

DUKEENGAGE IN CHARLOTTE, NC

Supporting children and families through education, law, and policy

Dates: May 25 – July 27, 2019

(Dates subject to change up until the point of departure.)

Service Themes

- Education & Literacy
- Children & Youth Services
- Public Policy

Program Focus

Advocating for North Carolina children and their families through education, policy, and programs in active partnership with community members and Duke alumni.

Curricular Connections: While all students are welcome to apply, this program may be of particular interest to students studying education, or focusing on child and family welfare within the study of other disciplines such as public policy, psychology, sociology, and economics. (See below for additional details about connecting this program to your academic work.)

Program Leader

Amy Anderson, Assistant Professor of the Practice in the Program in Education and Faculty Consultant with Duke Service-Learning, teaches courses including Foundations of Education and De/Re/Segregation in Education and studies ways community-engaged practices support students' integration of curricular and co-curricular interests.

Program Overview

DukeEngage-Charlotte: Advocacy for NC Children and Families matches students with nonprofit organizations that provide services, resources, and research advocating for children and their families. All of our nonprofit partners see themselves as part of the answer to a more equitable and just Charlotte community. Duke students have the opportunity to work with and learn from organizations in placements that include teaching to reduce summer learning loss; policy research focused on child welfare; youth mentoring; and family self-sufficiency.

A unique element of DukeEngage-Charlotte is its enrichment programming. Duke alumni, working together with nonprofit community partners, offer students opportunities that complement and integrate with on-the-job service experiences. Summer events and activities enable participants to network with and learn from community leaders (many of them Duke alumni) and enjoy the wide variety of social, recreational and cultural opportunities Charlotte offers.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Quality Engagement

- Significant experiences working with nonprofit organizations that support children and families in Charlotte
- Meaningful opportunities to be mentored by nonprofit and community leaders
- Engagement with alumni and community leaders working to respond to community needs

Opportunities for Growth

- Increased understanding of the complex social challenges and opportunities of urban communities
- Greater appreciation of the dynamics of systemic change
- Increased experiences critically reflecting on the connections between individual goals, social advocacy, and community engagement
- Increased knowledge of careers in the social sector
- Greater understanding of the strengths of interdisciplinary, interpersonal learning and collaboration

Partnership Opportunities

Examples of placements may include:

- Council for Children’s Rights: As the largest child advocacy organization in the southeastern U.S., the Council for Children’s Rights provides legal representation and direct advocacy for over 2,000 at-risk children every year in the areas of special education, school discipline, juvenile justice, mental health, civil custody and abuse/neglect. In this office-based setting, students work independently with Council staff to compile and synthesize research and data that facilitates Council’s public policy work on behalf of Charlotte and North Carolina children. This experience is targeted to Duke undergraduates with prior public policy coursework.
- Freedom School Partners: Charlotte’s Freedom School Partners (FSP) provides high-quality summer literacy education through the Children’s Defense Fund Freedom Schools® program. In partnership with area churches, colleges, universities, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, FSP serves over 500 children at CDF Freedom Schools sites each summer. Duke students working with Freedom Schools® lead literacy-based summer learning opportunities during a six-week summer camp for students. Duke students are interviewed and approved by Freedom School Partners staff, and are trained in Charlotte and at a week-long CDF orientation prior to the six-week school camp program.
- Allenbrook Elementary School: DukeEngage students at Allenbrook Elementary shadow the school principal and support administrative efforts to assess the past year and prepare for the next academic year. This experience provides significant insight into school leader decision-making and the work required to operate and transform a lower-performing elementary school.
- Mecklenburg County Community Support Services – Homelessness Services: The CSS Homeless Services Division connects people who are homeless or about to become homeless to available community resources and services. As a department in Mecklenburg County’s Health and Human Services Agency, Community Support Services maximizes community partnerships and collaborative opportunities to better provide services to members of the Charlotte community. DukeEngage students shepherd a research project under the direction of the Housing & Homelessness Research Coordinator. Students analyze data, prepare reports, and make presentations that support current initiatives, spending significant time learning about issues of homelessness in Charlotte.
- Community School for the Arts (CSA): By providing the most respected music and art programs in the region, CSA unleashes the creativity of future generations and brings joy, confidence, and a sense of accomplishment to its students. CSA welcomes every student into its programs, regardless of ability to pay, and educates its community about the absolute necessity of encouraging and welcoming all children to pursue their artistic dreams. CSA provides Duke students varied opportunities to help organize and support CSA summer enrichment camps, working with children in the visual arts and music. CSA interns also learn about the history, culture, and practices of an arts-based nonprofit.
- READ Charlotte. Read Charlotte is a community initiative uniting families, educators and community partners to improve children’s literacy from birth to third grade. DukeEngage students have the opportunity to engage with outreach or marketing activities of READ Charlotte to support their ambitious goal of doubling the percentage of third graders reading on grade level from 39% to 80% by 2025.
- Time Out Youth. Time Out Youth Center offers support, advocacy, and opportunities for personal development and social interaction to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) youth ages 11-20. DukeEngage students may work with Programming, Housing or Outreach staff to

support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning youth in Charlotte through programs, acceptance, and safe spaces for self-expression through leadership, community support and advocacy.

- Carolina Youth Coalition. Carolina Youth Coalition (CYC) is a college-access organization that prepares high-achieving, under-resourced high school students to get into, excel at, and graduate from college so they can become full participants in society. DukeEngage students would support the work of this dynamic new (2018) nonprofit through office support and direct service programs.
- Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Greater Charlotte: Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) operates under the belief that inherent in every child is the ability to succeed and thrive in life. The mission of BBBS is to provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported 1-to-1 relationships that change their lives for the better. Duke students support BBBS through office-based research and community-based outreach to recruit mentors for BBBS.

Students will learn more about specific placement opportunities during the interview period for DukeEngage-Charlotte, and will be given the opportunity to indicate placement preferences and submit resumes to placement supervisors. While some organizations seek students with a specific skill set (specified above), we recommend Duke students stay open to all placement options. The placement matching process and final decisions are made after students are selected and committed to the DukeEngage-Charlotte program and following student interviews with community partners. Students work approximately 40 hours per week, Monday through Friday, during normal working hours (8:30am to 5pm). Some work may occasionally require evening and weekend commitments.

Program Requirements

Coursework: DukeEngage-Charlotte does not require specific courses, but participants with education or public policy coursework have found it useful.

Other Skills: Charlotte community partners have required or requested various technical skills including data collection, management, and analysis experience; video production; news writing; marketing research; grant writing; and community-based research. Programs that place students in direct service to children have sometimes required both a background check and a drug test.

Personal Qualities:

- Willingness to learn and support organizational mission and vision: strong listening skills, willingness to take direction and learn from others, and willingness to ask for guidance when needed.
- Problem-solving and goal orientation: ability to analyze and reflect on organizational data and/or practices; ability to set and respect deadlines
- Curiosity and self-awareness: understanding of personal strengths and limitations; ability to articulate beliefs, values, and interests in DukeEngage-Charlotte
- Empathy and cultural sensitivity: demonstrated curiosity about the lives of others without judgment; willingness to engage in a variety of cultural settings responsibly and with sensitivity and humility

Curricular Connections

Students wishing to deepen their DukeEngage-Charlotte experience before or after the DukeEngage summer can consider the following courses:

- EDUC 101: Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education
- EDUC 243: Children, Schools and Society
- EDUC 290S: De/Re/Segregation in Education
- PUBPOL 155D: Introduction to Policy Analysis
- PUBPOL 242: Child Policy Research
- Bass Connections Education and Human Development: Contextual Influences on Children's Identity Development

Program Details

Description of Community: Charlotte is a culturally and socio-economically diverse city in a metropolitan area comprising more than two million residents. Nicknamed the “Queen City,” Charlotte is North Carolina’s largest city, a major banking center, home to NASCAR and exciting professional sports teams, and a community rich in cultural arts opportunities.

The 1971 *Swann v. Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling was a landmark case supporting school desegregation in the United States. The provision of busing to support school integration led to Charlotte’s reputation as “the city that made desegregation work.” As is the case in many urban communities in the US, however, Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools are once again largely re-segregated along racial and socio-economic lines following federal courts’ relaxing of desegregation requirements. Re-segregated schools in Charlotte and elsewhere challenge commitments to equity and opportunity for all students. A 2014 Harvard research study indicated that children born in Charlotte have *the worst odds of any big city in the US of moving out of poverty* – a finding that shook the Charlotte community and unifies DukeEngage community partners in their commitment to supporting children and families in Charlotte.

Housing and Meals: DukeEngage-Charlotte students will live together in university housing or similar apartment-style accommodations. Students can expect to live in fully furnished rooms with adequate furniture and access to laundry and vending services. Usually, students will need to supply linens and some kitchen items. Students receive a food stipend designed to support cooking in on-site kitchens in their housing facilities.

If you do not eat certain types of food for cultural, religious or personal reasons, please contact the DukeEngage office, dukeengage@duke.edu, to discuss whether or not your dietary needs can be reasonably accommodated at this program site.

Transportation: DukeEngage provides or arranges transportation to and from service placements and all scheduled program activities. In Charlotte, students use public transportation for their in-town travel needs. Bus passes are provided for commutes ranging from 20 minutes to 1 hour. Vans or taxis will be rented by program staff for immersion activities and events.

Communication: We assume all students will have a personal cell phone for program-related and emergency communication. Students will have internet access in their housing.

Local Safety and Security; Cultural Norms, Mores and Practices: DukeEngage strongly advises all applicants to familiarize themselves with the challenges travelers commonly encounter at this program site in order to make an informed application decision. We recommend starting with the [Diversity, Identity and Global Travel section](#) of the DukeEngage website.

Opportunities for Reflection: Students will engage with a broad range of community leaders at required enrichment events and will participate in field trips, workshops, and community events designed to deepen connections to the Charlotte community. Weekly group dinners will provide ongoing opportunities to reflect on participants’ service in the community, as will blogging assignments over the course of the summer. Readings, discussions, and reflections will focus on equity and opportunity for Charlotte’s children and families; Charlotte’s history and current practices that facilitate or frustrate opportunities for all citizens; community initiatives seeking to create more just outcomes for children and families; philanthropic commitments and opportunities; and connections between Charlotte and national trends and movements regarding education, child and family welfare, and community development.

Other Opportunities: Students are required to attend all group programming. Students will have program commitments one to two nights per week and approximately every other weekend. Program commitments will take place at locations around Charlotte and will include activities that complement and deepen students’

experiences at their community partner sites by further exploring the program theme of solutions for children and families; activities that capitalize on Charlotte's significant "natural resources" that include engaged Duke alumni who are civic leaders, prominent professionals, and leading philanthropists; and enrichment field trips that take advantage of Charlotte's arts, cultural, and recreational resources. The remaining three or four nights during the week and every other weekend will be free for students to relax or explore the city on their own. Occasionally students may have evening and weekend commitments with their community partners. Open water swimming will not be a sponsored activity in any DukeEngage program.

DukeEngage-Charlotte offers participants many opportunities to engage in the community and more fully understand Charlotte and challenges it faces. Programs will enable participants to meet others – students from other schools, civic, nonprofit and business leaders, recent Duke graduates – and to experience the wide variety of opportunities Charlotte affords.

More Information

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- Garmon-Brown, O., & O'Dell, D. (2017). *Leading on opportunity: The Charlotte-Mecklenburg opportunity task force report*. Charlotte, NC: Leading on Opportunity.
- Leonhardt, D., Cox, A. & Miller, C.C. (2015, May 4). An atlas of upward mobility shows paths out of poverty. New York Times. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/04/upshot/an-atlas-of-upward-mobility-shows-paths-out-of-poverty.html>.
- Mickelson, R.A., Smith, S.S. & Hawn-Nelson, A. (2015). *Yesterday, today, and tomorrow: Desegregation and resegregation in Charlotte*. Harvard Education Press.
- Rhew, A. (2015, May 11). Once again, Charlotte confronts race, segregation, and busing. EdNC. Retrieved from <https://www.ednc.org/2015/05/11/once-again-charlotte-confronts-race-segregation-and-busing/>.