



UNI Engaged Monthly Newsletter - September

UNI Office of Community Engagement <community.engagement@connect.uni.edu>

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Office of Community
Engagement

Office of Community Engagement Monthly Newsletter

September 2022

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Welcome Back

We are excited to kick off the new school year with the return of the Office of Community Engagement Monthly Newsletter! For our new faculty and staff members, welcome to the University of Northern Iowa! The UNI Office of Community Engagement will send out monthly newsletters with updates on how to be engaged around campus and our community, as well as highlights of different areas of community engagement!

Meet Lauren Finke



Hello! My name is Lauren Finke. I'm so excited to get the opportunity to share a little about me and the work we do at the Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley (VCCV). A few fun facts: I have lived in Cedar Falls all my life, attended UNI and now it's where my husband, Joe, and I are raising our four young kids, Colin, Sam, Nora and Gemma. You'll find all of us

often outside enjoying our neighborhood, spending time with our awesome friends and attending sporting events together – especially at UNI. Go Panthers!

In my professional life, I'm the Executive Director of the Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley (VCCV). The VCCV promotes and supports volunteerism throughout the community. Through connection with 200+ nonprofits and organizations, thousands of individuals of all abilities, backgrounds and interests find ways to get involved. Since 2008 the VCCV has partnered with UNI to bring support for volunteer opportunities and service-learning classes, assist in days of service planning and develop strategic outreach with the Office of Community Engagement.

As you are welcomed back to campus it is a time of renewed energy and excitement for what's ahead. At the VCCV, we want to capture this and help you get involved in opportunities to be connected to your community and give of your time, talents and expertise. If you're looking to get involved personally, thinking about honing in on some professional skills, developing classroom opportunities for your students or just wanting feel connected to your community, visit with us on Mondays and Thursdays in Maucker Union, connect with us on Facebook

[@TheVolunteerCenterofCedarValley](#) or email us at information@vccv.org.

The VCCV is so grateful for the support of UNI faculty, staff and students and looks forward to another successful year on campus and throughout the community.

2017-2022 Impact Report

The University of Northern Iowa's (UNI) President signed an Action Statement, a declaration of shared commitment to the public purpose of higher education and a promise to develop a Campus Civic Action Plan in 2016. The **2017-2022 Civic Action Plan** served as part of the implementation plan of **UNI's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan**. We developed an **Impact Report** that highlights significant accomplishments in each goal area of the Civic Action Plan from 2017 - 2022. Thank you to the thousands of students, faculty and staff for your engagement for the betterment of our communities.

UNI Engaged Podcast

The Office of Community Engagement is excited to launch the Engaged UNI podcast. This podcast was developed and recorded by Dr. Deb Young and her students in her cornerstone class. The premier episode of UNI Engaged can be found on **Spotify** and **Apple Podcasts**. Follow us on social media for the release of additional episodes.

Get Connected

Community of Practice - The Office of Community Engagement is hosting a Community of Practice (CoP) for community engaged faculty. This CoP is designed for faculty that are considering embedding, or are currently embedding, community engaged learning opportunities into their courses. We welcome the experienced and those just getting started with community engaged learning. The focus will be on sharing best practices, supporting each other in shared goals, building community and expanding our own engagement in the Cedar Valley community. Meetings will be held the 4th Wednesday of the month: noon-1:30 p.m. for 6 months: Sept., Oct., Nov., Jan., Feb and March. First/last meetings will be in person and the others on Zoom. [Register here!](#)

Iowa Nonprofit Alliance- The Iowa Nonprofit Alliance is coming soon! This is Iowa's first state-wide nonprofit association whose aim is to strengthen nonprofit organizations and the entire sector across our state. [Sign up to be first in line](#) to get information about how to join the Iowa Nonprofit Alliance and join the network to unit forces to strengthen our nonprofit organizations and the entire state!

Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley- [Located in Maucker Union, Mondays & Thursdays 8:00a.m.-4:30p.m.](#) If you or a student are looking for volunteer opportunities in our community, the Volunteer Center is the place for you to get connected and explore ways to engage in the Cedar Valley!

Board Match Program- Are you interested in learning what it means to serve as a board of director for a local organization and potentially being matched with an organization to serve? UNI Office of Community Engagement in partnership with the Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley can assist faculty, staff and students in finding a nonprofit organization for which to serve on their board of directors. For more information visit the [Office of Community Engagement website](#).

Events

Volunteer fair- [September 7th, 10:30 a.m.-1p.m., Maucker Union Ballroom](#). The volunteer fair provides an opportunity for UNI faculty, staff, and students to engage with community organizations and discover what volunteer opportunities are available in our community.

Town Hall for Community Engagement- [September 27th, 9-11 a.m., Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center](#). You are invited to meet with community leaders to create partnerships that will support faculty research and scholarship, build service-learning opportunities, complement classroom instruction and introduce students to service projects. [Register here!](#)

Civic Action Academy - November 11-12th, in Des Moines. This unique professional development opportunity will bring students from Iowa and Minnesota together to learn new ways of making a difference and building skills through civic and community engagement. Please share this opportunity with your students and ask them to Save the Date. More information to be released soon.

For more information on events, visit the [Community Engagement Website!](#)

In Other News

Building a Better Iowa Podcast - Building a Better Iowa Podcast is produced by Business and Community Services (BCS) at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). Business & Community Services (BCS) at the University of Northern Iowa is a collection of 13 unique outreach programs. Their mission is to build a better Iowa through entrepreneurship, education, business, innovation and sustainability.

Green Iowa AmeriCorps Pod - Green Iowa Pod is a podcast produced by members of Green Iowa AmeriCorps (GIA) and features conversational episodes on all things environment. GIA is a state-wide service organization which empowers Iowa's communities and school districts to make more environmental and conservation-minded decisions.

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