Help recruit Duke volunteers (including staff, faculty, and graduate level students) and inform and connect them with Duke stakeholders, community partners, and established opportunities
 - Help support high quality, long-term, supported relationships between university volunteers and community partners
 - Foster civic engagement as an *integral* part of the curriculum and academic life at Duke by promoting and incentivizing faculty and student courses and projects with a civic engagement focus
 - Provide support to engaged faculty and students, and to the community partners with which they work, to foster effective communication and a mutually beneficial experience on the part of both parties
 - Help provide orientation, training, reflection, follow-up, and evaluations for volunteer-partner relationships
 - Support fundraising/grant-writing for civic engagement programs

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