

Civic Engagement Symposium Project Abstracts

April 27, 2023

Carlisle Victory Circle COVID-19 Impacts Student Learning & Wellbeing

Our goal is to support Carlisle Victory Circle in researching how the Covid-19 pandemic has negatively impacted students' learning. Furthermore, we aim to offer viable solutions on how to regain this lost academic time for students. To accomplish this, we will research how a variety of communities were affected by the pandemic, and how they were able to overcome it. We can use this information to provide the Carlisle Victory Circle with resources of how Covid-19 affected communities. We want them to use this information to improve education within the community. This project will further our understanding of direct impacts of the pandemic for ourselves and members of the Carlisle Victory Circle. (Spencer Davis '26, Alyssa Fernandes '26, D.J. Finnell '24, Cyara Lambert '23)

Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Carlisle Borough Student Ambassador Position

For twenty years, Carlisle Borough Student Ambassadors have cultivated reciprocity between members of the Dickinson College and Carlisle communities by serving as non-voting members of the Carlisle Borough Council. This project aims to outline the development and role of the Student Ambassador position since its formation in 2002. (Anne Fisher-Henson '24)

CCLA's Days of Service

The Center for Civic Learning & Action (CCLA) runs the Day of Service program which provides an incredible opportunity for students to gain leadership experience while volunteering alongside community partners. CCLA's goal is to foster experiences that allow participants to bring what they learned back to the Dickinson community while also contributing to our partners' ongoing work in the public interest. As the Day of Service coordinator this year, I have been involved with the planning and facilitation of these events. (Sariah Franklin '25)

CCLA Student Service Trips

The Center for Civic Learning and Action connects members of the Dickinson community to community partner organizations. Through the Service Trips program, students work in communities to complete service projects focused on different social issues. Each trip includes educational and reflective opportunities prior, during, and after travel focused on these social issues, historical and cultural context, and community problem-solving. (Lily Hogan '25, Trudy Chung '25)



Community Action Project: Incorporating Sustainability at New Life Community Church

The goal of our New Life Community Church collective action project is to research and outline sustainable practices for the Church to implement. This includes giving them recommendations on sustainable materials to replace their existing materials that are not as environmentally friendly. We hope to offer a number of recommendations, some that are already practiced in other churches. One of our goals is also to frame this work in a way that aligns with the Church's values. By this, we mean help them understand the importance of a sustainable lifestyle in the context of their faith or religion. We want the community to see the benefits and bigger picture of the whole project. Our community partner will benefit from this by learning new ways to help his community live sustainably, while living through his values. We will also research not only environmentally sustainable options, but financially, too. With this all being said, we want to create a concise and clear outline for Pastor Ryan so that he has sustainable recommendations for the future that can eventually be passed down. Members of the team will gain the knowledge of researching and creating a sustainable procurement policy, as well as gaining experience with a real hands-on project that will go towards helping a community. We will also learn how to work with others, especially those that are outside our institution. (Emerson Rains '24, Zaara Shah '26)

Covid-19 and How it Affected Students

The impacts of COVID-19 on students have been reported worldwide, with the abrupt transition to using technology solely having resulted in massive changes regarding the student's social and academic aspects. In this research, we will be reviewing articles and literature about the challenges students were facing when their daily face-to-face interactions were replaced with computer screens. (Binh Nguyen '25, Annika Haagensen '26 Indra Sokhomsan '26)

Homelessness among Formerly Incarcerated people

I intern at Safe Harbour, Inc. Their goal is to provide shelter and resources for the homeless or potentially homeless. In the facility where I work, is also where the homeless reside. There are a variety of different people we have in our shelter, single mothers with children, disabled, veterans, mentally ill, facing addiction or abuse, etc. When looking at potential residents, Safe Harbour goes through background checks to make sure that the resident does not have a criminal record. If they do, they are not able to reside at Safe Harbour. So where do these homeless people who have criminal charges go? They are still humans. That is what I want to discuss. There are options for people who are facing homelessness and are registered as a criminals, but not as much. (Madison Hensley '26)



Hope Station After-School Program

Developing lesson plans for STEM topics that will help enrich youth in the Northside neighborhood community. (Grace Filson '25, Amber Holmes '24, Ellis Tompkins '25, Sophie Brightman '24)

Huggingface Transformers

Huggingface Transformers is an open-source project that provides deep learning libraries for text, vision, and audio applications in pursuit of solving complex real-world problems. We contributed to this open source by adding new features to existing models and troubleshooting bugs through open collaboration with project maintainers. (Katie Le '24, Adia Wu '23, Billy Lee '23, Evan Bates '23, Phillip Mollerus '23)

Invasive Plants and Water Resources in Carlisle

This project aims to investigate the impact of invasive plant species on water resources in Carlisle, PA. It will assess the effects of invasive plants on water quality and quantity and develop community-based approaches to invasive plant management to protect water resources. The study will contribute to the understanding of the importance of protecting water resources and provide insights into managing invasive species in urban areas. (Evelyn Pham '26)

Oppia

Oppia is an open-source online learning platform designed to specifically meet the needs of under-resourced students by simulating one-on-one interactions with a tutor. Its low bandwidth requirement and local translations make it accessible to many. Our team has contributed by refactoring the codebase and improving front-end and back-end tests. (Leah Goldberg '23, Wonje Lee '23, Han Trinh '23, Josephine Cook '23)

Prison Reentry in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania

The current study aims to assess trends of prison reentry and the resources available to offenders in Cumberland County Prison. 206 inmates were asked to respond to a series of open-ended and multiple-choice questions. One significant finding was that sobriety was more important to repeat offenders than first time offenders. (Cassandra DiPierro '23)

Project RattleCam: Developing Dashboards for Educating the Public about Rattlesnakes

Through our research, we are developing an online platform to make this project's data more accessible. Our dashboards can help scientists conduct data analysis for their research and educate the public about Rattlesnakes. (Dzung Dinh '24)



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The Cycle of Homelessness in Young Women

This project examines the disproportionate factors in which young women face homelessness. We will be exploring the gender pay gap, access to reproductive care, domestic violence, mental health, and the constitutional right to bodily autonomy in the wake of the overturning of Roe v. Wade. (Lucy Woodward '25, Jane Canfield '25)

The Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Food Insecurity

My presentation will be on the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on food insecurity when applied to Carlisle, Pennsylvania. There was a decrease in recurring clients receiving food at Project SHARE during the pandemic because of an increase in government benefits. This fact shows current structural inequities my presentation will highlight. (Claire Choplick '26)

The Feasibility of a Solar Panel Plant in Cumberland County

We will determine the feasibility of developing a solar panel manufacturing plant in the Cumberland area, identifying the benefits and challenges that come with such a project. We will also determine the next steps that are necessary through research and interviews. Our overall goal is to find out such a project's possibility. (Greta Herman '26, Cass Jackson '26, Tessa Lefante '26, Lucian Kapushoc '25)

The Importance of Mentoring

This poster will focus on looking at the impact that mentoring programs have on young children, such as those in elementary, especially after the pandemic. (Lusila De La Rosa '24)

The Unaffordable Reality: Exploring the Affordable Housing Crisis in Carlisle

One of the largest issues in Carlisle and Cumberland County post-pandemic has been the affordable housing crisis, which has left people struggling to pay rent and has even left people homeless. The high levels of inflation and absurd housing prices leaves those in lower income fields fighting to make enough for a living, which is why we need to bring immediate awareness to affordable housing. (Jacob Fuentes Ortega)



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