

CSSA ANNUAL REPORT



**THE CENTER FOR
SERVICE-
LEARNING AND
SOCIAL ACTION**

 **John Carroll**
UNIVERSITY

2023-2024

*“Somewhere,
something incredible
is waiting to be
known.”*

— Carl Sagan



The total Solar Eclilpse on April 8, 2024 on the Quad at John Carroll University. JCU was in the path of totality. The campus community came together to witness this once-in-a-lifetime awe-inspiring event.



Letter from the Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The total solar eclipse on April 8, 2024, was an unparalleled communal experience of awe and wonder. As JCU lay in the path of totality, day turned to night, and for just a moment, time seemed to stand still. The eclipse, revealing the beauty of total alignment, mirrored our efforts this year, which were also aligned toward a shared vision of commitment, community, and working for the common good. Embracing this broader vision inspired us to re-articulate our mission, focusing on equity and justice as the foundation of our work. The format of this annual report reflects that alignment, organized around the key tenets of our mission.

Our dedication to fostering community-engaged, experiential learning through sustained partnerships has been invaluable in enhancing academic outcomes, nurturing ethical leaders, and promoting lifelong civic engagement. This mission has guided all our initiatives, ensuring that every program and partnership remains true to our core values and goals.

Among our significant achievements this year, one of the most remarkable was the generosity of two major donors, who established a \$1.8 million endowment to ensure that CSSA's vision and work continue for years to come. Our Summer in the City Internship Program also shone brightly, providing students with hands-on experience in diverse community settings. Additionally, we were proud to host our annual Community Partner Meeting, a crucial space for discussing collaborative strategies and celebrating our shared successes.

As we reflect on these accomplishments, we are reminded of the profound impact community-engaged learning has in shaping a just and equitable society. I offer my deepest gratitude to our students, faculty, community partners, and supporters for their unwavering dedication. Together, we will continue to create meaningful change and uphold the values at the heart of our mission.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Katherine Feely, SND

Dr. Katherine Feely, SND, Ed.D
Director

CSSA BY THE NUMBERS

STUDENT IMPACT

- **1,296 students** (unduplicated) were involved in community service activities through CSSA
- **891 students** were in academic service-learning courses
- **969 students** completed 5+ hours of community service in 2023-24
- **609 students** participated in more than 5 community service activities



FACULTY ENGAGEMENT

- **58 courses** ran as service-learning courses
- **30 faculty** taught service-learning courses across **11 disciplines**
- **2 faculty** were awarded fellowships as Community-Engaged Faculty Fellows
- **10 faculty** served on the CSSA Faculty Advisory Board

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- **85 community** partners hosted JCU students
- **80%** of our community partners have worked with CSSA for 10+ years
- **12 community partners** hosted Summer in the City Interns
- **76 community partners** attended the annual Community Partner Meeting



TRANSFORMATIVE GENEROSITY: CSSA Receives \$1.8 Mil Endowment

In 2023-24, the Center for Service-Learning and Social Action (CSSA) received two transformative endowed gifts, marking a significant milestone in its mission to promote experiential learning and community engagement.

The first gift of \$500,000 will help expand programming and support for student leadership development and faculty engaged in service-learning. The second gift, totaling \$1.3 million, is one of the largest in CSSA's history and will provide long-term funding to sustain key initiatives, ensuring that the Center's impact continues to grow in the

years to come. These gifts reflect the generosity and commitment of alumni donors to fostering a culture of community engagement and service at John Carroll University. We extend our deepest gratitude to our donors.

\$1.3 Million Endowed Gift - Anonymous Alumnus
\$500,000 Endowed Gift - David and Mo Meuse



The CSSA Staff along with student leaders are pictured (left) with David and Mo Meuse. The Meuse's generosity has transformed the depth and impact of the work of CSSA.

2024 Day of Giving - The Impact of Generosity



CSSA participated in the 2024 Day of Giving and interviewed current students and alumni about the impact of their experience. The campaign's goal was to reconnect with alumni and cultivate new donors to support the work of the Center so future Blue Streaks will know the power of experiential learning and civic engagement. We are so grateful for all the support received!

- Watch this uplifting video about the work of CSSA created by Blake Yoho and Anna Glass '24



CSSA Mission Statement

Grounded in equity and justice, the Center for Service-Learning and Social Action facilitates community-engaged, experiential learning through sustained partnerships in order to strengthen academic outcomes, develop ethical leaders, and foster lifelong civic engagement.

Learning Outcomes:

- Apply and **deepen course knowledge** through engaged experiential learning.
- **Gain** increased knowledge of community issues, needs, strengths, challenges, and resources.
- Develop competency to **challenge uncritical assumptions** about the lives of others, especially those living in poverty and on the margins.
- **Cultivate a habit of reflection** about the meaning of service in their lives and how their service experience informs their vocation.
- Develop an **awareness of civic responsibility** and the importance of community engagement.
- Engage in **advocacy** work that fosters solidarity, promotes the common good, and contributes to social change.
- Engage in activities that advance the **promotion of justice** and social action.
- Develop a **greater understanding** of others' lived experiences through sustained, personal interactions.
- **Communicate skillfully** in multiple forms of expression.
- Cultivate a **lifelong habit of service** and civic engagement as members of the John Carroll University community and as alumni.

HIGHLIGHTS

IN 2023-24 CSSA...

- CSSA engaged **1,296 students in a wide array of community engagement opportunities and activities** throughout the greater Cleveland area with more than **85 community partners**.
- CSSA coordinated more than **157 weekly service-learning activities** ranging from health care, STEM and environmentally related activities to connecting with seniors, refugees, and special needs populations including children, high school students, and incarcerated youth.
- CSSA designed and coordinated the “**Discover JCU**” Scavenger Hunt for the incoming Class of 2027. The hunt involved 41 different offices, centers or groups on campus and the purpose of the activity was to build community and belonging, create awareness of resources. This event involved the JCU faculty and staff in the orientation and welcoming process.
- CSSA welcomed the second cohort of **Community-Engaged Faculty Fellows**. This program provides resources and opportunities for faculty to engage their research and their students in experiential learning with community partners. **Dr. Rich Clark**, Sociology and **Dr. Debby Rosenthal**, English joined **Dr. Mariah Webinger**, Accounting, and **Dr. Elizabeth Stiles**, Political Science, as the Faculty Fellows for this year.
- CSSA relaunched its **Faculty Advisory Board** to seek faculty input and feedback on the academic integration and strategic priorities of CSSA. The Advisory Board is comprised of ten faculty members from a range of disciplines.
- CSSA hosted the city-wide **Jesuit Day of Service** with close to 400 participants participating including **382 students, 66 student leaders, 9 site captains, and 15 faculty & staff**. The student-led event was planned and directed by an 8-member Student Core Team.
- CSSA worked with an **8-member Student Leadership Team** to design and facilitate a comprehensive leadership curriculum focused on equity, justice, and ethical community engagement for over **70 student leaders**.



CSSA is part of a national network of Catholic Colleges and Universities charting the course for the future of the field of service-learning and civic engagement. Network members met at Loyola University, New Orleans from October 23-24, 2023.





GROUNDING IN EQUITY AND JUSTICE

MISSION

Grounded in equity and justice, the Center for Service-Learning and Social Action facilitates community-engaged, experiential learning through sustained partnerships in order to strengthen academic outcomes, develop ethical leaders, and foster lifelong civic engagement.

ADVANCING SERVICE-LEARNING FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

The work of the Center for Service-Learning and Social Action (CSSA) is grounded in principles of equity and justice. CSSA prioritizes programs that empower marginalized populations, foster ethical leadership, and promote civic responsibility. By integrating service into the curriculum, students not only develop critical skills but also gain a deeper understanding of social justice, ultimately preparing them to make lasting contributions in their communities.

By engaging students in community service that addresses social inequalities, CSSA helps students develop the skills and competencies necessary to analyze and understand unjust systems and structures and contribute to a more just and equitable society. Through reflection upon community engagement experiences, CSSA cultivates a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of justice and equity, encouraging students to work toward a more just and humane world.



Advancing Equity and Justice:

- **95% of students** in service-learning courses indicated they have a greater understanding of the relationship between power, privilege, and equity.
- **97% of students** in service-learning courses indicated they are motivated to work for social justice changes in society.
- **90% of students** in service-learning courses indicated they are motivated to bring an equity perspective in the work they do.

(Data is from the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 CSSA end of semester assessment of students in service-learning courses. N=425 students.)

IN 2023-2024, JCU STUDENTS WORKED ALONGSIDE COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

Areas of Engagement	Hours
Elementary Schools	3,259
High Schools	2,717
Early Literacy	2,626
Youth In Detention Centers	1,558
Incarcerated And Re-Entry Populations	1,475
Special Needs Adults	931
Neurodivergent Children	758
Welcoming Immigrants And Refugees	690
Healthcare And Social Services	564
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance	383
Homelessness	334
Sustainability	280
Adult Literacy	200
Advocacy	182
Food Insecurity	152
Pregnant And Parenting Mothers	136

Faculty Fellows: Community-Engaged Scholars



Dr. Elizabeth Stiles, Professor of Political Science, and **Dr. Mariah Webinger**, Professor of Accountancy, were named as Community-Engaged Faculty Fellows in 2022.

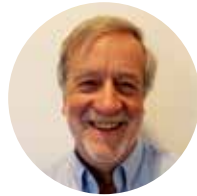
Dr. Stiles has been working with **InMotion**, a nonprofit organization that provides research and support for people suffering from Parkinson's Disease. Dr. Stiles is helping InMotion develop their evaluation systems and a suitable data repository for their research.



Dr. Webinger has initiated a new research project creating a **Community Partner Impact Survey** in collaboration with a range of community partners provided by CSSA. She plans on integrating community engagement research in her courses.



Dr. Debby Rosenthal will be using this fellowship to more fully build out the pedagogy of climate game playing in her EN 2635 Climate Literature class, and in her EN 1250 class, and then engage in community-based scholarship by expanding the game playing to the wider city community through the Cleveland Public Library in collaboration with Felton Thomas, Jr., executive director of the CPL.



Dr. Rich Clark, Sociology, will be using this fellowship to build upon the Inside-Out Prison Exchange program at John Carroll University. He will also explore how student experiences working alongside incarcerated populations has an impact on students.

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program

Dr. Gerry Weinstein led the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program for the 31st year. The VITA program provides crucial support to low-income individuals and families through free tax preparation services. JCU students in the program play a vital role in ensuring that eligible taxpayers receive the tax credits and refunds they deserve, contributing to economic empowerment and financial literacy among those who need it most. Overall, **22 students** provided more than **300 hours** of free tax return preparation.



- **22 Students** participated in income tax clinics throughout the city.
- **383 Hours** working on volunteer income tax returns.
- **300 families** filed their tax returns with the assistance of JCU students.



Faculty Learning Community: High Impact Practices and Experiential Learning

CSSA convened the Faculty Learning Community (FLC) on High Impact Practices and Experiential Learning, providing a collaborative space for faculty to explore innovative teaching methods that engage students in meaningful, hands-on community-based learning experiences.

Through readings, discussions, and research, participants gained new insights and strategies to integrate high impact practices into their curricula. The FLC fostered interdisciplinary collaboration, enhancing both student engagement and academic success by promoting practices that deepen learning and foster real-world application of knowledge.

Faculty Participants:

- **Tracy Masterson**, Psychology
- **Mariah Webinger**, Accounting
- **Nathan Jun**, Philosophy
- **Megan Bolin**, Ignite Scholars
- **Megan Connor**, English
- **Nora Mackin**, Nonprofit Administration

The goal of the Faculty Learning Community (FLC) was to build a diverse, interdisciplinary group of faculty focused on exploring high-impact teaching practices and the research supporting their effectiveness. Faculty members used this opportunity to incorporate these ideas into new or revised courses. As a result, they will be introducing new experiential learning components or enhancing existing ones in their courses, programs, and curricula.

2023-24 Service-Learning Faculty:

- **Denise Ben-Porath**, Psychology
- **Megan Bolin**, Ignite Scholars
- **Rich Clark**, Sociology
- **Dave Clifford**, Entrepreneurship
- **Megan Connor**, English
- **Tina Facca Miess**, Marketing
- **Carl Greppin**, Entrepreneurship
- **Sadie Hackett**, Arrupé Scholars
- **Julia Karolle-Berg**, Classical & Modern Languages and Cultures
- **Sharon Kaye**, Philosophy
- **Chris Knestrick**, PJHR
- **James Lissemore**, Biology
- **Tracy Masterson**, Psychology
- **Malia McAndrew**, History
- **Tom Pace**, English
- **Mindy Peden**, Political Science
- **Iman Raoofpanah**, Marketing
- **Nick Santilli**, Psychology
- **Richard Sax**, PJHR
- **Peggy Schauer**, Education
- **David Shutkin**, Education
- **Anna Simonson**, Exercise Science
- **Elizabeth Stiles**, Political Science
- **Mariah Webinger**, Accountancy
- **Gerry Weinstein**, Accountancy (VITA)
- **Phil Wenk**, Entrepreneurship
- **Doan Winkel**, Entrepreneurship

2024 Curtis W. Miles Faculty Award for Community Service: Dr. Peggy Schauer



Dr. Margaret "Peggy" Schauer was celebrated for her distinguished 30-year career in education and deep commitment to community engagement and social justice. Through her work, Dr. Schauer has fostered strong partnerships between the university and local organizations, creating meaningful opportunities for students to engage in service-learning initiatives.

Described by nominators as dedicated, mission-driven, and a tenacious advocate, Dr. Schauer serves in multiple leadership roles at John Carroll University, including as the inaugural Faculty Mission Liaison, the coordinator of Middle and Adolescent Education programs, and the founding faculty member of the Ignite Scholars program where she has been instrumental in supporting first-generation and marginalized students. Beyond academia, she actively engages in community service through her work with the Greater Cleveland Congregations, Ohio Diversifying the Educator Workforce Coalition, and the Fairview Park DEI Coalition. Her service extends even further through her musical contributions as a bassoonist with the Lorain Civic Orchestra. This award celebrates her passion for service, advocacy, and transformative education.

Congratulations Dr. Schauer!

SUSTAINING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



MISSION

Grounded in equity and justice, the Center for Service-Learning and Social Action facilitates community-engaged, experiential learning **through sustained partnerships** in order to strengthen academic outcomes, develop ethical leaders, and foster lifelong civic engagement.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR MEANINGFUL IMPACT

Community partnerships are the foundation of our service-learning programs, providing students with meaningful, real-world experiences that deepen their academic and personal development. CSSA has cultivated a network of over 90 community partners, ranging from schools and non-profit organizations to health and social service agencies. These collaborations allow students to apply their classroom knowledge in practical settings, offering them the chance to engage directly with social issues, develop problem-solving skills, and reflect critically on their roles as active citizens. For many students, these partnerships turn abstract concepts into tangible actions that have a lasting impact on both their education and the community.

Many of CSSA's community partners have been working with the Center for over a decade, a testament to the strong, sustainable relationships that have been built. These long-term partnerships foster trust and mutual respect, which in turn leads to more meaningful and impactful projects. Whether addressing educational inequality, providing healthcare access, or supporting vulnerable populations, these partnerships enable students to contribute to ongoing initiatives that benefit both the community and their learning experience. The continuity of these collaborations allows students to engage with complex issues over time, understanding not only the immediate effects of their work but also its broader, long-term implications.

Through service-learning, students are not just passive learners; they become co-creators of knowledge alongside community members. These partnerships push students to move beyond the classroom, fostering empathy, cultural competency, and leadership skills. By working

directly with community partners, students gain a deeper understanding of societal challenges, equipping them with the tools they need to be thoughtful, informed leaders in their future careers and civic lives.



Dr. Pastor Richard Gibbons, J.D., Ursula Rossman and John Jackson connect at the Annual Community Partner Meeting.

What our partners said about the event:

“Best JCU annual meeting ever.”
- Lydia Bailey
Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry

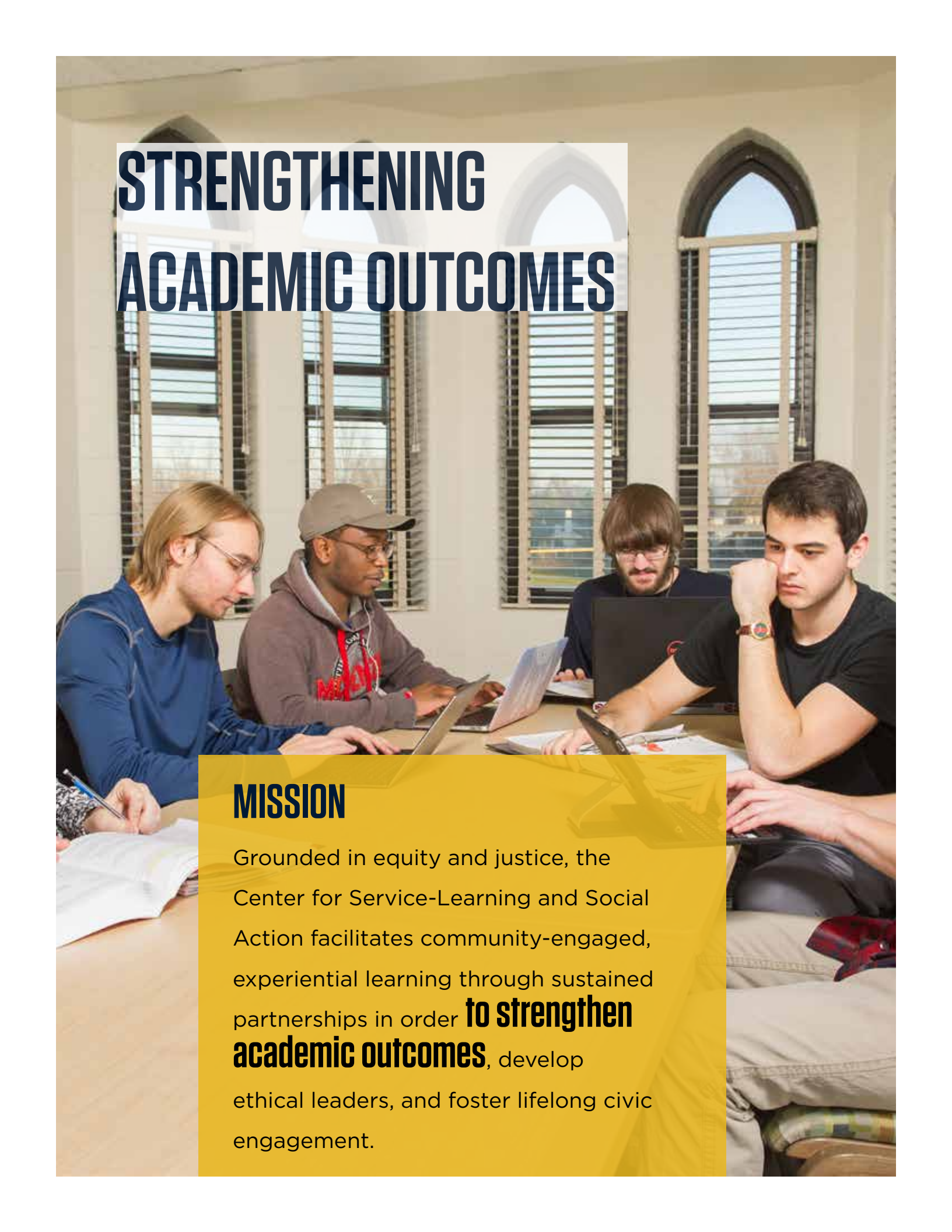
“Great annual meeting! Leaving energized to continue the great work.”
-Celeste Wainwright
Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center

“Very engaging, great agenda, students host were awesome!”
-Linda Catanzaro
NERC Women’s Spirituality

“It is always valuable time spent making genuine connections. It adds value to our work. Thank you.”
-Khaalise Makupson
Fatima Family Center



Community partners gathered at Cleveland’s Ronald McDonald House to network, share their experiences, learn from each other and engage in professional development opportunities.



STRENGTHENING ACADEMIC OUTCOMES

MISSION

Grounded in equity and justice, the Center for Service-Learning and Social Action facilitates community-engaged, experiential learning through sustained partnerships in order **to strengthen academic outcomes**, develop ethical leaders, and foster lifelong civic engagement.

BRIDGING THEORY AND PRAXIS

Service-learning at a Jesuit university enhances academic outcomes by integrating rigorous course work with meaningful community engagement. Rooted in the Jesuit tradition of holistic education, this approach encourages students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world challenges, fostering deeper understanding and critical thinking. Through reflection and active participation, service-learning cultivates leadership, empathy, and problem-solving skills, all of which enrich the academic experience and prepare students for lifelong learning and civic responsibility. In 2023-2024:

- **891 students** were in academic service-learning courses
- **58 courses** ran as service-learning courses
- **30 faculty** taught service-learning courses across **11 disciplines**

Strengthening Academic Outcomes:

- **95% of students** in service-learning courses indicated they want to learn more about the root causes of the issues at their placement site.
- **99% of students** in service-learning courses indicated they have a responsibility to be involved in their community as an informed and active citizen.
- **88% of students** in service-learning courses indicated their service activity helped them care more about the course content.
- **90% of students** in service-learning courses indicated they have grown in respect for others with different backgrounds, beliefs, and cultures.

(Data is from the CSSA end of semester assessment of students in service-learning courses. N=425 students.)

STUDENT FEATURE: ZACH BRINKS '24

Hometown: Loveland, OH

Major: Exercise Science

Roles:

- Student Liaison
- CSSA Student Leadership Team
- Carroll Ballers Leadership Team

Zach got involved with CSSA during his freshman year through virtual service-learning during the pandemic. He was quickly identified as a leader and became a Student Liaison as a sophomore, leading philosophy students to St. Thomas Aquinas and later, engaging with adults with developmental disabilities through the Youthability program.

A significant part of Zach's JCU legacy, shared with Scott Esteb '24 and Vince Rizzo '23, was relaunching the Carroll Ballers program at the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center. After meeting with the program's founding alumni, Zach was instrumental in recruiting JCU students, running training sessions, and helping to facilitate this high impact program.

Today, Carroll Ballers remains strong, offering transformative weekly sessions where participants bond over pizza, basketball, and guided discussions, learning from one another and finding common ground.

The Roman-Canning Award for Student Athlete Community Service



Matt Canning '95 presents the Roman-Canning Award to **Zach Brinks '24**. The award is given to a deserving senior student athlete who has demonstrated a dedication to service and a commitment to the Jesuit ideal of being Men and Women for Others.

Academic Engagement with Incarcerated Youth and Adults: Fostering Education and Empowerment

Academic courses that connect students with incarcerated youth and adults offer powerful opportunities to foster empathy and deeper understanding of the realities faced by those within the criminal justice system. At John Carroll University (JCU), students build relationships with residents of the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center through programs like Power Source, which focuses on socio-emotional development, and Carroll Ballers, which engages youth in sports and meaningful dialogue.

In Cleveland, where approximately 1,100¹ youth are arrested each year and over 26,000² adults are incarcerated in Cuyahoga County annually, these courses challenge students to confront the barriers and systemic issues impacting incarcerated populations. Programs like Inside-Out, along with partnerships with organizations like EDWINS, provide immersive learning experiences that bridge academic knowledge with the lived realities of returning citizens. This engagement not only enhances students' academic understanding but also cultivates a commitment to social justice and community support. Described below are some of the programs that take place as part of service-learning courses.

Women's Spirituality

Through the Northeast Reintegration Center, JCU students, alongside volunteers from the Diocese of Cleveland, participate in a Women's Spirituality Group. This weekly gathering brings together incarcerated women and outside volunteers to explore spirituality and foster mutual support.

Chopping for Change

In the Chopping for Change program, run by the Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry, JCU students assist individuals in the criminal justice system by providing computer skills training in a career readiness class. Students help participants with tasks such as writing resumes, completing job applications, and practicing for interviews, supporting their journey toward meaningful employment.

¹ 2022 Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center Annual Report, p. 61.

² Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department, <https://cuyahogacounty.gov/sheriff/corrections-jail#:~:text=Corrections%20Center%20%2D%20General%20Information,of%20over%2026%2C000%20inmates%20annually>.

EDWINS

EDWINS Leadership & Restaurant Institute provides formerly incarcerated adults with training in the culinary and hospitality industries, along with vital support for long-term success. JCU students collaborate with EDWINS participants, assisting them in developing life skills, accessing community resources, and gaining insight into the challenges faced by returning citizens.

Writers in Residence

Writers in Residence teaches creative writing to youth who are incarcerated to empower their voices and assist in their re-entry into society. John Carroll students in an English course worked with youth at the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center in this creative writing program.



Carroll Ballers

The Carroll Ballers program is a unique service opportunity that combines the game of basketball with an original mentoring program for the youth at the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center (CCJDC). The goal is peer-to-peer mentoring and support to choose a productive path after their time at the CCJDC.



The mission of The Carroll Ballers is to empower young men who are involved in the juvenile justice system with the ability to face and overcome adversity with confidence, learn from losses and mistakes, achieve success with humility, and be always striving to improve in order to help them be successful in their home environments and reducing the cycle of recidivism.



JCU students gather at the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center every Thursday and Friday as part of the Carroll Ballers program.

STUDENT FEATURE: LAURA RUTGER '26

Hometown: Vermilion, OH

Major: Biology

Roles: Student Liaison

Leader of Power Source

Laura was introduced to CSSA when she took a service-learning course during her first year at John Carroll. Her placement was the **Power Source** program, where she worked with young women in the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center.

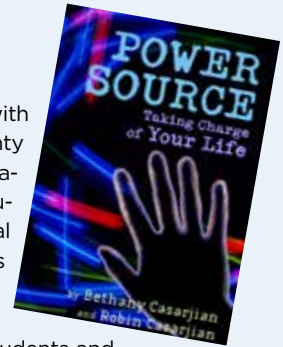
As a sophomore, Laura was hired as a Student Liaison to return to Power Source and facilitate the emotional literacy curriculum for service-learning students and JDC residents. Leading one of CSSA's more complex placements can be challenging, but Laura brings her years of experience and leadership to the role.



During the summer of 2023, Laura also served in CSSA's Summer in the City Internship program, working at the Rainbow Connects program of University Hospitals. In all endeavors, Laura brings a spirit of curiosity, humility, and concern for others.

Power Source

JCU students build relationships with residents of the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center by facilitating the Power Source curriculum to develop socio-emotional skills with the youth. Students are trained in the PowerSource Program and lead a session on a given topic or skill each week. Students and youth conclude the sessions with a game of volleyball.



The Power Source Program is an evidence-based program designed to empower at risk youth with the social and emotional skills necessary to forge paths of healthy development and disengagement from high risk and offending behaviors. Grounded in a belief in the intrinsic dignity and worth of each person,

Power Source guides trauma impacted adolescents and young adults in discovering their own resilience, while also building the skills associated with healthy social, emotional, and identity development. Offering a wide range of tools and resources, Power Source enables facilitators to address youth's unique socioemotional needs, risk factors, and protective factors through high impact, engaging exercises, role plays, discussions, games, and meditations.

Inside-Out Program

The Inside-Out program brings campus-based college students together with students living in incarcerated settings for a semester-long college course. The program is rooted in the belief that learning is a transformative human endeavor and that being a part of a non-traditional learning community such as this one can deepen and enhance the learning experience for all those involved.

The collaborative learning opportunity brought nine "outside" students who traveled from the JCU campus together with ten "inside" students incarcerated at the facility. Emphasizing collaboration and dialogue, the semester-long course equipped students to become active problem solvers and engaged citizens.



Dr. Malia McAndrew (standing, far left) and **Dr. Rich Clark** (standing, far right) are pictured here with their students in PJHR 2750: Modern Social Problems. Classes were held at the Northeast Reintegration Center, a minimum security women's prison in Cleveland.

"After this course, I realize that I want a better life for myself, my kids, and my family, to be viewed as a woman, mother, and a positive productive member of society, not a number, an inmate, or someone who is looked at differently." -Inside Student Fall 2023

DEVELOPING ETHICAL LEADERS



MISSION

Grounded in equity and justice, the Center for Service-Learning and Social Action facilitates community-engaged, experiential learning through sustained partnerships in order to strengthen academic outcomes, **develop ethical leaders**, and foster lifelong civic engagement.

FORMING THE ETHICAL LEADERS OF TODAY AND TOMORROW

Developing ethical leaders through a service-learning program is a powerful way to cultivate responsibility, integrity, and a deep sense of civic duty. At the heart of the program are 70 student liaisons, each actively engaged in fostering relationships with community partners and guiding their peers in meaningful service. These liaisons learn to lead with empathy, communicate effectively,

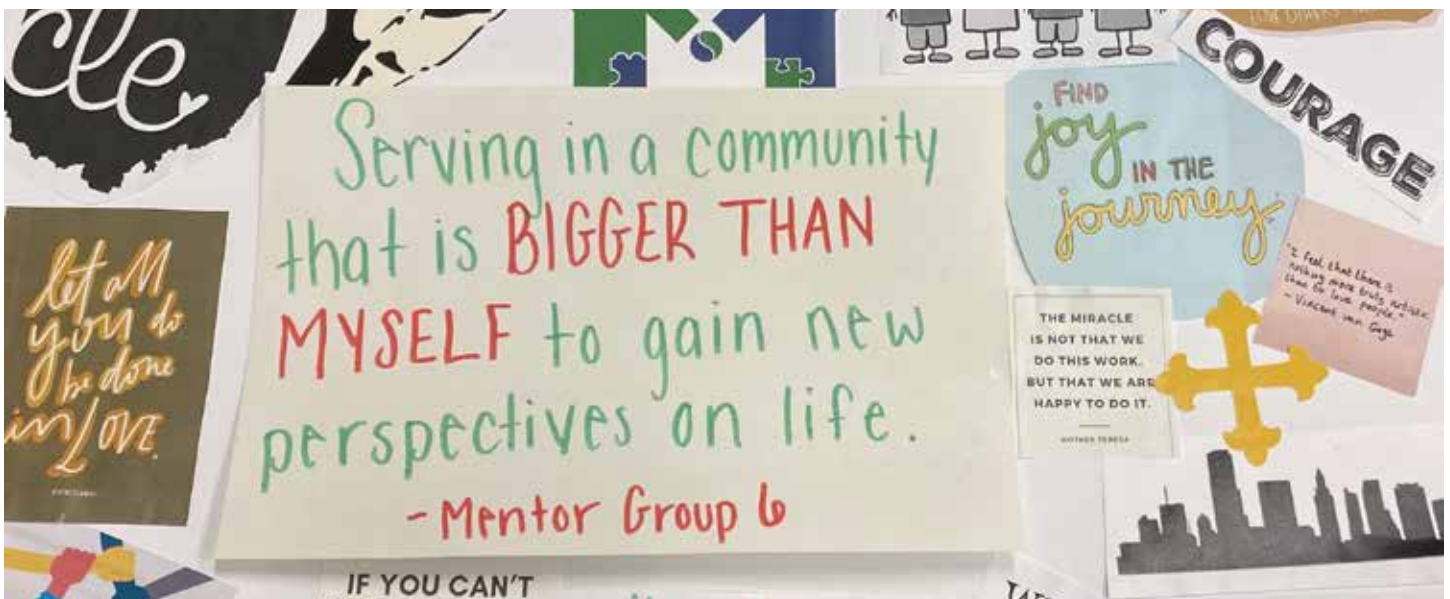
and navigate complex social issues while remaining grounded in the principles of ethical decision-making. The experience equips them with the skills to approach leadership from a perspective that prioritizes the well-being of others and the community as a whole.

A dedicated leadership team, composed of students who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to service and leadership, oversees the work of the student liaisons. This team plays a crucial role in mentoring their peers, ensuring that ethical considerations are woven into every aspect of service-learning. Through regular training and reflection, they address real-world challenges such as equity, justice, and sustainability, and consider the broader impact of their service on society. The leadership team fosters a culture of accountability and mutual support, empowering students to take ownership of their actions while helping them understand the ethical dimensions of community engagement.

In addition to leadership and mentoring, the program emphasizes professional skill development, preparing students for future careers while making a tangible difference in the community. Students not only gain practical experience in project management, communication, and teamwork but also develop a nuanced understanding of how to lead with integrity and purpose. By integrating ethical leadership into their service, students in the Center for Service-Learning and Social Action make a lasting impact, both in the community and within their own personal and professional growth. This comprehensive approach ensures that service and leadership go hand in hand, shaping well-rounded, socially responsible leaders of tomorrow.

Developing Ethical Leaders:

- **70 Student Liaisons**
- **8 students** on the CSSA Student Leadership Team
- **9 monthly leadership trainings**
- **840 hours** of leadership training



Centering Equity in Leadership Development

The Social Action Leadership and Transformation (SALT) Model¹ centers justice and equity and responds to critiques of earlier models that took a “colorblind” approach and did not adequately address racial justice concerns in the context of leadership development. In the Spring 2024 semester, CSSA’s Student Leadership Team piloted the SALT Model by researching three of its core themes (Capacity for Empathy, Critical Consciousness, and Commitment to Justice) and using them to design, deliver, and assess three monthly trainings over the course of the semester. Liaisons were able to engage with these concepts in an interactive format and apply them to their community-engaged leadership roles.



THE CSSA STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

The CSSA Student Leadership Team (SLT) are a group of experienced Student Liaisons, selected through a competitive application process. This 8-member team is responsible for providing input and feedback on the work of CSSA, developing and delivering a monthly training program, and mentoring a group of 7-9 Liaisons. SLT members undertake a leadership curriculum facilitated by CSSA staff to learn about social change values and collaborate on applying them to their roles.



The 2023-2024 CSSA Student Leadership Team. (L to R): Zack Brinks '24, Scott Esteb '24, Sophia Ruse, 24, Celeste Wellman '25, Natalie Byrne '25, Wilson Ha '25, Sydney Burger '25, and Isidora Djukic '25.

STUDENT FEATURE: WILSON HA

Hometown: Medina, Ohio

Majors: Biology, Neuroscience, Pre-Med

Roles:

- Arrupe Social Justice Scholar
- CSSA Student Leadership Team
- CSSA Student Liaison
- CSSA Summer in the City Intern

Wilson is a CSSA Student Liaison and Arrupe Social Justice Scholar. He is a two-year member of the CSSA Student Leadership Team and completed the Summer in the City Internship Program at University Hospitals Rainbow Connects Program where he conducted research on the social determinants of health. In recognition of his on and off-campus accomplishments, Wilson was named the 2024 Newman Civic Fellow for John Carroll University.



Wilson Ha '25, pictured with CSSA Associate Director, Heather Craigie, receives the Newman Civic Fellowship.

The Fellowship recognizes one student on each campus who demonstrates leadership potential for social change. Fellows attend a Summit focused on skill building for social change, and then form part of a national network of student leaders dedicated to public service.

¹ Museus, S., Lee, N., Calhoun, K., Sánchez-Parkinson, L., & Ting, M. (2017). The Social Action, Leadership, and Transformation (SALT) Model. National Center for Institutional Diversity and National Institute for Transformation and Equity.

STUDENTS ENGAGE AT REGIONAL AND NATIONAL CONFERENCES

Ethical leadership development is facilitated through opportunities to attend and present at regional and national conferences and justice networks.



CSSA Student Leadership Team members, **Celeste Wellman '25**, and **Isidora Djukic '25** (third and fourth from left) attended the Ignatian Justice Summit for College Students.



The Propel Ohio Collegiate Leadership Summit brought together emerging student leaders from Ohio's colleges, universities. More than 300 students and administrators from 58 Ohio colleges and universities attended, including JCU students: **Chase Hudock '25**, **Victoria Montag '26**, **Abigail Walker '27**, **Joseph Bilas '27**, **Morgan Kuhlman '27**, **Tate Farinacci '25**, and **Trinity Fussner '25**.



The George B. Sweeney Endowed Campion Award for Community Service



Serine Jaffal, sophomore (left) and **Chase Hudock**, junior (right) were selected as the 2024 winners of the George B. Sweeney Endowed Campion Award for Community Service.



The Newman Civic Fellowship recognizes students with demonstrated leadership experience and passion for public service. **Rivera Cruz '25**, JCU's 23-24 Newman Civic Fellow, attended the annual convening in Boston, where she was able to connect with student leaders from around the country and explore ways they can enagage their vision and talents for the common good.

◀ A large JCU student cohort, including CSSA Student Liaisons **Sydney Burger '25** and **Selena Alamir '24**, attended the annual Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice held in Washington, D.C. in November 2023.

FOSTERING LIFELONG CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

MISSION

Grounded in equity and justice, the Center for Service-Learning and Social Action facilitates community-engaged, experiential learning through sustained partnerships in order to strengthen academic outcomes, develop ethical leaders, and **foster lifelong civic engagement.**

INSPIRING COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY AND THE COMMON GOOD



JCU was recognized as a Voter Friendly Campus by the Campus Vote Project, in addition to being named an ALL IN Most Engaged Campus for College Student Voting by the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge.

Democracy Fellows

CSSA, in partnership with the Office of Student Engagement and the Campus Vote Project, supported three Democracy Fellows in the 2023-2024 Academic Year.

Mallory Dunlap '24, Veronica McDowell '24, and Joseph Bilas '27 coordinated JCU's nonpartisan democratic engagement activities and voter registration efforts. Through the JCU Votes student organization, the Fellows build a diverse coalition of students dedicated to civic engagement and voter education. In recognition of this work, JCU holds a Voter Friendly Campus distinction and was named an ALL IN Most Engaged Campus for College Student Voting.



The JCU Democracy Fellows engage students through interactive educational encourage students to register to vote and make their voices heard.

STUDENT FEATURE: MALLORY DUNLAP '23

Hometown: Elyria, Ohio

Majors:

- Political Science and Peace
- Justice & Human Rights
- Minor in Italian Studies

Roles:

- Arrupé Social Justice Scholar
- JCU's inaugural Democracy Fellow through the Campus Vote Project; has spearheaded nonpartisan democratic engagement and voter registration efforts for last 2.5 years, leading to national voter-friendly campus designations for JCU
- CSSA Student Liaison;
- CSSA Summer in the City Internship with Catholic Charities Migration & Refugee Services;
- JCU in Rome program (interned with Jesuit Refugee Service in Vatican City);
- Will be doing City Year (AmeriCorps) in Columbia, SC before law school



Mallory Dunlap '24 is presented the Charles J. Ping Award for Community Engagement by Dr. Al Miciak. **The Charles J. Ping Award** recognizes students at member campuses who demonstrate outstanding leadership and contributions to community service or service-learning on their campus and within their community.



(L to R) Blake Yoho, Sr. Katherine Feely, Al Miciak, Mallory Dunlap, Wilson Ha, Heather Craigie, Ursula Rossman and John Jackson. Presentation of Awards.



Bradley Stumpp, ITS receives the Staff Community Service Award from president, Al Miciak.



Students embrace the JCU spirit of community-building, creating memories that will last a lifetime.



Members of the Class of 2027 pose in front of the JCU letters as part of the Discover JCU scavenger hunt.



John Jackson presents the work of CSSA to prospective students.



Nour Benmayza '26 works with a student learning to read from St. Thomas Aquinas.



Aidan Rodriguez '24 and Natalie Byrne '24 consult the CSSA Weekly Drive Schedule for their next assignment.



Bella Smith '24 explains her Summer in the City Internship research project to John Jackson, Assistant Director, Community Partnerships, CSSA.

STUDENT FEATURE: SOPHIA RUSE '24

Hometown: Willoughby, Ohio

Major: Communication

Roles:

- 4-year member of Jesuit Day of Service Core Team
- Student Liaison
- CSSA Student Leadership Team

Sophia served for an unprecedented four years on the Core Team for the Jesuit Day of Service. In this role, Sophia coordinated marketing and recruitment efforts for JCU's largest annual community-engaged event, which often enrolls close to 400 participants.

Sophia also worked as a Student Liaison and served on CSSA's Student Leadership Team.

Sophia Ruse graduated from JCU in spring 2024 with a major in Integrated Marketing Communications.

Sophia will continue her education at JCU pursuing a Master of Science degree in Digital Marketing and Communications Strategy. She will also serve as the Graduate Assistant for the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.



Jesuit Day of Service

The 2024 Jesuit Day of Service brought together a record-breaking number of students, faculty, staff, alums, and community members for a morning of service to community partners across Cleveland.

- **382 students** participated
- **15** faculty and staff
- **9** community partner work sites
- **66** student group leaders
- **9** site captains
- **20** different student groups and teams participated
- **8-member** logistics team



Students bring a willing spirit to any task set before them and make new friends.



Men's Soccer brings heart and strength.



Site Captains ensure the day runs smoothly and lead by example.



Students discover the power of teamwork.

Gearity Elementary School Garden gets a make-over. ▶



President Al Miciak (left) is pictured with the Jesuit Day of Service Student Leadership Core Team and celebrates a job well done.

Community Partners Involved:

- Bellefaire JCB
- Edwins Life Skills Center
- Fatima Family Center
- St. Agnes Our Lady of Fatima Parish
- Cleveland Cultural Gardens
- St. Thomas Aquinas School
- Boys Hope Girls Hope
- Cosmic Bobbins / Cleveland Sews
- Goods Bank
- Gearity Elementary School



Student Groups Involved:

- Alpha Kappa Psi
- Black Students in Action
- Chi Omega
- Football Team
- 9 Friend Groups
- Honors Scholars
- JCU Men's Soccer Team
- JCU Student Government
- JCU Swim and Dive Team
- JCU Women's Basketball
- JCU Women's Soccer
- Kappa Alpha Theta
- Kappa Kappa Gamma
- Men's Club Volleyball
- Muslim Student Association
- Panhellenic Council
- Pre-Med Society
- Sigma Phi Epsilon
- Tour Guides
- Volleyball
- Women's Club Basketball

JCU IN THE CITY

The vision of Jesuit higher education for the twenty-first century is to graduate individuals with a well-educated solidarity who are aware of the fundamental challenges facing today's world with a depth of knowledge and strength of character to work creatively for a more just and humane society. The JCU in the City initiative is designed to do just this by extending the boundaries of the classroom in new and more dynamic ways while incorporating the needs of the city of Cleveland in the work we do as an academic institution.

The focus of our work this year centered on deepening our engagement with community partners and connecting the Faculty Fellows to organizations that are interested in working together.

We continue to invest in partnership in the St. Clair Superior and Hough communities. Our work in the past year included:

The Fatima Family Center

- **51 students** provided 1,022 hours of service

St. Martin DePorres High School

- **35 students** provided 400 hours of tutoring

Cleveland Sews and Cosmic Bobbins

- **12 students** provided 213 hours of service

Upcycle Parts Shop

- **1 intern** provided 400 hours of support

St. Clair Superior Development Corp

- **1 intern** provided 400 hours of support

PCs for People

- **7 students** provided 156 hours of service

St. Thomas Aquinas Elementary - Carroll Reads

- **15 students** provided 803 hours of tutoring

It Starts with Stem

- **9 students** provided 50 hours of STEM events

University Hospital Rainbow Connects Program

- **1 intern** provided over 400 hours of outreach and care

Investing in network building nationally was also a focus and priority.

Place-Based Justice Network

- CSSA is part of the Place-Based Justice Network, a coalition among universities and colleges and their communities. Sr. Katherine serves on the National Strategy Committee.

Community Engaged Scholar-Practitioner Network

- Sr. Katherine Feely joined colleagues at research and strategy meeting convened by the **Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities and Uniservitate** in October 2023.

Diversity Equity and Inclusion Advisory Board

- John Jackson, Associate Director, Community Partnerships, is a member of the DEIB Advisory Board to integrate the work with colleagues across campus.

GOALS

JCU in the City goals include:

- Supporting community partners through mutually beneficial outcomes
- Promoting deeper civic engagement of students
- Preparing students for success after college and help them apply classroom concepts while building skills and competencies needed for any career path
- Resourcing faculty to engage high impact experiential learning in their courses
- Bringing students, faculty, staff, our partners, and the broader community together to strengthen Cleveland through the intersection of education, advocacy, and action for social change.

In sum, the JCU in the City initiative cultivates a wide array of high-impact experiential learning opportunities that connect the campus to the community through service-learning, community-engaged research, and civic engagement.



CSSA'S SUMMER IN THE CITY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Summer in the City Internship Program provides a unique and enriching opportunity for students to gain real-world experience in urban environments. This immersive program not only exposes participants to diverse professional settings but also fosters personal and professional growth through hands-on projects and interactions with city-based organizations.

14 Interns spanning the following majors:

- Sociology & Criminology
- English
- History
- Political Science
- Peace, Justice & Human Rights
- Theology & Religious Studies
- Biology
- Management & Human Resources
- Spanish
- Communications (Digital Media)
- Clinical Mental Health Counseling (graduate program)

12 Placement Sites:

- Boys Hope Girls Hope
- Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry (Advocacy)
- Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry (Communications)
- Catholic Charities Migration & Refugee Services
- Global Cleveland (2 interns)
- University Hospitals Rainbow Connects
- Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center
- Fatima Family Center
- Upcycle Parts Shop
- St. Clair Superior Development Corporation
- Joseph & Mary's Home
- Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless
- Zelig's Home

STUDENT FEATURE: TATE FARINACCI '25

Hometown: Chardon, Ohio

Major: Political Science

Role:

- CSSA Summer in the City Intern



Through CSSA's Summer in the City Internship Program, Tate served as a Workforce Development Intern at Global Cleveland. Tate collaborated with colleagues to build an extensive outreach and educational campaign to support international students in greater Cleveland.

Through an in-depth exploration of the temporary work authorizations available to international students, Tate developed educational materials to advocate for their employment rights. These resources served to both highlight the economic benefits brought to the region by international students and further Global Cleveland's mission to welcome international newcomers to Northeast Ohio.

The work culminated in a comprehensive presentation delivered to area employers, in addition to a published article in Crain's Cleveland titled, "Unlocking Ohio's Economic Potential: Embracing International Students as Catalysts for Growth."



“A JESUIT EDUCATION SEEKS to address the world in which we actually live as well as the hopes and challenges of that world. Indeed, one can view the current situation in the world against a backdrop of a whole range of key desires, really, “hungers” of the contemporary world for wholeness, peace, and justice for all.” - Daniel Hartnett, S.J.



**CENTER FOR SERVICE-LEARNING
AND SOCIAL ACTION**

John Carroll University

<https://www.jcu.edu/service>