

# COLLABORATIVE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC PLAN



COLORADO COLLEGE  
**Collaborative  
for Community  
Engagement**

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
“Building on the Block” through Community Engagement	4
The Civic Action Planning Initiative	5
Foundations	6
Semester of Listening and Summer of Planning	7-8
Institutional Context	9
Aspirational Tenets	10-22
How might we mobilize our campus community to embrace individual and institutional citizenship in Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region?	10-11
How might we build the capacity of our faculty and students to meaningfully integrate community-based work into teaching, learning, and scholarship?	12-13
How might we better prepare our campus community to engage in intentional ways that attend to individual and institutional positionality, and promote equity, inclusion, and empowerment?	14-15
How might we facilitate intracampus collaboration toward more strategic, impactful, community-engaged goals?	16-17
How might we centralize, institutionalize, and communicate resources to stakeholders both on and off campus in order to affirm and deepen partnerships?	18-19
How might we integrate communities beyond the campus into the life of the college in an effort to learn together and from one another?	20-21
Summary of Strategic Initiatives	22
Contacts and Acknowledgements	23

## Executive Summary

The Collaborative for Community Engagement (CCE) launched a strategic planning process in January of 2018 with one core goal — to forge a strengthened vision for how the CCE could cultivate and deepen community-engaged teaching, research, and action in ways that advance the mission and strategic plan of the college.

Our vision for crafting a campus-wide community engagement strategic plan was rooted in the national “Civic Action Planning” initiative launched by Campus Compact, a national coalition of over 1,000 colleges and universities committed to the public purpose of higher education. In 2015, the Compact charged member institutions with reinvigorating their public missions by engaging in community work more deliberately, thoughtfully, and coherently. As a first step, the Compact suggested creating a Civic Action Plan that set goals and identified approaches for how to best leverage campus assets to invest in public goods. We join over 100 colleges and universities across the nation who have responded by writing and implementing such strategic plans.

To determine our focus areas and strategies, we sought to co-create our strategic plan democratically with communities on and off-campus. To do so, the CCE coordinated a Semester of Listening to gather input from stakeholders through town halls, focus groups, interviews, collective visioning sessions, and survey data. We engaged the ideas and visions of around 500 people: faculty, students, staff, community partners, and residents. Our strategic planning steering committee crafted the core outcomes of this semester, including the CCE’s new vision and mission, as well as six aspirational questions that reflect central themes from input sessions. CCE staff then participated in a Summer of Planning to strategize how our office would realize this shared vision. This document elaborates this vision and how we plan to turn ideas into reality.

**Vision** To advance the public purpose of liberal arts education.

**Mission** In collaboration with faculty, staff, and communities beyond the campus, we co-create community-engaged learning experiences to develop students into engaged citizens who invest their liberal arts education in the public good.

## CCE Aspirational Tenets

1. How might we mobilize our campus community to embrace individual and institutional citizenship in Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region?
2. How might we build the capacity of our faculty and students to meaningfully integrate community-based work into teaching, learning, and scholarship?
3. How might we better prepare our campus community to engage in intentional ways that attend to individual and institutional positionality, and promote equity, inclusion and empowerment?
4. How might we facilitate intracampus collaboration toward more strategic, impactful, community-engaged goals?
5. How might we centralize, institutionalize, and communicate resources to stakeholders both on and off campus in order to affirm and deepen partnerships?
6. How might we integrate communities beyond the campus into the life of the college in an effort to learn together and from one another?

# “Building on the Block” through Community Engagement

Our aim in strategic planning is to deepen the CCE's effectiveness in advancing Colorado College's strategic plan, titled "Building on the Block." We sought to determine how the CCE can support the community engagement and engaged learning that best advances core goals of the college.

Colorado College's commitment to developing our students into lifelong engaged citizens is nothing new, reflected in our mission to “develop habits of intellect and imagination that will prepare students for learning and leadership throughout their lives,” and core institutional value to “encourage engagement and social responsibility at local, national, and global levels.” Through supporting place-based action, learning, and research opportunities, the CCE embodies this commitment by challenging students to apply the spirit, intellect, and imagination developed through a liberal arts education toward solving public problems. Yet *how* we as a college realize that commitment — and more specifically how the CCE builds capacity and coherency to that commitment — calls for renewed investment and strategic direction.



Community-engaged learning, research, and practice can powerfully support the recommendations of CC's strategic plan to “realize the potential of our ground-breaking Block Plan,” “enhance our distinctive place of learning,” and “connect the CC experience.”



By educating the CC community about the challenges for and priorities of Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region, community engagement develops a “sense of place” and understanding not only of the physical world in which CC is situated, but the communities in which we are embedded. Through programming that helps connect “students’ learning experience across coursework, and across curricular and co-curricular experiences,” community-based learning helps students discern the intersections between their engaged experiences and their intellectual and moral development as college students. Such experiences bridge students’ college years and their post-CC lives and allow exploration in career pathways in public good fields. Research also shows that community-based learning develops skills in students to more effectively navigate diversity and build inclusive spaces. Community-based research contributes to CC's overarching strategic aim to

develop a spirit of innovation in our students, cultivating knowledge and skills that enable students to “produce real-world answers to complex questions” and become “change-makers” in social and environmental realms. By promoting the use and best practices of community-based learning and research among faculty, the CCE builds on the assets of the block: immersive, experiential, and applied learning.

The CCE's planning processes aimed to deepen the intentionality and outcomes of community-engaged work at Colorado College toward realizing these components of the CC educational mission and strategic plan. Conceptualizing our work as supporting the central mission and priorities of the college, and remaining true to our work as a "collaborative," we sought to democratically form this plan by soliciting input from communities on and off campus.

This plan reflects the core concerns and priorities of the campus community, is rooted in the core concerns and priorities of Colorado College as an institution, and will be realized through our support of work across the campus.

While the CCE will drive and lead implementation, this plan emerges from and belongs to Colorado College.

## The Civic Action Planning Initiative

In our desire to deepen the strategic impact of community work, Colorado College is not alone. We engage in this collective visioning and planning process along with a national network of community engagement professionals, practitioners, scholars, and advocates within higher education, organized and guided by the Campus Compact. The mission of this coalition is to "advance the public purpose of colleges and universities by deepening their ability to improve community life and educate students for civic and social responsibility ... envisioning colleges and universities as vital agents and architects of a diverse democracy ..."



Founded in 1985 by the presidents of Brown, Georgetown, and Stanford, and the president of the Education Commission of the States, Campus Compact has a rich 30-year history of supporting the field of community engagement within higher education. In those three decades, practitioners and

scholars within the field have continually engaged in self-inquiry and study to strengthen the theoretical basis of community-engaged work, as well as adapt to an ever-changing civic landscape. Upon their 30th anniversary as an organization, Campus Compact released an Action Statement to build on this academic labor and summarize the latest thinking in the field of the core purposes of community engagement within higher learning. Colorado College signed that Action Statement in 2015, affirming our commitment to preparing young people to act in the benefit of the common good by equipping them with tools to challenge social and economic inequalities.

We contextualize our efforts within this **Campus Compact Action Statement:**

- We empower our students, faculty, staff, and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus — nearby and around the world.
- We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.
- We embrace our responsibilities as place based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities — economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.
- We harness the capacity of our institutions — through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice — to challenge the social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.
- We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for the campus community to contribute to their achievement.

## Foundations

The CCE's work is built on a shared set of values that infuse our practice and inform our perspective. At its core, our strategic planning process sought to determine how we can best embody and realize these fundamental commitments.

### Core Values

1. **Citizenship** – We work to cultivate a sense of shared responsibility for addressing collective problems and realizing collective visions, recognizing that we each have a stake in one another's futures.
2. **Place-Based** – We seek to root students' knowledge and community-engaged experiences in the communities, environments, and contexts that we inhabit.
3. **Just** – We commit to equitable and inclusive practices in our work that embody the diverse, democratic societies we aspire to build.
4. **Co-Creative** – We use a co-creative political approach to build partnerships with communities impacted by the issues on which we work – sharing voice, power, decision-making, and meaning-making in every phase.
5. **Relational** – We build and strengthen communities by centering relationship building rooted in a framework of trust, authenticity, and honesty.
6. **Collective Impact** – We believe that collective action of diverse stakeholders is the most sustainable, democratic, and impactful form of engagement.
7. **Asset-Based** – We believe all stakeholders in campus/community partnerships bring assets and strengths to bear on shared goals, and we honor knowledge, know-how, and perspectives both in and outside of academia.
8. **Intentional** – We cultivate informed, purposeful community engagement in which all people understand the assumptions and consequences of their actions.
9. **Holistic** – We engage with students as whole people to impact their intellectual, personal, and moral development, cultivating life-long commitments and actions.

# Semester OF Listening

In the spring semester of 2018, the CCE engaged in a “Semester of Listening” to gather input from around 500 people – including faculty, students, staff, community partners and residents. Underlying this effort to gather extensive input and feedback from communities on and off-campus was a deeper philosophy — the CCE belongs to, and exists to serve, the priorities of the college. With such a role, we felt that our mission and strategic direction should emerge from the college community; in other words, we should be charged with our strategic focuses. Additionally, we sought to embody the principles we espouse and promote — democracy, dialogue and deliberation, and community building and organizing.

## Listening Strategies

We phased our Semester of Listening by block to have intentional conversations that built on one another over time. Beginning in Block 5, we gathered input around the state of community engagement at CC. In Block 6, we gathered input around a vision for community-engaged learning, research, and action at the college. During Block 7, we gathered input on strategies for how the CCE might support that vision. Lastly, in Block 8 we shared what we learned and invited feedback.

The forms of listening and types of outreach we conducted varied to invite input from the stakeholders best equipped to answer the questions of each phase. To understand the current state of community engagement at CC, as well as the roots of that landscape, we conducted focus groups with engaged students, faculty, staff, and current community partners, as well as historical interviews with prior leadership in community engagement at CC. We gathered broad input for our vision, popping in to numerous student group gatherings, almost every academic department meeting, and staff divisional and office meetings. During this phase, we also conducted a survey of community partners and residents and a Facebook poll for students. To develop our strategies moving forward, we conducted Skype sessions with civic engagement offices at peer or exemplar institutions across the nation.

## By the Numbers

**500 people**

**207 students**

**149** faculty in  
**20** academic departments

**60** community partners, residents

**59** staff members

**14** steering committee members

**12** community engagement offices

**67 outreach strategies**

**31** visioning sessions

**12** in-depth interviews

**12** Skype sessions

**4** surveys

**4** focus groups

**3** listening sessions

**1** Facebook poll

## Data Analysis

To make meaning and sense of the data, we formed a steering committee of 14 faculty, staff, students, and community organization representatives that analyzed input throughout the semester. The role of the steering committee was to synthesize broad, democratic input into core foundations of our strategic plan, based on the emergent themes and input of communities on and off campus. To enable the committee to have access to this input, we recorded all listening sessions and had them transcribed by a student assistant. We shared written summaries of each session with steering committee members, who then collectively identified patterns and themes. Reflecting these themes, the steering committee worked to re-write the CCE's mission and vision statements and identified the six aspirations on which our strategic plan is centered.

## Summer of Planning

Following our Semester of Listening, CCE staff engaged in a "Summer of Planning" to strategize how to realize this shared vision. Through a series of eight weekly workshops and a full-day retreat, we collectively brainstormed and organized goals, strategies, tactics, and initiatives within each aspirational tenet. Below, you will find the core definitions that guided this work.

### Definitions

Goal — Measurable impact achieved through strategic actions

Strategy — Approach to guide our actions

Tactic — Strategic action to achieve measurable impacts

Initiative — Specific CCE program, event, or service designed to employ core strategies and tactics toward goals

## Steering Committee

### Community-Based Organization Representatives

- LouAnn Deklava, Community Engagement-Volunteer Administrator for School District 11
- Deana Hunt, Senior Vice President of Community Impact, Pikes Peak United Way
- Zac Chapman, Executive Director of Colorado Springs Food Rescue

### Engaged Faculty

- Dr. Kat Miller-Stevens, Assistant Professor of Economics & Business, Faculty Director of Public Interest Fellowship Program
- Dr. Carol Neel, Professor of History
- Dr. Emilie Gray, Associate Professor, Organismal Biology & Ecology

### Engaged Students

- Acelynn Perkins, CCE Advisory Board
- Elam Boockvar-Klein, Engaged Scholar

### Community Engagement Leadership

- Dr. Jordan Travis Radke, CCE Director
- Dr. Anthony Siracusa, CCE Engaged Learning Specialist

### Academic Leadership

- Dr. Aaron Stoller, Director of the First Year Experience Program

### Student Life

- Zak Kroger, Special Projects Coordinator

### Community-Facing CC Staff

- Ian Johnson, Director – Office of Sustainability
- Carlos Jimenez, Director of Admission

**In the following pages, we elaborate our goals and use exemplar initiatives to illustrate core strategies and tactics.**



## Institutional Context

To understand where we should go, we must first understand where we begin. The following narrative of our strengths and weaknesses was crafted from data gathered in interviews with former community-engaged leadership, as well as focus groups of currently engaged students, faculty, staff, and current partners.

We begin with deep roots. CC has a rich history of community engagement, and this legacy means that the college is primed for meaningful community work. Our students and faculty take initiative to engage in the community — evidenced by the pockets of work that exist all over campus. Across a diverse array of departments, offices, and initiatives, people are building relationships with communities beyond the campus. Moreover, our students and faculty are capable of capacity-building and effecting change, bringing strong skillsets and knowledge to public work. Our people — this passion and knowledge — are our greatest asset.

While the sheer variety of initiatives on campus attest to broad interest in community work, this decentralization comes at the cost of coordination and strategy. Engaged projects, initiatives, and coursework can operate independently of one another, leading to a sense of isolation and siloization — ultimately inhibiting our capacity to make a deeper community impact and strengthen student learning. Externally, this lack of coordination weakens the coherency of CC's institutional narrative and identity in the community and leads to an underutilization of college assets. Internally, this lack of centralization and clear communication of resources diminishes our capacity, leaving some campus stakeholders with a desire to engage but without knowledge of how to do so. Lastly, without a strong coordinating body, engaged initiatives often emerge from disparate student or faculty passions — rather than community-driven needs.

Our Block Plan lays a context for and presents unique strengths and challenges to community engagement at CC. The Block Plan allows for immersive, focused community engagement and engaged projects. Yet the short-term nature and rhythm of the block precludes ongoing work and sustained impacts through courses. In and outside of the classroom, the block makes it difficult to build long-term, consistent relationships with community partners. Relatedly, the culture of the block lends itself to engagement that is episodic, as well as a tendency to expect to witness immediate impacts on complex social and environmental issues.

Lastly, our location as a progressive-leaning institution within a conservative-leaning city can present cultural divides and ideological conflicts between CC and Colorado Springs that are both real and perceived. Such differences can inhibit engagement and relationship building, yet provide a rich learning experience when encountered (or deconstructed). Our students also often come from social locations and backgrounds that differ from the communities in which they engage, heightening the need for students to have a strong awareness of their positionality as individuals and CC students, and dynamics of privilege and power.

### Our opportunities emerge from this context:

- harnessing passions toward shared goals to deepen collective impact
- understanding, adapting, extending, and building on the block to better integrate community engagement into CC's educational mission
- taking a place-based approach that centers opportunities for learning within our unique location and surrounding community
- providing more opportunities to equip our students with the skills and knowledge needed to be intentional changemakers toward a more just, equitable, sustainable world

## How might we mobilize our campus community to embrace individual and institutional citizenship in Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region?

To learn, to impact, to develop — we must first *show up* as citizens in our community. By “citizenship,” we mean taking shared responsibility for addressing collective problems and realizing collective visions, recognizing that we each have a shared stake in one another’s futures. By citizenship, we do not mean who is legally permitted to belong – an exclusionary, narrow use of the term in political discourse.

We have untapped potential in getting more members of our campus community connected — particularly in deep, sustained ways. Moreover, we have a tremendous opportunity to embrace our place in Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region; engaging locally affords greater opportunity for sustained relationship building and deeper, longer-term impacts. Moving forward, the CCE will work to mobilize our campus community to build collaborations with local organizations and participate in city and regional community life, dialogue, and decision-making.

Lastly, CC has an opportunity as an organization — not just as a community of individuals — to deepen our institutional citizenship, embracing our status as an anchor institution in Colorado Springs.

### Goals

1. Facilitate a spectrum of opportunities to engage (diverse communities, issues, forms of engagement, and levels of commitment).
2. Promote and expand deep, focused engagement in the Pikes Peak Region.
3. Advocate for the centering of community engagement within CC’s institutional narrative, culture, and practices.
4. Cultivate informed citizenship and sense of belonging in Colorado Springs by deepening knowledge of this city and region.
5. Deepen the CC community’s understanding of meanings and significance of citizenship.

### ANCHOR INSTITUTION

Colorado College has an opportunity to deepen our role as an anchor institution in Colorado Springs, meaning we are “anchored” or rooted to, and intimately shape, this place – in intentional and unintentional ways.

## Strategic Initiative – Community Engaged Scholars

In this program that spans the college experience, students commit to guided individual journaling and reflection on 300+ hours of social action over 4 years, coupled with participation in co-curricular trainings and lectures that give insight to their community work. Students document their activities along the way, each time responding to critical thinking questions aimed to help students conceptually integrate their engaged experiences. Intended to serve as an accessible gateway program for new CC students, Community Engaged Scholars centralizes information on avenues to engage and learn from community-based experience. With over 130 members, this open enrollment program encourages students to commit to making community engagement a core part of their college experience – and hold themselves accountable to “showing up.”



*In 2017, students learn about opportunities to engage in community work during a blockly Community Engaged Scholars orientation.*

**COMMUNITY  
ENGAGED  
SCHOLARS**

### SELECTED STRATEGIES

- √ Mobilize the campus community to participate in community life, dialogue, and decision-making
- √ Provide an array of “onramps” to enable students, staff, and faculty to engage
- √ Offer orientations, programming to ensure stakeholders know entry-points
- √ Provide meaningful incentives for high commitment and sustained work

# How might we build the capacity of our faculty and students to meaningfully integrate community-based work into teaching, learning, and scholarship?

To purposefully impact our community or students, we believe community engagement must be integrated with the core intellectual pursuits of higher learning. To impact community, CC must leverage our greatest public asset — knowledge learned in, and alongside, the classroom and created through research. To impact students' development into lifelong citizens, students must have the opportunity to learn and grow from their engaged experiences in intentional, structured ways.

## Strategic Initiative – Faculty Conversations

In this blockly lunch-and-learn, a faculty presenter or small panel shares their engaged teaching or research with interested faculty from across the college. This series is intended to support faculty who would like to learn more about community-engaged teaching and research on the block format, meet like-minded colleagues, and discover faculty projects with which they can get involved. These lunches are intentionally informal to enable faculty to ask questions and dialogue with one another, explore how to implement engaged models, and discuss possible collaborations. Critically, these lunches also provide a space to share and celebrate the engaged work of faculty.

## Goals

1. Enhance knowledge of community-engaged pedagogies and methodologies.
2. To support learning goals and research agendas, connect faculty and students to community-based organizations and needs in Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region.
3. Develop and offer resources to support community-engaged teaching, learning, and research.
4. Cultivate communities of praxis – groups that support one another in integrating theory and practice.
5. In partnership with faculty, integrate community-based work and teaching, learning, and research in and alongside the classroom.

To enable community-engaged pursuits within the classroom and research agendas, the CCE will work to expand the capacity of interested faculty by providing intellectual and practitioner support in each stage – knowing what to do and how to do it, making it happen, making it better, and sharing it with others. In particular, we will work to “Build on the Block” by seeking to better understand, adapt to, extend, and leverage a condensed, immersive course format for community impact. This work should and will be done in deep partnership with our resident experts on how to best integrate public work into the block – CC faculty. Lastly, recognizing some of the inherent limitations of the block in sustaining community work, we have a rich opportunity to integrate community-based learning and research into co-curricular spaces,

as well as meaningfully connect students' curricular and co-curricular experiences.

## Strategic Initiative – Community Partner RFP (Request for Proposals) for Research Projects

Through facilitating a “Request for Proposals” (RFP) process for community-based organizations, the CCE will begin to generate a list of community-driven projects that can connect to teaching or research. First, we will scaffold the process by educating partners about research methods and outcomes, the capacities of our faculty and students, and the block schedule. Then, we will support an application process through which partners can share research needs and knowledge-based project ideas. A committee will review applications to curate a list of possible community-engaged research project ideas, which the CCE will share widely as well as proactively targeting specific faculty and courses. The goal for this process is to guide faculty teaching and research toward community-identified needs, as well as guide our partners toward the types of projects that best leverage knowledge and provide learning opportunities.



*In a 2018 Faculty Conversation, faculty from diverse disciplines discuss the Fountain Valley Water Project.*

### SELECTED STRATEGIES

- ✓ Leverage faculty experienced in community-engaged work
- ✓ Offer integrative experiences that fuse learning, research, and engaged action
- ✓ Heighten awareness of community-identified needs, organizations
- ✓ Build working knowledge of faculty research and teaching interests
- ✓ Centralize information to enable and promote partnerships

## Strategic Initiative – Engaged Journalism

In this course, students will examine the theory and practice of engaged journalism through an experiential course project on “Guns in Schools” in partnership with Rocky Mountain PBS and the CC Journalism Institute. Course content will cover concepts, principles, and strategies for engaging communities as active participants in, rather than subjects of, journalism that produces publicly relevant and actionable knowledge. Through exploration and experience in journalistic efforts to democratize knowledge production and dissemination, the course provides a lens into the ways in which knowledge can reflect and perpetuate, or actively resist, societal inequalities. Through teaching this course, the CCE provides students with a deep opportunity to integrate learning and engagement, and hones a model of engaged teaching on the block to share with faculty.



# How might we better prepare our campus community to engage in intentional ways that attend to individual and institutional positionality, and promote equity, inclusion, and empowerment?

## Goals

1. Promote student learning and reflection around the intersection of community-engaged work and positionality, power, and privilege.
2. Embed intentional, equitable and inclusive community-engaged language and practices across CC.
3. Regularly assess the extent to which CCE impacts, practices, and language are diverse, equitable, and inclusive.
4. Engage diverse perspectives, identities, and stakeholders in community-engaged teaching, learning, and practice.
5. Practice and showcase equitable, inclusive, empowering forms of community engagement.

Community engagement is not intrinsically or inevitably impactful – or even beneficial – for communities or students. Knowing how to engage effectively, intentionally, or democratically must be learned. Within the academic division of labor in higher education, students discern *what* they believe needs to be changed in the world in core disciplines and majors; the field of civic engagement, with a foot in theory and a foot in practice, builds experiential knowledge of *how* to effect change in the world.

We have the opportunity to build communities of learning and generate spaces for dialogue and reflection that increase our campus capacity to engage more deliberately and effectively. Critically, we can deepen understanding of the intersection between engagement and “positionality” – meaning how one’s position in the social and political world shapes one’s perspective, voice, and influence in community-engaged work. In other words, the principles of community-engaged practice are not one-size-fits-all; how to best effect change depends on who is engaging and who is being engaged. Additionally, we have an opportunity to better understand our shared positionality as a part of

Colorado College; we must ensure that as an institution of higher education we engage *with* — not *for* — communities beyond our campus. The CCE can build spaces in which our campus grapples with how to engage in intentional, humble, beneficial ways that attend to and do not reinforce inequalities and privilege.

## POSITIONALITY

We can deepen understanding of the intersection between engagement and “positionality” – how one’s position in the social and political world shapes one’s perspective, voice, and influence in community-engaged work.

## Strategic Initiative – Community Engaged Fellowship

This four-year, developmental fellowship aims to cultivate civic leadership in students who seek to transform their communities and our world. Fellows develop knowledge of pressing issues facing our society, and build experience working directly on those problems with community partners. Fellows are engaged in community work throughout the duration of their college career, committing to at least 24 hours per block at community sites identified by the CCE. Fellows also meet weekly as a cohort to integrate their work in the community with their work in the classroom. The fellowship is designed to make community-engaged experiences accessible to students who need to work their way through college, as well as leverage their talents toward community work; the fellowship prioritizes support for first generation, underrepresented students of lower-income backgrounds.



*Community Engaged Fellows meet weekly to learn about this region and develop civic leadership skills.*



*CC students and North Middle Schoolers co-organize a pet adoption fair in the spring of 2018 as part of the Public Achievement (PA) program.*

### SELECTED STRATEGIES

- ✓ Ensure that engagement opportunities are accessible to all students
- ✓ Cultivate communities of learning and curriculum alongside the classroom
- ✓ Promote intentionality, reflection, and self-inquiry
- ✓ Implement signature programs that model best practices of engagement

## Strategic Initiative – Public Achievement

Public Achievement (PA) is an international program for college students to mentor primary and secondary school students through a community organizing process. In this model, college students are trained in how to coach K-12 students in the process of public work: identifying a community challenge, engaging in community-based research, and implementing a collective solution through a social change project. The goals of the program are to empower youth to become agents of change, and to train college students in community organizing skills. This year, we are reinvigorating and expanding PA in collaboration with the CC Sociology and Education Departments.

## How might we facilitate intracampus collaboration toward more strategic, impactful, community-engaged goals?

In our listening sessions, the theme we heard most clearly was that while numerous examples of community-engaged work exist across the campus, we are often unaware of what one another are doing and how we might work together. What might we be able to accomplish if we rooted our work in the principles of collective impact, establishing shared goals and investing in fewer but deeper initiatives? What if we simply tried to row our boats in the same direction?

Through greater coordination of engaged initiatives and coalition formation across the campus, we can harness passion and creativity toward shared goals – deepening community impact, adding coherency to our institutional narrative and identity, and strengthening student learning. Moving forward, the CCE will employ a “big tent” strategy, providing spaces where those with shared interests can gather and explore how they might work together. In this work, we aim to embody democratic principles and the core insight of public work that all of us is better than any of us.

### Goals

1. Lead collaborative community-engaged projects and partnerships aimed to deepen collective impact.
2. Elevate current community-engaged work at CC to increase awareness of existing partnerships and projects.
3. Organize structures for community-engaged collaboration.
4. Cultivate intracampus relationships to lay a foundation for collaboration.
5. Create ongoing opportunities for diverse stakeholders to collaboratively guide the strategic direction of community-engaged work at CC.

### Strategic Initiative – CCE Co-op

This program creates a cooperative of student organizers committed to facilitating intracampus collaboration to deepen CC’s collective impact throughout Colorado Springs. Student organizers are responsible for co-leading an issue-based, ongoing coalition. In doing so, co-op leaders aim to organize students working on similar issues in an effort to foster collective intentionality, pool resources, reduce redundancies – and educate other students about their issue of interest. The coalitions’ work will culminate in issue-awareness weeks on campus and recommendations about ways CC should engage in the issue.



### SELECTED STRATEGIES

- ✓ Establish structures to enable students to organize students





*During the 2018 Week of Action, 24 CC faculty and staff learn about public art in Colorado Springs through a walking tour. This session was one component of a condensed “Experience the Springs” class organized as a collaboration between the CCE, Leadership Pikes Peak, and TIAA (Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association).*



## Strategic Initiative – CC Week of Action

Building on the CC Day of Service, this campus-wide week of opportunities and events mobilizes and inspires CC students, staff, and faculty to engage in local community-based work. In doing so, we aim to expose our campus community to shared issues, challenges, and organizations with which they can continue to engage. Piloted in the fall of 2018, we had around 250 members of the campus community participate in 16 diverse opportunities organized with 9 campus partners and 26 community partners.

### SELECTED STRATEGIES

- ✓ Identify and promote collective challenges and shared problem-solving through highlighting specific organizations and issues
- ✓ Invite collaboration within CCE programming to leverage expertise across the college and build stakeholders
- ✓ Build partnerships and coalitions with and between diverse organizations



## How might we centralize, institutionalize, and communicate resources to stakeholders both on and off campus in order to affirm and deepen partnerships?

The decentralized nature of community engagement at CC diffuses not only our impact, but also knowledge of the intellectual, practical, logistical, and financial resources to support community work. In this, we diminish our own capacity to bring visions to life; ideas may wither not because of their merits, but the difficulty of navigating the support systems needed to realize them.

By positioning the CCE as a hub of information, resources, and relationships, we can lay a strong foundation for community-engaged teaching, learning and research. Through greater centralization and communication of the resources available to support stakeholders on and off the campus, we can provide clearer and more equitable pathways to building, expanding, and deepening community partnerships. Lastly, a coordinating body with strong community relationships can maintain a pulse on community needs, helping to guide student and faculty passions towards the intersection of campus and community interests.

### SELECTED STRATEGIES

- √ Build deep, multi-faceted institutional partnerships with the potential for meaningful student learning and community impact
- √ Establish clear processes to facilitate partnership building and to access research and academic expertise

### Goals

1. Document and centralize information to catalog community-engaged work, inspire partnerships and engagement, and educate stakeholders.
2. Share and celebrate CC's engaged work to communities beyond the campus to establish CC as a public resource for Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region.
3. Establish clear and transparent procedures for accessing and utilizing resources.
4. Educate stakeholders about resources and avenues to engage at CC.

## Strategic Initiative – High Impact Partnerships

This initiative aims to develop a small consortium of around ten community-based organizations with whom CC can develop deep, multi-faceted institutional partnerships. The CCE will bring this group together to build relationships, as well as support and co-educate partners on how to offer meaningful, developmental opportunities for students. The CCE commits to highlighting and centralizing these partners and working to leverage CC assets, knowledge, and energies toward proactively building deeper, mutually beneficial relationships with these partners.



*Around 150 students, faculty, staff, and partners gather to celebrate community-engaged work during Community Engagement Recognition Night (CERN).*

**SELECTED STRATEGIES**

- ✓ Celebrate and elevate community-engaged work to raise awareness and foster collaboration
- ✓ Share community impacts with stakeholders beyond the campus

**Strategic Initiative –  
 Community  
 Engagement  
 Recognition Night**

At this end-of-year celebration, we celebrate the various ways in which our campus engages in community-based work, democratically invests in shared futures, and develops our students into engaged citizens. At CERN, we honor those faculty, staff, students, and community partners who have gone above and beyond in contributing to the public good. With over 150 attendees at our 2018 pilot event, this event serves to affirm and renew energy for a culture that supports community-based work.



*Rocky Mountain Field Institute staff accept the Outstanding Community Partner Award at CERN.*



*At CERN, President Tiefenthaler kicks off the night by sharing insights on the importance of community-engaged learning, research, and practice to the college's strategic plan and educational mission.*

## How might we integrate communities beyond the campus into the life of the college in an effort to learn together and from one another?

Community *engagement* is not the same as community *outreach*. Outreach implies a unidirectional relationship in which the college has something to offer. Engagement implies a relationship — and not just a transactional one in which each side has something to exchange with the other, but one in which we bring people together through collective work that combines what each group knows and can do toward shared aspirations. In this work, a new “we” is created.

To truly engage, we cannot just go out into the community, but also invite community in to our educational mission — enabling communities beyond the campus to be a part of “us.” By inviting the community to participate in and contribute to the intellectual life of the college, we honor the forms of knowledge outside of academia that enhance classroom learning. Moreover, by creating a more permeable membrane between the college and city, we can start to see ourselves as a part of this place rather than a bubble within it. In doing so, we can enhance our role as “good neighbors” by taking time to listen and respond to the perspectives and interests of the community in all that we do.

Our unique location presents an opportunity to learn and apply democratic skills of engaging across differences in background, identity, and perspectives. The differences between our institution and local communities provide a space for dialogue, deliberation, and cross-cultural understanding. By providing opportunities to interact with multiple ways of knowing and being, we can promote dignity and inclusion, challenge and expand worldviews, and begin to alleviate political and social divisiveness.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** is not the same as **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**.

To truly engage, we cannot just go *out* in the community, but also invite community *in* to our educational mission, enabling communities beyond the campus to be a part of “us.”

### Goals

1. Promote community partners and residents as co-educators.
2. Invite communities to participate in the intellectual life of the college.
3. Establish partnerships that bring community-based organizations to our campus to achieve shared goals.
4. Enhance CC as a public asset for college access.
5. Advocate for community perspectives, interests, priorities, and needs in CC’s policies and practices.

## Strategic Initiative – New Student Orientation (NSO) “Sense of Place” Programming

In the CCE’s participation in NSO, we aim to cultivate a “sense of place” and informed citizenship Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region by deepening student knowledge of local communities, issues, and ecosystems. To do so, we engage community leaders as co-educators. For the fall of 2018, we facilitated four deliberately sequenced sessions aimed to foster a sense of belonging to this place early in students’ college experiences: 1) a training for NSO leaders around how to engage first year students in discussions around citizenship; 2) a panel and town hall session of community leaders during a mandatory “sense of place” session for first years; 3) small group conversations with first years during an academic scavenger hunt that shared important facts around key issues facing Colorado Springs; and 4) optional tours for first years of Colorado Springs led by the Downtown Partnership.



*During a “Sense of Place” session for NSO, the CCE organized a panel of community leaders to share their thoughts on what makes this city and region special, and their priorities for our shared future.*

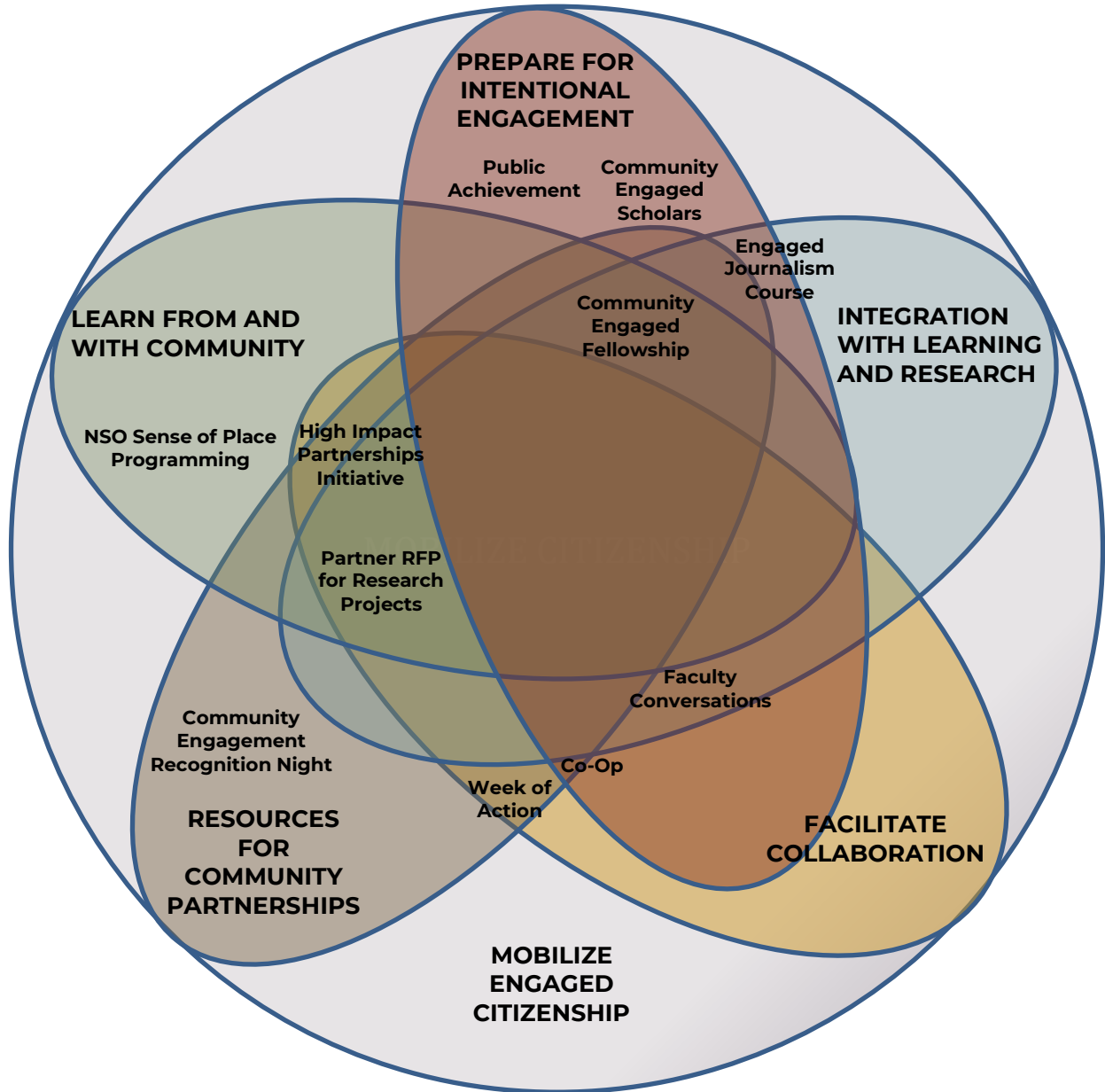
### SELECTED STRATEGIES

- ✓ Provide opportunities to learn from and in community about what makes this city and region distinct, and the challenges we face
- ✓ Offer trainings that unpack what it means to be a citizen
- ✓ Engage diverse perspectives, identities, and stakeholders as co-educators
- ✓ Establish co-learning programs in which the CC community can dialogue with and learn from community



*Students tour downtown Colorado Springs to learn more about the place they will live, work, and play for the next four years. These tours were a collaboration between the CCE and the Downtown Partnership.*

## Strategic Initiatives Summary



## Contacts

If you would like to hear more about CCE's strategic plan, discuss potential collaborations, or share feedback, please reach out to CCE Staff. We would love to hear from you!

Staff Member	Role	Email
<b>Director</b> Jordan Travis Radke, PhD	faculty development, course and research-based partnerships	<a href="mailto:jradke@coloradocollege.edu">jradke@coloradocollege.edu</a>
<b>Engaged Learning Specialist</b> Anthony Siracusa, PhD	student learning alongside the classroom, student programs	<a href="mailto:asiracusa@coloradocollege.edu">asiracusa@coloradocollege.edu</a>
<b>Community Partnership Coordinator</b> Niki Sosa	support to and relationship-building with community-based organizations	<a href="mailto:nsosa@coloradocollege.edu">nsosa@coloradocollege.edu</a>
<b>Civic Leadership Paraprofessional</b> Jasmine Wallack	student-led organizations and initiatives	<a href="mailto:jwallack@coloradocollege.edu">jwallack@coloradocollege.edu</a>
<b>Administrative Assistant</b> Richard Bishop	communications, data analysis, logistical support	<a href="mailto:rbishop@coloradocollege.edu">rbishop@coloradocollege.edu</a>

## Acknowledgements

*Enormous thanks to our Steering Committee for your work and dedication during the Semester of Listening. Your perspectives and insights were invaluable to this process. A special acknowledgement to Kyana Bell, our Strategic Planning Student Intern. Without her many hours spent eloquently synthesizing input, this process would not have been possible. Interns Sam White and Logan Coleman also played a vital role in transcription.*

*A huge note of gratitude, as well, to CCE staff. We have poured countless brainstorming sessions, numerous hours, and innumerable amounts of energy and commitment into this plan. This has truly been a shared project, and I could not be more proud of the outcome, or thankful for your contributions.*

*Thank you to Campus Compact for the valuable resources and feedback you have offered as part of the Civic Action Planning process. And, I owe a big one to all who reviewed this draft — Jake Eichengreen, Maggie Grove, Claire Derry, and CCE staff.*

*Lastly, thank you to YOU for sharing your visions and ideas with us throughout this process.*

*Sincerely, Dr. Jordan Travis Radke, CCE Director*