

2023-  
2024

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July 1, 2023 -  
June, 30 2024

# IMPACT REPORT

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YOUR PUBLIC  
IMPACT IS OUT  
THIS WORLD

Your Public Good Work is  
star - share what you are  
star - share what you are  
star - share what you are



Center for Community Engagement  
to advance Scholarship & Learning  
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER



# ABOUT US

The [Center for Community Engagement](#) (CCESL) connects students, faculty, staff, and community partners through programming to promote far-reaching and sustainable outcomes for the public good. CCESL is part of the [Office for Public Good Strategy and Research](#) in Academic Affairs.



## WHO WE ARE

### OUR VISION

1

Everyone experiences liberation and flourishing through their community-university collaborations.

### OUR MISSION

2

To foster collaboration among faculty, staff, students, and community partners to advance knowledge and social change for the public good.

### OUR VALUES

3

Mutual Benefit and Reciprocity, Anti-Oppression, Intellectual Rigor

# MEET THE CCESL TEAM



**Cara DiEnno**

EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR



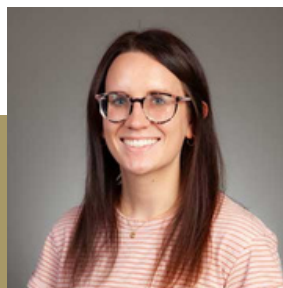
**Anna Antoniou**

ASSOCIATE  
DIRECTOR\*



**John Macikas**

STUDENT  
PROGRAMS  
MANAGER



**Maddie Duven**

BUSINESS  
PROGRAM  
MANAGER



**Angelica Ortiz**

OUTREACH &  
COMMUNICATIONS  
COORDINATOR

**In addition to staff, student employees help advance CCESL's work serving as Community-Engaged Fellows, CCESL Student Scholars, or Graduate Leads.**

*\*Antoniou served in the Associate Director role until April 2024.*

# OUR APPROACH

We pull on diverse traditions and fields to create a distinctively DU approach to university-community collaboration that bridges community organizing, collective impact, community-engaged scholarship, and anchor institution work. This broad approach puts students, staff, faculty, and community members in dialogue and relationship leading to collaborative strength.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



CCESL has identified seven strategic priorities to operationalize the center's mission, vision, and values. We recognize that these strategic priorities are not mutually exclusive but, taken together, provide the foundation for our work.

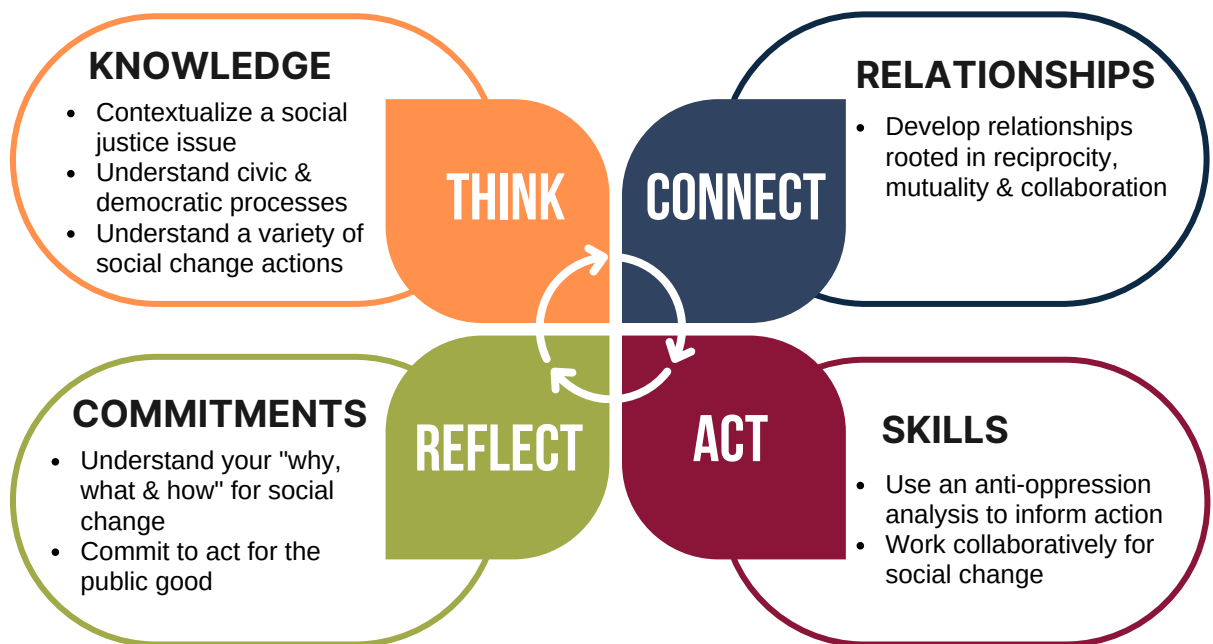


# STUDENT PROGRAMS APPROACH

We apply the philosophy and skills of the community organizing model, such as identifying self-interest, building relationships, understanding root causes, restructuring power, and centering the experience of the communities most impacted by injustice and systemic oppression, to inform how we build partnerships for community engagement.

We employ a set of knowledge, skills, and commitments through our student programs that are aligned with this approach. We believe that students' capacity to do authentic, ethical community-engaged work is enhanced when they Think, Connect, Act, Reflect.

## STUDENT FRAMEWORK



*In striving to create sustainable, impactful change, I have learned a great deal about doing community-engaged work not just for, but also with and alongside our partners, and I will continue to look for opportunities to lift communities in the future, no matter the circumstance.*

- CCESL Student

*I've been able to grow as a student, researcher, clinician, and community member through CCESL. From the weekly Fellows meetings to the guest speakers, every part of the Fellows program helped me engage in understanding community-engaged work and my own self-interest in this work...I feel this program has helped me experience a sense of belonging to the larger DU and Denver community, in ways that I have not felt in different spaces.*

- CCESL Student

# STUDENT PROGRAMS

## OVERVIEW

CCESL offers [students opportunities](#) to apply their academic interests to problem-solving with community partners through mentored research, scholarly, and creative work – called [signature work](#). Students engage in meaningful collaborations with communities, fostering the development of knowledge, skills, and civic identity. Through these collaborations, students become agents of change, empowered to act in concert with others. Our student programs are designed to cultivate the knowledge, skills, and commitments student need to carry out signature work, become tomorrow's civic leaders, and prepare them to address [grand challenges](#).



94%

identified at least one way of applying skills or knowledge to other areas of their personal, academic, or professional life



91%

of students learned how they can contribute to work with communities utilizing their strengths



91%

have developed at least one influential relationship with peers, faculty, and/or staff through a CCESL student program

## PROGRAM IMPACT

## AT A GLANCE

294

STUDENTS INVOLVED IN  
CCESL PROGRAMS

147K

AWARDED IN  
STUDENT GRANTS

214

STUDENTS ATTENDED  
CCESL EVENTS &  
TRAININGS

1,915

STUDENTS ENROLLED IN  
COMMUNITY-ENGAGED  
COURSES

## FEATURED STUDENT WORK

### YOUTH ORGANIZING



CCESL students partnered with youth in the Socially Just Education class at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. early college to foster creativity and civic engagement, guiding them to research and address issues impacting their communities.

### EMPOWERING ADULT LEARNERS



A CCESL student collaborated with a community partner to develop and teach curriculum for free English as a Second Language classes, supporting adult learners from pre-literate to advanced levels.



# FACULTY & STAFF PROGRAMS

## OVERVIEW

CCESL provides workshops, grants, events, consultation and other [faculty and staff opportunities](#) to support community-engaged (CE) methods in their research, teaching, and professional practice—strengthening both student experiences and public impact.

## AT A GLANCE

90

PARTICIPATED IN  
CCESL PROGRAMS

25

RECEIVED CCESL GRANT  
FUNDING

21

MEMBERS MENTORED  
CCESL STUDENTS

21K

IN STIPENDS FOR  
MENTORING STUDENT  
SIGNATURE WORK

65

ATTENDED CCESL  
EVENTS & TRAININGS

141K

AWARDED IN  
TEACHING &  
RESEARCH GRANTS

*Our community-engaged project is an example of a meaningful collaboration between students and a community partner. By applying social psychology principles to real-world challenges, we gained understanding of the potential for academic research to drive positive change in our community.*

**- Grant Recipient**

*The most important takeaway for me is the emphasis on creating reciprocal relationships between students and community partners, ensuring mutual benefits and integrating academic objectives with real-world applications to enhance student learning and community impact.*

**- Workshop Participant**

## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

### MUTUAL LEARNING, MUTUAL HEALING:

With support from the Public Good Fund, Dr. Alejandro Cerón and community partner Front Line Farming built “Esencial,” a digital community archive that documents the fight for rights, respect, and visibility by agricultural workers in Colorado.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH APPLIED TO REAL-WORLD PROBLEMS: EXPLORING MESSAGING STRATEGIES

Through CCESL funding, Dr. Heidi Vuletich connected with Metro Caring to co-design a marketing course where students gained experience designing and testing messaging campaigns aimed at garnering support for a Universal Basic Foods program.





# COMMUNITY & CAMPUS IMPACT

We serve as connectors and facilitators because we believe in the power of partnerships. We support relationships between the campus and community (local, regional/state, national, global) that are forged from trust and emphasize "the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching).

## COMMUNITY IMPACT AT A GLANCE

68

COMMUNITY PARTNERS DIRECTLY  
AND INDIRECTLY SUPPORTED

20

CONNECTIONS MADE THROUGH  
SCHOLAR SHOP

5

NEW COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS  
DEVELOPED THROUGH  
SCHOLAR SHOP

“

### FEATURED PARTNERSHIP: METRO CARING

*It feels really meaningful when I can combine my education with authentic community engagement, going beyond theory in classroom discussion to real social change. I plan to continue supporting Metro Caring however I can and am thankful for this course introducing me to their incredible work.*

[CCESL's Scholar Shop](#) resource connects DU faculty, staff, and students with community partners to develop collaborative projects that meet community-identified needs.

## CO-HOSTED EVENTS & INITIATIVES

CCESL was responsive to ongoing requests for consultation on a range of topics, from community-engaged learning implementation and community-engaged research to volunteer development and community partnership building. Further, we supported and co-sponsored a variety of events, some of which include:

- Co-hosting a student open house with the Center for a Regenerative Future (CRF)
- Co-hosting a collective welcome event for the DU community with IRISE, CRF, The Latinx Center, Black Community Initiatives, Estlow International Center for Journalism & New Media, and the Center for Immigration Policy & Research
- Co-sponsoring an event hosted by the Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute
- Supporting the DU Undergraduate Research Showcase





# ANCHOR STRATEGIES

## CCESL SPENDING: LOCAL SPEND ANALYSIS

61%

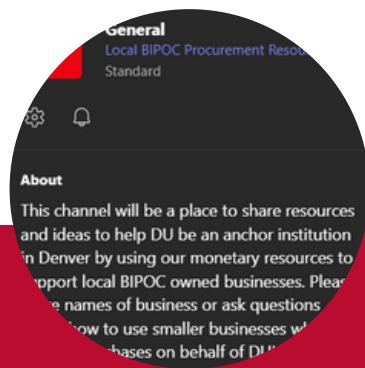
OF WHAT COULD BE, WAS SPENT LOCALLY ACROSS BUDGET CATEGORIES

20

LOCAL BUSINESSES WERE SUPPORTED THROUGH FOOD/CATERING PURCHASES

Anchor institutions are large organizations that are necessarily tied (anchored) to their locations, such as universities or hospitals. Because these institutions can't move to another city the way most private businesses can, anchor institutions intentionally apply place-based economic power and human capital to build partnerships with local businesses, non-profits, and community members that mutually benefit the long-term well-being of both the University and the broader community.

As a private university working for the public good, the University of Denver is able to use its own purchasing power to support and empower local companies, and to help traditionally marginalized populations in our city thrive.



CCESL collaborated with the Center for Community Wealth Building to host a lunch focused on the importance of anchor work and building a network of DU faculty and staff committed to increasing their local spending.

CCESL created a Teams group for faculty and staff to share resources and ask questions about using local, BIPOC-owned businesses as a step towards being a community-centered anchor institution.

CCESL's Business Manager attended the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities Anchor Network conference to build a network of Anchor Work collaborators and gather ideas about procurement processes, data collection, and impact reporting.



# RECOGNIZING CHANGEMAKERS

Part of institutionalizing community-engaged work involves recognizing campus leaders. CCESL honors outstanding students, faculty, and staff through awards and recognition.

26

NUMBER OF STUDENTS  
RECOGNIZED

22

NUMBER OF FACULTY &  
STAFF RECOGNIZED

> 100

PUBLIC GOOD CELEBRATION  
ATTENDEES



## PUBLIC GOOD CELEBRATION

In collaboration with the [Office for Public Good Strategy and Research](#), CCESL hosted the second annual [Public Good Celebration](#) to recognize university and community partners whose collaborative work advances the public good. This event also highlighted the university's recent [Carnegie Foundation's Elective Classification for Community Engagement](#) reclassification and the people whose public good work made it possible.

## CRIMSON & GOLD AWARDS

CCESL honors outstanding students through the [Crimson & Gold awards](#) by nominating an undergraduate and graduate student in the following categories annually:

**PUBLIC GOOD STUDENT OF THE YEAR**

**COMMUNITY ORGANIZER OF  
THE YEAR**

**SERVICE STUDENT OF THE YEAR**

## PUBLIC GOOD PHOTO SHOWCASE

The [Public Good Photo Showcase](#) highlights student and faculty photos and stories that illustrate the impact of their community-engaged work on their experience at DU. Prizes are awarded for submissions that embody the spirit of CCESL's pathways to the public good, [Think. Connect. Act. Reflect.](#)

## KIMMY FOUNDATION COMMUNITY SERVICE PROFESSIONAL AWARD

Annually, the [Kimmy Foundation Community Service Professional Award](#) recipients are chosen from seniors graduating in the spring from DU's traditional undergraduate program based on past contributions to community service as a DU student and future contributions to society via community service or engagement following graduation.



# SCHOLARSHIP & LEADERSHIP



## SCHOLARLY PUBLICATIONS & CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

In addition to the scholarly products developed by CCESL-connected faculty and students, CCESL staff members are committed to disseminating knowledge and experience in the field of community-engaged learning and community engagement through scholarship. Below are a few examples.

Jenks, S., Orphan, C., & **Macikas, J.** (invited chapter). Toward a more nuanced understanding of regional public universities. In Perna, L. (under contract), Higher education: Handbook of theory and research (Vol. 39). Springer.

**DiEnno, C.M.** & Makarewicz, C. (2024). A community-universit(ies) partnership: Valverde Neighborhood Association, University of Denver, and University of Colorado Denver (2020-present). Invited featured speakers for The Research University's Civic Engagement Network (TRUCEN) Annual Meeting. Denver, Colorado.

**DiEnno, C.M., Antoniou, A.,** Romero, T. & DePrince, A.P. (2024) Dreaming and scheming together: Uniting community engagement and diversity leaders. Campus Compact Annual Conference, Compact24: Now is the Moment. Denver, Colorado.

## COMMUNITY COMMITTEES

CCESL staff shared their knowledge and expertise on community-engaged perspectives in a range of campus and community service activities including participating in:

- The Coalition for Urban and Metropolitan Universities' Higher Education Anchor Mission Initiative
- The Denver Anchor Network
- The Metropolitan Denver Nature Alliance Equity Assessment Research Team
- Various Interdisciplinary class presentations



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## CONNECT WITH US



[ccesl@du.edu](mailto:ccesl@du.edu)



[du.edu/ccesl/](https://du.edu/ccesl/)



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