By joining forces, by capitalizing on one another’s strengths and compensating for one another’s weaknesses, we can do so much more than we can do alone.”

—Penny White, Distinguished Professor of Law

FROM THE DIRECTOR

In January 2015, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture received a joint Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement from the Carnegie Foundation, which is a remarkable achievement. With it, UT becomes one of only fifty-two universities to hold both the Carnegie’s “very high intensity” research classification and the engaged status designation.

The Carnegie Foundation provided our university with four recommendations, which we have adopted for ongoing advancement of community-campus engagement and a successful reclassification in 2025.

1. Development of robust assessment practices
2. Development of more reciprocal partnerships
3. Increased incentives for and evidence of faculty rewards for roles in community engagement
4. Closer alignment with campus priorities and initiatives

We made great progress towards achieving our Carnegie goals in 2015, from a yearlong celebration of our “Partnerships that Make a Difference,” which received national attention, to the approval of more supportive language for engaged scholarship in our faculty handbook.

We look forward to further discovery and emphasis on the value of community engagement as an integral approach to our academic, research, and outreach programs in years ahead.

Elizabeth Burman
Director, Office of Community Engagement & Outreach

robust assessment

The quality of engaged scholarship is tied to both public accountability and traditional measures of academic excellence. Among our ongoing efforts to document the impact of UT engagement, we post formal end-of-project reports, publish news articles, and follow up after the funding period has ended.

Alex Miller, the William B. Stokely Chair in Management and director of the Consortium for Social Enterprise Effectiveness, was awarded a Community Engagement Incentive Grant in 2013 for his proposal, “UT Engagement with Regional Nonprofits.” Miller’s project helped launch the Knox Area Alliance for Better Nonprofits (ABN), the first nonprofit training and resource center in East Tennessee that continued to grow throughout 2015. ABN provides a unique opportunity for members to learn, grow, and engage. ABN offers unparalleled training workshops, certificate programs, networking events, and consulting packages.

IMPACT OF ABN SINCE JUNE 2015:

| 1,728 professional development hours provided | 981 event attendees | 120 member nonprofits | 22 nonprofits currently completing the Standards for Excellence assessment |
| 8 partner universities | 9.6 out of 10 Workshop attendees rating of ABN’s expert trainers | 50,000 unique online sessions logged |
| ABN website serves as command central for registration and membership. It also features an online resource library, equipment donations forum, and job board for the nonprofit sector. |
Projects funded by UT Community Engagement Incentive grants require the active involvement of an external partner. Grant applications are subject to a peer-review process that includes reviewers from both inside and outside the university.

The following partnerships began in 2015 and were awarded grants:

**Priorities for Downtown Knoxville: Exploring Recommendations for the Urban Land Institute**

*Marleen Kay Davis, ACSA Distinguished Professor, School of Architecture*

In 2014, the City of Knoxville engaged the Urban Land Institute (ULI) as a consultant to make recommendations regarding five downtown sites, related to a process of input from significant stakeholders. ULI submitted their final report in February 2015 to the city. Building on these recommendations, and in consultation with the city, Davis conducted a research design studio course in the fall, the findings of which could be used to assist the city in building consensus for community decisions. Project funding assisted public outreach during the course and extended course research beyond the classroom with public events, exhibits, and a permanent publication. Students gained insight into the public process related to urban design decisions.

**Lonsdale Elementary Performative Landscapes**

*Gale Fulton, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Landscape Architecture*

This project is focused on an ongoing collaboration between the UT Landscape Architecture program, the Great Schools Partnership, and several Knox County community schools. In this case, members of the UT Landscape Architecture program worked with Lonsdale Elementary Community School on an ongoing on-site project to establish productive vegetable gardens and other performative landscapes. Funds were used for supplies and coordination of on-site construction of new gardens.

**String Music Education in Moshi, Tanzania**

*Hillary Herndon, Associate Professor of Viola and String Area Coordinator, School of Music*

With regular cuts to funding for the arts, today’s music students must learn to be advocates for their field. This program allows UT students to realize the value of music education, even to those struggling with the most basic needs. Tanzania has been declared a “Least Developed Country” by the United Nations, with 68 percent of people living on less than $1.25 a day. This proposal funded UT student teachers to work over the summer in Moshi, Tanzania, teaching daily music lessons to Tanzanian school children. The program is preparing our students to be leaders in the music field while empowering the youth of an impoverished community.

**Fostering Children’s Conservation Ethic Through a Bat-Centered Conservation**

*Gary McCracken, Professor, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology*

This project involves constructing a community bat house that will provide a focal point for education and implementation of conservation education curricula as well as providing the opportunity for children and other community members to experience bats in the wild. The bat house envisioned will be large, measuring ten by ten feet, and will accommodate many thousands of bats. The house will be located on an approved location at the UT Gardens, adjacent to the Tennessee River. Funds will be used to erect a superstructure of the bat house, with matching funds to be obtained to complete the construction.

**Root Mark Analysis Utilizing Citizen Science**

*Andrew Steen, Assistant Professor, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences*

Citizen scientists represent an underutilized resource for crowdsourcing research. Previous attempts to incorporate citizen scientists into research on postmortem alterations to bone are rare, but yield promising results. This project will explore modifications to bone caused by plants—a commonly identified trace, but one that is also poorly understood. Datasets will be collected by the PIs and area middle school students for statistical comparisons. The results will serve as a method of engaging students in the scientific process, an exploration for the utility of citizen science in similar research, and a proof of concept for forthcoming National Science Foundation and National Institute of Justice proposals.

“Prospective partners want to know how much we care before they care how much we know”

—Tyvi Small, director of diversity and community relations, Haslam College of Business
reciprocal partnerships

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INCENTIVE GRANTS WERE COMPLETED IN 2015 FOR THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:

A CLEAN WATER PUBLIC HEALTH AND EDUCATION TRAINING PROGRAM FOR RURAL APPALACHIA
Lisa Davenport, Clinical Assistant Professor, College of Nursing, and Appalachia Project Manager
Davenport used her grant to develop and implement the WASH education and training program. In partnership with the Red Bird Mission Christian School in Beverly, Kentucky, materials and education were provided to 116 students in grades five through twelve over the course of two days.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD BY NUMBERS: USING SOCIAL JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATION TO SUPPORT MATH LEARNING
Lynn Hodge, Associate Professor, Theory and Practice in Teacher Education
Hodge used her grant to implement social justice-themed math activities at Vine Middle School. Hodge partnered with the school’s teachers and Ashley Walther, a doctoral student and math coach with Knox County Schools.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM MARKETING AND TRAINING FOR ONLINE CONTINUING EDUCATION
Elizabeth DeGeorge, Director of Communications, College of Social Work
DeGeorge used her grant in the Social Work Office of Research and Public Service to create a supportive assistance system for people registered with the College of Social Work Learning Management System. The system engages over 1,700 registered users from across the state in continuing education for social workers and related professions.

A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE EVALUATION, STATISTICS, AND MEASUREMENT PROGRAM AND KNOXVILLE’S TENNESSEE COLLEGE OF APPLIED TECHNOLOGY
Jennifer Ann Morrow, Associate Professor, Educational Psychology and Counseling
Morrow used her grant to assess student needs at Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT). Morrow brought 250 community members to the TCAT Knoxville open house. Through the assessment evaluation project, TCAT Knoxville gained valuable understanding of what future attendees need and expect for careers and technical education.

RETENTION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN KNOXVILLE INITIATIVE WORKSHOP
Lili’a Uili Neville, Communications Director, Office for Diversity and Inclusion, and Chair of the Commission for Blacks
Neville used her grant for a community-campus workshop to develop solutions for keeping African Americans in Knoxville.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS OF HIGH POVERTY YOUTH
Yujeong Park, Assistant Professor, Theory and Practice in Teacher Education
Park used her grant to work closely with the Boys & Girls Club of the Tennessee Valley to provide struggling fourth- and fifth-graders with more effective writing skills.

KNOXVILLE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT: AN ORAL HISTORY
Liz Teston, Assistant Professor, Department of Interior Design
Teston used her grant to preserve the design and culture of Knoxville online. Teston’s team created an archive of images, recordings, and transcriptions focused on Market Square and the downtown area.

Please visit engagement.utk.edu for more details of each partnership.
REVISIONS TO THE FACULTY HANDBOOK
In June, the UT Board of Trustees approved the addition to UT’s Faculty Handbook of an outreach and engagement criteria for faculty appointment, evaluation, promotion, and tenure. The revision adds to the criteria for professorial rank and formalizes appropriate position and rank titles for faculty involved almost exclusively in outreach and engagement.

“The proposed revisions document and validate the importance of outreach and community engagement across the University of Tennessee and will help improve recruitment and retention of valued faculty members.”—UT Board of Trustees

RESOURCES FOR ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP
Our office provides resources to assist UT administration, academic departments, faculty, and staff in addressing issues of concern to society by encouraging and supporting external partnerships that co-generate, apply, transmit, and preserve knowledge. We’re doing this through regular posting of funding, publishing, presenting, and nominating opportunities with a community engagement component.

2015 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITY COUNTS
232 unique opportunities for funding (not including limited submissions)
123 unique publishing, presenting, or nominating opportunities sent out
355 total unique opportunities sent out

2015 ENGAGEMENT SCHOLARSHIP CONSORTIUM CONFERENCE
UT was among the first member institutions to join the Engagement Scholarship Consortium (ESC), now comprised of thirty-three colleges and universities from around the globe. The ESC’s annual conference is the biggest of its kind in the world, held this year at Penn State University.

OCEO provides three full scholarships for faculty to attend, awarded at the discretion of the Academic Outreach and Engagement Council. 2015 scholarships went to Paula Williams, associate professor, College of Law; Lisa Fall, associate professor, College of Communication and Information Sciences; and Anna Sandelli, associate professor, UT Libraries.

THE CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Community engagement is a high-impact practice. Seven of eight of UT’s Top 25 benchmark institutions also carry the designation. Supporting UT’s strategic mission:
• Higher retention rates of both faculty and students
• Increased public appropriations and support
• More capacity for research and teaching functions
• Increased campus diversity in many dimensions
• Stronger support from national reaccreditation agencies (including SACSCOC)

The Carnegie classification “recognizes the Institute of Agriculture’s strong commitment to the land-grant mission, which is carried out daily by our faculty and staff. We provide real-life solutions to our communities through teaching and research and especially through the impact of our extension programs offered in all ninety-five counties in Tennessee.”—Chancellor Larry Arrington, University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture

“Our university is an economic engine and a social change agent in our own backyard and across the globe ... The new Carnegie classification will sharpen our focus on the mutually beneficial partnerships and exchange of knowledge that help improve people’s lives.”—Chancellor Jimmy G. Cheek, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
“We are not in any way superior to people in these underserved communities. I think [students] do a good job at understanding that and learning from the community.”
—Lynn Blackburn, clinical assistant professor of nursing

“As part of our successful 2015 Community Engagement Classification application, we called upon colleges and divisions across UT, Knoxville, and the UT Institute of Agriculture to nominate their top community-campus partnerships that best represent an alignment of assessment, reciprocity, faculty scholarship, and our campus mission. We celebrated our fiftieth “Partnerships that Make a Difference” feature in December, wrapping up a yearlong celebration of our new Carnegie designation.

“Most importantly, you have to be a good listener.”
—Tom Gill, Smith Chair in International Sustainable Agriculture and director for International Programs

“UT’s team of professionals and students give all of themselves, offering up their unique skills and knowledge, and honor our community through their respectful, compassionate engagement.”
—Tracy Nolan, RN, director of community outreach, Red Bird Mission

engagement.utk.edu
Community engagement is the nexus of knowledge sharing and co-creation of knowledge between the academic world and other worlds.”

—Barbara A. Holland

Celebrating Our New Designation

In April, internationally known scholar Barbara A. Holland spent several days on campus discussing community engagement with UT faculty, administrators, and community partners.

During Holland’s visit, Chancellors Arrington and Cheek co-hosted a Community Engagement Party in celebration of our new classification, which was attended by many of our community partners, board members, legislators, faculty, staff, and students.