



**2025 NATIONAL COMMUNITY
SCHOOLS & FAMILY
ENGAGEMENT CONFERENCE**

Movement Building through University-Assisted Community Schools (UACS) Regional Training Centers

Naorah Rimkunas, Binghamton University-SUNY
Cory Bowman & Mya Gordon, University of Pennsylvania
Jerry Johnson, East Carolina University
Marisa Saunders, University of California, Los Angeles

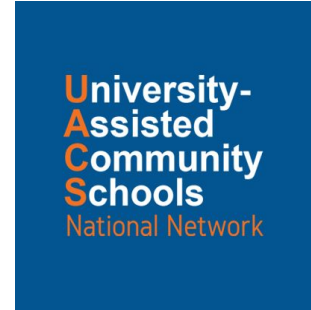
UACS National Network at the Netter Center for Community Partnerships



University-Assisted Community School National Network

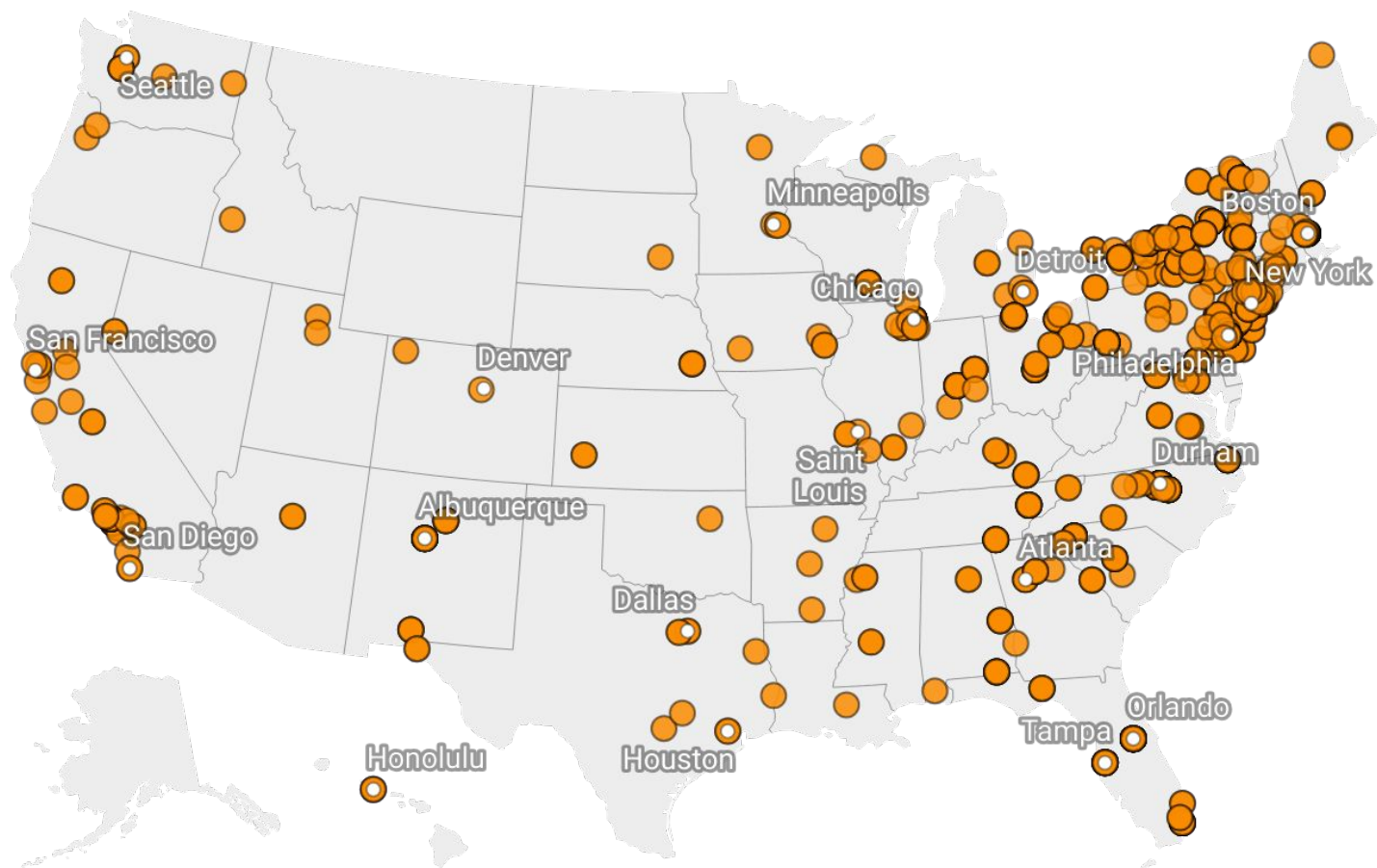
Promotes the exchange of resources and practices that help advance UACS partnerships.

- Hosting and co-hosting virtual meetings and in-person conferences;
- Providing technical assistance and resources for university, school and community partners seeking to build and/or strengthen UACS programs;
- Connecting UACS practitioners; and
- Site visits by request.
- Helping to find people to connect with at local higher eds



Scan QR code to visit
[UACS National Network](#)

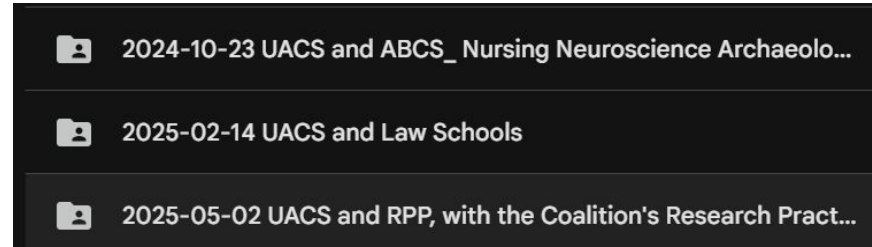




UACS National Network - Google Folder

Access the Network's Google Folder, which includes:

- Zoom call recordings
- Sample course syllabi
- Project materials
- Articles
- Slide presentations



Scan this QR code or visit
<https://bit.ly/4jqIAXQ>
to access the UACS
National Network Google
Folder



University-Assisted Community School Regional Training Centers

Part of the Netter Center endowment is designated to fund regional training centers on university-assisted community schools on three-year cycles.

UCLA began its work in fall 2017 with establishment of the UCLA Center for Community Schooling

Binghamton University, part of the State University of New York (SUNY), and Binghamton University Community Schools was selected in fall 2020.

The Southeast Regional Coalition for University-Assisted Community Schools (SRCUACS) launched in fall 2023 and is anchored by a coalition of universities: Duke University, North Carolina Central University, and East Carolina University.

Scan the QR code or visit
<https://bit.ly/4mpxIU>
to learn more about UACS
Regional Training Centers



Netter Center
for Community Partnerships
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA



NETTER CENTER STRATEGIES

- Academically Based Community Service (ABCS)
- University-Assisted Community Schools (UACS)
- ABCS & UACS as core to a comprehensive Democratic Anchor Institution approach

These strategies are shared across the country and around the world, serving as a model for democratic university-community engagement.

Community Schools

A Community School is a comprehensive neighborhood center that is built on democratic partnerships and contributes to improved student learning and development and increased community wellbeing.

Community Schools

A Community School is...

- a comprehensive neighborhood center that educates, engages and serves, not only children, but all members of the community in which the school is located.
- an institution that educates students for democratic citizenship and serves as a catalyst for community change.

A Community School is built on...

- democratic partnerships at and through the school – partnerships are the means for creating a community school.

A Community School contributes to...

- improved student learning and development through a curriculum focused on real-world community problem solving.
- improved community wellbeing, including physical, behavioral and social health; environment; safety; housing; and college and career attainment, among others.

University-Assisted Community Schools

A University-Assisted Community School (UACS) is a community school in which universities serve as a lead partner in providing broadly based, sustained support.

Academic partnerships connect the university's and school's curricula through a focus on helping to solve local community-identified problems. This approach is designed to improve both the quality of life in the community and the quality of learning at all levels of schooling.



University-Assisted Community Schools

For neighborhood schools to function as community schools, they need additional human resources and support. Universities are particularly well-suited to be a lead partner in the creation, growth, and ongoing development of community schools, including providing academic, human, and material resources.

Scan this QR code
or visit this link: <https://bit.ly/4dett3m>
to read more about Netter UACS



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University-Wide Engagement

- Penn Schools - All 12 are involved (Med, Vet, Dental...)
- Penn Centers (E.g., Athletics, Museum, LGBT, Penn Dining, Public Safety)
- Academic Partnerships - ABCS and CES
- Interns
- Volunteers
 - students, faculty, staff, and alumni
- Alumni Relations and Development



Netter Center Penn Student Engagement

Through the Netter Center, Penn students work with local public schools, communities of faith, and community organizations to help solve critical campus and community problems. Penn students learn from and with the community through democratic partnerships that help contribute to improving the quality of life and learning on campus and in West Philadelphia/Philadelphia.



Netter Center Penn Student Engagement

- **Academically Based Community Service (ABCS) courses** which involve service rooted in and intrinsically connected to teaching, learning, research, practice, and reflection. Students engage in hands-on, real-world problem-solving learning opportunities that help them become active citizens and lifelong learners. Over 70 ABCS courses are offered each year across the University.
- **Volunteer and Work-Study Opportunities** with programs that partner with University-Assisted Community Schools (UACS), communities of faith, and community organizations.
- **Summer opportunities**, working or volunteering up to 40 hours a week with West Philadelphia youth and partners.

Scan this QR code
or visit this link:
<https://bit.ly/3GPUezg>
to read more about UACS



Academically Based Community Service (ABCS) Courses

- Integrate service with research, teaching, and learning
- Are a form of Community-Engaged Scholarship (CES)
- Bring together academic expertise and the expertise of the community via mutually-beneficial, mutually-transformational democratic partnerships
- Use collaborative local problem-solving to improve the quality of life and learning in the community and the quality of learning and scholarship in the university
- Foster structural community improvement (e.g., effective public schools, neighborhood economic development)
- Emphasize student and faculty reflection on the service experience
- Help students become active, creative, contributing citizens of a democratic society



Scan this QR code
or visit this link:
<https://bit.ly/3SfD946>
to read more about
UACS



PENN STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Annually, Netter engages:

- 450+ Penn work-study and non-work-study student employees
- 500+ student volunteers
- 1800+ ABCS students

Netter provides for all engaged students:

- Support to obtain clearances to work with minors
- Transportation – van service and public transportation passes
- Workshops, trainings, and professional development opportunities

NETTER CENTER PROGRAMS



FACULTY, STAFF, AND ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

Penn Volunteers in Public Service (Penn VIPS)

- Organize a one-time service project for your department/center/group
- Engage in an ongoing basis, such as through mentorship and career exploration programs with local middle school or high school youth
- Teach a skill to adults in the community through UACS Nights (Tu/Th 6-8pm)
- Participate in University-wide donation drives
- Adopt a school classroom
- Donate items to community
- Lead a workshop through Nonprofit Institute (2x year)
- Serve on the Marie K. Bogle Scholarship Committee
- Connect with local partners



EXAMPLES OF NETTER UACS PROGRAMS



**Environmental Health
Improvement**



**Food Education and
Food Systems Change**



**Improving STEM Teaching,
Learning, Equity and Inclusion
from K to 16+**



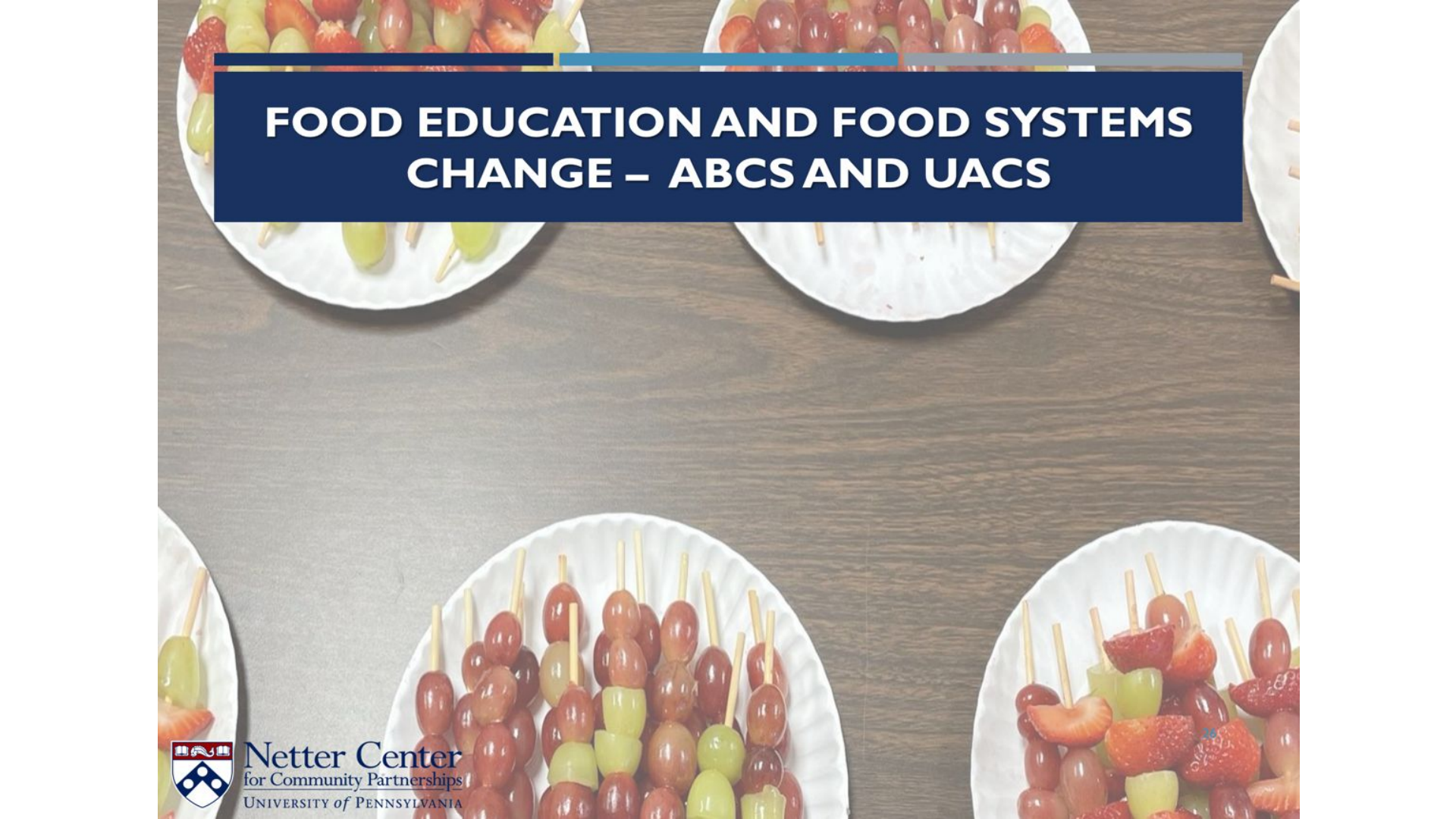
**Environmental
Improvement**



**Sports, Fitness &
Health**



**Health and Mental
Health Partnerships**

The background of the slide is a photograph of several white, scalloped-edge plates arranged on a dark wooden table. Each plate contains multiple wooden skewers with various fruits, including red grapes, green grapes, and strawberries, threaded onto them. The lighting is bright, highlighting the freshness of the fruit.

FOOD EDUCATION AND FOOD SYSTEMS CHANGE – ABCS AND UACS



Netter Center
for Community Partnerships
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

FRUIT STAND - REBEL STORE

- At UACS K-8 sites there is a Fruit Stand and Rebel Store.
- This is a real-world, project-based learning experience that engages a team of K-8, Penn students, and Netter staff in running a store that sells healthy, delicious snacks, student-created toys and crafts, and positive non-food items like stress balls.
- All K-8 Students in UACS program earn Rebel Bucks as a positive behavior incentive and use them to purchase Rebel Store products.
- Penn academic partnerships:
 - Arts and Sciences
 - Politics Philosophy Economics (PPE)
 - Urban Studies
 - Nutrition
 - Nursing
 - Nutrition
 - Wharton
 - Education



SCHOOL GARDENS

- At UACS sites there are School Garden 'clubs' and 'crews' - teams of K-12 students, Penn students, and Netter staff - who work together to maintain and grow their school gardens.
- Penn academic partnerships:
 - Arts and Sciences
 - Environmental Sciences
 - Urban Studies
 - Biology
 - Nutrition
 - Design
 - Landscape Architecture
 - City Planning
 - Nursing
 - Nutrition
 - Medical School
 - Culinary Medicine

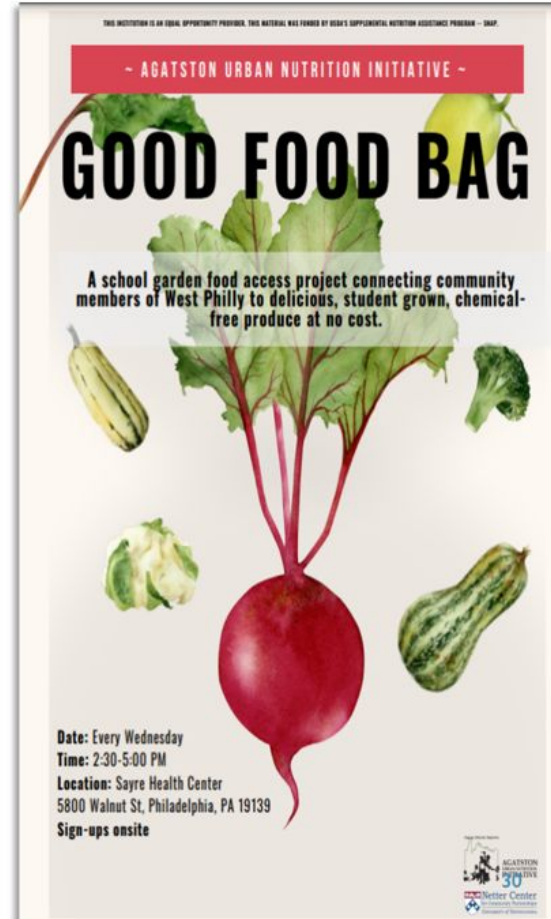


SAYRE HIGH SCHOOL GARDEN



GOOD FOOD BAG

- The Good Food Bag is a no-cost fruit and vegetable distribution program that is led by K-12 students, Penn students, at Netter staff at the UACS sites.
- Good Food Bags typically happen weekly during dismissal of UACS programs.
- So far this school year, 28,905 lbs of food have been shared with UACS families.
- Penn academic partnerships:
 - Social Policy and Practice
 - Nonprofit Leadership
 - Social Work MSW
 - Nursing
 - Med School





SMOOTHIE BIKE

- In the UACS High Schools, teams of HS students, Penn Engineering and Nursing students, and Netter staff work together to transform used bikes and used blenders into functioning 'smoothie bikes.'
- Smoothie Bike Labs are being developed at the UACS high schools, and at Penn Engineering and Penn Nursing.
- Used bikes are donated by Penn Police.
- Finished and functional 'Smoothie Bikes' deployed in partner K-12 schools.
- Penn Library
- Penn academic partnerships:
 - Engineering
 - Nursing
 - Nutrition



COMMUNITY DINNERS AT SAYRE HS

- The purpose of Community Dinners is to create a space for fellowship, connections, good food, and community.
- The create the monthly Dinners, HS students work together to plan and create menus in collaboration with Penn Med students and Netter staff.
- HS students also regularly visit Penn to engage in Culinary Medicine cooking/nutrition classes with the Med students.
- Penn academic partnerships
 - Medical school
- Penn Dining



PROMOTING STEM TEACHING, LEARNING, EQUITY AND INCLUSION FROM K TO 16+ THROUGH UACS

Moelis Access Science



MOELIS ACCESS SCIENCE

IMPROVING STEM TEACHING, LEARNING, EQUITY AND INCLUSION FROM K-12 TO HIGHER ED THROUGH UACS

- Launched in 1999 with funding by the Graduate Teaching Fellows in K-12 Education Initiative (GK12) of the National Science Foundation
- Works to improve STEM education for grades K-12 in West Philadelphia, as well as undergraduate and graduate STEM education at Penn
- Supports hands-on and inquiry-based science education in classrooms, and incorporates community-based, problem-solving learning
- Components
 - STEM Academically Based Community Service (ABCS) courses
 - STEM Classroom/ MAS Fellows
 - Educational Pipeline Program



MOELIS ACCESS SCIENCE FELLOWS

Undergraduate and graduate STEM majors collaborate with K-12 teachers to provide STEM enrichment and support through tutoring, small group work, labs, and inquiry-based projects.

- ~60 Penn student participants work at UACS schools at least once a week in school-day and afterschool programs.
- Penn students are members of departments, with student leaders who coordinate each department. Department meetings are convened on a semi-monthly basis to plan activities and curriculum. The current departments are:
 - Biology/Environmental Science
 - Chemistry
 - Physics/Engineering
 - Computer Science
 - Math
 - Elementary Education.
- Fellows also participate in three general body meetings per semester to share experiences and learn new skills for working with youth.

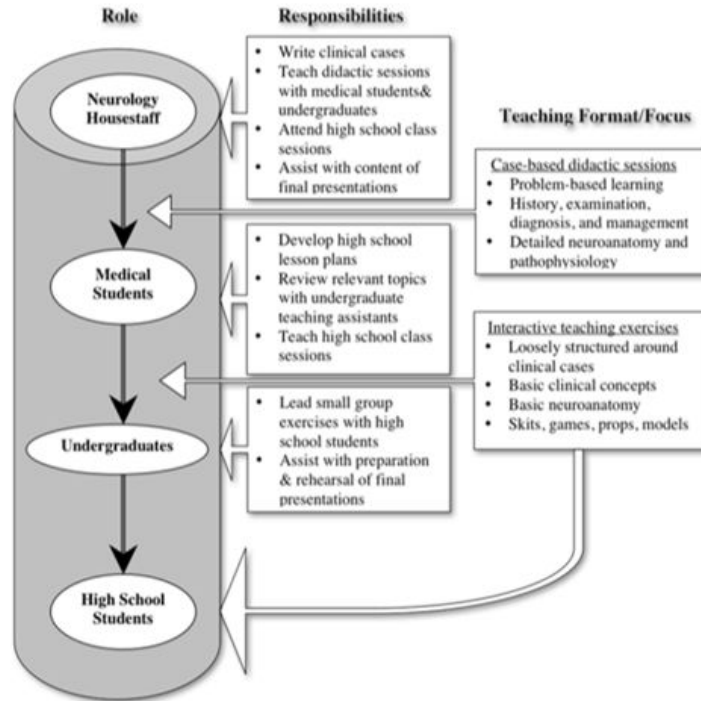


EDUCATIONAL PIPELINE PROGRAM

MEDICINE, VETERINARY MEDICINE, LIFE SCIENCES MANAGEMENT, AND PUBLIC HEALTH

A health careers exposure program for high school youth designed to promote K-16+ collaborative learning through four years of hands-on STEM exposure.

- Four partner high schools; approximately 100 youth enrolled in the program annually.
- In the fall, Penn undergraduates provide college and career mentorship at the school site. Also, high school youth attend career exposure events across Penn Medicine facilities.
- In the spring, high school students attend classes at the Medical, Veterinary, and Life Science Management Schools taught by Penn students in those schools.
- In the summer, high school students participate in internships in labs and clinical settings and/or perform youth participatory action research (YPAR) on public health related themes in conjunction with the Center for Public Health.



STEM ABCS CLASSES

STEM ABCS classes advance science education and scientific inquiry K-16+ by bringing university and K-12 students together to engage in real-world problem solving.

Math 123: Builds basic algebraic skills through games and enrichment.

NRSC 1160: ABCS of Everyday Neuroscience: Collaborative learning that explores concepts in biological and brain science through guided activities and experiments.

Phys 137 Community Physics: Teaches optics, mechanics, and electromagnetism through data-collection and analysis.

EAS 2020 Rivers in a Changing World: Penn students and high school students collaboratively explore the impacts of climate change and pollution on an urban watershed and inform the revitalization of Cobbs Creek Park.



Netter Center
for Community Partnerships
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA



Netter Center UACS Regional Training Centers

UCLA

Center for
Community Schooling



The UCLA logo, featuring the letters "UCLA" in white on a blue rectangular background.

Center for
Community Schooling

We advance DEMOCRACY, JUSTICE, and EDUCATION through community schooling in collaboration with local communities, in particular the UCLA Community School and the Mann UCLA Community School.



UACS Strands of Work

Teaching School



A shared commitment to making practice public, mentoring and modeling excellent teaching for the next generation of community school professionals.

Research-Practice Partnerships



Research-practice partnerships that tackle collective problems in order to inform practice, ensure accountability, and share the wealth of our community knowledge.

Student Enrichment & Services



Opportunities for students within and beyond the classroom that develop their identity, knowledge and passions and prepare them to be college and community-ready

Preparing and Sustaining Community Teachers

- Center X Teacher Residencies
- Support for professional learning and leadership, e.g., Summer R&D
- Research-practice Partnership in Los Angeles and San Diego on the conditions needed to retain community teachers of color



Saunders, M., Yo, J., Grijalva, E., Jimenez, R., & Pina, N., (2025). Community Teaching: “We Need People Like Ourselves in the Community.” Los Angeles: UCLA Center for Community Schooling.

UCLA

Center for **Community Schooling**

Community Schools
Pilot Schools
Ethnic Studies
AP for All
Multilingual Education
Teacher Retention
...more



**STATE TRANSFORMATIONAL
ASSISTANCE CENTER FOR
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

Study Tours
Resource Sharing
Storytelling
Research Partnerships
Data Use
Local Measurement
...more

UACS Regional Training Center
Higher Education Civic
Engagement
Teaching Schools
Learning Exchanges
Research Partnerships
Sustainability
...more

**University-
Assisted
Community
Schools**
National Network

COMMUNITY SCHOOLING

A publication of the UCLA Center for Community Schooling,
featuring multimedia public scholarship to inform the collective
struggle for democracy, justice and public education.

Issue 7 | Summer 2025 | Mountain View School

Cover Art by Mountain View Students under the guidance of
Paola "Panca" Villaseñor



ISSUE 7 | SPRING 2025 | CONTENT

School Case

**The Story of Mountain View Community
School: Autonomy, Collaboration and
Innovation**

Rhea Brown, Mountain View School;
Wendy Ranck-Buhr, SDUSD; Anthony
Villasenor, Oregon Episcopal School; Erica
Diamond, Mountain View School



Teacher Scholarship

**Project- and Community-Based Learning at
Mountain View: Empowering Young
Changemakers through Empathy, Purpose,
and Community**

Gaby Pérez-Swanson, SDUSD; Anissa Ruiz,
Mountain View School



Youth Research

**Student Leadership and Community
Engagement at Mountain View**

Richard Gijon & Christopher Millow,
Mountain View School



Policy ABCs

**Nothing For Us Without Us:
Laying the Foundation for Community
Schooling through Coalition-Building
and Community-Led Transformation**

Rhea Brown, Mountain View School; Kyle
Weinberg, SDEA; Kyle Serrette, NEA



EDITORIAL BOARD: Bianca del Rio, University of Pennsylvania; Symone Gyles, University of Washington; Kevin Kane, UCLA; Christa Rowland, Coalition for Community Schools; Curtiss Sarikey, Oakland Unified School District; Kyle Serrette, National Education Association; Cora Watkins, Los Angeles Unified School District; Reuben Jacobson, American University

ISSUE EDITORS: Wendy Salcedo-Fierro & Lauren Kinnard, UCLA Center for Community Schooling

NEXT ISSUE | FALL 2025
communityschooling.org



SRCUACS – Our Partners and Purpose



Duke



NC Central
UNIVERSITY

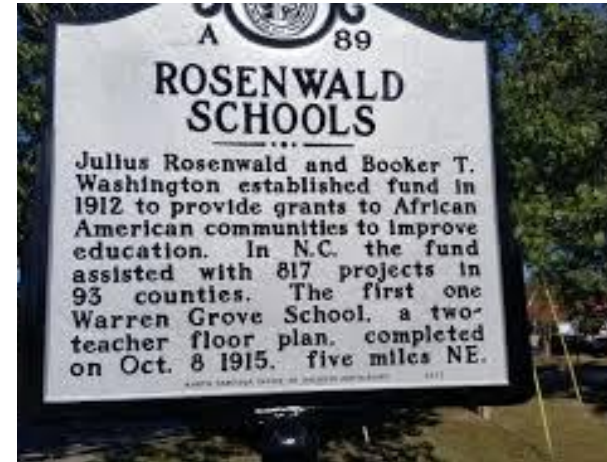
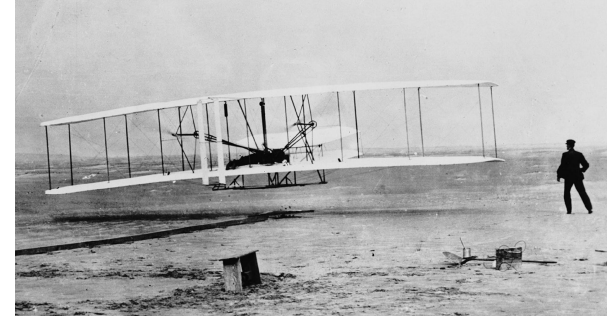
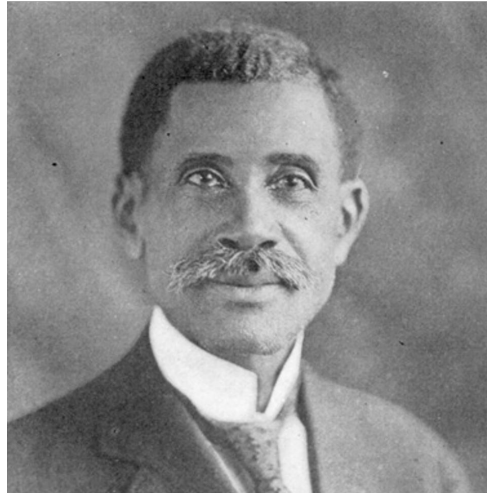
- Origins and evolution
- Our why
- How we marshal our varied assets as a unified whole

SRCUACS programs and activities include

- Rosenwald Schools work (HS summer enrichment experience; big data project mapping contemporary school and community characteristics to Rosenwald communities; development of curriculum for high schools)
- Resources to support social service access (NCCU BSW capstone project)
- Summer engineering and aviation camps (ECU and Elizabeth City State University)
- Durham UACS Research Collective (Duke and NCCU undergraduate research - incl interactive asset map tool, survey assessment of FSCS understanding)
- Teacher pipeline activities (ECSU and Elon University)
- Postsecondary access and career development activities (e.g., “Let’s Connect”)

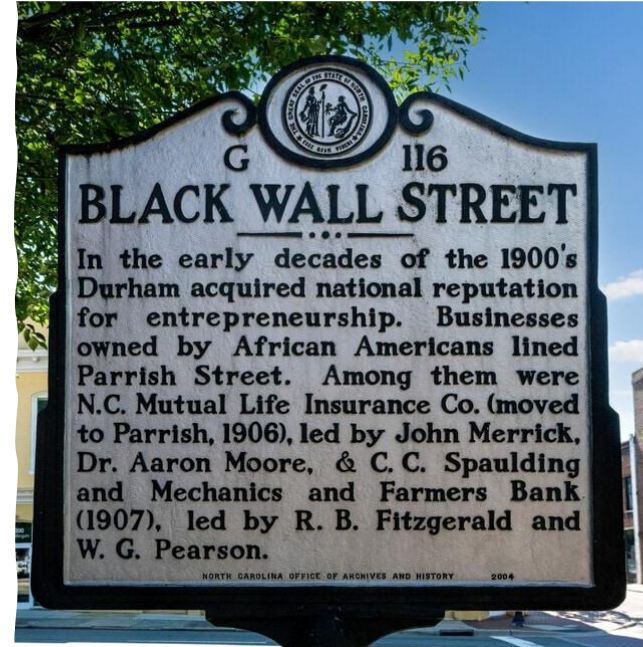
Reclaiming Place and Purpose: Foundations

- The centrality of place in teaching and learning
- Rosenwald Schools
- Peter Weddick Moore
- Aviation in NE NC



Reclaiming Place and Purpose: A Development Story

- Starting points:
 - Dewey on the dual disconnect that students experience in school and community
 - *Learning to be where we are* (Smith) versus *Learning to leave* (Corbett)
 - Reclaiming greatness from marginalization
- Asset mapping
- Initial learning experiences and community engagement activities (e.g., alumni breakfast at PWMES, community learning in Hayti)
- Direct engagement of university assets to deepen and extend the work (e.g., consultation with historians; access to document archives, GIS applications; consultation with statisticians; access to big data and applications)
- Creating durable resources (e.g., formalizing curriculum, developing and hosting public data sets and interactive mapping applications)



How we are building the movement

Macro:

- Engagement with other units within our institutions, with other NC higher ed institutions, with higher ed institutions outside NC
- Community School Teach-Ins
- *Southern Roots* symposium
- Rural UACS summit

Micro:

- *System-world AND Life-world* approaches
- “Snowball sampling” technique
- Asset-mapping and connecting to individual needs/interests
- Space and appreciation for varied levels and types of participation



CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY



Clinical & Practice Partnerships	Academic Partnerships	SUNY UACS Expansion
- BSW & MSW interns–School Mental Health & Wellness - Pre-service teachers–Family Engagement)	- Community Schools Faculty - BUCS CEL courses - Service Learning Institute - Research Lab	- Convening, Connecting, Aggregating, Aligning - Technical Assistance - SUNY System - Netter Center

Clinical & Practice Partnerships

CRITICAL PARTNERS

- Rural and small town school districts
- Families and students
- Binghamton University
- Community Partners, Consultants & Resources

SOCIAL WORK INTERN LEARNING

- Prep Academy
- School-based field placements
- Weekly supervision connecting social work competencies
- In-service training twice a month

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY CONTEXT

- Mapping resources, strengths, and gaps
- Regional Network building communication across region
- Intentional outreach to engage ALL children and families
- Strengths-based with healing-centered engagement

RESEARCH & EVALUATION

- Intern growth and development
- Student-level outcomes



SOCIAL WORK INTERN ENGAGEMENT

23

BUCS SW Interns

SERVING 11,730 hours
IMPACTED

775+

Youth & Families



Chenango Forks



Harpursville



Maine-Endwell

TIER 3

27%

1-to-1 Support

TIER 2

24%

Small Group Work

TIER 1

49%

Whole School & Classroom Support

Social-Emotional Learning, Academic Support, Attendance
Family Engagement, and Data Collections & Analysis



Owego-Apalachin



Whitney Point



Windsor

VISION: LINKING SUNYs TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS in NYS



UACS Regional Training Center

- Binghamton



Emerging UACS

- Buffalo
- Plattsburgh



Exploring UACS

- Old Westbury
- Oswego

SUNY UACS Learning Network:

- Community Colleges–3
- 4-year comprehensives–14
- Research Centers–3



University Colleges



University Centers & Doctoral Degree Granting Institutions



Community Colleges



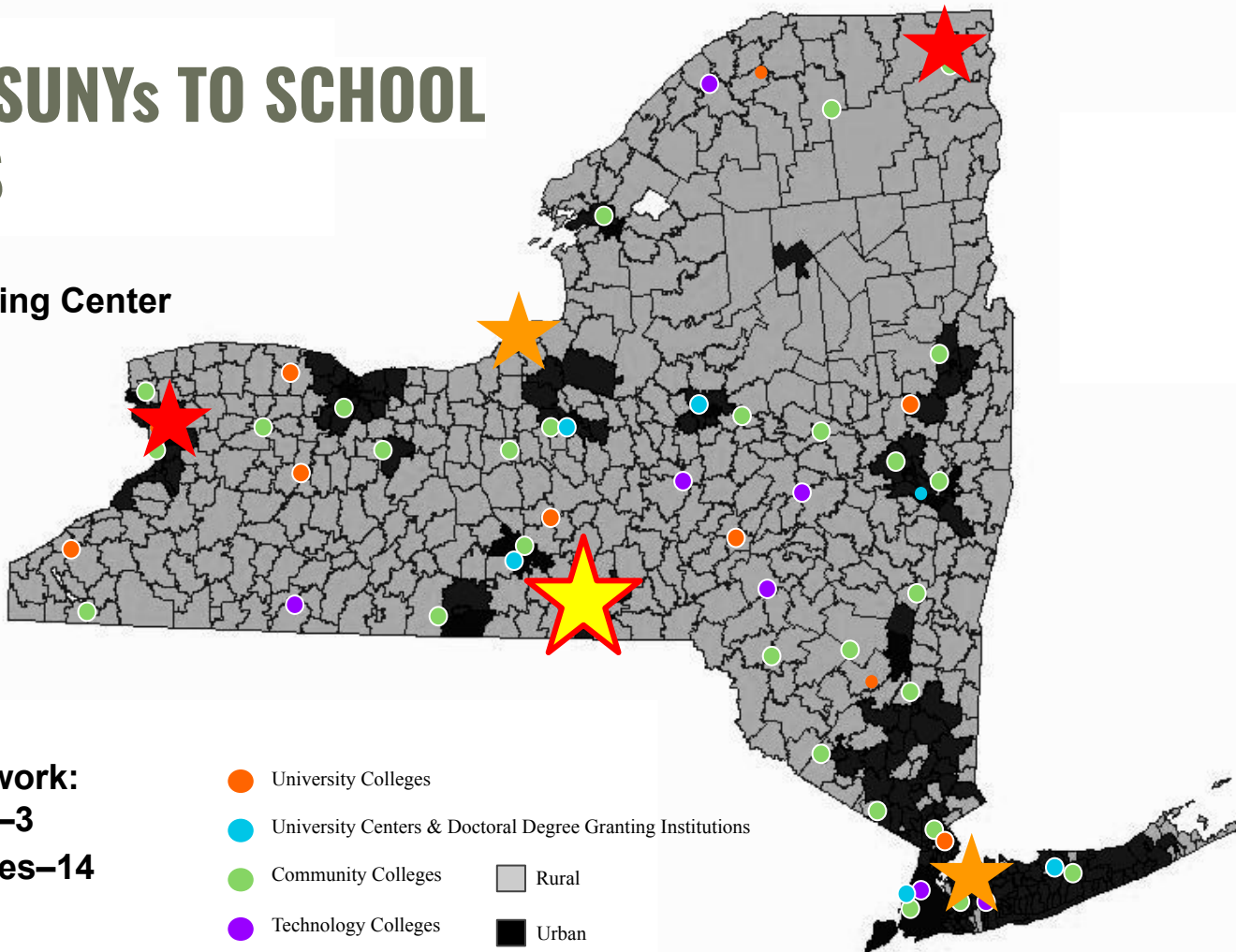
Technology Colleges



Rural



Urban



Building the SUNY UACS Movement

BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

- UACS Information Source
- Facilitate UACS Point Persons
- Connect with Netter Center
- Community Engaged Scholarship & Coursework Support

NETTER CENTER

- Site Visits and Convenings at Netter Center
- UACS National Network
- Convene Deans, Provosts and UACS Point Persons
- Support Campus-wide & Cross-site Collaborations

SUNY SYSTEM

- Support Grant Applications
- Support UACS Learning Network
- Share SUNY UACS Updates and Progress
- Link to System Statewide Plan for Higher Education

SUNY CAMPUSES

- Identify a UACS Point Person
- Convene Deans & Department Chairs
- Identify Key UACS Faculty & Administrators
- Participate in Learning Networks



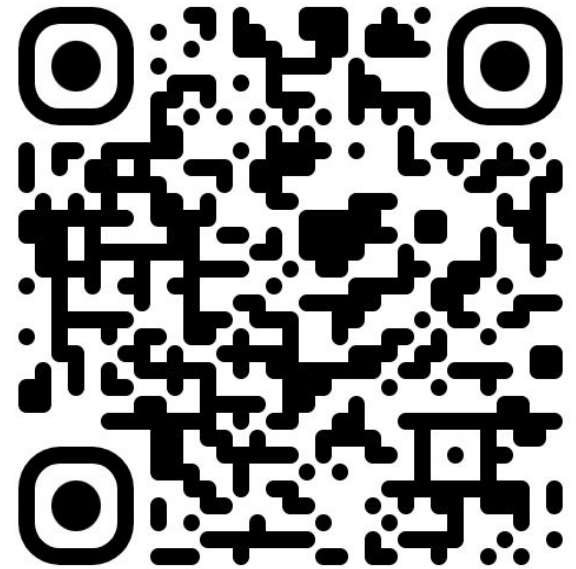
**SUNY
Campus &
Community**

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

- What do you wish you knew about partnering with higher education?
- What courses at your institution could be transformed through an academic K-16+ partnership based at a community school?
- What supports do you need to form partnerships between your local higher education institution and your community school?

**University-
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National Network

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THANK YOU! QUESTIONS ?

Reach out anytime: bowman@upenn.edu

