



**MEDICAL
COLLEGE
OF WISCONSIN**

**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

2024 Annual Report



2024 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS



216 Unique individuals with significant collaborations with OCE:

- Participants in the self-study process for MCW's 2026 Carnegie Community Engagement Re-Classification application
- Members of community engagement-focused advisory committees
- Contributors to programming; sponsors or reviewers for award/fellowship nominations and applications
- Supporters of other community engagement mission-focused efforts



5 Selected awards to members of the OCE team



27 Selected presentations by members of the OCE team



19 Selected publications by members of the OCE team



150 Attendees at the 2024 annual Community Engagement Conference



65 Poster presentations at the 2024 Community Engagement Poster Session



9 Community partners highlighted in the Community Engagement Spotlight Series



504 MCW faculty who reported CE activities in the Community Engagement Faculty Survey



30 MCW staff and faculty members of OCE's Community Engagement Advisory Council



28 Participants in the 3-day Community Engaged Scholars Immersion Program



303 Items donated to OCE's second annual Community Engagement Donation Drive for Essential Supplies



5 Awardees of the 2024 President's Community Engagement Award

10 MCW units, including OCE, housed at ThriveOn King



24 Members of ThriveOn Health Equity Academic Committee coordinated by OCE

68 Inquiries to OCE about partnership opportunities, facilitating connections with the community, speaker requests, sponsorship questions, and event promotion



2 MCW medical students funded by OCE for the Medical Student Summer Research Program (MSSRP)



John R. Raymond, Sr., MD
President and Chief Executive Officer
Professor of Medicine
Medical College of Wisconsin



Cheryl A. Maurana, PhD
Provost
Stephen and Shelagh Roell
Endowed Chair
Professor of Bioethics and
Medical Humanities
Founding Director, Kern National
Network for Flourishing in Medicine
Senior Vice President for Strategic
Academic Partnerships
Medical College of Wisconsin

MISSION

Mission

The Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) Office of Community Engagement (OCE) is dedicated to improving the health of communities in Wisconsin and beyond by advancing the art and science of community engagement and making MCW a national leader in improving the health of the public.

Guiding Principles

- Develop reciprocal and mutually beneficial partnerships with communities across Wisconsin.
- Use bi-directional dialogue to define and understand *community* and *community engagement* and identify program scope based on relevant community issues.
- Recognize the importance of relationships in developing strong community-academic partnerships with equitable power and agreed-upon responsibilities.
- Build capacity within the Medical College of Wisconsin and the community.
- Effectively disseminate outcomes via multiple methods.



We are pleased to recognize and celebrate the breadth and depth of community engagement that is taking place both across MCW and within our other missions of research, education, and patient care. In 2024, MCW's Office of Community Engagement launched a comprehensive institutional self-study to support the institution's application for the 2026 Carnegie Community Engagement Re-Classification. This process uncovered the many ways that our faculty, staff, learners, and community partners are advancing meaningful engagement through strong partnerships, integration in our strategic priorities, and innovative curricular and co-curricular initiatives."

A MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



The Office of Community Engagement (OCE) at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) strives for growth and excellence in how we partner, communicate, educate, and learn alongside our community. We are proud to share this 2024 report with our partners, friends, and supporters in the spirit of gratitude for the collective efforts in advancing the principles of partnership and improving health in our Wisconsin communities and beyond.

The report highlights our extensive efforts to submit an application for the 2026 Carnegie Elective Re-Classification for Community Engagement. This self-study included stakeholders across MCW and among our community partners to assess our strengths and opportunities in community engagement related to education, scholarship, civic identity, and institutional initiatives. The application also highlighted key partnerships that showcase our deep commitment to addressing community needs and engaging multiple groups.

The OCE also plays a critical role in the ThriveOn Collaboration between MCW, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, and Royal Capital Group. This innovative partnership has grown and gained momentum as a generational investment in advancing health equity across Milwaukee.

As I look to the future of the Office of Community Engagement, I am energized by the many opportunities ahead. I look forward to strengthening our collaborations across the MCW campuses, and with organizations locally, nationally, and globally. By connecting students at all levels of learning with community partners, MCW is investing in the future of medical and graduate education that emphasizes the value of community engagement.

MCW is dedicated to advancing health equity across Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and beyond. We are inspired by all those who seek to improve the health and well-being of their communities. I am invigorated by the commitment to community engagement across our many departments, centers, and institutes. We too are part of the community, and our collaborative spirit moves us forward.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Staci Young".

Staci Young, PhD

MEET THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM

Staci Young, PhD (she/her/hers)

syoung@mcw.edu

Senior Associate Dean for Community Engagement
Director, Office of Community Engagement
Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine
Inaugural Faculty Director, ThriveOn Collaboration
Associate Director, Community Outreach and Engagement, Cancer Center
Director Emerita, Center for Healthy Communities and Research

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Faculty, Center for Healthy Communities and Research

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Associate Professor, MCW-Central Wisconsin
Director, Physician in the Community Scholarly Concentration
Joined the Office of Community Engagement in July 2025

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Program Coordinator III
Office of Community Engagement

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Associate Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine
Director, Center for Healthy Communities and Research

Christopher J. Simenz, PhD, MS (he/him/his)

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Associate Professor, Institute for Health & Humanity;
Department of Family and Community Medicine
Director, Master of Public Health Program
Associate Director, Doctor of Public Health Program

FORMERLY WITH THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Madhumita Ravikumar, MS, BDS

SELF-STUDY FOR THE CARNEGIE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RE-CLASSIFICATION APPLICATION

In 2015, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching awarded the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) the prestigious Elective Community Engagement Classification in recognition of the institution's commitment to meaningful community engagement. Currently, MCW is one of only five U.S. medical schools with this designation.

To apply for re-classification, MCW completed a comprehensive self-study throughout 2024. The Office of Community (OCE) led this effort, actively collaborating with five section-specific workgroups, a Steering Committee, an Application Committee, stakeholders across campus, and selected community partners, to ensure a thorough and inclusive process. Notable results of the self-study are presented on these pages and were accurate through 2024.

Campus & Community Context

MCW is a private, nonprofit academic health institution with a statewide presence that serves Wisconsin through its missions of education, research, patient care, and community engagement (CE). With campuses in Milwaukee, Green Bay, and Central Wisconsin, MCW addresses health disparities across diverse urban and rural communities.

CE became an official mission in 2008, and the Office of Community Engagement (OCE) was established in 2012 to institutionalize and support this work. CE is integrated across MCW's academic and research programs and is a core focus in the institution's 2020–2025 strategic plan under the “Health of Our Community” priority. Programs like the Health Equity Scholars, 500 Stars internship, and Community Engaged Scholars Immersion Program exemplify MCW's commitment to equity and workforce development.

MCW partners with over 650 organizations statewide, and from 2021-2024, the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin (AHW) Endowment invested over \$54 million in community-led health initiatives through its Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program. Other major MCW initiatives like the ThriveOn Collaboration demonstrate place-based, long-term investment in underserved communities. Community input is embedded through advisory boards, shared governance, and collaborative program design.

Infrastructure supporting CE has grown significantly since 2015, including expanded staffing, permanent central funding, and dedicated tools like the CE Dashboard and Engagement Hub.



Community Engagement is the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional, state, national, global) for mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.”

- Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Quality of Community Engagement Relationships and Academic Partnerships

Since its 2015 Carnegie Classification, MCW has significantly expanded and deepened its academic-community partnerships, advancing its commitment to health equity, education, and community-driven collaboration. The following eight partnerships were highlighted as exemplars of MCW's engagement across diverse sectors: <https://tinyurl.com/4knwzn2a>

- Bread of Healing Clinic (Milwaukee, WI)
- Community and Cancer Science Network (throughout WI)
- Dhulikhel Hospital (Nepal)
- Great Lakes Native American Research Center for Health (Lac du Flambeau, WI)
- Pathfinders (Milwaukee, WI)
- Special Olympics Wisconsin (statewide)
- ThriveOn Collaboration (Milwaukee, WI)
- United Community Center (Milwaukee, WI)

Faculty, Staff, and Student Community Engagement

Scholarship in CE has grown—MCW staff, faculty, students, and community partners produced and disseminated a wide variety of CE scholarship.

MCW Staff-Involved

Community Engaged Scholarship Highlighted in [Carnegie Re-Classification Application](#).

MCW Faculty-Involved

Community Engaged Scholarship Highlighted in [Carnegie Re-Classification Application](#).

MCW Student-Involved

Community Engaged Scholarship Highlighted in [Carnegie Re-Classification Application](#).

Faculty promotion and tenure policies were revised to formally recognize CE as a core accomplishment area. As of 2025, a unified promotion pathway

allows faculty to demonstrate CE at the levels of involvement, achievement, and leadership. These changes, developed collaboratively with institutional leaders and faculty, ensure that community-engaged scholarship is valued and rewarded.

Curricular and Co-Curricular Engagement

Since 2015, MCW has significantly expanded CE in its curriculum through strategic institutional changes, including the launch of regional campuses, new academic programs, and redesigned medical education. The opening of MCW-Green Bay and MCW-Central Wisconsin addressed physician shortages and established longitudinal CE-focused scholarly concentrations. Across all campuses, the 2023–2024 MCWfusion curriculum integrated CE principles into the core medical school experience, while the Health Equity Scholars Program and the School of Pharmacy's required CE activities further prioritized CE. Graduate programs, including the DrPH and PhD in Public and Community Health, now embed CE through required courses, applied practice experiences, and scholarship.

From 2015 to 2024, the availability of CE courses offered grew substantially, with 667 students (40.2%) participating in community engaged courses taught by 35 faculty course directors across 12 departments. Efforts at the school level—such as orientation sessions, Health Equity Thread course content, and partnerships with community organizations—have deepened student learning, broadened access, and positioned CE as a core educational priority at MCW.

Since the last classification, MCW expanded co-curricular CE through initiatives like the Saturday Clinic for the Uninsured (SCU), Wausau Free Clinic, and the Cadavers as Educators (CaE) program. These programs provide hands-on service and outreach opportunities for students and foster long-standing community partnerships.

SELF-STUDY FOR THE CARNEGIE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RE-CLASSIFICATION APPLICATION (CONTINUED)

Civic Learning and Life

MCW prepares students for civic engagement through practical, curricular, and co-curricular experiences. Initiatives like MaskUpMKE exemplified cross-sector collaboration during the COVID-19 crisis, offering hands-on civic engagement and public health outreach while fostering reciprocal partnerships. Civic skills are embedded in courses like “The Good Doctor,” experiential clinics like the Trauma Quality of Life Clinic (TQLC), and outreach with organizations like StreetLife Communities. MCW also supports civic identity development through student participation in the Sustainability, Health and Environment (SHE) Center and the Civic Engagement Interest Group. Further, the recently developed Freedom of Expression Principles promote civil discourse across the institution.



Community Engagement and Other Institutional Initiatives

MCW leads innovative public-private collaborations like HealthyMKE and 414LIFE, which address health inequities through digital access and violence interruption strategies. These efforts demonstrate how CE can be a vehicle for health equity, economic inclusion, and systemic change.

Next Steps & Acknowledgements

MCW submitted its re-classification application in April 2025 and will learn the results in early 2026. The OCE is so appreciative to the more than 155 stakeholders who contributed to this effort, including MCW students, staff, faculty, institutional leaders, and community partner representatives. Their names are listed on the Acknowledgements page of this Annual Report.



You tell a comprehensive and compelling story of MCW’s institutional commitment to community engagement, grounded in mission, structure, and strategies. The thoughtful inclusion of infrastructure, governance, funding shifts, and measurement tools speaks to the deep institutionalization of community engagement.”

- John Meurer, MD, MBA,
Professor Emeritus, MCW Institute for
Health & Humanity; Steering Committee,
Carnegie Re-Classification Application

THRIVEON KING OPENS IN 2024

After much anticipation, in the latter half of 2024, the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) Office of Community Engagement (OCE) along with nine other MCW programs and units, moved into the redeveloped ThriveOn King (TOK) building. The historic building, located at 2153 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Milwaukee, is remembered by many as the former Gimbels-Schuster's Department Store. Representatives from the following MCW programs, centers, institutes, and offices are currently housed at ThriveOn King:

- Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment
- Center for Community Health and Intervention Research (formerly Center for AIDS Intervention Research)
- Center for Advancing Population Science
- Comprehensive Injury Center
 - Division of Community Safety & 414LIFE
 - Division of Data Analytics & Informatics
 - Division of Suicide Research & Healing
- Froedtert & MCW Cancer Center
 - Community Outreach and Engagement Team
- HIV Care and Prevention Program
- Institute for Health & Humanity (formerly Institute for Health & Equity)
 - Division of Epidemiology & Social Sciences
 - Public & Community Health PhD Program
- Maternal Health Research Center of Excellence
- Milwaukee Health Scholars Program (formerly Health Equity Scholars Program)
- Office of Community Engagement



The Comprehensive Injury Center is pleased to have found its new home in ThriveOn King. In addition to providing a beautiful, collaborative space for our staff to work, it has also been a key part of advancing our mission to build safer and healthier communities for all Wisconsinites through its central location for convening community partners. We have been able to better connect with our existing community partners and build new relationships through utilizing the organic networking opportunities and the resources that ThriveOn King has to offer.”

- Terri deRoos-Cassini, PhD,
Director, MCW Comprehensive Injury Center





MCW, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, and Royal Capital formed the ThriveOn Collaboration with a joint vision for a Milwaukee that is equitable, healthy, and thriving for all. Located proximal to three north side neighborhoods—Halyard Park, Harambee, and Brewers Hill—the ThriveOn King building features community, commercial, and residential space.

The ThriveOn Collaboration focused on five priority areas for the building spaces: housing, early childhood education, health and wellness, social cohesion, and economic opportunity. The first floor of the building houses tenant partners who address these priorities: Malaika Early Learning Center, JobsWork MKE, Versiti Blood Center of Wisconsin, and Kinship Café. TOK also features community gathering space, public art, and recently completed 90 units of mixed-income housing for families, seniors, and students.

2024 THRIVEON COLLABORATION AWARDS:

**Frederick I. Olson Historic Preservation Award,
Milwaukee County Historical Society**

Milwaukee County Historical Society presented the award in recognition of the ThriveOn Collaboration’s restoration and redevelopment of the historic Gimbels-Schuster Department Store, while pursuing its mission to invest in the well-being of the people of Milwaukee.

**Milwaukee Award for Neighborhood
Development Innovation (MANDI),
Husch Blackwell Building Blocks Award**

Awarded to the ThriveOn Collaboration in recognition of a real estate project that advances the community.



“

Kinship Café proudly opened its doors this past November at ThriveOn King. With every delicious food order or steaming cup of coffee, customers are supporting Kinship’s Workforce program aimed at building a path for stability and economic prosperity in Milwaukee. Kinship has successfully onboarded two classes of Workforce Trainees who gain hands-on experience, learning everything from teamwork to perfecting the art of making a chicken sandwich. This milestone for Kinship would not have been possible without the incredible partnership with the ThriveOn Collaboration. The shared mission focused on health, education, and economic wellness made the collaboration a natural and powerful fit.”

- Amanda Fahrendorf,
Senior Communications Associate,
Kinship Community Food Center



“

Over the past year, it has been a true privilege for the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment to host several impactful events at ThriveOn King, including our National Advisory Committee convening, the Advancing Childhood Behavioral Health Summit, and the Celebration of Innovation in Maternal & Child Health. ThriveOn King has provided a vibrant, welcoming community space that has elevated our gatherings and fostered meaningful connections across partners and initiatives.”

- Amanda Fraser, Program Manager,
Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin
Endowment



MCW ENGAGE: 2024 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SPRING CONFERENCE

On May 2, 2024, the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) Office of Community Engagement (OCE) hosted its spring conference at the Milwaukee War Memorial Center. The theme of “Showcasing Community Engagement in All Spaces” highlighted the presence of community engagement across education, research, and health care and encouraged over 150 participants to reimagine ways to improve health.

The conference provided a platform for attendees to learn from speakers from various sectors, community-based organizations, and institutions about their experiences and insights on innovative community engagement strategies. It also provided a space for participants to connect with others through experiences, best practices, and lessons learned from their community engagement journeys.

The day included a morning keynote, “Feeding Progress: The Crucial Link Between Nutrition Security, Race, and Public Health,” delivered by Rayna Andrews, MUP, chief



executive director of Healthy Food Movement. An afternoon keynote, “Leveraging Philanthropy to Improve Community Health,” was given by Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, MD, MPH, senior associate dean and director of Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment and a professor of anesthesiology at MCW.

Conference attendees attended concurrent breakout sessions that delved into different aspects of community engagement:

- Community-Academic Partnerships: Using a Community Engagement Framework
- Building Respect and Equity in Community-Academic Collaborations
- Strategies for Capacity Building and Sustainability for Coalitions and Other Partnerships
- Involving Students in Community-Academic Collaboration



A panel of practitioners from clinical, academic, and community-based spaces engaged in a facilitated discussion about the complexities of navigating community engagement in a variety of environments.

To conclude the day, attendees participated in a World Café discussion exploring strategies and resources for addressing nine community health needs, with attention given to multiple perspectives and to the role of social isolation and loneliness.

Attendee Quotes

“I appreciate the bold honesty and vulnerability from the brilliant people who shared their stories and perspectives.”

“Presenters offered additional nuance to strategies and framed the possibilities for better outcomes for health within realistic ideas and their individualized experiences.”

“It’s a great event for partners to feel how much they are valued.”

“I took away new knowledge about existing community partnerships and programs and new contacts.”

“It is a great opportunity for networking and learning more about community engagement.”



2024 PRESIDENT'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD

Since 2015, the annual Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) President's Community Engagement Award has celebrated the breadth, depth, and impact of community-engaged initiatives for their outstanding contributions to advancing MCW's Community Engagement (CE) mission. In that time, a competitive review process has resulted in the recognition of sixty-three awardees comprising four categories as outstanding contributors to MCW's CE mission: 14 students, 16 staff members, 16 faculty members, and 17 community partners or programs. These honorees exemplify MCW's ongoing commitment to collaborative, impactful engagement with communities across Wisconsin and beyond.

On May 3, 2024, the MCW Office of Community Engagement (OCE) hosted the annual award ceremony at the MCW-Milwaukee campus. The event commenced with welcoming remarks from John R. Raymond, Sr., MD, president and chief executive officer and Joseph E. Kerschner, MD, then the Julia A. Uihlein, MA, Dean of the School of Medicine, provost, and executive vice president. Awards were presented by Staci Young, PhD, senior associate dean for community engagement and professor of family and community medicine.

“

Every year I am struck by how deeply people are both doing work in the community and within community engagement, and how much they acknowledge those that support them in this work. We do not do this work alone and this work is not always easy. Community engagement does not advance without meaningful support.”

– Staci Young, PhD,
Senior Associate Dean
for Community Engagement



2024 AWARDEES

Community Partner/Program:

Yvonne D. Greer, DrPH, RD, CD

**Owner, Y-Eat Right,
Nutritional Consultant for Healthy Living**

Recognized for her commitment to promoting healthy living behaviors and providing nutrition education in a way that is accessible to all communities.

Darlene Russell, MSM

**Director of Community Engagement
Greater Milwaukee Foundation**

Recognized for serving as a leader in Community Engagement for the ThriveOn Collaboration and building trusted partnerships with the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods of Harambee, Brewers Hill, and Halyard Park.

MCW Student:

Ana Maria Viteri

**Third-year medical student
MCW-Milwaukee**

Recognized for her dedication to service and advocacy through her leadership role for the Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA) and as co-founder of the student-led partnership with the United Community Center (UCC), “Venciendo la Pandemia con la Vacuna,” to provide vaccine information to the Latino/Hispanic community.

MCW Staff:

Tricia Monroe, MEd, MA, CHES

**Program Manager
Comprehensive Injury Center**

Recognized for her commitment to providing grief and bereavement support and resources to individuals impacted by suicide loss through the development and management of the MKE Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors (L.O.S.S.) Program.

MCW Faculty:

Melinda Stolley, PhD

**Associate Director of Cancer Prevention and Control,
Cancer Center; Professor, Department of Medicine**

Recognized for her research contributions and intervention trials to impact cancer prevention and control through health behavior change, particularly in communities that have been traditionally underserved.



2024 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POSTER SESSION

The Medical College of Wisconsin's (MCW) Office of Community Engagement (OCE) hosted its tenth annual Community Engagement Poster Session in November 2024 at MCW-Milwaukee. This milestone event brought together over 100 attendees, including representatives from many MCW departments, other academic institutions, and a wide range of community partner organizations and communities.

The 2024 session featured 65 posters highlighting collaborative and community-engaged research, programs, and initiatives. Poster presenters included students, staff, and faculty from across MCW's Milwaukee, Central Wisconsin, and Green Bay School of Medicine campuses, School of Pharmacy, and School of Graduate Studies, as well as partners from community-based organizations and other academic institutions/medical centers.

Poster topics reflected the breadth and depth of community engagement work in key areas, including:

- Behavioral health
- Child and youth well-being
- Cancer prevention, research, and education
- Clinical and patient care
- Community engagement methodologies
- Health care access and quality
- Health education and literacy
- LGBTQ+ health
- Social determinants of health
- Socioeconomic disparities

BY THE NUMBERS



65 posters



182 contributing authors



Over 100 attendees

Authors/presenters represented:

- **21** MCW units (departments/centers/institutes/offices)
- **36** community-based organizations/programs
- **23** academic institutions/medical centers



During the event's welcome remarks, Staci Young, PhD, senior associate dean for community engagement and professor of family and community medicine, emphasized the importance of collaboration and innovation in this work. "May the connections made today spark new collaborations and lead to new opportunities for growth and innovation in community engagement," she stated, reflecting the session's spirit of shared learning and impact.

[View the 2024 Poster Session Abstract Catalog.](#)



2024 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FACULTY SURVEY

The Community Engagement (CE) Dashboard is updated with data from the 2024 Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) Faculty CE Survey. Each year, the Office of Community Engagement (OCE), in collaboration with the MCW Business Intelligence team, collects and analyzes thousands of data points related to CE across the institution. In 2024, MCW faculty reported a higher number of CE activities than in any prior survey year.

The CE Survey continues to provide comprehensive insight into engagement across a range of categories, including Outreach and Service; Events and Fundraisers; Education and Service Learning; Research; Clinical Care; Policy and Advocacy; Presentations and Publications; and Awards. Partnerships with community organizations are specifically highlighted in the categories of Outreach and Service, Research, and Policy and Advocacy.

The CE Dashboard, launched in 2016, was developed to enhance access to critical engagement metrics and support institutional reporting, strategic planning, and alignment with national standards for measuring community engagement. It aggregates data from multiple sources, including the annual rotating faculty and staff CE surveys and continues to serve as a valuable resource that offers longitudinal data visualization at the institutional, departmental, and unit levels.

2024 Faculty CE Survey Snapshot

42% response rate

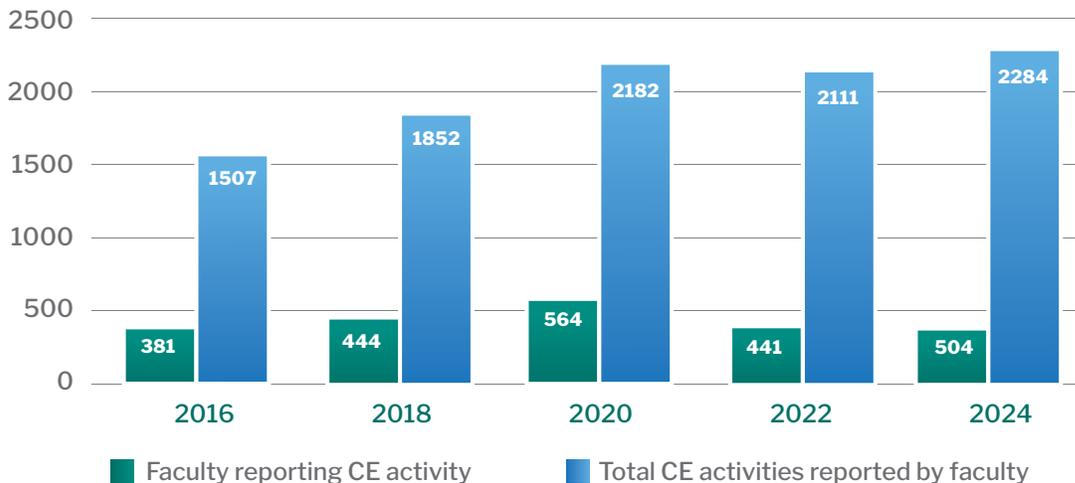
27% of responding faculty (504) reported CE activity

450 unique organizational partners

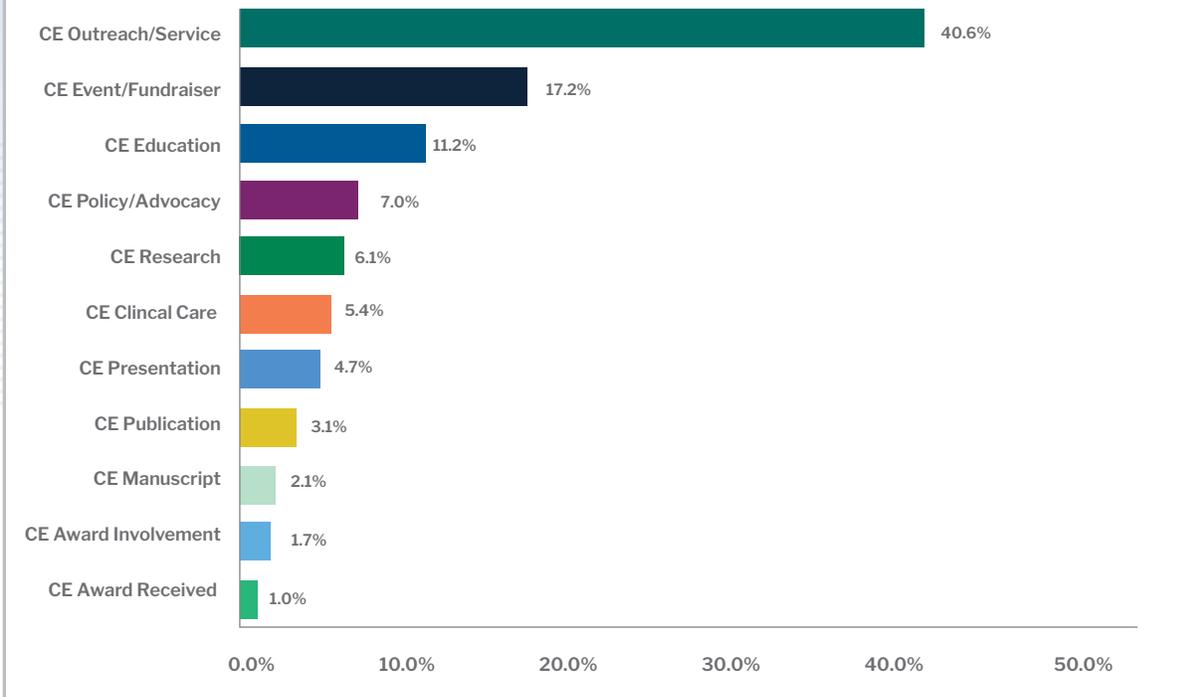
2,284 CE activities

41% of CE activities in Outreach/Service (top CE category)

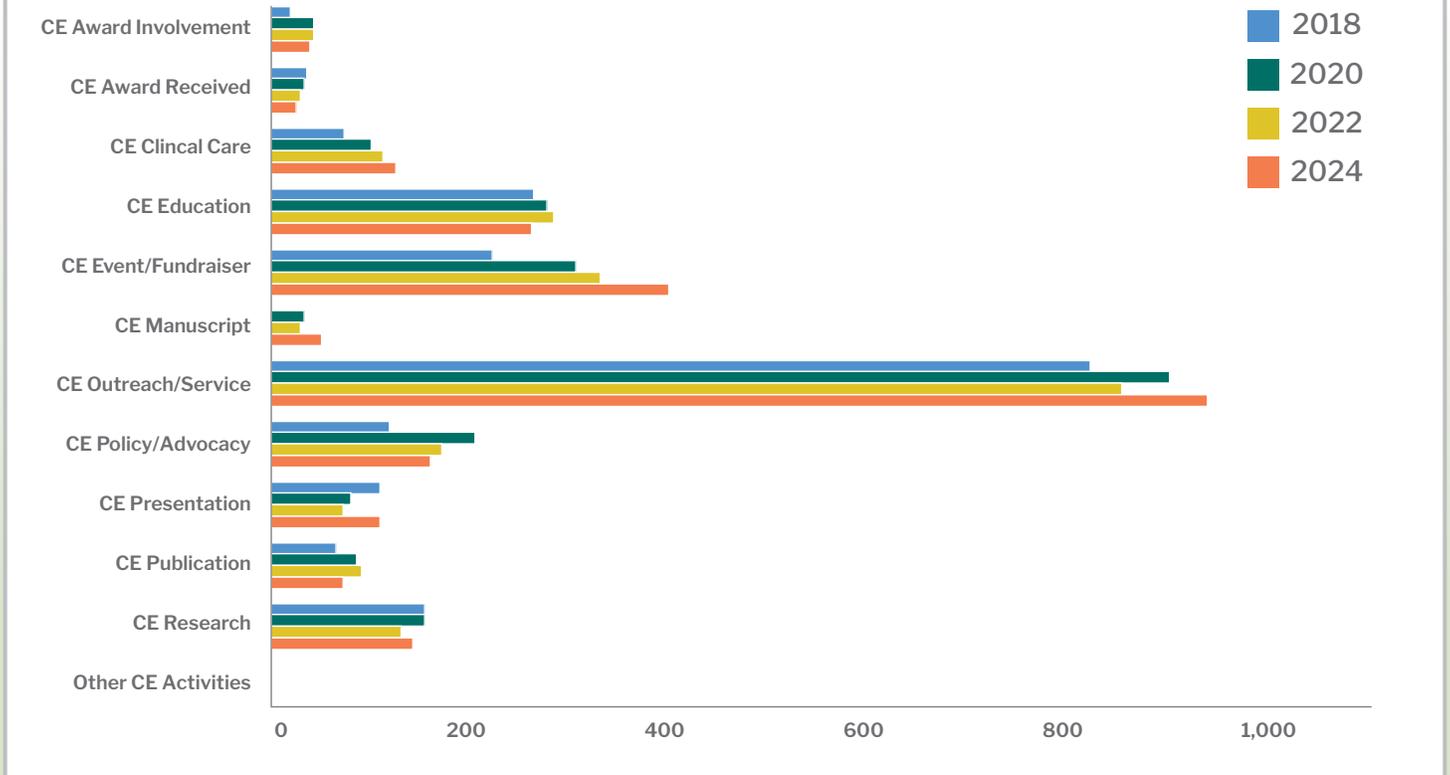
MCW Faculty: CE Survey Results



% of CE Activities Reported by Category (2024 Survey)



Number of CE Activities Reported by Category (2024 Survey)



MEET MCW'S 2024-2025 NEWMAN CIVIC FELLOW

The Newman Civic Fellowship is a year-long program through Campus Compact that recognizes students across the country who are deeply committed to making a difference in their communities. Campus Compact is a national coalition of colleges and universities dedicated to advancing civic and community engagement. Fellows are nominated by their schools and join a national network of changemakers working on a wide range of social issues.

At the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW), the Office of Community Engagement (OCE) facilitates the institution-wide student nomination process and provides support for the fellow to attend the annual conference and their engagement in local community projects. Through 2024, MCW has supported three fellows, with Cordelia Elaiho, a second-year medical student, selected as the 2024-2025 fellow.

Cordelia was nominated by Catherine Ferguson, MD, who described her as “a bridge builder” who uplifts voices and brings people together through her many advocacy and outreach efforts. As a fellow, Cordelia attended the Newman Civic Fellowship’s national conference in Chicago and participated in training and networking opportunities with students from across the country working to create positive change.

In addition to her participation in fellowship activities, Cordelia was awarded a Campus Compact mini-grant to support a community-focused project around storytelling and healthcare (launching fall 2025).

The support of Cordelia Elaiho for the 2024-2025 Newman Civic Fellowship was made possible through the nomination by John R. Raymond, Sr., MD, president and chief executive officer, the commitment to community-engaged medical education by Joseph E. Kerschner, MD, then the Julia A. Uihlein, MA, Dean of the School of Medicine, provost, and executive vice president, and the mentorship of Dr. Catherine Ferguson.



“

The conference was a great reminder that there’s more to be done in the world, and I appreciated hearing different perspectives from students in other fields and regions. I get to lead not only in medicine, but if I can continue to be world-minded and global in my thinking, then I can make an impact in these things that don’t directly tie to medicine.”

- Cordelia Elaiho

2024 COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARS IMMERSION PROGRAM

The Medical College of Wisconsin's (MCW) fourth annual Community Engaged Scholars Immersion Program welcomed 28 participants in July of 2024, continuing its commitment to fostering community-engaged practice in partnership work. This year's cohort included a diverse mix of nine faculty, seven staff, three students, and nine community representatives from academic institutions and organizations in Wisconsin and Alaska.

Designed to provide an intensive, place-based learning experience, the program explored the historical, cultural, and structural factors that shape health and well-being in the Milwaukee community. Through place-based learning, didactic sessions, and collaborative reflection, participants engaged in rich dialogue and built connections across sectors.

MCW-affiliated participants have continued their community-engaged work in meaningful ways following the program, applying the insights gained to their roles across education, research, clinical practice, and community partnership.

Among the MCW participants was Alenna Beroza, MS, who joined the program as a rising fourth-year medical

student. Following her work in Uganda as a Kohler Global Health Scholar and her participation in the Immersion program, Alenna returned to Uganda for a year, working to improve HPV and cervical cancer prevention among female sex workers. Throughout her time in Uganda, she has built strong relationships with local stakeholders, contributed to published research, and helped shape culturally informed policies and practices.



Rochelle Cockerham, RN, BSN, RNC-OB, program manager in MCW's Department of Family and Community Medicine, also applied her Immersion Program learnings to medical resident education. Since participating in the Immersion Program, she has expanded community opportunities for the 38 residents of the North Side Milwaukee Health Centers Family Medicine Residency Program. She has worked towards establishing new partnerships around the city, meeting with community partners and collaborating with them to host community health events. Participation in these events will now be integrated into the residency's curriculum. Reflecting on her community-based work, Rochelle shared that the immersion program widened her perspective to see that "building relationships takes time... it may not work to partner with everybody, but that's okay, I recognize that that is a normal part of the process."



"The Community Engaged Scholars Immersion Program helped solidify my commitment to equitable, community-led work. Hearing directly from grassroots leaders challenged me to think more intentionally about how I approach partnerships and affirmed that the most impactful and sustainable solutions emerge when we lead from within the team and community."

- Alenna Beroza

Reflections from 2024 Participants:

“(The session) sparked me to want to continue to go deeper on some of the historical implications of policies.”

“Appreciate the opportunity to meet such a wide variety of professionals who are dedicated and committed to working towards building and sustaining communities in WI.”

“I took away new knowledge about existing community partnerships and programs and new contacts.”

“I enjoyed the networking and learning about partnerships – establishing connections and sustaining them...”



2024 OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SCHOLARSHIP AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SELECTED AWARDS

Rebecca Bernstein, MD

Inaugural Award Recipient, Amos Deinard Award, American Academy of Public Health Dentistry, 2024

Zeno Franco, PhD

Outstanding Medical Student Teacher Award, Global Health Pathway, Medical College of Wisconsin, 2024

Leslie Ruffalo, PhD, MS

Outstanding Medical Student Teacher Award, Clinical and Translational Research Pathway, Medical College of Wisconsin, 2024

Christopher Simenz, PhD, MS

Outstanding Graduate Educator, Medical College of Wisconsin, Academic Year 2023-2024

Staci Young, PhD

Cancer Center Scholar, Medical College of Wisconsin, 2024

SELECTED AWARDS

Azam L. Strategies for Capacity Building and Sustainability for Coalitions and Other Partnerships. MCW Community Engagement Spring Conference; 2024

Azam L. Patient-Physician Interactions with Muslim Patients Medical College of Wisconsin. Health Equity Thread Spiral Weeks; 2024

Azam L. Building Trust and Breaking Barriers to Health Equity in Communities of Color. Versiti Organ and Tissue Impact Summit; 2024

Azam L, Tahir A, Ahmed F, Quryshi I, Ashraf I, Hafeez A, Foutz R, McCracken C, Padela A. "Are we really speeding up death?" Exploratory Insights About Hospice Care from the American Muslim Community. 10th Annual MCW Community Engagement Poster Session; 2024

Bernstein R, Ruffalo L, Maher L. Including Patient and Community Voices in Medical Education: Strategies for Virtual, Hybrid, and In-Person Learning. Society of

Teachers of Family Medicine Annual Conference; 2024

Bernstein R, Schmidt P, Maher L. Urban and Community Health Pathway 2.0. Kern Health Equity Summit; 2024

Bernstein R, Telagi P, Maher L, Meurer L. Career Outcomes of the Urban and Community Health Pathway: A Survey of Program Graduates. Central Group on Educational Affairs (CGEA) Spring Conference; 2024

Castro A, Treat R, Malinowski M, Fairbanks S, **Simenz C**, Willie C, Zundel T, Georgeades C, Francis J, Carlson C, Longo J, Ovide J, De Santis J. A Community Outreach-Based Healthcare Disparities Curriculum Integrated into Professional Development for Graduate Medical Education Trainees: A Mixed-Methods Analysis of Pilot Year One. Association of American Medical Colleges Learn Serve Lead Conference; 2024

Edgerly M, **Ruffalo L.** Obstetric Care in Rural Wisconsin: Challenges and Facilitators. Society of Family Medicine Medical Student Education Conference; 2024

Lakshmanan A, **Ruffalo L.** An Evaluation of Geographical Factors When Training Community Health Workers. Society for Public Health Education Conference; 2024

Meurer L, Maher L, **Bernstein R.** Weaving a Health Equity Thread Across a Medical School Curriculum. Central Group on Educational Affairs (CGEA) Spring Conference; 2024

Nelson D. Health Scholars: Community Engagement in Four Parts. MCW Health Scholars; 2024

Nelson D. Lead-Free Wisconsin Project Summary. Wisconsin Public Health Association Conference; 2024

Nelson D. Public Health and Community Development. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Urban Planning; 2024

Nelson D. Resilience in 2024 and Beyond: Supporting Health through Relationships. Milwaukee County Organizations Promoting Prevention: Social Determinants of Health Symposium; 2024

Pinsoneault L, Cawthra T, Broeckling J, Meister T, Taebel K, Proctor J, Fairfield F, Hackett K, **Young S**, Frazer D, Stolley M. The Critical Role of Developmental Evaluation in Supporting and Enhancing an Equitable Transdisciplinary Approach to Address Cancer Disparities. American Association for Cancer Research Conference on The Science of Cancer Health Disparities in Racial/Ethnic Minorities and the Medically Underserved; 2024

Ruffalo L, Bernstein R. Results from a Community Engagement Learning Series for Medical Students. Society of Family Medicine Medical Student Education Conference; 2024

Ruffalo L, Bernstein R, Johnston B, Young S, Burke K. Results from a Community Engagement Learning Series for Medical Students. Society of Teachers of Family Medicine Annual Conference; 2024

Ruffalo L, Heller B, Bomstad N, Hanson W, Scanlan K, Dyer J. Building Capacity for Hmong Farmers to Meet Local Food Needs. American Public Health Annual Conference; 2024

Ruffalo L, Purl L, Severson S, Scanlan K, Dyer J, White-Jacobs M, Torkelson M, Roberts J. Evaluation of the Jackson County Pathways Community Hub. Wisconsin Public Health Association Annual Meeting; 2024

Simenz C. Promoting Social Connectedness and A Sense of Belonging. Milwaukee County Organizations Promoting Prevention: Social Determinants of Health Symposium; 2024

Simenz C, Culp B, Morris S, Rodriguez C. Understanding the Needs of Physical Educators around Burnout, Stress, and Trauma. Society for Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) Annual Convention & Expo; 2024

Simenz C, Treat R, De Santis J, Fairbanks S, Zundel T, Willie C, Castro A, Malinowski M, Nelson D. Promotion of Equity-Focused Medical Practice via Community Engagement Across Medical Residency Programs. International Association of Medical Science Educators Annual Conference; 2024

Umfleet L, **Young S**, Franczak M, Tobin B, Pitchford D, McDowell M, Jones D, Mason L, Merrill J. The BAND-Together Initiative: A Milwaukee-based Collaborative Project to Reduce Health Disparities and Improve Research Inclusivity. International Neuropsychological Society North American Meeting; 2024

Young S, Beyer K, Dickson-Gomez J. Community-based Participatory Workshop, Duhlikhel Hospital, Kathmandu, Nepal; 2024

Young S, Cortina C, Holder P. Community and Cancer Science Network's Collaborative Work Groups Wisconsin Cancer Summit; 2024

Young S, Merrill J. Principles of Community Engagement and Relevant Research Methods. International Neuropsychological Society North American Meeting; 2024

SELECTED INTERVIEWS & OTHER MEDIA

[Community Conversations: Face2Face with Dr. Zeno Franco and Patricia Ruiz-Cantu](#)

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Awoyinka I, Tovar M, **Young S**, Beyer K, Kwarteng J, Knight J, Stolley M. [Examining the role of social relationships on health and health behaviors in African American men with prostate cancer: A qualitative analysis.](#) Support Care Cancer. 2024;32:178.
- Baker ND, **Franco Z**, Okusanya T. [Sensorized health interventions in marginalized communities: The role of surveillant assemblages in maintaining compliance within disaster affected healthcare systems.](#) Information Technology in Disaster Risk Reduction: 8th International Federation for Information Processing International Conference. Revised Selected Papers. 2024;706, 269.
- Bollaert RE, Bennett MM, Davis KE, Hillard CJ, Whittle J, **Franco Z**, Broadwell S, Fitzgerald J. [Yoga for veterans with PTSD: Intervention feasibility, changes in PTSD symptom severity, and psychological and physiological health related fitness outcomes.](#) Int J Yoga Ther. 2024;34.
- Daskalska L, Broaddus M, **Young S**. [Closing the gap in access to child mental health care: Provider feedback from the Wisconsin Child Psychiatry Consultation Program.](#) BMC Prim Care. 2024; 25: 300.
- Daskalska L, Tarima S, Meurer J, **Young S**. [Child anxiety and depression during the COVID-19 pandemic and unmet mental health care needs.](#) Child Psychiatry Hum Dev. 2024.
- Davis KE, Bennett MM, Hillard CJ, Whittle J, **Franco Z**, Bollaert RE, Fitzgerald JM. [Effect of trauma type and trauma burden on self efficacy for physical exercise in military veterans.](#) Trauma United Kingdom. 2024. Scopus ID: 2s2.085186393424.
- Denton S, Cairns D, Marchese G, Rich A, Jadcherla A, Scott D, Dyer J, Lundh R, **Young S**, Harrison R. [Development of a medication refill system—A collaboration between telemedicine and pharmacy departments.](#) J Student-Run Clin. 2024;10(1).
- Franco Z**, **Ruffalo L**, Curry B, Gollin-Graves M, Ahamed SI, Winstead O, Hooyer K, Pazdera M, Rein L, Lizarraga Mazaba J, Hossain MF, Stoffel V, Flower M, Madiraju P, Melka S, Berte K, Whittle J. [Impact of veteran led peer mentorship on posttraumatic stress disorder.](#) J Trauma Stress. 2024;37(4):617630.
- Greer YD, Nevels D, Meinen A, Korth A, Moore TR, Appel J, Werner K, Calancie L, Ellis AL, Espy N, Hendricks S, Johnson T, Johnson VD, Nabak D, Rember V, **Simenz C**, Weeks N, Wilks-Tate A, **Economos CD**. [Applying Community-Based System Dynamics to Support Collective Action and Promote Child Health Equity: The case of Healthy & Fit Kids in Milwaukee, WI.](#) Front Public Health. 2024;12.
- Haque MR, **Franco Z**, Madiraju P, Baker ND, Ahamed SI, Winstead O, Curry R, Rubya S. [“Butt call me once you get a chance to chat”: Designing persuasive reminders for veterans to facilitate peer mentor support.](#) Proceedings of the Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. 2024.
- Kohlbeck S, Quinn K, deRoos-Cassini T, Hargarten S, **Nelson D**, Cassidy L. [Toward a public health approach to farmer suicide prevention: The potential power of systems change.](#) J Agromedicine. 2024;29(4):665-675.
- Korom B, Malloy M, Remmers C, Welsch E, Cevilla M, Alamillo-Roman Z, Torres D, Dione K, **Nelson D**. [“It takes a village”: Reflections from participants after a Hispanic community-based health promotion program.](#) BMC Public Health. 2024;24(1):237.
- Miller T, Balza J, Kellis J, Paradis H, Meurer J, **Nelson D**. [Lead poisoning in Milwaukee: A medical and public health update.](#) WMJ. 2024;123(4):267-271.
- Miller J, Doucas A, Hamsitha K, Thareja S, Bowie O, Dong X, Terrell J, Hernandez S, Corujo-Ramirez AM, Xia N, Qi S, Huang C, Lundh R, **Young S**. [Social determinants of health correlations and resource usefulness at a Milwaukee free clinic for uninsured individuals: A cross-sectional study.](#) J Clin Transl Sci. 2024;8(1):e71.
- Nguyen C, Kubiak G, Dixit N, **Young S**, Hayes J. [Evaluating barriers to opioid use disorder treatment from patients’ perspectives.](#) PRIMER. 2024;8:11.
- Okusanya TR, Gresser J, Stevenson M, A Kumar, MR Haque, **Franco Z**. [Designing information flow with diverse community health workers to improve public health situational awareness during COVID 19.](#) In: Proceedings of the International ISCRAM Conference. 2024.
- Remmers CA, Conroy MM, Korom BM, Malloy ME, Sieracki R, Fairbanks SL, **Nelson D**. [Anesthesiologists and community engagement: A scoping review of the literature.](#) Anesth Analg. 2024;138(4):794-803.
- Thareja SK, Marting S, Davies W, Samudrala SS, Rayes R, Balfour M, Corujo-Ramirez AM, Carter F, Liu B, Trinh D, Ritter T, Miller J, Lundh R, **Young S**. [Associated SDOH needs of patients without health insurance and experiencing food insecurity.](#) Discover Soc Sci Health. 2024;4:25.
- Thareja SK, Yang X, Upama PB, Abdullah A, Torres SP, Cocroft LJ, Bubolz M, McGaughey K, Lou X, Kamaraju S, Ahamed SI, Madiraju P, Kwitek AE, Whittle J, **Franco Z**. [Equitable community based participatory research engagement with communities of color drives All of Us Wisconsin genomic research priorities.](#) J Am Med Inform Assoc. 2024;31(12):29402951.

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- Participating in the self-study process for MCW's 2026 Carnegie Community Engagement Re-Classification application
- Serving on community engagement-focused advisory committees
- Contributing content as planners, presenters, panelists, facilitators, and guests during OCE webinars, podcasts, conferences, and other programs
- Sponsoring, supporting, and reviewing award and fellowship nominations and applications
- Providing support for other community engagement mission-focused efforts

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