The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification is a prestigious self-reporting elective classification for higher education institutions leading the nation in community engagement and service. According to John Saltmarsh (Director of the NE Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE)), “Institutions that hold the Community Engagement Classification are improving teaching and learning, producing research that makes a difference in communities and revitalizing their civic and academic missions.” Utah State University (USU) will complete the application process for the upcoming 2020 cycle. We are currently identifying faculty, staff, students and community partners to serve on the task force and help the University acquire this important designation.

USU will start the year-long application process for Carnegie Community Engagement Classification in May 2018. The application will include thorough volunteer and engagement data, program details, and examples of community engagement from campus and community. To provide a comprehensive application reflective of the positive impact of USU in the community, a cross-institutional task force with university, community, and student representation will be developed to collectively work on the application.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

The Center for Community Engagement is leading the planning and application process, with support from both Academic and Student Affairs, but we need involvement from the entire campus to tell the full story of engagement at USU. We are currently looking for faculty and staff, community partners, and students who are interested in joining the task force. We want to know how your department, program, or college is partnering with the community and what specific programs you would like to showcase.

To share your story, learn more about the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, or join the application task force, please contact:

KATE STEPHENS
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Joining the Carnegie Community Engagement application task force is just one way to get involved. USU recently completed a five-year Civic Action Plan, in preparation for the Carnegie Community Engagement designation, identifying focus areas and ways the institution can emphasize community engagement in academia, research, and co-curricular activities. You can help USU implement the plan by increasing awareness and tracking of community engagement, collaborating with departments and community partners, and providing incentives for engagement. Through small changes in course offerings, accurate tracking and assessment, and strengthening relationships with community partners, USU can deepen its impact in local, state, regional, and international communities.

- Emphasize Community Engaged Learning and Research to apply course content and support local communities.
- Ensure classes, clubs, and personal volunteering are recorded properly in AggieSync to help USU track and assess the impact of community engagement. Record your own community engagement activities through Digital Measures.
- Practice mutually beneficial community engagement – check with the Center for Community Engagement to learn about high priority needs identified by local nonprofits and governments.
- Work towards the USU goal of creating Citizen Scholars by teaching civic responsibility and sharing opportunities for student involvement.
- Learn more about the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification and ways you can help USU earn this prestigious designation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT USU

As a Land-Grant Institution, USU has woven community engagement into its mission statement, campus framework, and institutional goals. Engaging with and improving Utah communities part of USU’s legacy, and USU faculty, programs, and staff are regularly developing new ways to showcase this commitment. As well as a prestigious designation, the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification is to be utilized as a roadmap – a process for developing a baseline of current engagement against which improvement can be measured. Community engagement opportunities incorporated into all departments and programs across USU campuses offer opportunities for deeper learning, faculty networking, research prospects, and outside funding. Connecting the classroom to community is an effective pedagogical strategy, and a recognized high-impact practice. Research shows college students who participate in community engagement learning and experiential activities have a deeper learning experience and higher retention and completion rates. Community engagement teaches critical thinking, communication, and leadership skills while increasing civic interest and responsibility.