Civic Engagement is the work people do when they collaborate with others toward a vision of the public good. It happens in many ways, some of them explicitly political, some not. Civic Engagement is part of our name because we are the office charged by the Provost to coordinate and support the university’s efforts to educate for civic engagement.

UMass Amherst is among the national leaders in civic education at the college level. For over four decades, our faculty have been working through a broad range of courses to help students build the knowledge, skills, and values they need to be civically engaged. For the past two decades, our campus has built systems and structures to support faculty and students in this work. Our Service-Learning Faculty Fellows program, our nationally-recognized Citizen Scholars Program, and our student-initiated and student-funded program focused on college access and success, Student Bridges, are just three examples.

The need for this kind of work is increasing being recognized on the national level. In A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy’s Future, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) reports that our democracy is in crisis, with citizens increasingly disengaged not only from political institutions but from all forms of public life. The report opens with a quote from David Mathews, president of the Kettering Foundation, warning that events “are moving us toward what cannot be”: a democracy without any citizens. AAC&U calls for the nation’s colleges and universities to step up to this crisis, creating “developmental pathways” that foster our students’ capacities to engage in public life—to see themselves as part of an interdependent world and to act collaboratively with others in ways that create a common good.

What is “Civic Engagement” and Why Is It Part of Our Name?

- **CIVIC LITERACY** would be a goal for every student.
- **CIVIC INQUIRY** would be integrated within the majors and general education.
- **CIVIC ACTION** as a lifelong practice. Students would develop the knowledge, skills, and values that would prepare them to engage in collective action for public problem-solving.

The report calls on every college and university to become a civically minded campus, and offers ideas about how to do so.

This national vision is echoed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, where the Board of Higher Education recently voted to add Civic Education and Civic Engagement to the other five goals it had already adopted in its Vision Project for public higher education within the state. As a result of this decision, the Department of Higher Education will be encouraging and assessing civic education in public colleges and universities.

You may be wondering, why is “Service-Learning,” the other part of our name? As AAC&U points out, service-learning is one of the “powerful pedagogies that promote civic learning.” The other two they identify are Intergroup and Deliberative Dialogue (which at UMass is already connected to service-learning), and Collective Civic Problem Solving (which we think of as a particular form of service-learning).

Many people at UMass are already part of the solution to this crisis. We are excited this year to take another step forward, as we begin identifying courses in the online course schedule as exploring Civic Engagement or having a tighter focus on Service-Learning (see story on Page 4). Whether you are a student or a member of the faculty, staff, or wider community, we invite you to join us in this challenging and rewarding work of education for democracy.

“**What Would a Civic-Minded Campus Look Like?**” asks AAC&U. These things would happen:

- **CIVIC ETHOS** would govern campus life.

John Reiff
Director

Carol Soules
Associate Director
Community Focus: Holyoke Tutor/Mentor Program

Holyoke Tutor Mentor (HTM) is an adult literacy organization currently serving 270 adult learners in Holyoke, MA. This academic year, through a partnership supported by UMass Civic Engagement and Service-Learning, 24 students from EDUC377: Introduction to Multicultural Education, will have volunteered almost 400 hours as tutors. Additionally, HTM provides leadership opportunities for UMass students who have previously taken EDUC377 to return as Campus-Community Liaisons, while taking a CESL Leadership course on campus. In a recent interview, Emily Fox, Director of HTM, shared some insight into this partnership and the role of UMass students.

In Holyoke, a city of roughly 40,000 residents and approximately 16 miles south of UMass, about 30 percent of the population over age 18 has no high school diploma. However, through HTM, an agency of Juntos Collaborative, and other organizations, educational resources are making their way to adults in the Holyoke area. Currently, HTM is running 24 classes, with about 12 learners each, for a total of over 270 adult learners—and has a waitlist of 400-500 for its classes. There are about 16 teachers in the program, plus tutors—including UMass students—who play a large role in the process.

HTM has benefitted from college-aged tutors for many years. Recently, however, the program has been strengthened through on-going relationships with service-learning courses in the Five Colleges.

In fall 2011, UMass’ Education 377: Introduction to Multicultural Education, along with the support of staff from UMass Civic Engagement and Service-Learning, began a partnership with the Holyoke Tutor/Mentor Program. Eleven students were tutors last semester. This semester there are 13 EDUC 377 students tutoring at the site plus one UMass student serving in a leadership role as a Campus-Community Liaison. One third of the tutors are college students who are studying at UMass and Amherst College.

Fox appreciates the partnership with UMass; any time she can find tutors without having to spend extensive time recruiting, she can focus more on other elements of the program. She also believes that education students find they have a lot to offer—and learn from—the program. They focus on current critical issues in literacy and education. This means students are engaged and ready for the opportunities at HTM.

“Community Focus: Holyoke Tutor/Mentor Program

When college students come in already focused on education, which requires reflection on the educational process, they are that much more prepared to deal with those who are having difficulties in education,” she says, and adds that tutors gain both inner and outer knowledge from their experience at HTM.

Discouragement and deflation of self-confidence within the 612.0x792.0

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Discouragement and deflation of self-confidence within the education system has negatively influenced the experiences of many of the learners at HTM.

“Over and over I’ve heard learners say, ‘I couldn’t have made it without my tutor,’ after they’ve passed the GED test,” says Fox. “And the HTM teachers so appreciate these college students being here as tutors.”

The feelings are mutual. College students value their experiences at HTM. Jaclyn Essa, an EDUC 377 student, says, “Each learner might be progressing at a different rate but each class they get better and better at what they’re doing. They all work so hard and it’s really great to see and to be a part of their learning.” Essa also notes the importance of building and sustaining relationships. She says, “When I came back to HTM for my second semester after winter break and all of the learners remembered my name, it made me feel really appreciated and accepted into their community. I really enjoy working at HTM and I think it’s a really great place in the city of Holyoke.”

Fox also said she notices something special about college students who have signed up as tutors with the organization.

“People who had thought they wanted to do K-12 came here and learned about Adult Basic Education, and changed their minds,” Fox says. “It’s a generally unknown field due to some of the shame associated with it. Imagine being an adult in our society, and not knowing how to read. The lack of funding keeps adult education in the shadows.”

The positive impact of college student involvement is felt at HTM.

“Having the passion and enthusiasm of young people is remarkable,” Fox adds. “If college students’ lives have been informed by being here, working with us, even people in political science or public policy, then maybe ten to twenty years from now there will be positive changes in the adult education system.”

Tutors are always in demand at the organization. There are two tracks in adult basic education: English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and basic reading, writing, and mathematics for GED preparation. HTM offers classes during the day and in the evenings; there is always a need for bilingual students (English and Spanish), especially students strong in math and Spanish writing composition. Certain times, such as the afternoons, are harder to find tutors and have a greater need for tutors.

Holyoke Tutor/Mentor Program is located at the Picknelly Center at 206 Maple Street in Holyoke. If you are interested in tutoring at HTM, enroll in EDUC 377, Multicultural Education in either the Fall or the Spring semester, or contact UMass CESL for more information.
Community Service Assistants (CSAs) are a vital part of the CESL staff. CSAs are undergraduates from nine different disciplines, performing various tasks and roles in the CESL community, from staffing the reception desk to consulting with students interested in Service-Learning to coordinating a range of events and projects. CSAs have integrated their academic work and service-learning to better shape their understanding of the world and to assist their own growing process of what it means to be civically engaged.

They were asked, “When and where did community and academics come together for you personally?” Here are their answers.

**Chris Beatriz, Sophomore**
Major: Nursing
Minor: Spanish
CESL Citizen Scholars Program Assistant

“American Diversity, had a lot of intellectual and personal components. Without the community background, I don’t think the course would’ve been as effective because people wouldn’t have been willing to share their stories.”

**Jon Carvalho, Junior**
Major: Journalism
Minor: Political Science
CESL Newsletter Team and Reporter

“In high school I was the secretary of Kiwanis Educated Youth organization and we did a lot of community service.”

**Jenn Fardy, Senior**
Major: Earth Systems
Minor: Certificate in coastal and Marine Studies
CESL Administrative Leader

“I think everything clicked for me after reading The Color of Wealth.”

**Farron Harvey, Senior**
Major: Social Thought and Political Economy
Minor: Women, Gender, and Sexuality
CESL Newsletter Team and Administrative Team

“When I realized that there were not a lot of people of color in higher education.”

**Yaa Mensah, Sophomore**
Double Major: Public Health and Psychology
CESL Academic Programs Assistant

“Service and Learning course Honors 391. It’s where we connect to the community and brought what we learned back to the classroom.”

**Anna Petsching, Sophomore**
Major: Business Management
CESL Faculty and Curriculum Assistant

“In high school, the annual “Turkey Dip” was the first time that I was able to participate with a teacher outside of the classroom working towards a common goal.”

**Alesia Razumova, Sophomore**
Major: Russian
Minor: Communications
CESL IMPACT! T.A. and Program Assistant

“When I became a T.A. for a community service-learning course at UMass. I was able to look at the community from a different perspective and connect it to my academics.”

**Josh Spinner, Senior**
Major: Environmental Design
Minor: Economics
CESL Community Partnership Assistant

“The connection between the service I was physically doing and the content we discussed in the IMPACT! program allowed me to make a more thorough evaluation of why it was important to me.”

In high school, I participated in the annual turkey dip, which consisted of me jumping into a lake near the high school. It was to help raise money for Muscular Dystrophy (MD). The Turkey Dip was the first time that I was able to participate with a teacher outside of the classroom working towards a common goal.”

“Student Profiles: Community Service Assistants at Civic Engagement and Service-Learning!”
Service-Learning Academic News: Service-Learning Course Designations Coming to SPIRE!

The registrar’s database now allows courses to carry a designation of either Civic Engagement or Service-Learning. As with the General Education designations, these “course attributes” will be searchable in SPIRE, the on-line course database; students will be able to easily find courses that connect them in many different ways to the communities around us.

The Civic Engagement designation will cover a broad range of courses that explore the knowledge and skills needed by citizens in a democracy and that engage students in work outside the classroom that contributes to the public good. The Service-Learning designation will apply to a smaller set of courses that meet more detailed criteria.

Faculty: CESL invites you to request either designation for courses you teach (either undergraduate or graduate), using the form on the CESL website. Requests will be reviewed by the Provost’s Committee on Service-Learning. A designation will be retained for five years unless you inform us that the course has changed so that it is no longer appropriate.

We expect to see many courses bearing one of these designations the next time a new schedule of classes is released—in November for Spring 2013.

Service-Learning Course and Program Information:
Time to Sign Up For Fall 2012!

Service-Learning Course List Fall 2012
Service-Learning Course list for Fall 2012 is now available!

The Boltwood Project Lives On!
For over 40 years UMass has been home to The Boltwood Project, a Service-Learning course that partners with 14 community programs for people with disabilities. This semester, Professor Merle Willmann, long since retired from Landscape Architecture Regional Planning, is retiring from directorship of The Boltwood Project. UMass CESL is proud to be taking up the mantle from Professor Willmann. If you are interested in participating in The Boltwood Project next academic year (Service-Learning 298, a 2-credit practicum) email Carol Soules, Associate Director of UMass CESL at ccsoules.cesl@umass.edu.

EDUC 377 Gen. Ed. (U) is a service-learning course with service-learning sites in Holyoke. The class provides first-hand experience of the role of multicultural education in today’s schools and examines the nature of intergroup education. EDUC 377 offers an opportunity for you to incorporate theory with community-based work and experience, thereby enriching your educational experience. Information on the course can be found on our service-learning course list.

Apply to the Citizens Scholars Program (CSP)!
Be part of a community of students, faculty and staff who think critically about social issues and act collaboratively to create change. Successful completion of CSP courses fulfill 5 out of 6 courses required for the new Certificate in Civic Engagement and Public Service.

First Round of Applications Due: March 30, 2012
Applications will be accepted after this date so long as space is available.
Questions? Please contact: CESL at csp.cesl@umass.edu

New fall practicum course with Nuestras Raíces!
Come get your hands dirty and learn about topics ranging from the history of Holyoke to food systems! Nuestras Raíces is a grass-roots organization that promotes economic, human and community development in Holyoke, Massachusetts, through projects relating to food, agriculture, and the environment.

The 2-credit Service-Learning practicum course will consist of 7 two-hour seminar sessions at UMass and 4 six-hour work days (Saturdays) at La Finca Farm (transportation will be provided). For more information about the practicum or Nuestras Raíces see our website or email Carol Soules, Associate Director of UMass CESL, at ccsoules.cesl@umass.edu.

Hunger and Community Food Security—SRVCLRNG 292F
In this course you will get to know—and get involved with—people, places, and organizations that address issues of food security and hunger. You will explore topics from food banks to community gardens, from farmers markets to nutrition education, and more, including a historical perspective on hunger. The core of the course is your commitment to a weekly community service experience at a site of your choosing.
**Upcoming Opportunities and Events!**

**UMass Civic Engagement and Service-Learning is expecting to hire:**
Two Paid AmeriCorps Summer Associates
One position will focus on Amherst
One position will focus on Holyoke
If you are interested in applying, please contact Carol Soules at csoules@acad.umass.edu

**SAVE THE DATE – CESL Spring Celebration!**
Are you interested in meeting students from across campus who are engaged in service-learning and social action? Do you want to learn more about other opportunities at UMass Amherst to engage with the community? Then join us!
Please RSVP online!
Date: Monday, April 9
Time: 6:00pm – 8:00pm
Place: Cape Cod Lounge, Student Union
Dinner will be provided

**Holyoke Transportation** available to students!
Buses are available to take students to and from their community service sites, Monday-Thursday afternoon.

**The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts Food for Today Workshop**
An interactive workshop for students, staff and faculty designed to demonstrate root causes of hunger and the challenges some people face in obtaining food.
Pizza dinner will be provided.

UMass Amherst Campus, TBA
Wed. April 11, 2012, 6:00pm – 8:30pm

To register or learn more, please [click here](#) or contact [Nicole Nemec](#) at the CESL office.

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addition, a variety of field trips and service opportunities—including farm work and serving community meals—provide a larger perspective on the community and the issues. Information on the course can be found on our [service-learning course list](#).

**Mentoring with Big Brothers Big Sisters SRVCLRNG 292M**
Do you have a little time to make a big difference in the life of a child? Would you like to learn more about mentoring? In this course you can do both! You will study the history of mentoring and consider theories of youth development and best practices in mentoring. You will also critically examine your own assumptions and beliefs in order to better understand your interactions with your Little Brother or Sister and their family. Through this course, you will develop skills as a mentor and for working in a variety of social service settings. Interested students need to apply to be a Big Sister or Big Brother. Early application is strongly encouraged. Students who are already mentoring with Big Brothers Big Sisters may enroll in this course. Contact Tom McGuire at [TMcGuire@chd.org](mailto:TMcGuire@chd.org).