REPORT TO CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY 2013
Our Values

Being in service
University Outreach engages with hundreds of community-based organizations each year. Most often that engagement involves students. We identify the needs, struggles, and common interests of our partners so we can best access collective resources. Through this process, community needs are met and students are transformed. By maintaining balanced partnerships with those we serve, University Outreach has built trusted relationships to benefit the greater community.

Healthy relationships
Building stronger connections between people, land and community is at the core of University Outreach work. Building upon Michigan’s rich history of resource conservation, University Outreach is concerned with the relationships between land, water, people, and our state. We embrace contributing to healthy lifestyles and communities, while building a stronger, more resilient Michigan.

Justice and fairness
University Outreach promotes justice and fairness in our work. By acknowledging that all voices and viewpoints are important and valuable, we demonstrate our commitment to sharing power and challenging others to do the same. Providing access to University and community resources, fostering relationships, supporting partnerships, and promoting action contribute to a fairer, more just community.

Community-building
University Outreach supports communities that are working to protect natural assets and rebuild their economies. We provide neutral spaces for those with resources and those with needs to come together to solve problems, which builds community. Our inclusive and solution-based approach helps unite communities, and builds local, regional, and national networks. These contribute to a positive and prosperous future for those we serve.

Economic vitality
University Outreach supports innovation and creativity, and fosters a culture of entrepreneurship. Working collectively to develop and retain talent will lead us to a vibrant local community. Our Innovation Incubator helps students and community members navigate the extraordinary economic challenges facing their communities.

University Outreach Staff

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Health Education graduate students, taking the course Health Communications, learn to develop effective health communication strategies in health promotion. During the Winter 2013 semester, Health Communications students partnered with the American Red Cross to host the “66 Heroes for 66 Lives” blood drive at the University of Michigan-Flint.

This partnership grew out of the Red Cross’s desire to inform the community about the need for new blood donations, to dispel myths about blood donation, and to encourage first-time donors to become repeat donors.

Health Communications students worked closely with the Red Cross to transform a campus blood drive into a positive community event with the goals of collecting one pint of blood for every homicide victim in the City of Flint in 2012 and educating community members about the impact of donating blood.

76 pints of blood were collected and 105 individuals presented to donate blood, surpassing the 66 pint goal and shattering the previous campus record of 48 pints collected.

The “66 Heroes for 66 Lives” blood drive gained local and regional recognition from print, radio, and television media and from the national American Red Cross office.
More than 90 freshmen at Beecher Middle/High School are dancing, writing poetry, and learning theatre methods, thanks to a residency by Shop Floor Theatre Company (SFTC).

SFTC, a student-run business in the University Outreach Innovation Incubator, is dedicated to socially engaged, place-based arts and education. In 2013 it staged State of Emergency, an original play about Flint’s emergency manager situation. The script, constructed from verbatim interviews and news articles, was performed locally for free, funded primarily by foundations and arts organizations.

In 2013 Shop Floor hired 28 employees, including four UM-Flint alumni who teach arts at Beecher’s Ninth Grade Academy. They are currently collecting stories for a play about education.

The company focuses on underserved populations, including inner-city youth who filmed public service announcements on issues important to them; detained juveniles who learned life skills through the arts; and elder north side Flint residents who shared histories.

The C.S. Mott Foundation is the principal funder of the Innovation Incubator.
Alternative Spring Break

The University of Michigan-Flint’s Alternative Spring Break (ASB) program enables students to learn about issues such as homelessness, poverty, hunger, violence, environmental issues, and complex social and cultural issues. Students develop an understanding of community needs and a commitment to community service and social change.

During the 2013 ASB experience, the areas of service that the ASB board focused on included the following: education, homelessness and hunger, urban gardening, urban renewal, veterans, underprivileged children and animals.

From these areas of focus, the board decided to go the following sites: Alternative Veteran’s Solutions, Flint River Farms, The Boys and Girls Club of Greater Flint, Habitat for Humanity, North End Soup Kitchen, Genesee County Land Bank, King Karate, Adopt a Pet, Beecher 9th Grade Academy and Salem Housing.

The University of Michigan-Flint students once again made a colossal impact on the greater Flint community!

- 1,165 hours of community service were donated by UM-Flint students during Alternative Spring Break 2013
- ASB provided $25,385 worth of service to the Flint community
Healthy Relationships

University Outreach partners with Boys and Girls Club of Greater Flint to introduce club members ages 10-19 to their local natural environment and provides opportunity to experience previously unknown parks and natural areas while providing college positive experiences. Two key programs are Parks in Focus and Careers in Natural Resources.

Nature through photography

The Parks in Focus program uses photography to connect youth to nature. Approximately 20 Club members ages 10-13 participate each summer. Youth visited local, state, and national parks as part of the 8-week program. An exhibit of their work is featured at For-Mar Nature Preserve and Arboretum in Burton.

Career Exploration

The Careers in Natural Resources program provides experiences that develop skills and understanding of professions in natural resources to thirty-two City of Flint teens ages 16-19. Participants are introduced to and tour various locations in Genesee County that employ natural resource professionals.

2013 Parks in Focus participants took a total of 8,000 photographs at city, state, and national parks and wildlife refuges.

UM-Flint Biology faculty lead a demonstration on fish populations.
UM-Flint Neff Center and Discovering Place

The Neff Center at Beecher Middle/High School opened in 2013 thanks to a partnership between UM-Flint and the school district. The Neff Center features classrooms and office space for UM-Flint students, faculty, and departments to engage in meaningful civic engagement opportunities in the Beecher community. The Center is also available to Beecher students, staff, partners, and community members offering a space where all can collaborate to strengthen community, both in and out of the classroom.

The Neff Center partnered with Discovering Place, a program for place-based education and UM-Flint volunteers to assist the school in the phased construction of an outdoor classroom and learning space at the Middle/High School. Discovering Place supports K-12 schools and local partners using a place-based learning approach to empower youth to identify and address environmental and social needs in their community. Through these place-based learning experiences, youth are empowered, learning is enhanced, and communities are strengthened.

As of August 2013, there have been a total of 4 UM-Flint classes, 1 course presentation and 1 course community observation held in the Neff Center. Out of these 6 courses, a total of 142 college students attended classes, and interacted with or observed more than 300 Beecher Students ranging from 5th–12th grade.

Since 2009, more than 880 K-12 students across three school districts have been engaged in place-based education projects in the community thanks to the hard work and dedication of the teachers that participate in Discovering Place.
Best Practices

Best practices in academic community engagement and outreach include:

· Cultivating mutually-beneficial, reciprocal relationships
· Genuinely addressing community needs
· Acknowledging community assets as well as needs (an “assets-based approach”)
· Valuing the knowledge, expertise and life experiences of community partners equally to university partners
· Sharing power, decision-making and resources
· Being accessible, such as through listening, language and presence in the community
· Intentionally tying the engagement activities with learning outcomes or research questions
· Reflection on the community engagement experience, lessons learned, and one’s own civic identity

The Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement’s indicators of a truly community-engaged university are supportive:

· Community-Campus Exchange
· Classes, Curriculum and Pedagogy
· Institutional Culture
· Faculty Culture
· Mechanisms & Resources

The Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement

In 2010, the University of Michigan-Flint received the prestigious national Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement by demonstrating significant commitment to and investment in the community-engaged university indicators listed above. UM-Flint is one of only 311 higher education institutions in the United States selected for this recognition after a rigorous application process. For more information about the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, please visit: www.carnegiefoundation.org/newsroom/press-releases/carnegie-selects-colleges-and-universities-2010-community-engagement-classification and http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/community_engagement.php