

The 2026 Annual

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING SHOWCASE

Now an expanded version of CCLA's Civic Engagement Symposium

Thursday, February 19th
12-1:30pm
Stern Great Room

Co-hosted by

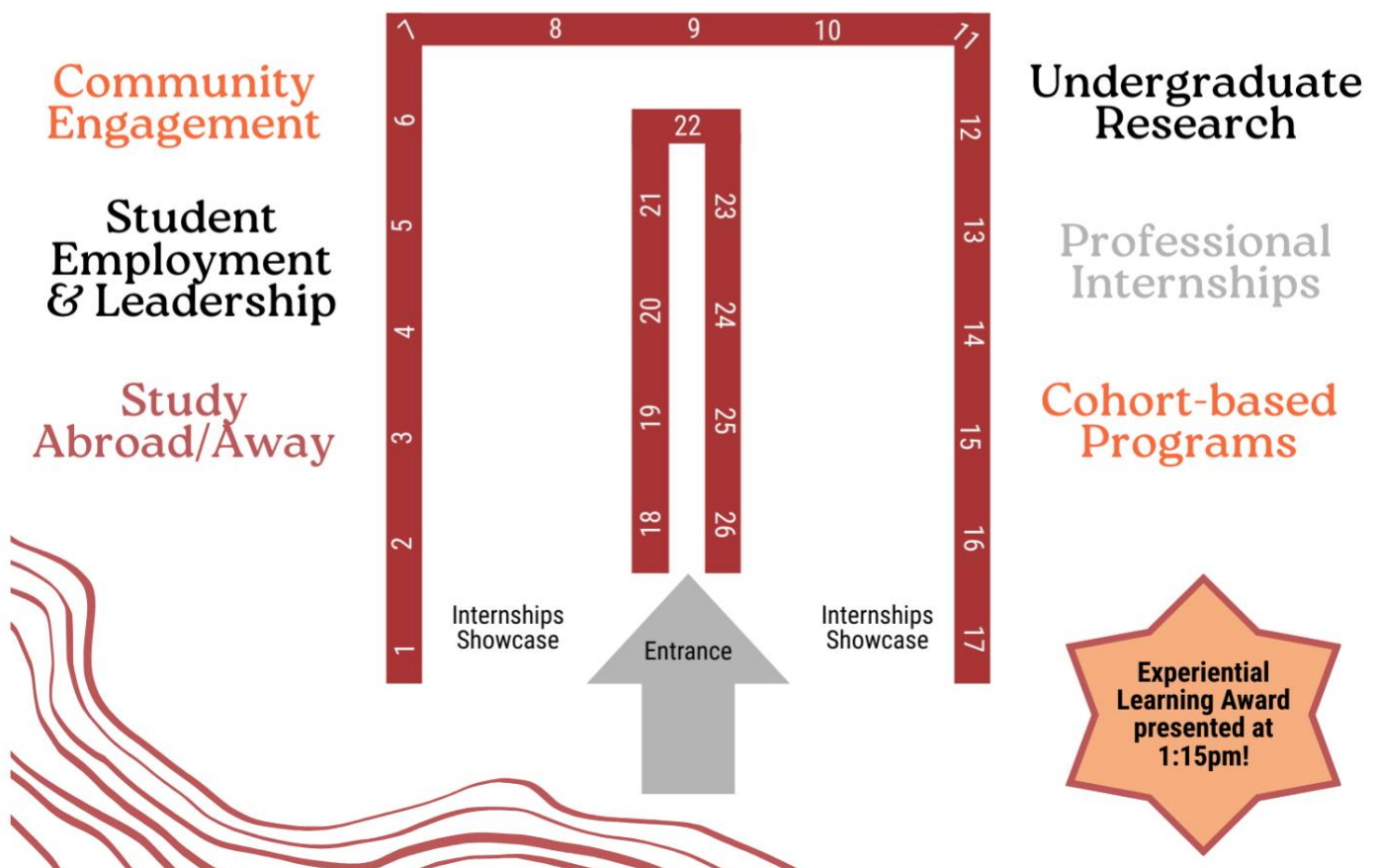
Dickinson
CENTER FOR CIVIC
LEARNING & ACTION

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DEVELOPMENT

Experiential learning is the educational process of gaining knowledge and skills through the ongoing cycle of **hands-on experience**, **critical reflection**, and the **application** of ideas.

This conference features **26 poster presentations by 45+ students**, who exhibit the diverse forms that experiential learning can take. **On display are also 34 registered internships**. The presentations span all class years, cut across academic majors, and represent the skills and outcomes associated with applying academic concepts in practice.

Enclosed are program abstracts for presenters, clustered by theme throughout the room. Navigate to a particular poster using the layout below.



2026 Experiential Learning Showcase Abstracts

1: Your Normal is Not Universal

Aavani Joshy '28 and Anushka Sharma '29

Our poster, Your Normal Is Not Universal, examines food as a social system shaped by history, culture, and access. Drawing from community food distribution experiences, we challenge individualistic assumptions about choice and reframe behaviors labeled irrational as collective care. Pausing judgment recognizes the limits of one's perspective and creates space for empathy and more just systems.

Categories: Community Engagement | Internships

2: Home Away From Home: The Importance of Community Programs for Students

Talia Perez '28 and Maya Reichenbach '27

As Community Engagement Fellows at Carlisle Victory Circle (CVC), we provide community programming to middle school and high school kids. We propose that safe spaces that encourage teamwork, friendship, and imagination support students' sense of belonging within their community.

Categories: Community Engagement | Internships

3: Colorful Communities: The Importance of Authentic Creativity in a Nonprofit Setting

Dinela Dedic '27 and Cody Harper '27

With the rise of generative AI use in professional settings, it is important now more than ever to foster authentic creativity, especially in community settings like nonprofit organizations. Creative expression within non-profits such as marketing material creates a welcoming environment for community members and tells a story that further builds trust and credibility.

Categories: Community Engagement | Internships

4: The Impact of Community on Reducing Recidivism in Carlisle

Cecilia Deeny-Locraft '29 and Isabella Gehron '28

Upon analyzing our internships within Carlisle as a Mental Health and Activities Intern at the Cumberland County Prison and Criminal Justice and Reentry Program Assistant, we recognized the importance of establishing support systems and resources to help incarcerated individuals effectively transition back to their communities.

Categories: Community Engagement | Internships

5: Addressing Gaps in Needs—Understanding the Framework for Effective Community Development

Charlotte Rismiller '28

Community development is when members of a community come together to enhance the quality of life in their community, whether that be through economic, social, spiritual, or environmental means. Through serving as the Neighborhood Needs Coordinator at New Life Community, I found that communities are most successful when the three levels of community development (macro, mezzo, and micro) collaborate with each other to identify and address gaps in needs.

Categories: Community Engagement | Internships

6: Community Networks

Silvia Roberto '29, Jocelyn Mrotek '29, and Fariya Bushra '28

Work with the United Way's Success by 6 Program, Community Impact Department and Carlisle's CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) office have proven that community networks are essential to the success of community engagement and improvement. Sharing resources and collaborating on shared goals creates the kind of progress that proves 'it always takes a village.'

Categories: Community Engagement | Internships

7: Stakeholder Considerations in Projects at Community CARES

Grace Johnson '29 and Anna Aaron '28

Community CARES is a local non-profit providing shelter and other resources to people who are or at risk of becoming homeless in Cumberland County, PA. We are students actively performing two separate roles within the organization:

Anna is a volunteer completing safety updates, while Grace is completing a marketing and communications internship with Community CARES through the Community Engagement Fellows Program. Engaging all relevant stakeholders is paramount to a success in our work supporting vulnerable populations.

Categories: Community Engagement | Internships

8: Service Trips & Engagement Over the Years

Valerie Larsen '27 and Yeis Rivera-Olivo '26

Volunteering is often seen as a societal requirement on the list of things you are supposed to do, but what actually drives participants to service trips, and who participates? In the last three years, CCLA has seen an uptick in service trip engagement, and our project aims to learn why by analyzing gender dynamics, qualities seen in service trip participants, and the overall impact of service trips.

Categories: Student employment and leadership | Senior Presentations

9: Watering our Giving Tree: Moving from Extractive to Reciprocal Community Engagement

Emily Chaine '28 and Alyssa Daly '28

Community engagement is most effective when it is built on a foundation of shared growth. Often, a disconnect exists between Dickinsonians and the Carlisle community; students take resources and knowledge but struggle with how to give back. Through opportunities provided by CCLA, we have collaborated with our peers to find ways to “water” the tree that is the community we live within. Our work aims to transform this dynamic into a more intentional, humble, and harmonious relationship.

Categories: Community Engagement | Internships

10: OBBBA & Housing and Food Insecurity

Grant Donta-Venman '28 and Noelle Artinian '28

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), enacted on July 4th, 2025, proposed one of the largest budget cuts in American history—cutting \$186 billion dollars from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and a cut to housing support that puts 170,000 people nationwide at risk of losing permanent supportive housing. Our insights, as Community Engagement Fellows in housing and food security respectively, have proved how integral proper fundraising and community unity are to supporting causes that combat harmful policies.

Categories: Community Engagement | Internships

11: Dignity Index

Sadie Dussault '28

The Dignity Index is a tool that allows people to frame their conversations in a respectful and meaningful way. Tim Shriver developed this scale in an attempt to ease political tension and it has grown into a global movement. The scale measures how we should be communicating in conversations with each other: contempt is indicated through numbers 1-4, while dignity is represented in numbers 5-8. By sharing this barometer and utilizing it in my internship with Moving Circles, an organization dedicated to community dialogue, the hope is to promote more productive conversations that can ease political tension.

Categories: Community Engagement | Internship

12: Bridging Divides through Dialogues Across Differences

Marianna Bischoff '28, Mel Morales '26, Piper Wake '28, Vy Dao '27

Structured dialogue bridges social, cultural, and ideological differences. Having respectful conversations and reflective exercises, in addition to problem solving while navigating disagreement, leads participants to build shared understanding. The Dialogue Across Differences table focuses on effective key practices to create dialogue across diverse perspectives. Together, we intentionally foster meaningful connection and community-building while promoting awareness, curiosity, and humility.

Categories: Community Engagement | Student employment and leadership

13: Public Education Through Film: Informing Communities About Constitutional History

Andrea Gomez Zamora '28

This poster explores my work with the War,Peace, and Justice Project supporting a community-based film series that uses historical documentaries to educate the public about constitutional history. Through film screenings and guided panel discussions, the project creates nonpartisan spaces for learning and reflection on past injustices. This experience highlights how storytelling can inform communities and encourage individuals to make their own connections between historical events and contemporary issues.

Categories: Community Engagement | Internships

14: The Power of Communication and Storytelling for Civic Engagement

Harley Bui '27

What makes people care enough to act? Can a story turn a passerby into a participant? This poster explores how communication and storytelling shape civic engagement in educational and civic organizations like the CCLA. It asks: what makes their branding different, how communication influences audiences, and how intentional storytelling can inspire meaningful civic participation—turning awareness into action.

Categories: Student employment and leadership | Community Engagement

15: Senior Presentations of Learning: Reflections on Three-Year Commitments to Civic Engagement

Madison Hensley '26 and Claire Choplick '26

What is the impact of a long-term commitment to serving in Carlisle? In this poster, two senior Community Engagement Fellows share their reflections on what we've learned from three years of community engagement with their respective partners--Safe Harbour (housing) and Project SHARE (food). Across different majors and placements, we share similar insights about the power of relationships and collective action toward systemic change.

Categories: Senior Presentations | Community Engagement

16: Finding Family and Purpose: Mission Based Civic Engagement

Elena Mazurek '26

Through my commitment to mission based civic engagement, I have learned many skills that have advanced my understanding in the operations of non-profit organizations. I benefit from being able to bring tangible knowledge and a different perspective to my classes. My classes have provided me a basis of critical thinking, curiosity, practice in decision making, and an understanding of the historical roots of social issues. I have also learned a great deal about my own personal beliefs, values, and how to balance doing the things I love. In this poster I define, reflect, and make connections on my courses and two most impactful internships during my three years at Dickinson.

Categories: Senior Presentations | Community Engagement

17: Connecting Carlisle and Campus

AnhTam Pham '29, Chris Marcil '28, and Samuel Pimental '28

Through our three distinct roles as student leaders at the CCLA, we mitigate the divide between Dickinson and Carlisle. The goals and perspectives of students and the residents of Carlisle are often aligned, yet move on parallel paths. Our work as Campus and Community Outreach Coordinator (Sheehy Scholar), Voter Engagement Coordinator, and Carlisle Borough Ambassador helps connect those paths to create more powerful and progressive change.

Categories: Student employment and leadership | Sheehy Scholar

18: Continuing Resistance: Lessons from the Atlantic Slave Trade Ghana Mosaic

Reed Stone '26 and Kiersten Kahn '26

This poster discusses the impact of the 2024-2025 Teaching the Atlantic Slave Trade Ghana Mosaic which intersected the historical narratives regarding the trade of enslaved people with contemporary analyses of American education for Black students. In January 2025, participants in the program conducted fieldwork in Accra and Cape Coast Ghana to layer their understandings from classwork and design lesson plans using racially informed pedagogies.

Categories: Study abroad/away | Senior Presentations

19: Demystifying Prostitution and the Sex Trade

Mae Polis '27

Drawing on my experiences abroad in Denmark and my internship at the YWCA, my poster focuses on the ways in which sex work can be demystified, with the purpose of creating a better understanding of the industry. I present the idea that the decriminalization of sex work is the legal model that provides the most safety, security, and dignity to sex workers.

Categories: Study abroad/away | Community Engagement

20: Center for Sustainability Education: Experiential Learning & Sustainability

Jillian Mann '26, Cara Kamoie '26, Nam Nguyen, Rachel Lipsky, Elle Kellogg, Claire Raesly, Caleb Grim, Reed Beck, and Breanna Franchak

The Center for Sustainability Education (CSE) provides internships and volunteer opportunities that engage students with our sustainability initiatives on campus and in the community. These experiential learning opportunities provide students with hands-on, real-world discovery and application of what sustainability means to people, projects and solutions. Living laboratories provide valuable skill-building and professional development opportunities including critical thinking, collaboration, organization and problem-solving.

Categories: Student employment and leadership | Internships

21: How Tutoring at the MWC Changed Our Perspectives

Claire Raesly '27 and Fiona Orrok '27

Dickinson College's Norman M. Eberly Multilingual Writing Center (MWC) is a student-centered space that supports writers across disciplines, abilities, and languages. Through peer tutoring and our roles as Writing Associates, we developed interpersonal skills while building strategies that reshaped our approaches to learning, collaboration, and writing. These experiences have influenced our academic paths at Dickinson College and continue to shape our work beyond the classroom.

Categories: Student employment and leadership

22: Encouraging Voices: How PCIT-SM Supports Children with Selective Mutism

Celine Phan '27

What unfolds when children who are too anxious to speak finally find their voices? At Advanced Therapeutic Solutions for Anxiety (ATSA), interns observed the remarkable transformations sparked by exposure and Parent-Child Interaction Therapies for Selective Mutism (PCIT-SM). Shy children gradually engaging, communicating, and connecting revealed the thrilling potential of clinical interventions and the excitement of witnessing real change in action. This poster highlights some of the knowledge, skills, and experiences I gained while serving as an intern with ATSA.

Categories: Internships

23: Modeling Enzyme Catalysis in Micelles Using Computational Tools: Hands-On Research with the SIMCODES Catalysis Project

Alisa Steele '26

Through a summer research experience with SIMCODES, I learned about computational chemistry via a project using machine learning to model protease substrate catalysis in micelle environments. My role was to use chemistry background to generate a database of binding affinities. The final program will assist in computational drug development. I learned Python, attended weekly professional development seminars, and presented my work at a symposium. This hands-on research strengthened my skills and advanced my career path.

Categories: Research | Internships

24: Valuing Lived Experiences and Emotions of Our People Within Academic Research

Indra Sokhomsan '26 (and Destiny McFalls '25)

As Undergraduate researchers of Color, we see that within educational research, we focus on data 100% of the time. The data most valued has zero emotional implications and zero human bias within the data. The data valued doesn't adequately frame someone's life experience. So what good does this data do if it is not framing human emotional experiences? Within our research with BLESS, we focus on community dinners with participants as a medium for gathering data. We are searching for trigger words and emotional-based language that we gather from these dinners to shape our understanding of the experiences of Black women educators.

Categories: Research | Senior Presentations

25: From Student to Faculty: Everyone is Learning

Sophia Dadds '29

The Center for Teaching, Learning & Scholarship (CTLs) fosters faculty/staff development, teaches about various pedagogies, encourages continued scholarship, and advocates for innovative education. This poster features a Sheehy scholar and CTLs student worker who shares how mentorship and working with faculty/staff development has improved her communication, technology, and professionalism.

Categories: Sheehy Scholar | Student employment and leadership

26: Leadership Recognition at Dickinson College

Addison Jackson '29

Being a Sheehy Scholar allows me to work in the campus life office in an official capacity. Working with Ryan Patton and MOB has allowed me to gain professional skills. Through this partnership, I have learned the importance of leadership recognition and the ways that Dickinson not only recognizes but cultivates leadership.

Categories: Sheehy Scholar | Student employment and leadership



On Display at the Internships Showcase

The Center for Career Services extends our sincere appreciation to everyone who participated in our recent photo submission initiative. Your creativity, enthusiasm, and willingness to share your experiences truly brought this project together.

Josie Angevine '27

Neuroscience

UMD Medical Center/Shock Trauma Center & UMSOD

Beatrix Bond '27

Environment Science

Dickinson College Farm

Leo Burchell '27

Neuroscience; Psychology

Broad Institute of MIT & Harvard

Alex Carbone '27

Archaeology; Anthropology

El Campanario Archaeological Project

Liz Cioffi '26

American Studies

Headstone Manor and Museum

Alyssa Daly '28

Educational Studies

Lancaster County Democratic Committee

Minh Dao '28

Quantitative Economics; INBM

VIX Securities Joint Stock Company

Vy Dao '27

Art History; Economics

L'Officiel Vietnam

Olivia Degen '27

Law & Policy; Biology

Cumberland County Courthouse

Linh Do '27

Theatre Arts; Quantitative Economic

Hanoi Drama Theatre

Megan Fife '27

INBM

Pebble Studios

Henry Gaydos '27

Archaeology; Anthropology

HTCC/IRLab Field School

Palistha Hada '28

Neuroscience

Avaani Foundation

Ashley Harbert '26

Psychology

Philadelphia Center Against Sexual Violence (WOAR)

Riley Heffron '26

English; Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies

General Federation of Women's Clubs

Zoe Hiller '28

INBM
Mud Luv Pottery Studio

Ava Hoffer '28

Archaeology; Anthropology
Institute for Research and Learning in Archaeology and
Bioarchaeology

Zarak Khan '26

Quantitative Economics; INBM
SM Property

Duc Le '27

Quantitative Economics
Viet Dragon Securities

Alexandra Lee '28

Political Science; Religion
Dickinson College – Religious Studies Program

Malena Malka Goldman '26

Data Analytics; Quantitative Economics
PureIntegration

Abigail Miller '27

Archaeology; Classical Studies
Balkin Heritage Field School Archaeology of Apollonia
Pontica

Nada Moussaid '27

Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
UMD Medical Systems Oral-Maxillofacial Surgery/Shock
Trauma Center & School of Dentistry

Huong Nguyen '27

Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies
L'Officiel Vietnam

Nam Anh Nguyen '28

Quantitative Economics; INBM
Vietcombank

Ani Nikoghosyan '27

Quantitative Economics
Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training

Celine Phan '27

Psychology; Quantitative Economics
Advanced Therapeutic Solutions for Anxiety

Rohan Piya '28

Computer Science; Data Analytics
LogicaBeans

Robin Rushing '27

INBM
Beyond Alpha Ventures

San Tran '27

Quantitative Economics; INBM
Eurostars Jsc.

Thao Trinh '27

Music; INBM
International Business Times UK

Maxwell Yeager '27

Archaeology; History
Strata Florida Trust