



**Center for Community Solutions  
West Chester University**

**2022 – 2023  
Annual Report**



*“Neighbor is not a geographic term. It is a moral concept.”*

- Joachim Prinz

Emblematic of the University’s mission to develop graduates who succeed personally and professionally and contribute to the common good, the Office of External Relations works based upon the University’s role as an anchor institution within community and thus its moral responsibility to lead and serve its campus and broader community guided by sound ethical decision making and a genuine commitment to have a positive impact upon society and the lives of those who reside within it. The Center for Community Solutions (CCS), housed within the Office, is integral to the fulfillment of this aim.

CCS’ purpose is evident in its name, with the focus upon working to address community need through providing project-based, community-engaged learning experiences for students, enabling their applying knowledge and skills learned, and community partners value through achieving organizational goals and objectives with needed assistance at no cost to the community partners. The CCS is central to informing, growing, and sustaining the University’s community engagement and leadership as an institutional priority and demonstrating its genuine commitment to actualize its public mission.

---

# Community Partners

---

From August 2022 through May 2023, the Center for Community Solutions responded to the following organizations' requests for assistance. The CCS would like to thank these community partners for providing WCU students with the opportunity to expand their educational and professional skillsets and experience and skills.

- Borough of West Chester
- Chester County Economic Development Council
- Chester County Food Bank
- Chester County Partnership to End Homelessness
- Congresswoman Chrissy Houlahan Veterans History Project
- ESORM for Africa
- Lundale Farms
- RESTART Your Life/RENREW Your Mind
- Uncommon Individual Foundation
- West Chester Green Team
- West Chester Film Festival



Chester County  
**Economic  
Development  
Council**



## Project Highlights

---

### West Chester Green Team

#### Emily Miller, Computer Science and Earth Science Major

The West Chester Green Team partnered with Emily Miller to achieve cohesive branding across WCGT digital platforms, design content, and conduct social media campaigns relating to sustainability. Emily contributed to the creation of a comprehensive map of the music venues in West Chester for the West Chester Porchfest and engaged in public suitability activities.



### Borough of West Chester

#### Korryn Wingertsahn, Media and Cultures Major

The Borough of West Chester partnered with Korryn Wingertsahn to create a cohesive online presence that utilizes effective communication strategies to provide current and accessible information to Borough residents. The project involved redesigning the West Chester Borough website and social media accounts, emphasizing the importance of providing accurate information to the general public.



### Chester County Economic Development Council

#### Ani Avesian

The Chester County Economic Development Council partnered with Ani Avesian to create a social media campaign in an effort to support and inspire current and future healthcare workers in Chester County. The social media campaign assisted healthcare workers by providing awareness of various agencies, services, and tools that offer accessible resources for healthcare workers established by Chester County governmental departments and professional healthcare organizations. The social media campaign was designed to show appreciation for the current healthcare industry and to develop a pipeline of future healthcare workers.



Chester County  
**Economic  
Development  
Council**

## **Project Highlights**

---

### **Chester County Partnership to End Homelessness**

#### **Kylie Shelderfer, Interdisciplinary Studies Major**

The Chester County Partnership to End Homelessness collaborated with Kylie Shelderfer to create a digital presence that aims to engage a variety of stakeholders by providing information on the opportunities to volunteer or donate and spreading awareness of the services provided to the public. This partnership acts as a vital component toward clarifying and emphasizing the critical role of the Chester County Partnership to End Homelessness in the health and well-being of the local community.



### **West Chester Film Festival**

#### **Olivia Carzo, English and Journalism Major**

The West Chester Film Festival partnered with Olivia Carzo to assist with the Film Festival's administrative duties of marketing, sponsor outreach, fundraising, and film selection. This project supported the production and promotion of the West Chester Film Festival to inspire and educate the public on the artistry of filmmaking through the presentation of global independent and innovative short films and interactive workshops.



## **CCS Impact**

---

### **Community Partner Feedback**

The goal of our project was to positively impact the Healthcare community, specifically those who are working day in and day out caring for our community. We at CCEDC feel we have very much accomplished this goal! The Center for Community Solutions completely caught our vision and paired us with the perfect student to achieve what we set out to do. Ani thought through every topic we addressed and put calculated time into every social media post she provided. Her creativity, and positive can-do attitude is exhibited in all her work. We hope to partner with CCS again in the future.

— Bethanie Emery, Community Partner, Chester County Economic Development Council

West Chester University's Center for Community Solutions has been a great partner and provided us with the resources and means to clean up our website and social media presence. Their student expertise has been invaluable to the Borough and we hope to continue working with them in the future!

— Nicholas Fink, Community Partner, Borough of West Chester

### **Student Partner Feedback**

Working in the Center for Community Solutions has not only allowed me to diversify the fields I am working in, but also let me gain valuable, hands-on, experience. I've worked for the West Chester Borough and the West Chester Green Team, which let me branch my work off into sustainability—not just computer science, which my undergraduate degree is in. My managers are always flexible and help me grow not only as an employee, but as a person as well. I can always reach out to them in case my schooling becomes too busy and develop a personal course of action that helps me succeed in the workplace.

Another thing I love about working for the Center is that it always feels personally catered to my needs and academic interests. At the beginning of the school year, the manager of the Center sent me a list of several options she thought I might be interested in and helped me schedule meetings to start working on the project of my choice. Since the time commitment is only roughly 7.5 hours a week, I always have time for myself and to work on my education.

— Emily Miller, Student Partner, West Chester Green Team

## University Collaborations

---

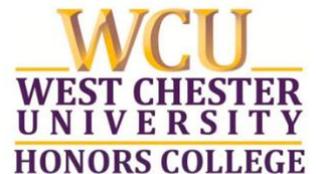
The Center for Community Solutions (CCS) collaborates with numerous departments and centers within the University toward such community collaboration and partnership, creating a network of mutually beneficial relationships in serving the community. The CCS team sincerely appreciates the collaboration of these entities in its mission to connect campus resources with community needs.

### TWARDOWSKI CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The Twardowski Career Development Center develops individual strategies to aid students and alumni in finding success by providing career and education counseling and facilitating recruiting and networking activities to build a bridge into the professional world. The CCS collaborates with the Twardowski Career Development Center to connect students with participating organizations providing impactful opportunities that allow students to apply academic knowledge and develop as professionals.

"As an office that manages external relationships with employers, the Twardowski Career Development Center values the relationship with the Center for Community Solutions," explained Jennifer Rossi Long, Senior Director of the Twardowski Career Development Center. "The ability to offer unique yet complementary solutions for employers looking to connect with students for meaningful projects and experiences is valuable. It's great to be able to seamlessly connect an employer with a variety of opportunities to engage the campus in partnership with the Center for Community Solutions."

The Honors College houses a cross-disciplinary curriculum designed to develop students' intellectual abilities and social responsibilities through honors course enrollment and service to the campus community. The CCS connects Honors College students to service and leadership opportunities within the community to reinforce student learning outcomes and address positive social change needs in their communities. The Honors College maintains that engaging students in community-based projects and service-learning opportunities strengthens their civic duty to become part of the solution for local through global social problems.



"At the core of both the personal missions is student success, and we both believe collaborations and working together is the way to drive student success," Dr. Gerardina Martin, Assistant Director of the Honors College stated. "Our students only have four years to achieve their student learning outcomes and become part of the workforce. Experiencing community engagement and service-learning projects help them realize they can be part of the solution for many local and global problems."

## Meet Our Team

---



### **Dr. Julie Dietrich**

#### **CCS Director and Executive Director, Office of External Relations**

Dr. Julie L. Dietrich serves as the institution's primary government relations officer, cultivating and sustaining relationships with local, state, and federal elected officials and their offices, and a leading liaison within community. Through her position, Dr. Dietrich focuses upon executing strategic community and economic development as well as facilitating communication and negotiating partnerships among key leaders to help leverage and optimize the use of institutional assets and addressing community need.



### **Valentina Mitterer**

#### **CCS Graduate Assistant**

Valentina Mitterer supports and contributes to the work of the Office and its Executive Director, specifically relating to the Center for Community Solutions. Valentina supports this work through fulfilling project management and tracking responsibilities, contributing to the writing of communication material, developing and keeping current website content, and performing additional associated duties as applicable and appropriate. She is a May 2023 graduate of West Chester University with a master's in public administration.

## Acknowledgement of Past CCS Team Members

---



### **Kristel Loughlin**

#### **Fall 2020 – Spring 2021**

Kristen was a CCS Undergraduate Assistant who contributed to the work and management of the Center for Community Solutions and interaction with and support of its community and student partners. She was a 2021 graduate of West Chester University and was highlighted as an exemplar of student engagement and leadership through the Center for her dedication to the wider campus mission and vision.

## Connect With Us

---

The West Chester University Center for Community Solutions serves as a link between the University and the community. For information on how you can partner with CCS, please contact the following:



[www.wcupa.edu/ccs](http://www.wcupa.edu/ccs)

[jdietrich@wcupa.edu](mailto:jdietrich@wcupa.edu)

(610)-436-3424

Dr. Julie Dietrich, CCS Director



The Center for Community Solutions serves the mission of West Chester University and the Division of University Affairs. University Affairs cultivates and maintains effective relationships with internal and external constituencies to enhance the overall visibility, reputation, and appreciation of West Chester University and its institutional priorities.