Office of Community Impact
Annual Report AY2020/21

Ut Prosim, That I May Serve
The Office of Community Impact fosters transformative learning experiences for PSU students to engage in active citizenship, explore their sense of purpose, and grow into conscious leaders who cultivate love and connection throughout our local and global communities.

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This past academic year was unlike any other, as we collectively navigated through the COVID-19 global pandemic. Our top priority was the health and well-being of our entire community. Necessary safety protocols kept us physically distanced, however, we found new ways to work alongside our non-profit partners through indirect service, virtual volunteerism, and outdoor in-person projects. Though the landscape of community engaged learning was uprooted, civic responsibility grew increasingly important with the pandemic exposing social injustice, racial disparities, and systemic inequities. I am incredibly proud of how our PSU students answered the call to embody our institutional motto, Ut Prosim, That I May Serve, with great courage and creativity.

This report highlights all that the Office of Community Impact (OCI) was able to accomplish this past year, but let me be clear, none of this would have been possible without the dedication and tireless work of our non-profit agency partners. I am deeply grateful for the important work they do to strengthen the fabric our community. They have invested countless hours into mentoring the next generation of change makers, our beloved students. Together with our partners, we were able to collect and distribute PPE, participate in the Community of Caring Flags Project, host Community Cleanups, make blankets for Project Linus, facilitate the Angel Tree Project, host both a campus-wide cereal drive and book drive, provide meals at the Bridge House, and involve students in many volunteer and service learning projects throughout the broader community. Off-campus work study students engaged at the Pemi Youth Center, Plymouth Parks and Recreation, Campton Recreation, and Ladders Thrift Store (to name but a few). We were able to increase our social media presence and offer online experiences such as the Coffee & Community Zoom conversations and the Let’s Talk Tuesday podcast, which provided safe and brave space to explore complex social issues. The OCI also provided basic necessities for students and community members through our work with the Student Support Foundation and our Give Before You Go program. This was our collective impact. This is what is possible when we come together in honoring our interconnected nature. Simply put, we need each other.

I extend my deep admiration and appreciation to OCI Assistant Director, Casey Krafton, whose brilliant mind and generous heart shapes our work in powerful ways. I couldn’t imagine the OCI without her! Profound gratitude is also sent to our amazing graduate student Impact Coordinator, Melina Baker, and fabulous student Impact Ambassadors, Tam ‘Tallie’ Phan, Tylor Austin, Emily Infinger, Cody Roberts, Jonah Rosenberg, and Breanna Kender, It was truly an honor working alongside you all this past year! On behalf of all of us in the OCI, I thank the students, faculty, staff, and partners who helped us advance social justice and cultivate a more compassionate, equitable, and loving world. I am grateful for the light you bring. Shine on!

With gratitude,

Jessica A. Orf Dutille, EdD
The Office of Community Impact facilitated 461 placements throughout the broader region during AY2020-21. These experiences resulted in 4,210 total service hours, with an economic benefit of $120,153 (based on current volunteer rate of $28.54/hour).
Co-Curricular Pathway

The Community Impact Pathway offers students a guided journey through community engaged learning experiences intentionally designed to develop PSU’s four Habits of Mind and eight NACE (National Association of College and Employers) competencies.

This tiered programmatic approach to co-curricular engagement supports students from exposure to service oriented activities, up through engagement in social action programs, and ultimately to a culminating leadership experience. To complete this pathway, students must engage in and reflect on five experiences at the Basecamp Member Level, two experiences at the Climbing Volunteer Level, and one experience at the Conscientious Citizen Level. Students who complete the Community Impact Pathway receive recognition on their co-curricular transcript and are honored through the Office upon graduation.

Competencies

All Office of Community Impact programs integrate Plymouth State’s Habits of Mind and the NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers) Competencies* in support of student development.
We learned a great deal this past year about supporting one another and protecting our community as we faced the COVID-19 global pandemic. The OCI partnered with Speare Memorial Hospital and the Central NH Public Health Network to collect PPE for local community members. Additionally, we found new ways to connect and support our non-profit partners through indirect service projects and virtual volunteerism. We launched new programs such as the weekly Coffee & Community Zoom sessions and the Let’s Talk Tuesday Podcast, which provided safe and brave space for students, faculty, and staff to explore social issues and ways to have positive impact on our communities during the pandemic.

"I learned that I am cared about and that I care about others, and we can do a lot together, even if it’s just brightening each other’s day for an hour." -Student Participant

"I learned how we can all come together in times of hardship and still find ways to help even when we can’t be there physically." -Student Participant

"I learned what a huge difference connecting with others can make." -Student Participant
Reflections on Impact

The true and lasting impact of this work is best articulated in the words of our students and partners...

“Thank you for your commitment to educational excellence.”
—Partner Survey Spring 2021

“As someone who wants to end up in a career working with children, this community engaged learning allowed me to gain experience within the specialty and build new skills that allow me to continuously be the best mentor I can be.”
—Student Reflection, Community Engaged Learning Module AY20-21

“The process to address social inequities takes time but with many people of the same mindset/beliefs contributing to the same cause, progress is made.”
—Student Reflection, Coffee & Community Session AY20-21

“We can all take a small portion of our day to do something kind and meaningful for others.”
—Student Reflection, Project Linus AY20-21

“I have learned that participating with a group of volunteers who are all contributing to the community can be very rewarding and liberating to feel, because know that the shared value of helping those in need brought all of us together to help our communities”
—Student Reflection, Community Engaged Learning Module AY20-21

PSU is recognized as one of only 119 U.S. colleges and universities to hold the Carnegie Foundation Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, a designation that honors institutional commitment to community engagement.
The Office of Community Impact engaged students during Panther Days’ and throughout the fall 2020 semester in making flags for the Community of Caring Flags Project, which was a collaboration between the OCI, Museum of the White Mountains, the Town of Plymouth, and local businesses and organizations. The project raised awareness of the importance of protecting one another during the COVID-19 global pandemic.
Project Linus

Students made over 100 blankets for Project Linus, a non-profit organization that distributes these blankets to children and youth being supported by social service agencies, hospitals, and shelters.

"This experience made me realize that there are a lot of children in need. There are may people without access to simply resources, like warm blankets." - Student Participant

"It just takes a little bit of time and effort to make a difference." - Student Participant

Dog Chew Toys

Students engaged in making 59 Dog chew toys were made for shelter dogs at the Franklin, NH Animal Shelter and the Anti-Cruelty Society.

"There are easy ways to make an impact, you just need to commit to it." - Student Participant
Angel Tree Project

The Office of Community Impact facilitated our largest Angel Tree Project to date, which supported fifteen community agencies throughout our region to provide over 345 local youth with gifts for the holidays. This program spread some holiday cheer and also assisted in providing necessary winter clothing for our youth.

This project could not have been possible without the incredible support of our community. We had over 208 donors contribute gifts and financial support, engaged students in 44 volunteer hours, and raised over $4,250 in donations. We are forever grateful for all the ways everyone came together this holiday season to fill this community need in our local region.
The OCI works hard to be responsive to the volunteer needs of community partners and takes project requests throughout the year.

This past academic year, we were happy to support the Mayhew Program by having volunteers help work on Mayhew Island.

We were also happy to support the Food Bank of NH Mobile Food Pantry.

"I will take away the power of what a few hours of effort will do and how that can affect a community." -Student Participant
Spread the Love

The OCI engaged students in making Valentine’s Day cards for residents of the Woodcrest Village Assisted Living community.

Children's Book Drive!

*Now accepting books through March 5th!*

NEW or USED children’s books can be dropped off into the donation bin right outside the Office of Community Impact in the HUB, Room 039.
Community Cleanups

The OCI facilitated Community Cleanups in partnership with the Town of Plymouth to help connect students to the broader community and make a local impact on the environment.

“This made me think that we need better educational programs early on about respecting the earth and instilling those important values.” - Student Participant
The Office of Community Impact was pleased to continue its collaboration with the Bridge House Shelter of Plymouth to provide community dinners on a monthly basis. Instead of having students prepare and share meals with Bridge House residents, the OCI supported locally owned businesses and provided take-out meals for the Bridge House. This helped to ensure the health and safety of our community. The OCI looks forward to engaging in-person with the Bridge House again in the upcoming academic year.
Give Before You Go

We were happy to facilitate Give Before You Go (formerly named, Give it Forward) again this year, after having to keep the program small during AY2019-20 due to COVID. All the donations were able to be shared with Student Support Foundation’s on campus food pantry, as well as local organizations, including Voices Against Violence, Ladders, Pemi-Valley Habitat For Humanity ReStore, and the Pemi Youth Center.

A big thank you to our OCI Student Ambassadors and volunteers who helped collect and sort donations - all while wrapping up their semester and finals!
Social Action Trips

Service trips expose students to complex social and cultural issues through direct service, group discussion, and reflection. These trips immerse students in diverse communities to learn from those around them as they learn about themselves.

Our goal is to provide financially accessible opportunities for students to explore the world through meaningful service opportunities.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we had to suspend Social Action Trips during winter break and spring break in AY20-21, but are grateful to our Social Action Trip Coordinators, who worked hard to explore all options over the year. Thank you to Lisa Howes, Noelle Brower, Kadirah Abdul-Jabbar, Jessica Veil, and Reuben Nadeau. We do have a team currently working towards an International Social Action Trip to Jamaica, scheduled for January 2022, and we anticipate sending trips out for Spring Break in 2022.

Photo from AY2018-19 Amizade trip to Petersfield Galloway Benevolent Society, Petersfield and Galloway, Jamaica

Photo from AY2019-20 trip to Gita Nagari Eco Farm in Port Royale, Pennsylvania
Student Support Foundation

The Student Support Foundation (SSF) is proud of all the hard work the board members have dedicated this past year in awarding over 35 grants totaling over $8,700 to Plymouth State students, collecting over 1000 meals through Swipe It Forward, as well as maintaining the Community Cupboard and two satellite food pantries.

SSF is grateful for the support of our campus and community through financial donations and food donations. Throughout the year we had donations come in from local businesses, Greek Life organizations, Residence Halls, class projects, and individual contributions from many individuals. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our community and our philosophy of taking care of one another!

For more information about SSF please visit this link: https://campus.plymouth.edu/student-support-foundation/.
PSU Volunteers is a social action student organization focused on making a difference in our surrounding communities. We are grateful for their partnership and support in making a positive impact in our town! Here are some highlights of AY20-21.

- Hosting multiple community clean ups in partnership with campus and the town.
- Coordinating a donation event on campus, to encourage donors to support a cause that is important to them.
- Collaborating to write holiday cards and spread cheer for senior citizens during the month of November.

![Image of PSU Volunteers]

**PSU Volunteer Donation Event**

Donation = Straw
Have an organization you’d like to donate to? Donate even just $1 to a nonprofit organization and receive a metal re-useable straw!

Requirements for Organization
Any nonprofit organization will be accepted as long as it follows Plymouth State University supporting guidelines
Suggested Organizations: UNICEF, The Water Project, Charity Water

Straws
Straws are metal with a blue silicone tip, comes with cleaning brush. Limited supplies and first come first serve.

How to get a Straw
Email confirmation of donation to epi1001@plymouth.edu
Will arrange pick up time for you to collect prize

Alternative Prize Accomodation
We acknowledge that not everyone can use reusable straws, and if you would like an alternative prize we have stickers!
Service Learning

The Office of Community Impact is pleased to collaborate with faculty members in supporting high impact community engaged learning that advances integrated cluster projects and positively benefits our broader community. This past academic year, we facilitated 96 placements with community partners.

Resources and tools are available on the OCI website in support of high quality service learning experiences that integrate best practices in partner development, reciprocity, and reflection.

Service learning looked different in AY20-21, but despite the pandemic, we were able to work with our partners to engage students in indirect service, remote projects, and safe in-person opportunities.

Service Learning Spotlight

The OCI was pleased to continue our collaboration with Professors, Dr. Kristina Lind and Dr. Khánh Lai and their Intro to Social Work students in supporting service learning placements with local non-profit organizations. Additionally, we were happy to work with Dr. Kimberly Livingstone in presenting our service workshop in her Tackling a Wicked Problem class. Sincere gratitude to our colleagues in Social Work!

Workshops

The Office of Community Impact hosts workshops that provide students with safe and brave space to explore important topics and further develop as self-aware, civically engaged, and socially responsible active citizens. We were pleased to present the “Ethical Engagement Workshop” to students taking Tackling A Wicked Problem, a required course for all incoming first-years.

"Thank you so much to everyone who welcomed me with (virtual) open arms. I had a great experience and look forward to participating in future events!"
-Student Participant
**Off-Campus Federal Work Study**

Students have the opportunity to use their work study financial aid packages to work at local nonprofit organizations. This experience provides our students with direct learning from our community partners. This past year the program engaged **42 student placements at 5 locations, completing approximately 1,823 hours during AY20-21.**

Students spend their time supporting our local agencies and learning from them in areas including client management, youth development, social services, event management, community education, and many other valuable learning opportunities.

**2020-2021 Off-Campus Federal Work Study Partners**
Campton Recreation Department, Campus Ministry, Ladders, Pemi Youth Center, Plymouth Recreation Department

**Student Leadership**

The Office of Community Impact empowers student leaders through student employment and program coordinator positions. This past academic year, seven Student Ambassadors worked for the office through student employment and internships. In addition, volunteer student leadership positions are available through social action student organizations such as PSU Volunteers, Student Support Foundation, and Service Trips.

These student leaders create a welcoming environment at PSU, where their peers gain a sense of belonging and come to understand how much they matter in our community.
Engaged Learning Module

The Community Engaged Learning Module helps to prepare students for their community engaged learning experiences. This online training lays the foundation for developing PSU’s four Habits of Mind that cultivate the NACE (National Association for Colleges and Employers).

Students can take these modules online by going to the OCI webpage. In AY20-21, 91 students completed the module.

"The aspect that resonated with me the most that leads to being a well-rounded leader is the importance of happiness and gratitude. I think gratitude is the key to happiness. It helps us see the world in a more positive light and gives us the power of patience, understanding, and helps us relish the good experiences we have." -Student Participant

"I believe through participating in community engagement experience, I gain the awareness of how interconnected I am with others in the community and how we all relate to one another on a deeper level beyond participating in the same program or being part of the same community." - Student Participant

"My participation in my community engaged learning experience impacted my career and future professional endeavors by teaching me to be more confident." -Student Participant

"In volunteering, it is important to remember that yes, you are providing a service, however, you are also there engaging with you community and learning about it from a perspective you may not have considered before. This is a profound idea that many people forget about giving back, you may not benefit directly from the service offered at certain organizations, but you are benefiting from just being there and absorbing other people's struggles and beginning to understand them on a deeper level." -Student Participant
Campus Compact Presidents’ Awards

The OCI was delighted to collaborate with the President’s Office in honoring outstanding members of our community who are dedicated to civic and social responsibility through the **Campus Compact Presidents’ Awards**. Congratulations to Ann Thurston, Alyssa Griffin ’23, and Speare Memorial Hospital for being recognized for their exemplary work.

**Presidents' Leadership Award & 2021-22 Newman Civic Fellow**

**Alyssa Griffin**

Alyssa is a sophomore at Plymouth State University, where she is studying meteorology with a minor in math. She serves as food pantry manager and current President for the Student Support Foundation (SSF), a student-led organization that provides emergency financial grants, manages an on-campus food pantry, and provides other services at no cost to PSU students. Alyssa stepped into the role of President just this semester, when the SSF’s previous President was unable to return for the spring 2021 semester. A passionate volunteer, she dedicated her free time and skills over the summer of 2020 to review multiple SSF grant applications. Additionally, Alyssa is a writing consultant for Lamson Library and is active in student government, serving as the Class of 2023’s elected Treasurer. She took part in a video presented at the January 2021 USNH Board of Trustees meeting, describing her experience needing to quarantine last semester and how the COVID-19 response teams communicated effectively with her to ensure her needs were met. More recently, Alyssa was accepted by the admissions office to become a tour guide. She is looking forward to giving tours in the near future so she can tell prospective students about the school that she cares about so deeply.
Ann Thurston

Ann has three degrees from Plymouth State, and her time on campus has spanned four decades and numerous positions and awards. She started by working in Lamson Library, and has served as manager of campus services, bursar, and associate vice president for academic administration and finance. ``I get to work with really fantastic people,`` she says. ``I have the opportunity to participate in the life of the University through supporting our students and faculty.`` In 2016, Ann stepped into the role of Plymouth State's first Director of Planned Giving. In the past five years as Director of Planned Giving, Ann has transformed Plymouth State's planned giving operation, which was in its nascent stage when she took the role. She has cultivated relationships between Plymouth State and estate planning professionals to ensure that bequests and other planned gifts left to the University are received accurately and efficiently. Through her thoughtful stewardship of deferred gift donors, Ann has inducted over 40 new members to the Holmes Heritage Society, an honorary society for alumni and friends who have included Plymouth State in their financial and estate plans through a will, trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy, or life income gift. In addition to her role as a steward, Ann has been a generous donor to Plymouth State for nearly four decades. She and her late partner, Betsy Cheney '89,'99G, set up their own significant planned gift to the University more than ten years ago. Ann's forty-year career has covered every facet of Plymouth State University, from working with department chairs, to the registrar's office, to the Office of Sponsored Programs, to securing over a million planned giving dollars for future generations of Plymouth State students. She draws from her wealth of experience at the institution when connecting with potential donors, who trust her because they know she legitimately believes what she says. The institution provided her with an education and a career, with mentors, friends, and family. Raising funds for Plymouth State is not a job for Ann Thurston; it's a responsibility and a calling. Though she will be retiring from Plymouth State in the summer of 2021, we look forward to her continued involvement with the University as a triple-alumna, donor, volunteer, and Holmes Heritage Society member.
Speare Memorial Hospital has been Plymouth's cornerstone this year in keeping residents, including Plymouth State students, safe and healthy while in the midst of a global pandemic. The hospital worked with the National Guard, the State of New Hampshire, regional Emergency Preparedness resources, and Plymouth State University to create an Alternate Care Site at the PSU Ice Arena and Welcome Center early on in the pandemic, when health officials warned of a mid-April surge in COVID-19 cases. Speare medical providers also implemented telehealth across the hospital and its practices by mid-April, allowing patients and physicians to connect online through a secure, encrypted application. Through telehealth, patients are able to continue receiving care without leaving the safety of home. Speare Memorial Hospital has been a clinical training site for PSU nursing students for nearly a decade. Plymouth State's newly-opened medical simulation lab also serves Speare's nurses a great opportunity to train in and practice scenarios they experience infrequently. Speare began COVID-19 vaccinations in late December 2020 and will continue the roll-out throughout summer 2021, and beyond.
We’d like to lift up the incredible work of our graduating seniors. These students were integral to the Office of Community Impact, and left a mark on our community and our hearts. They chose to embed the Community Impact Pathway into their service experiences, and in doing so, made a commitment to rooting learning and reflection into their practices as they became leaders in their specific social action oriented organizations. We are incredibly proud of all their hard work and the legacies they’ve left in our communities. You truly embody our institutional motto, Ut Prosim, That I may Serve.
The OCI partnered with Choose Love NH to bring together Plymouth Community stakeholders, representing all sectors, to discuss advancing this important movement and serve as a model community in the State. The event was hosted by the First Lady of NH, Valerie Sununu at The Bridges House in Concord.
Collective well-being requires us to continuously return to what is most important, each other. Over the course of the 2021-22 academic year, the Office of Community Impact will take the following programmatic and outreach steps to advance active citizenship, wellness, and social justice throughout our region.

1. Strengthen campus and community partnerships for collective impact
2. Launch a transformative community engagement mentorship program in partnership with Frost House, Ascent, and Panther Days
3. Scale Community Impact Competency-Based Pathway
4. Integrate the Choose Love SEL Curriculum and practices into programming
5. Increase communication and offerings through the Student Support Foundation Food Pantry and emergency grants

Love,
OCI Family.