One of the measures of every great research university is the extent to which the knowledge it generates enriches the quality of life in the communities it serves. As a land-grant, sea-grant, and space-grant institution and the only research university in the state, the University of Delaware (UD) has a long tradition of applying knowledge, creativity, and civic commitment to the critical challenges facing communities in Delaware, across the nation, and around the world. In 2015, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching designated UD as a community engaged university.

The Community Engagement Initiative was established in February 2016 to further strengthen UD’s identity as an engaged research university. The Initiative focuses on what makes every community strong: improving public education, community health, and environmental quality; encouraging economic development and social equity; and expanding arts and cultural programs that enrich quality of life.

This status report summarizes the work of the Initiative through 2016 in five areas:

- Institutional Capacity
- Faculty Scholarship and Professional Development
- Student Opportunities
- Community Engagement Partnerships
- Regional and National Networks and Recognition

Finally, the report concludes with a review of next steps for 2017.
Faculty, staff, and students from all colleges and from many university support units participate in community engagement on an ongoing basis. Strengthening UD’s institutional capacity for community engagement means building upon, expanding, and adding to the diverse contributions that already define UD as an engaged university.

**Community Engagement of Colleges and University Units**

The deans of all seven colleges are initiating dialogues about the meaning and practice of community engagement in their programs. Each college will produce a statement about the relationship of community engagement to its mission and priorities. A similar process is underway with other university units, including the University Faculty Senate, Enrollment Management, Student Life, Athletics, Facilities Planning, the Sustainability Program, Governmental and Community Relations, and the University Diversity Executive Council.

All statements will be posted to the Community Engagement Initiative’s website to define the key dimensions of UD’s mission and priorities in community engagement. These statements will also serve as guiding principles for improving the campus’s overall capacity to support community engagement.

A major step in strengthening institutional capacity will be the generation of a Civic Action Plan. UD is a long-time member of the national Campus Compact of universities committed to advancing the public purposes of higher education through civic and community engagement. UD President Dennis Assanis pledged to participate in the 30th Anniversary challenge of Campus Compact to develop a Campus Civic Action Plan by the fall 2017, which will serve as a framework for the continued development of the university’s community engagement capacity.

**Council of Community Engagement & Public Service Centers**

The Council of Community Engagement and Public Service Centers was launched in fall 2016 with participation from more than 20 leaders and colleagues from units with a primary responsibility for programs of community engagement or public service. A full listing of the Council’s founding members can be found on page 15. Co-chaired by Michelle Rodgers, Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and Director of Cooperative Extension and Outreach, and Steve Peuquet, Director of the Center for Community Research and Service and Associate Professor in the School of Public Policy and Administration, the Council promotes:

- Collaboration across centers to create additional opportunities for community engagement and public service.
- Coordination with UD administrative leaders to strengthen policies and practices that will more effectively support the work of these centers.
- Communication about the work of the centers and their impacts on the communities they serve.

**Communications Strategy and Plan**

UD’s diverse contributions as an engaged research university are not well-recognized on campus and in the wider community. The Initiative is carrying out a communication strategy to better project UD’s identity as an engaged university, to increase recognition of the contributions of faculty, staff and students, and to demonstrate UD’s impact on improving the quality of life in the communities we serve. The Community Engagement Initiative’s website (udel.edu/engage) has been redesigned to better incorporate ongoing programs and partnerships, showcasing the long traditions of engagement in visual form. A video is in development that will highlight how community engagement is carried out on and off campus, as reflected by the contributions of students, faculty, and alumni. A community-focused publication, emphasizing long-term partnerships between UD and communities, is in development for fall 2017.
A central priority for the Initiative is to strengthen UD’s contributions to the scholarship of engagement in research, teaching, and public and community service. Accordingly, the Initiative is focused on ways to support faculty and students to address the critical challenges facing communities in Delaware, across the nation, and around the world.

Scholarship of Engagement
With encouragement from the Provost and the University Faculty Senate and the participation of the colleges, a university-wide dialogue on the scholarship of engagement has been launched. This dialogue mirrors the considerations at many research universities across the nation about the public purposes of scholarship in the 21st century. The focus of initial conversations will include defining the meaning and priority of engaged scholarship, how engaged scholarship may be better supported and recognized, and how this scholarship connects to the overall priorities of the institution as a research university. Additionally, in partnership with other units, the Initiative is creating programs and symposia on engaged scholarship—highlighting effective models from top-tier research universities. In fall 2016, Provost Grasso initiated a committee with the purpose of reviewing promotion and tenure requirements and procedures across the university; consideration of the scholarship of engagement is an important part of that review.

Faculty and Staff Professional Development
Developing the scholarship of engagement for faculty at UD requires ongoing opportunities for professional development. In fall 2016, the Interdisciplinary Science Learning Laboratories speaker series partnered with the Initiative to focus on topics around community engagement. For the duration of the fall 2016 academic semester, this speaker series hosted university faculty members speaking on a variety of topics with a common theme of community engagement.

In partnership with the Center for the Teaching and Assessment of Learning and the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, the Initiative is preparing a community engagement professional development program for new and continuing faculty in which participants will visit communities in the state of Delaware, to be piloted in summer 2017.

Assistant Professor Kelly Cobb and Fashion & Apparel Design student Amanda Raker co-design a memory garment with a member of Meeting of Minds at the Newark Senior Center. Cobb’s program, Wearing Well Being, collaborates with individuals to create wearable narratives that resonate despite memory loss.
The Initiative is working with units across campus to identify and support curricular and co-curricular opportunities for student community engagement.

**Community Engagement Scholars**

In collaboration with the Office of Enrollment Management, the Initiative is launching the Community Engagement Scholars program. This four-year interdisciplinary program, which will begin with the undergraduates enrolling in fall 2017, is designed to facilitate integration of civic engagement into student academic and career goals. First year programming includes a pre-semester service trip, participation in Delaware College Application Month, development of a four-year civic engagement plan, and participation in an alternative spring break service trip.

**Curricular Programs**

Working with members of the General Education Committee, the Initiative has developed a new course, UNIV365, which will enable students to connect their experience with co-curricular activities to the academic study of broader concepts and practices of community engagement. This is currently in the approval process for the University Faculty Senate. In addition, the Initiative is exploring ways to expand college-based curricular opportunities for undergraduate student community engagement.

**Co-Curricular Programs**

The Initiative is collaborating with Student Life professionals to enrich co-curricular programs that deepen student understanding of civic engagement. This collaboration includes enhanced training for alternative-break-site leaders, and improved coordination of the many Day of Service events across campus.

A new Community Engagement Student Network has been launched that includes leaders of Registered Student Organization (RSO) committed to community engagement. The primary goal is to more effectively involve undergraduate students in community engagement.

**Volunteer Opportunities**

In collaboration with the Initiative, the Bank of America Career Services Center will become the focal point for volunteer student opportunities. This will allow student volunteers and community organizations to connect through the university’s “Handshake” system, an online platform currently utilized by employers and UD students for posting and applying to jobs.

**Expanded and Coordinated Summer Programs**

The Initiative is supporting coordination and expansion of the many UD programs that enable students to participate in funded community engagement and engaged scholarship projects. These include both summer and academic year programs, such as the Service Learning Scholars and Blue Hen Engagement Fellows. The objective is to enable all undergraduates to participate in such programs as part of their UD experience.

In workshops that provide hands-on exposure to tools used in orthopedic surgery, the Perry Initiative gives young women the confidence they need to pursue a career in orthopedics or related fields. Orthopedics in Action extends the workshop, giving teachers the opportunity to use a low-cost hands-on curriculum in their own classrooms. This past summer, Service Learning Scholars Grace Ruiz Cooper and Sony (Srinivasa) Gajjala designed fracture puzzles for grade school students and helped facilitate workshops for the Perry Initiative. Sony, a former high school participant in the Perry program attributes that to her pursuit of engineering at UD.
A key goal of the Initiative is to launch new partnerships that apply UD’s knowledge and capacity to the challenges that face communities in Delaware and beyond. The first of these is the Partnership for Public Education, which was officially launched by President Dennis Assanis on November 14, 2016, at the ninth annual Vision Education Conference.

**Partnership for Public Education**

With initial funding from the Office of the President and the College of Arts and Sciences, the Partnership for Public Education (PPE) draws upon UD’s strength as a research institution to improve Delaware public education. PPE will provide support for initiatives of faculty, professionals, and students to collaborate with the public schools and other partner institutions, including the Vision Coalition and the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. PPE will connect UD and the P–12 community in new ways, extending from early childhood education to college and career readiness and success. In addition, UD will expand the Commitment to Delawareans through pre-college programs that help more Delaware students, particularly low-income and minority students, prepare for a UD education. Organized under the Initiative, PPE is led by Liz Farley-Ripple (School of Education) and Kelly Sherretz (Institute for Public Administration) and guided by a steering committee co-chaired by Carol Vukelich, Dean of the College of Education and Human Development, and Doug Doren, Deputy Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

**Partnership for Healthy Communities**

The Partnership for Healthy Communities, a joint effort of the Colleges of Health Sciences and Arts and Sciences, is being launched under the Community Engagement Initiative. The partnership will connect faculty, staff, and students concerned with the challenges of developing healthy communities with state agencies, health promotion organizations, health providers, and community institutions. The partnership will also coordinate with the One World, One Health initiative in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Rita Landgraf, currently Delaware Secretary of Health and Social Services, will join UD to direct the partnership and serve as Professor of Practice in the College of Health Sciences. Erin Knight, Associate Director of the Center for Community Research and Service, will become deputy director.

**Collaborative for Arts and Cultural Engagement**

The Initiative is working with the College of Arts and Sciences, the University Library, the Delaware Arts Alliance, and others to establish the Collaborative for Arts and Cultural Engagement (CACE), a coalition committed to promoting statewide partnerships to support the arts and to address social justice issues through the arts. CACE will serve as a resource for artistic and cultural collaborations, including those focused on promoting global understanding and social change through the arts.

**Newark Partnership**

The Newark City Government and UD are developing a new campus-community partnership focused on programs that enhance the long-term quality of life throughout Newark. An initial focus will be cooperative sustainability initiatives. UD will also collaborate with the BikeNewark project to develop infrastructure for safe biking. In addition, the Initiative is working with the City to formalize a Newark Fellows program to systematically engage UD undergraduate and graduate students in service-learning programs that support community priorities.
Wilmington Partnership

UD is expanding its partnerships with government, nonprofit, and business organizations in Wilmington to better address the challenges facing that community. An agreement between UD and city government will be signed in spring 2017 and will create the framework to strengthen existing programs as well as collaborations. One project already underway, How Wilmington Compares, will enable comparison of Wilmington with other communities on key quality of life and economic development indicators. This project was developed as a collaboration of UD’s Institute for Public Administration and Center for Applied Business and Economic Research with the Delaware Public Policy Institute. A related partnership between UD and the Delaware Community Foundation is called Delaware Focus, a social indicators program to gauge community well-being and help set priorities for programs and policies.

Community Partnership Offices

The Initiative now occupies physical office space in the Wilmington Community Services Building, co-located with and supported by the UD Center for Community Research and Service. This location will be the home of UD’s Wilmington Community Partnership Office. The Initiative anticipates similar partnership offices in Dover and Georgetown, operated in collaboration with Cooperative Extension and other University units engaged in communities throughout Delaware.

Regional and National Networks and Recognition

The Research Universities Civic Engagement Network

In addition to long-standing membership in the national Campus Compact, UD has recently been accepted as a member of The Research Universities Civic Engagement Network (TRUCEN). This network consists of 39 of the nation’s leading research universities, including Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute Technology, Stanford University, Michigan State University, University of California-Berkeley, University of Maryland, and University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. TRUCEN is devoted to promoting the public purposes of research universities and supporting the scholarship of engagement as a central responsibility of all research universities. The national dialogue among these research universities will inform UD’s efforts to strengthen the scholarship of engagement and incorporate it in key university and college priorities.

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and the Engaged Scholarship Consortium

The Initiative has an active role in both the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), and the Engaged Scholarship Consortium. Each of these national organizations are devoted to the value and practice of community engagement, and UD is committed to play a leadership role in both organizations.

Maryland-DC Campus Compact

The Initiative is working with the Maryland-DC Campus Compact Regional Organization to include UD and other institutions of higher education from Delaware in an expanded version of this regional compact. This will connect UD with colleges and universities throughout the region that collaborate on strengthening all dimensions of community and civic engagement. The expanded regional compact will be confirmed over the next year and recognized by the adoption of a new name. It will be the largest regional compact in the nation.
In addition to continued development of programs already launched, new initiatives for 2017 will include the following.

**UD Campus Compact Council**
A new UD Campus Compact Council will bring together leaders of units that are central to strengthening campus capacity to support and expand community engagement. A first responsibility will be to help develop and implement the UD Civic Action Plan.

**Faculty Fellows**
A faculty fellows program will be launched using funding provided by the Unidel Foundation. Fellows will play leadership roles on key priorities of the Initiative, with the first appointments expected to support partnerships focused on sustainability and arts and culture.

**Faculty, Staff, and Student Awards Programs**
A key priority for 2017 is the development of programs that recognize faculty, staff, and students for excellence in community engagement. Initial funding for awards programs has been provided by the Provost and supplemented from initial gifts to a new Community Engagement Scholars Fund. In addition, the college deans are being asked to develop awards to recognize faculty, staff, and students for excellence in community engagement. The Initiative will coordinate campus-wide opportunities and seek external funding for expansion.

**Knowledge-based Partnership Conference Series**
The UD knowledge-based partnership conference series will focus on the challenges facing communities in Delaware and beyond with the intent of mobilizing collaborations between the university and community partners to address those challenges. In fall 2017, the knowledge-based conference will focus on the challenges of community health and be the occasion to launch the UD Partnership for Healthy Communities.

**UD Sustainability Task Force**
Beginning in 2017, the Initiative will oversee the UD Sustainability Task Force, led by Michael Chajes, Professor of Civil Engineering, and Katie Morrison, Assistant Director in Residence Life and Housing in cooperation with Michele Bennett, Director of the Sustainability Program. This task force was established in 2007 with support from the University’s Academic & Student Affairs Council.

**Student Fellows and Assistantships**
Community engagement should be a signature feature of a UD education at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Utilizing funding from the Unidel Foundation, with support from college deans as well as UD’s many community engagement and public service centers, the Initiative will introduce new opportunities for academic year and summer programs, including newly funded student community engagement fellowships and assistantships. The Initiative will coordinate campus-wide opportunities and seek external funding for expansion.

**Community Engagement Initiative**
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Lynnette Overby, Deputy Director
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Tracey Bryant, Office of Communications and Marketing
Doug Burttney, Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
Matthew Creasey, Student Life
Rick Deadwiler, Governmental Reactions
Amy Foley, Institute for Global Studies
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Ivan Henderson, University Museums
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