



# Annual Report

2023-2024

Office of Community Engaged Learning

Lewis University



## Message from the Director

As I reflect on the 2023-24 academic year, it's exciting to look back on our progress. We continued to expand our community engagement work, with a focus on relationship development, through the Lewis University Community Schools Consortium (LUCSC). Additionally, we began to more fully support efforts around Experiential Learning (EL). Here are just a few of the many points of celebration in a wide array of initiatives:


- We wrapped up the first complete academic year of LUCSC, supporting over 1,200 students and hosting over 100 youth on campus to learn about college.
- The annual Faculty-Partner Roundtable brought together nearly 90 community partners, faculty, and staff to explore opportunities for collaboration.
- In partnership with the ad hoc committee for Experiential Learning, we approved the 100<sup>th</sup> EL opportunity for designation since the EL program launched in Fall 2022.
- Community Connections at Lewis University (CCLU), a joint program between the Disability Resource Center in Joliet, the Lewis Department of Education, and our team, successfully launched a program serving young adults seeking to grow their independent living skills.
- We supported over 440 undergraduate students in community engaged learning courses.

These are just a few of the many successes of the year, though they do not account for all the learning and growth we experienced as individuals and as a team.

As a result of our growth, I am thrilled to share that our office name will change in the upcoming school year. The new Office of Community Engagement and Experiential Learning (CEEL) will continue to partner closely with Lewis faculty and staff, along with regional community partners, to implement high-quality learning opportunities that respond to community priorities.

Enjoy learning more in the following pages!

Be well,



Director of Community Engaged Learning  
Lewis University



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## Community Engagement by the Numbers



Track • Report • Connect • Plan

Collaboratory is a software platform Lewis has adopted to collect data about community engagement between the university and regional partners. Faculty and staff members, along with student organizations and teams, engaged with off-campus partners can log activities to track our institutional community impact. Additionally, individuals can create a personal profile highlighting community engaged teaching, research, and service. The data below reflect community engagement efforts between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024.

**Community Individuals  
Supported**

**5,035**

**Total Community  
Engagement Activities**

**29**

**Faculty/Staff Partners**

**10**

**Note:** 49 other faculty/staff are involved in activities, other than those identified as partners.

**Number of Students Involved/Hours Per Term**

Curricular	Co-Curricular	Total
148 Students	99 Students	247 Students
345 Hours	147 Hours	492 Hours

**Community Partners**

**19**

The Community Engaged Learning Facilitator (CEL F) Program places undergraduate student leaders in a campus or community engagement opportunity to provide support.

CEL F Program Data 2023-2024		
New CELFs Trained	6	
Total CELFs Placed	17	
2023-2024 Data per Semester	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Community-Based CELFs	4	1
Campus-Based CELFs	5	5
Coordinators	1	1



**CEL Connections**

**Our bi-monthly email update reached over:**

**135**

Community partners

and

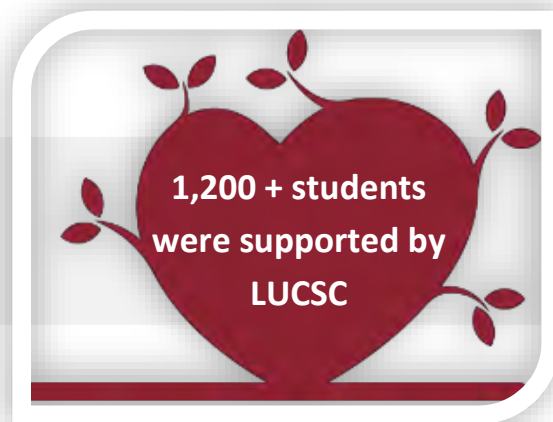
**114**

Lewis employees

## The Lewis University Community Schools Consortium (LUCSC) spent the year **GROWING**

LUCSC provided direct services and/or programming to over 1,200 students from local P-12 schools. Highlights of these services and programs, include:

- Moving Minds and Muscles, an activity-based mentorship program at Brooks Middle School
- Fairmont Academic Study Team (FAST), an after school academic support program for Fairmont students
- Collaboration with Loaves and Fishes Community Services to host a food pantry at Fairmont School
- Lewis student coaches supporting the first-ever Soccer team at Fairmont School
- Collaborating with Fairmont Community Partnership Group and the Proteential program to implement youth mentorship group for middle school students



LUCSC indirectly supported school-wide events and services such as:

- Translation and interpretation
- Donations of furniture and supplies through the Lewis University Office of Facilities

Outreach and education activities included, for example:

- Presenting at over 25 networking meetings to support school-and-community focused programming and initiatives (e.g., Valley View Community Partner network meetings; ACT Now, DuPage Township Board, etc.)
- Meeting with Lewis staff and faculty to build community and capacity for community engagement and partnership.



## The community keeps growing and growing

During the 2023-24 year, our team grew to include:

- Two LUCSC Co-Directors
- Three full-time School Partnerships Coordinators
- Two graduate assistants
- Community-based consultants and collaborators
- And 17 student workers from over 10 different academic disciplines



### Lewis University Engagement with LUCSC Initiatives

LUCSC hosted six on-campus events for local youth including:

- Fairmont school’s Soccer team practice
- Brooks Middle School’s Boys Leadership and Resilience Conference
- Multiple visits to Lewis University campus for 5<sup>th</sup>-to-8<sup>th</sup> grade students, who explored the following campus areas:
  - The Recreation Center
  - The airport hangars
  - Flight simulator
  - Wadsworth Art Gallery, and more

LUCSC also hosted Fairmont School’s Teacher Institute Day, in which all of Fairmont staff celebrated the start of the year with on-campus learning and planning.

Community-based participation was ever-growing. We collaborated with agencies such as (but not limited to):

- DuPage Township
- Fairmont Community Partnership Group
- Loaves and Fishes Community Services
- Trinity Social Services

Participation from campus-based community members was stronger than ever.

Staff and Faculty	Students
25	50

Participation was via partnership activities, community engaged coursework and/or co-curriculars representing over fifteen programs or offices/departments.



# Highlights

LUCSC initiatives seek to improve school and community well-being through the creation of mutually beneficial, collaborative community-based partnerships. Some of the highlights from the year include field trips to the Lewis campus so local kids could learn about college, professional development for educators hosted at Lewis, and school-based support to increase families' access to resources.



Loaves and Fishes food distributions at Fairmont School



Fairmont School Field Trip to the Swain Art Gallery



Fairmont Teachers Institute Day at Lewis



Aviation tour with Brooks Middle School



LUCSC team



Fairmont Teachers Institute Day at Lewis



Brooks Middle School Students try out the flight simulator



## Community Connections at Lewis University

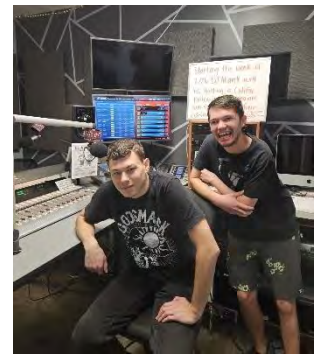
In collaboration with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and the Lewis Department of Education, the Office of Community Engaged Learning helped launch Community Connections at Lewis University (CCLU). This year-long program enrolls young adults with disabilities as continuing education students at Lewis. Students attend class twice a week to build community and expand their independent living and academic skills.

CCLU successfully engaged six participants during the 2023-24 academic year. Students learned about independent living topics, in addition to exploring possible future work opportunities by shadowing Lewis employees. Although small, the program had a great start and will continue next year with the goal of increasing enrollment and providing more opportunities for CCLU students to engage with the larger Lewis community.

Anyone interested in learning more can reach out to Kindall Carmouche at [kindall@drcjoliet.org](mailto:kindall@drcjoliet.org).



CCLU Student



CCLU Students



CCLU Student job shadowing an administrative assistant at Lewis



**EL Experiences Approved in 2023-2024:**

Curricular: 47  
Co-Curricular: 13

**TOTAL EL EXPERIENCES APPROVED: 100**

Curricular: 80  
Co-Curricular: 20

To obtain Experiential Learning designation for a course or co-curricular activity, faculty and staff complete an application identifying the experiential elements of the class or activity in which students engage. The application also requires discussion of the reflection opportunities and methods that students will engage in to internalize the full extent of the learning opportunity to which they have been exposed. When the application is complete, it is then reviewed by members of the Experiential Learning committee to determine if the experience warrants EL designation. Upon review, applications will receive one of three results:

- 1) Acceptance and conference of EL designation
- 2) Request for revision and resubmission, or
- 3) Rejection

**Experiential Learning (EL)** is an integral component of the Lewis Experience. In 2022, a requirement was added to the General Education Program to ensure that all students are exposed to experiential learning opportunities during their undergraduate time at Lewis University. EL is broadly defined as active engagement with, and meaningful reflection on, a specific learning experience. Active engagement can take place in a variety of contexts – from the classroom to the community; from the lab to the recreation center; from internships and study abroad to pilgrimages and performances – and that meaningful reflection can take a variety of forms.

**EL Committee Members**

Last Name	First Name	Office/ Department (College)
Bobo	Tina	Nursing (CONHS)
Burgess	Tom	Residence Life
Campbell	Spencer	Psychology (COESS/UAAC)
Cosimo	Julie	Career Services
Eichelberger	Melissa	Academic Services
Lubinski	Jen	Social Work (COESS)
Murdaugh	Jenn	Communications (COHFAC)
Oakley	Jim	Marketing (COB)
Plass	Matt	Computer Science (COAST)
Siegfried	Jill	Recreation, Fitness, & Wellness
Stevens	Cindy	Prior Learning Assessment (SGPCE)
Sulyok	Cara	Math (COAST)
<b>Co-Chairs</b>		
Franklin	Laura	Provost's office
Wilmarth Tyna	Laura	Community Engaged Learning



# 2023-2024 Snapshots



CELFs at a Monthly Gathering



CELFs at a Community Time event



CELFibration Fall 2023



Dr. Cathy Bohlin was honored with the De La Salle Medallion for Excellence in Community Engaged Learning



CELFs Spotlights! (left to right) Raven Robinson and Genesis Mcneal (not pictured) were both selected to attend the McLaughlin Social Justice Institute Lasallian Practice. Madisyn Smith was chosen as the 2024-2025 Newman Civic Fellow Nicole Manke was honored with the 2024 De La Salle Medallion for Excellence in Service and Community Engagement



Guardian Angel Community Services was honored with the De La Salle Medallion for Excellence in Community Partnership



Faculty-Partner 2024 Roundtable Event

## Looking to the Future

Looking ahead to the next academic year provides a great opportunity to consider where we are headed. During the 2024-25 academic year, our team will:

- Work to better **integrate the programs and initiatives of the Office**, including community engaged learning, experiential learning, and the work of the Lewis University Community Schools Consortium.
- **Review and align the community engaged learning course designation** with the experiential learning designation.
- **Launch a reflection initiative** that serves as a resource to faculty and staff who implement community engagement and experiential learning.
- **Expand educational development opportunities** for faculty and staff who implement community engagement and experiential learning.
- Adopt a new name – the **Office of Community Engagement and Experiential Learning** – and rebrand how we represent ourselves online, in print, and in other spaces.

We look forward to collaborating to support our local community and create transformational learning experiences for Lewis and local students.



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