

Netter Center for Community Partnerships Summary Spring 2019

Our Mission

Founded in 1992, the Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships is the University's primary vehicle for advancing civic and community engagement at Penn. It brings together the resources and assets of both the University and the wider community to help solve universal problems such as poverty, health inequities, environmental sustainability, and inadequate, unequal education as they are manifested in the University's local geographic area of West Philadelphia and Philadelphia at large. The Netter Center develops and helps implement democratic, mutually transformative, place-based partnerships between Penn and West Philadelphia that advance research, teaching, learning, practice, and service and improve the quality of life on campus and in the community. The Netter Center works with and serves as a model for other higher education institutions across the United States and around the world.

Netter Center Strategies

Three key strategies underpin our work. The first is academically based community service (ABCS), service rooted in and intrinsically connected to research, teaching, and learning. The second is university-assisted community schools (UACS), which educate, engage, empower, and serve not only students, but also all other members of the community, providing an organizing framework for bringing our programs, including ABCS courses, to West Philadelphia schools. Third, we view ABCS and UACS as core to a comprehensive anchor institution strategy in which universities engage in sustained, mutually beneficial partnerships with their communities. These strategies are shared with others across the country and around the world, serving as a model for democratic university-community engagement.

Academically Based Community Service (ABCS):

- Integrates service with research, teaching, and learning
- Works to improve the quality of life and learning in the community and the quality of learning and scholarship in the university through collaborative problem-solving, K-16+
- Fosters structural community improvement (e.g., effective public schools, neighborhood economic development)
- Emphasizes student and faculty reflection on the service experience
- Helps students become active, creative, contributing citizens of a democratic society.

Over 200 ABCS courses have been developed at Penn in a wide range of disciplines. In the 2018-2019 academic year, 74 ABCS courses were offered across 9 schools and 22 departments and programs, enrolling approximately 1700 undergraduate and graduate students. In addition, the Netter Center engages hundreds of Penn students through community service federal work-study positions and academic internships, as well as several hundred volunteers in programs and projects in the local community.

University-Assisted Community Schools

A major component of the Netter Center's work is mobilizing the vast resources of the University to help transform traditional public schools into innovative university-assisted community schools (UACS). University-assisted community schools educate, engage, empower, and serve not only students, but also all other members of the community in which the school is located.

UACS focus on the school as the core institution, the “hub,” for community engagement and democratic development, as well as link school day and after school curricula to solve locally identified, real-world, community problems. For neighborhood schools to function as genuine community centers, they need additional human resources and support. The Netter Center emphasizes *university-assisted* because universities can constitute the strategic sources of broadly based, comprehensive, sustained support for community schools. UACS engage universities as lead partners in providing academic, human, and material resources. A mutually beneficial approach simultaneously improves the quality of life and learning in the community while advancing the academic mission of the University.

The Netter Center’s university-assisted community school programs in West Philadelphia currently focus on 9 schools: Comegys School (grades K-8), Lea School (K-8), Mitchell School (K-8), Hamilton School (K-8), Shoemaker-Mastery (6-12), Robeson High School, Sayre High School, and West Philadelphia High School, and after school programming at West Catholic and GLA-SW (formerly the Huey School). Programming occurs during the school day, after school, evenings, Saturdays, and summers. Each school site has, at minimum, one full-time site director who works closely with the school and the community to determine activities that best serve the specific needs and interests of that area. In addition to organizing and overseeing the programs, community school site directors serve as liaisons between the University and the school, as well as between school day teachers and the after school program. University students taking ABCS courses, work-study students, and student volunteers provide vital support for these programs, serving as tutors, mentors, classroom fellows, or activity and project leaders.

UACS GUIDING PRINCIPLES & LESSONS LEARNED

- ***University-Assisted Community Schools*** focus on the school as the core institution, the hub, for community engagement and democratic development.
- ***University-Assisted Community Schools*** open their doors to all before and after school, weekends, and summers, to provide safe and engaging environments.
- ***University-Assisted Community Schools*** serve the educational, social service, health, and recreational needs of all participants and the broader community.
- ***University-Assisted Community Schools*** link school day and after school curriculum to solving locally identified, real world, community problems—every opportunity for service is an opportunity for learning.
- ***University-Assisted Community Schools*** engage youth as deliverers, not simply recipients, of service.
- ***University-Assisted Community Schools*** engage universities as lead partners in providing academic, human, and material resources.
- ***University-Assisted Community Schools*** engage higher education faculty and students in developing and implementing community school programs through academically based community service linked to the university’s core educational and research missions.

Netter Center University-Assisted Community School Programs

Agatston Urban Nutrition Initiative (AUNI)

AUNI developed from an ABCS course taught by Francis Johnston, Professor of Anthropology, in 1991. AUNI promotes nutrition education, food access, and healthy lifestyles and helps build a sustainable food system. While AUNI's emphasis is on West Philadelphia, it works in over 16 Philadelphia public schools, serving more than 6,000 students every month. Hands-on cooking and gardening clubs and youth-run fruit stands connect school day and after school learning activities for K-12 students, as well as connect to the academic work of Penn students and faculty. AUNI's Youth Development Program provides job-training and leadership development, particularly in urban agriculture and peer nutrition education, and its Adult Nutrition Education Program provides nutrition lessons and activities for adult community members at 22 community and senior centers throughout the year.

Bridges to Wealth

Professor Keith Weigelt of The Wharton School and Dr. Jill Bazelon, a graduate of Penn Graduate School of Education, founded Bridges to Wealth (B2W) in 2012. It became a program of the Netter Center in 2019. B2W develops business literacy programs for urban high schools. It is based on the idea that business literacy is a life skill which students can use throughout their lives to generate knowledge and wealth. B2W has developed six programs in business literacy. Programs include the following: Entrepreneurship; Financial Empowerment and Wealth Generation; Decision Making and Negotiations; Leadership Development; and Strategy and Marketing.

College Access and Career Readiness (CACR)

The Netter Center's College Access and Career Readiness (CACR) program partners with high schools in West Philadelphia to support students in attaining high school, post-secondary, and career success. For example, in the College Application Coaching Program, Penn undergraduate "coaches" are trained to help local high school students with every step of the college application process, including registering for the SAT, learning college terminology, generating a list of colleges to apply to, filling out online applications, drafting application essays, and securing recommendations.

Community School Student Partnerships (CSSP)

CSSP is an undergraduate student organization that works in close collaboration with the Netter Center's university-assisted community schools to provide academic and cultural enrichment to children and families in West Philadelphia. Several hundred Penn students help operate school day, recess, after school, and evening programs in five schools.

Extended Learning: After School and Summer Programs

Extended learning programs meet the community's need for safe spaces that provide academic, cultural, and recreational activities for young people as well as adults from 3pm to 6pm after school and from 8am to 3pm during the summer. Programs for K-8 students focus on tutoring, arts, culture, recreation, and project-based learning. High school programs combine academic support, college and career mentoring, extracurricular activities, and real-world job experiences through paid internships.

Health Sciences Educational Pipeline Program

The Educational Pipeline Program is a partnership between the Perelman School of Medicine, the School of Veterinary Medicine, the Masters of Public Health Program, the School of Nursing, the Netter Center, and Sayre High School, West Philadelphia High School, Robeson High School, and Shoemaker-Mastery High School. Started by the Perelman School of Medicine, the Netter Center has helped to coordinate and grow this program into a four-year long, year-round activity. The Netter Center has supported program evaluation and coordinates fall programming, which has been integrated into the high school science curriculum during the school day, and summer programming, which occurs on Penn's campus, and year-round activities with the students and families. Two years ago, the Netter Center added the intensive summer component with the MPH program; this has focused on careers. The spring component is directed by the Perelman School of Medicine and operates at PSOM (for grades 9, 10 and 11) and the Veterinary School (for grade 12) as an after school program (the students receive science credit on their

high school transcripts). The curriculum has focused on gastroenterology (grade 9), neurology (grade 10), cardiology (grade 11), and veterinary medicine (grade 12). Engaged learning and mentorship occurs at many levels: faculty members, residents, and fellows develop clinical cases with the medical students; medical students teach the undergraduates; and undergraduates engage the high school students in hands-on science lessons.

Moelis Access Science (MAS)

MAS was launched at the Netter Center in 1999 with funding from the National Science Foundation under the direction of Dennis DeTurck, Dean of The College and Professor of Mathematics. MAS supports partnerships that improve science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education in K-12 classrooms, as well as undergraduate and graduate STEM education at Penn. MAS staff and fellows work with STEM-related faculty from across Penn's campus. The program's curriculum approach focuses on supporting hands-on and inquiry-based science education in classrooms, as well as incorporating community-based, problem-solving learning. MAS Fellows work with public school teachers to make the best use of their standardized science and math materials while also helping teachers take advantage of a variety of supplemental resources to support inquiry-based learning. MAS also provides teacher professional development and has supported the redesign of the School District of Philadelphia's core STEM curriculum.

Penn Reading Initiative (PRI)

PRI is a Penn student-run tutoring program that was developed through an ABCS course taught by Bill Labov, Professor of Linguistics, and the Penn Linguistics Laboratory. PRI tutors use *The Reading Road*, a curriculum that includes lessons, stories, and games designed to engage the interest of struggling readers in urban elementary schools.

Rebel Ventures

This youth-run healthy food business supported by the Netter Center has been creating Rebel Crumbles, a fruit-filled whole grain-rich breakfast cake. Rebel Crumbles have been distributed for breakfast to more than 350 Philadelphia K-12 schools, with approximately 1,000,000 Crumbles served to Philadelphia school children through fall 2018. This is the first youth-created food served in a school meals program in any major city. In 2018, Crumbles are also being sold through Bon Appetit, Shoprite of Parkside, Mariposa Food Cooperative, the Please Touch Museum, and the Promise Academy of Harlem Children's Zone.

Urban Arts, Culture, and Humanities Partnership Program (UACHP)

UACHP is led by Carol Muller, Professor of Music and Faculty Fellow in Digital and Community Engagement. UACHP utilizes arts, culture, and humanities to build bridges that connect Penn students and West Philadelphia communities. Tapping the potential of the deeply human need for expression, this program's partnerships improve teaching, learning, and research while increasing cross-community understanding and supporting community development. The program engages Penn faculty and students of all levels, teachers, students, and parents in the public schools, city residents of many ages and backgrounds, and dynamic local artists of all disciplines.

University-Assisted Community Schools Sports

This program supports and enhances University-Assisted Community Schools through sports programming. Netter Center staff in collaboration with school partners and Penn student organizations such as CSSP will provide support for school-day PE classes, develop new sports components for existing after school and summer programs and create leadership activities for middle school and high school students who themselves will increase opportunities for sports participation by developing tournaments, sports fairs/Olympics, etc.

UACS Nights

UACS Nights offers free academic, cultural and recreational activities for adults two evenings at week at West Philadelphia High School. Classes include cardio-kickboxing, line dancing, painting, etc.

Young Quakers Community Athletics

The Young Quakers program was developed in partnership with Penn's Division of Recreation and Intercollegiate Athletics (DRIA). Members of the Penn teams teach athletic skills and provide mentorship and academic support as part of a partnership directed by the Netter Center that involves Penn student athletes and coaches, Netter Center staff, and university-assisted community school students, parents/guardians, and teachers. Founded in 2012 with boys' lacrosse at Comegys K-8 School, YQCA has grown quickly to include girls' lacrosse at Comegys and co-ed track at Huey and Lea Schools with plans for reaching more students through additional sports in the future.

More Netter Center Initiatives

Dr. Bernett L. Johnson, Jr. Sayre Health Center

Founded through a partnership among the Netter Center, Perelman School of Medicine, Sayre High School, and community members, the Sayre Health Center opened in fall 2007 as a Federally Qualified Health Center. It provides students and community members with clinical and educational health promotion services. These services are provided by physicians in Penn's Departments of Medicine and Community Health, as well as by students from the Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Dental Medicine, and Social Policy and Practice. Students from the School of Arts and Sciences and Graduate School of Education also work with Sayre youth as they learn about health careers and the delivery of basic medical services.

Emerson Fellow

The Emerson Fellow of the Netter Center offers a graduating Penn senior—who has worked with the Netter Center, Academically Based Community Service (ABCS) courses, and/or University-Assisted Community School (UACS) programs as an undergraduate—the opportunity to engage meaningfully in research, practice, and policy, work locally to advance UACS, as well as to disseminate his/her work to a national audience through a one or two-year appointment

Nonprofit Institute

The Nonprofit Institute, hosted biannually, provides free workshops for members of local nonprofits and faith-based communities. Penn staff and community leaders teach a series of courses in nonprofit administration, evaluation, legal issues, grant writing, finances, human resource management, and publicity over six days. Participants learn how to strengthen their organizational and personal capacity to improve the quality of services for their constituencies.

Penn Leads the Vote

Penn Leads the Vote (PLTV) is a student-run, non-partisan program that increases voter engagement and voting while advancing Penn's role of supporting the democratic and civic engagement of Penn students. During election cycles, PLTV connects the Penn community with the resources needed to register and check registration, to be informed, and to get out to the polls. Throughout the year, PLTV encourages students to learn about and engage with current issues and politics at the local, state, and national level. PLTV was established in 2004 and operated by Fox Leadership until 2014. PLTV was reestablished in 2018 in the Netter Center for Community Partnerships in collaboration with the Office of Government and Community Affairs.

Penn Program for Public Service (PPPS) Summer Internship

The PPPS Summer Internship is comprised of 10 to 15 top undergraduates each summer. Students participate in a research seminar, write a research paper (usually in collaboration with one or two other students in seminar), live together, and work at least twenty hours a week with an ongoing Netter Center partner in the West Philadelphia community.

Penn Volunteers in Public Service (Penn VIPS)

Penn VIPS provides a vehicle for staff, faculty, alumni, and the West Philadelphia community to work together on community service activities and events. Penn VIPS coordinates on-going service

opportunities, such as a work-place mentoring program and a series of supply drives throughout the year, as well as the Nonprofit Institute described above.

Provost's Graduate Academic Engagement Fellowship at the Netter Center

This two-year Fellowship is a new opportunity open to PhD students across all schools and fields at Penn. Fellows will be outstanding students whose scholarship significantly involves Academically Based Community Service (ABCS) and related activities, including locally based community problem-solving, engaged scholarship, service learning, and learning by teaching in public schools. The Fellowship will involve participation in a faculty-student seminar on community-engaged research and teaching, a research fund for each Fellow of \$5,000 over the two years, support to attend and present at conferences, and a full fellowship in the students' second year to continue studies and/or work on their dissertation.

Provost/ Netter Center Faculty-Community Partnership Award

This annual award recognizes Faculty-Community Partnership projects with a \$10,000 award (\$5,000 to the faculty member and \$5,000 to the community partner). The purpose of the award is to recognize sustained and productive university/community partnerships and to develop or enhance ongoing work. Junior and senior faculty along with senior lecturers and associated faculty from any of Penn's 12 schools are eligible for nomination, together with their community partners.

Shah Family Prize for Innovative Undergraduate Student Projects at the Netter Center

The Shah Family Prize for Innovative Undergraduate Student Projects at the Netter Center enables highly motivated and dedicated Penn undergraduates to further develop, improve, and successfully implement creative civic and community engagement projects. Designed to encourage social innovation and to have sustained positive impacts both on campus and in the local community, the Prize will be awarded to two outstanding projects a year.

Evaluation

A full-time evaluator position was created in 2008 with the generous naming gift to the Center from Barbara and Edward Netter. The director of evaluation works with a team of undergraduate and graduate students, in addition to a distinguished committee of faculty advisors, on evaluating various aspects of the University-Assisted Community Schools and Academically Based Community Service programs.

Regional, National, & Global Reach

The Netter Center works to create and strengthen local, regional, national, and international networks of institutions of higher education committed to engagement with their local schools and communities. In particular, the Netter Center's university-assisted community school (UACS) model has been adapted nationally and internationally.

Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (PHENND)

Begun in 1987, and housed at the Netter Center, PHENND is a consortium of more than 30 colleges and universities in the greater Philadelphia area. PHENND works with its member institutions to develop sustained and mutually beneficial community-based service-learning partnerships. PHENND's K-16 Partnerships Network brings together higher education faculty and staff who work with public school partners, as well as with the School District of Philadelphia.

National Replication and Outreach of University-Assisted Community Schools

Each year, the Netter Center hosts nearly 50 colleagues from higher education, K-12 education, and community partners from around the country and globe who are interested in learning from and adapting the Netter Center's work. From 1994-2004, the Center received funding from foundations and the federal government to promote the replication of the university-assisted community school model. Twenty-three higher educational institutions received funding and another 75 institutions were trained on the model.

Part of the Netter Center endowment is designated to fund regional training centers on university-assisted community schools on three-year cycles. University of Oklahoma-Tulsa served as the site of the first regional training center, beginning in 2008. Tulsa partners continue to convene the Higher Education Forum, an anchor institution consortium comprised of nine higher educational institutions and other partners. Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) was selected as the second regional training center in 2011. IUPUI's Midwest Center for University-Assisted Community Schools works in a multi-state area that includes Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and Kentucky. University of Connecticut was selected as the third regional training center in fall 2014 and established the New England University-Assisted Community School Collaborative. UCLA Center for Community Schooling became the fourth regional training center in fall 2017.

The Netter Center has also sought to support national networks in support of community schools. In 1997, it was one of the founding partners of the Coalition for Community Schools, housed at the Institute for Educational Leadership, to promote and advance community schools. The Coalition is an alliance of national, state and local organizations in education K–16, youth development, community planning and development, higher education, family support, health and human services, government, and philanthropy as well as national, state, and local community school networks. The Netter Center's director served as the chair from its inception until spring 2012. With a growing number of colleges and universities engaged in community schools, the Netter Center worked with the Coalition to develop a University-Assisted Community Schools Network in 2015 to share resources, best practices, and advance the work. The University-Assisted Community Schools Network is working to create a professional learning community among faculty members, administrators, and practitioners who are engaged in university-community partnerships and community schools. Approximately 70 higher education institutions are now part of this network.

Anchor Institutions Task Force (AITF)

AITF was initially created in 2008 to prepare a report to the incoming Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. AITF is now an ongoing organization that develops and disseminates knowledge to help create and advance democratic, mutually beneficial anchor institution-community partnerships. With approximately 900 members, AITF is guided by the core values of collaboration and partnership, equity and social justice, democracy and democratic practice, and commitment to place and community. Netter Center Director is the Chair.
(www.margainc.com/initiatives/aitf/)

The International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility, and Democracy (IC)

Since 1999, the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility, and Democracy (IC) has worked with the Council of Europe (CoE) and seeks to explain and advance the contributions of higher education to democracy on community college, college and university campuses, their local communities and the wider society. It is comprised of the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and South Africa. The U.S. is represented by a Steering Committee from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, American Council on Education, Anchor Institutions Task Force, Association of American Colleges and Universities, Campus Compact, Democracy Commitment, and NASPA-Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education. The Organization of American States joined the overall cooperation between the IC and CoE in April 2018. The Netter Center houses the executive offices of the Consortium and the Netter Center Director is the Chair.
(www.internationalconsortium.org)