



BONNER CENTER FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

# 2021-22 Annual Report



## Mission & Vision

The Bonner Center for Civic Engagement prepares students for lives of purpose and connects student, faculty, staff, and community stakeholders in social change efforts that value the knowledge and potential in our communities.

The University of Richmond will be a vital partner to a thriving Richmond region, catalyzing lifelong learning and civic engagement.

## Values

We value **collaboration** as a process of co-creation that enhances the communities of which we are a part.

We value **lifelong learning** that is enriched by reflection and grounded in context.

We value **full participation** as an inclusive approach that seeks out and considers diverse perspectives, recognizes participants as whole people, and invites individuals to contribute meaningfully.

We value **intentionality** as a commitment to making strategic and sustainable choices.

## Who Are We?

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We've been thinking a lot about our *we* in the Bonner Center for Civic Engagement.

Fostering relationships, deepening our perspectives, and expanding our *we* is at the heart of civic engagement.

The pandemic interrupted some of our usual rituals of learning and connection, but we – staff, faculty, students, together with our greater communities – found new and innovative ways to engage together. And we learned that expanding our *we* is crucial, catalytic work for the thriving of our communities.

To support this work in a year when so much of the *how* was uncertain, the CCE centered our underlying commitments, the things we stand for no matter what the circumstances.

In this annual report, we offer three of these central commitments and share some of the ways these commitments were animated by the people in our ever-expanding *we*.



Dr. Sylvia Gale  
Executive Director



# We center a co-creative approach to community partnerships.

A co-creative approach to community partnerships embraces the perspectives, knowledge, and experience of each participant. When we work together, we create more impactful and sustainable solutions.





*United Way's Cara Cardotti, CCE's Sasha Hollister, Robins School of Business associate dean Joyce van der Laan Smith, and tax site coordinator Kelvin Richardson; Volunteer Tiera Hart, Photograph courtesy of United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg.*

## A Longstanding Partnership

At 15 locations across our region, volunteers provide free tax assistance to qualified families and individuals through the United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. Clients depend on the in-person and virtual, hands-on support. UR has been a part of the program for 11 years. Both the pandemic and a site location change from UR Downtown to St. Paul's Episcopal Church this year presented new challenges, but also opportunities to deepen the partnership and reinforce our commitment.

**39** STUDENT VOLUNTEERS prepared **247 tax returns** for **\$324,038** total in refunds and **\$93,628** total in EITC in 2021-22. In 2012, the partnership's first tax year, 20 student volunteers prepared 35 tax returns for \$43,441 total in refunds and \$5,734 in EITC.

**“I’m really pleased as a coalition that we were able to pivot successfully and safely. I’m so grateful for strong community partnerships that are able to support the work that’s so important in the community.”**

*–Cara Cardotti, director of tax assistance programs, United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg*



## Richmond Transit, Richmond Stories

UR students curated the first Transit Museum exhibition in 2015, and GRTC Transit System was excited for a refresh. Students in Laura Browder (American Studies) and Patricia Herrera (Theatre & Dance)'s Transit in the Time of Two Pandemics class curated a new exhibition, *Through It All: Families Moving Richmond*, in collaboration with GRTC Transit System's Ashley Mason and Carrie Rose Pace and Equity & Community's Alexandra Byrum this fall. During the spring, University Dancers performed original choreography which also emerged from the fall class. Three spring classes, taught by Herrera, Browder, and Alicia Díaz (Theatre & Dance), engaged with the history of the GRTC and learned from family members of Stanley Lucas and David Williams, two of the first Black operators at GRTC. The students' research inspired commissioned artists (Kevin LaMarr Jones, '94, Vaughn Garland, and Lindsay Young) to create new works which were performed in April, adding to a list of co-creative projects centered around Richmond transit.



Top to bottom: Kevin LaMarr Jones, '94; members of the Lucas family; professors Herrera, Browder, and Díaz.



**“It is vital that we all see our role in making our communities places that individuals can thrive. This collaboration is bringing the voices of neighborhood residents, nonprofit leaders, government, business, and students of all ages together to shed light on the different perspectives and solutions that are in motion throughout the region.”**

*–Vanessa Diamond, Senior Vice President of Civic Engagement, Community Foundation for a greater Richmond*

## A Conversation Series for Richmond

Civic Action Conversations is an RVA Engage series co-hosted by the CCE with key community partners. This spring's inaugural conversations centered on critical regional priorities – workforce development and early childhood education – and possible action steps for every Richmonder. The two events drew about 200 participants and the collaboration enabled each partner to combine their resources, perspectives, and contacts to offer a distinctive learning opportunity for Richmond.

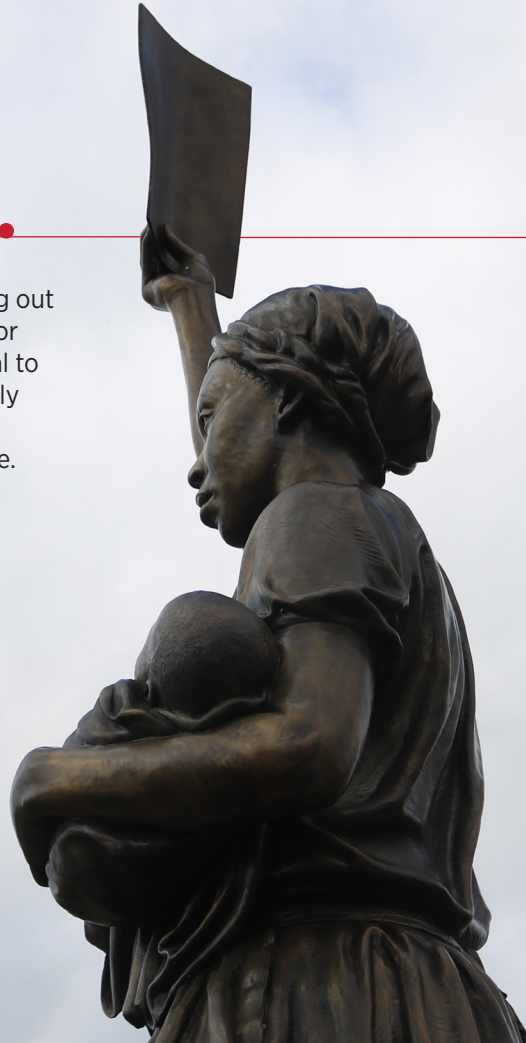


**81**

**COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**  
sustained by the  
CCE in 2021-22

# We invite full participation.

Cultivating full participation involves seeking out and considering diverse and often unheard or silenced perspectives. This practice is central to enabling everyone to contribute meaningfully to their communities and to understand themselves in relationship to a greater whole.



# Learning Beyond the Classroom

Supporting place-based learning beyond the classroom and engaging with multiple perspectives, stories, histories, and traditions remained an important part of our work this year. Highlights included: hosting an excursion to the new Emancipation and Freedom Monument and American Civil War Museum, sponsoring a film screening and conversation on Puerto Rico and Richmond's shared histories, offering regular Friday Perspectives talks (formerly known as Brown Bag Discussions), and a series of MLK Celebration programs focused on the theme, "We cannot walk alone," that provided a chance for reflective and timely conversations about social change.



# 48

**EDUCATIONAL  
EVENTS**

hosted by the  
CCE in 2021-22



*Students at the Emancipation and Freedom Monument, Photograph by Madyson Fitzgerald, '23; How the Monuments Came Down film panel conversation co-hosted with the Jepson School of Leadership Studies.*



**“We also have to recognize the different subgroups within race, ethnicity, intersection with sexual identity, geography, et cetera. We need to recognize that people still view the world with different perspectives, and uplift those differences.”**

*-Chlo'e Edwards*

## Community Partner-in-Residence

Chlo'e Edwards, former policy analyst at Voices for Virginia's Children and the CCE's fourth Community Partner-in-Residence at the University of Richmond, leads advocacy work in public health, trauma-informed care, equity, and justice. In addition to conducting her own research for a policy development framework on campus this fall, Edwards spent time working with students in the Jepson School of Leadership Studies. Community Partner-in-Residence Fellows receive a stipend, space, library privileges, and guidance connecting their work with the campus community.



*Former Community Partner-in-Residence Carol Dunlap spoke at our March 2022 Community Partners Gathering focused on assessment.*

# Reflecting in Community

Bonner Scholars, who commit to ten hours a week of community engagement for their four years in college, reflect regularly with CCE staff, fellow Bonner Scholars, and students from across the Bonner Network. This year's Junior Exchange brought together Bonner Scholars from UR, Christopher Newport University, and the University of Lynchburg and focused on providing students space to reflect on implications of global event in the past 18 months. This intentional pause reminded students and staff alike of the value of an in-person, reflective practice.

**In considering the incredible development I have had with the Bonner Scholars Program and all the people I have met, I know that coming to Richmond and being a part of this community has been the best decision I have made so far in my life.**

*-Juliette Copeland, '22, Bonner Scholar*

# 100

**BONNER SCHOLARS**  
dedicated 10 hours per week  
to community engagement



*Bonner Scholars at Junior Exchange; Bonner Scholars exploring Richmond's Jackson Ward.*

# We catalyze civic learning and action.

New knowledge and skills help us meaningfully engage with our communities, local to global. To act, we must be grounded in historical, political, and cultural understanding and recognize and build on a community's strengths.





*Civic Fellow McKenna Dunbar, '23 (top right), interned with Concerned Citizens for Charles City County (C5). Her supervisor was Beth Kreydatus and her faculty mentor was Mary Finley-Brook (Geography and the Environment); Sarah Page Steffens, '22 (right), interned with Devin Jefferson at the Science Museum of Virginia. Her faculty advisor was Todd Lookingbill (Geography and the Environment).*

## Engaged Scholars

Civic and Business Societal Impact Fellows do more than intern in the summer. They also collaborate with a faculty mentor to explore a key idea related to their interests in civic engagement and social impact. It's a combination that enables each fellow to merge their academic and civic identities and find their pathway towards lifelong learning and action. The summer 2021 fellows were challenged by the limitations of the pandemic, but they engaged in-person or virtually at organizations across the country and met several times as a cohort.

**13**

**CIVIC FELLOWS**

interned in summer 2021 with guidance from site supervisors and faculty advisors

**“Working with civic fellows has been one of the highlights of my work as a teacher and a mentor for undergraduate students. I get to see them take the lessons they’ve learned in my classroom and apply them to real world problems.”**

*-Jennifer Erkulwater, professor of political science*

# Place-Based Learning

Faculty understand that learning experiences in the greater community can be transformational. Over the years, Course Support Grants have paid for microscopes, vans, camera traps, art supplies, speaker honorariums, and so much more – anything that will enhance community partnerships, invite expanded forms of knowledge and expertise to the conversation, and challenge students to take on new perspectives.

**CARRIE WU'S (BIOLOGY) DESERT ECOLOGY STUDENTS** visited the Mojave and Sonoran deserts of California and Arizona where they conducted research and removed invasive species. A Course Support Grant offset transportation costs.

**“Learning in nature boosts feelings of scientific competence and has been shown to foster a sense of belonging and community, key factors that help retain diversity in STEM fields.”**

*-Carrie Wu, associate professor of biology*

# 45

**COURSE SUPPORT GRANTS**  
for faculty in 28 academic  
departments





**DOUG WINIARSKI'S (RELIGIOUS STUDIES) CITY OF THE DEAD STUDENTS** visited eight cemeteries across Richmond, including Barton Heights where students uncovered some of the oldest African American grave markers in the city, with Course Support Grant funding.

**ADAM MILLER'S OPEN WATER FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR STUDENTS** explored waterways across Richmond and enjoyed a canal tour with funding from a Course Support Grant.



**KARINA VÁZQUEZ'S (LATIN AMERICAN, LATINO, AND IBERIAN STUDIES) SPANISH IN THE COMMUNITY STUDENTS** engaged with the Latinos in Virginia Empowerment Center.

**1274** **UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS** took at least one community-based learning course



## 2021-22 Student Engagement Fund Awards

### Sherley Arias-Pimentel, '23

Funding for . . . *Because I love them*, an exhibition of photographs from Ghana, exploring the concept of “Ubuntu”

### Julia Brittain, '23

Funding for *Contagion to Connection: HIV/AIDS and Richmond's LGBTQ+ Communities*, an exhibition featuring oral histories conducted as a part of an independent study with Laura Browder (American Studies)

### Christopher Wilson, '23

Funding for a DIY service project to provide emergency hygiene bags for the Atlantic Outreach Group, which empowers vulnerable communities by connecting them to resources necessary for their success

## Voter Registration

Student voting at UR has been on the rise, and voter registration is an ongoing CCE effort. During last year's presidential election, voting increased to 71.7% from 56.9% in 2016. This year, student staff created an election guide and continued to maintain the student-run local and government state news site [URGOV.org](http://URGOV.org).



## 2021 Engage for Change Award Honorees

### Community-Engaged Teaching Award

Olivier Delers, Associate Professor of French  
Trey Sutton, Assistant Professor of Management

### Community-Engaged Scholarship Award

Laura Browder, Tyler and Alice Haynes Professor of American Studies  
Patricia Herrera, Associate Professor of Theatre

### Service for Change Award

Lucy Cummins, '21  
Taneha Fincher, '21

### Activism for Change Award

Hijab Fatima, '21, Tommy Na, '22,  
and Lina Tori Jan, '20  
UR Black Student Coalition

### Collaboration for Change Award

Virginia Poverty Law Center and  
Tara Casey, Director of the  
Carrico Center for Pro Bono &  
Public Service, and Public Policy  
students

### Contribution to the Institution Award

Thad Williamson, Associate  
Professor of Leadership Studies  
and Philosophy, Politics,  
Economics and Law

### Bill Coleman Award

Maya Vincelli, Assistant Director  
of Retail Operations

# 2021-22 Faculty Learning Communities

Since 2008, the CCE has offered a fellows program for faculty members who seek to transform or create a course with an integrated community-based learning component. The CCE supported three Faculty Learning Communities for faculty fellows this year.

## ECO-CORRIDOR FACULTY FELLOWS

Alicia Díaz, Theatre & Dance  
Amit Eynan, Analytics & Operations  
Elizabeth Outka, English  
Jeff Carlson, Marketing  
Holly Blake, *will*  
Laura Browder, English  
Lauranett Lee, Visiting Lecturer  
Margaret Dorsey, Sociology & Anthropology  
Mary Finley-Brook, Geography & the Environment  
Monika Siebert, English  
Patricia Herrera, Theatre & Dance

## INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY FACULTY FELLOWS

Craig Kocher, University Chaplain and Leadership Studies  
Kristjen Lundberg, Psychology  
Maia Linask, Economics  
Melissa Ooten, Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies and *will*  
Miguel Diaz-Barriga, Sociology & Anthropology  
Molly Fair, Boatwright Library  
Kathleen Skerret, Religious Studies



## EAST END CEMETERY COLLABORATORY FELLOWS

### *University of Richmond*

Beth Zizzamia, Geography & the Environment  
Elizabeth Baughan, Classical Studies  
Jan French, Sociology & Anthropology  
Jeannine Keefer, Boatwright Memorial Library  
Kristine Grayson, Biology  
Stephanie Spera, Geography & the Environment  
Lauren Henley, Leadership Studies

### *Virginia Commonwealth University*

Bernard Means, Anthropology  
Ywone Edwards-Ingram, Focused Inquiry  
Ryan Smith, History  
Meghan Gough, L. Douglas Wilder School of Government of Public Affairs  
Michael Rackett, VCU ASPIRE

### *Community Partners*

Loretta Tillman, Descendants Council  
Erin Hollaway Palmer, Friends of East End Cemetery  
Melissa Pocock, Friends of East End Cemetery

# 2021-22 Community Relationships

The CCE's Community Relationships Team connects with partners across the region to cultivate engagement and collaborative opportunities.

1708 Gallery  
American Red Cross  
ART 180  
Art for the Journey  
Birth in Color RVA  
Bridging the Gap in VA  
Boaz & Ruth  
CancerLINC  
CARITAS  
Church Hill Activities and Tutoring  
Commonwealth Catholic Charities  
Communities in Schools  
Conner's Heroes  
CrossOver Healthcare Ministry  
Evelyn D. Reinhart Guest House  
Girls for a Change  
Goochland Cares  
Greater Richmond Stop Child Abuse Now  
Health Brigade  
Henrico Education Foundation  
Hermitage Richmond  
Higher Achievement  
Highland Park Senior Apartments &  
The Rosa  
Home Again  
Homeward  
HOME  
International Rescue Committee  
IT4Causes

James River Association  
James River Parks  
Latinos en Virginia  
Legal Aid Justice Center  
Library of Virginia  
MENTOR Virginia  
New Virginia Majority  
Nurture RVA  
Oakwood Arts  
City of Richmond Office of Community  
Wealth Building  
Office of the Secretary of the  
Commonwealth  
Peter Paul  
Planned Parenthood  
PlanRVA  
Preservation Virginia  
Richmond City Health District  
City of Richmond Office of Sustainability  
Richmond Metropolitan Habitat for  
Humanity  
Read to Them  
ReEstablish Richmond  
Richmond City Council  
Richmond Public Defender's Office  
Richmond Public Schools  
Richmond Symphony  
Richmond Performing Arts Alliance  
Sacred Heart Center

Science Museum of Virginia  
Shalom Farms  
Sierra Club  
SOAR 365  
Special Olympics of Virginia  
State Council of Higher Education in Virginia  
The Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club  
The Valentine  
Virginia Civic Engagement Table  
The Virginia Home  
The Doorways  
Tuckahoe YMCA  
United Way of Greater Richmond &  
Petersburg  
Virginia 21  
Virginia Anti-Violence Project  
Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities  
Virginia Environmental Justice Collaborative  
Virginia Excels  
Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy  
Virginia Interfaith Power & Light  
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts  
Virginia Museum of History & Culture  
Viridiant  
Voices for Virginia's Children  
World Pediatric Project  
Youth Life Foundation of Richmond  
YWCA of Richmond



# Bonner Center for Civic Engagement

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[engage.richmond.edu](http://engage.richmond.edu)