

# 2019 DUKE ENGAGE ALUMNI SURVEY

## Collaborating to Transform Communities

Through DukeEngage, students and faculty collaborate with communities – locally and globally – to address critical social issues.

### Program Overview

Since 2007, DukeEngage has provided a transformative, high-impact undergraduate experience to more than 4500 students and worked with more than 600 community organizations in 81 nations and 42 U.S. cities. In all, DukeEngage students have logged 1.6 million hours of work in their communities. Through thirteen summers of community immersion, Duke students have worked with faculty and local partners to address societal challenges and to engage critically with notions of purpose, action, consequence, and change.

The 2019 survey was designed to measure the project's continued impact on its alumni. We received 485 survey responses from alumni participating in the program between 2007 and 2017. Of the respondents who completed the Survey, 85% percent of the participated in group programs and 15% completed independent projects, with 48 international projects and 20 U.S.-based projects being represented.

"DukeEngage was one of the reasons I wanted to go to Duke and it did not disappoint... DukeEngage is by far the most unique experience I gained at Duke and I can measure its impact on me (my increased cultural sensitivity, the challenges of engaging in ethical service, and just general adaptability) in my everyday life. In any career field, cultural competency is a key component of working collaboratively and empathetically. That's why I continue to value and reflect on my DukeEngage experience 5 years later. That summer that I spent working with such a distinct population—so different from anyone I had met in the States—taught me more about adaptability, service, and communication than any class at Duke."

—MB, 2014, India (Group Project)

"DukeEngage was the single most impactful educational experience I had at Duke. It pushed me to challenge my assumptions and rethink my role in the world. We learned so much from our faculty leader, our community mentors, and each other. What I gained most was not any particular piece of knowledge, but a new way of reflecting on my work."

—CH, 2013, Uganda (Group Project)

"During my DukeEngage experience, I was exposed to youth communities and real issues that I did not truly understand before DukeEngage Seattle. You can read about 'inner-city youth' without ever actually understanding what it means and how limiting that phrase actually is."

—EB, 2012, Seattle, WA (Group Project)

"Before leaving for Peru, I had just declared Psychology as my major. DukeEngage in Peru affirmed my interest in working with individuals from diverse cultures. It also prepared me for a semester abroad in Madrid, Spain where I took all four Duke classes in Spanish, further strengthening my fluency in Spanish. These experiences would later serve as catalysts, inspiring me to work with Spanish-speaking students and families in the Southwest through Teach for America."

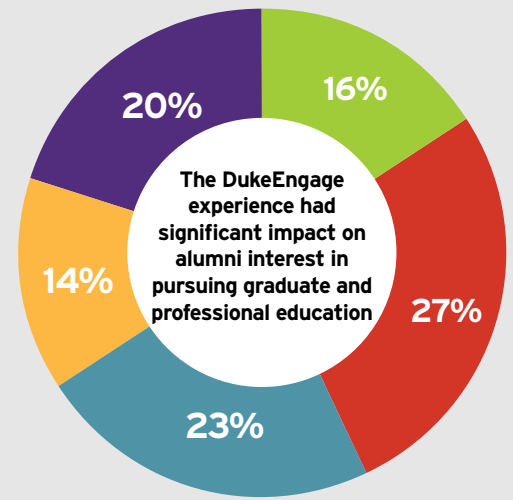
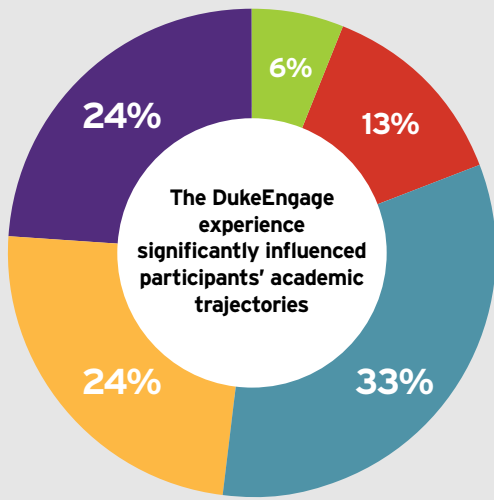
—CS, 2010, Peru (Group Project)

### Program Impact

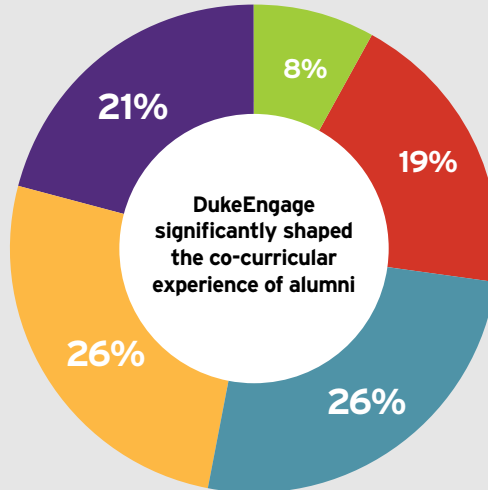
Consistent with many of the findings from the 2014 DukeEngage Alumni Survey, alumni reported:

- The DukeEngage experience significantly influenced participants' academic trajectories
- DukeEngage significantly shaped the co-curricular experience of alumni
- The DukeEngage experience had significant impact on alumni interest in pursuing graduate and professional education.

**Alumni reported a perspective shift as a result of their DukeEngage experience, with many citing their time in the field as the catalyst for questions about culture, identity, perspective, and bias.**



Following DukeEngage, alumni changed their majors and added minors and/or certificates to their courses of study. They took additional courses related to their specific DukeEngage experiences, and pursued senior theses relevant to those programs and projects. Many also reported their experience to have solidified their interest in their pre-DukeEngage choice of field of study.



While 29% of alumni are currently enrolled in a graduate or professional program, 32% of DukeEngage alumni have finished with their studies and are working in 30+ career fields with a significant number (n=135) working in the healthcare and education professions. Moreover, the majority of DukeEngage alumni (69%) consider their professional work, whether in non-profit or for-profit fields, to be in service of the public good.

"My DukeEngage experience has drastically reduced my reservation to serve others. In addition, I've learned to better express myself artistically. I was involved with Duke Health Art Network where I visited the oncology unit and made origami arts for in-patients. I also became an involved member of the Stop Motion Crew, where I engaged in public dance performances such as the Lunar New Year Showcase, Last Day of Classes Celebration, and the Duke Alumni Reception with the President of Duke."

—CC, 2010, Taiwan (Independent Project)

Many alumni reported increased involvement in activities on campus, in their home communities, and across the globe, much of which revolved around community engagement. Many remained connected to their partners and program leadership, and several returned to their program/project sites in subsequent summers to continue the work they began with DukeEngage.

"My DukeEngage experience introduced me to the medical field. Although I remained a history major and completed a thesis in history, this trip increased my curiosity in the field of medicine. Now, I am about to graduate from medical school in two weeks. In addition, I made lasting relationships that allowed me to return to work at the same hospital I worked in when I participated in DukeEngage. Working at the hospital when I participated in DukeEngage also introduced me to the field of bioethics."

—E. G., 2012, Kenya (Independent Project)

## Conclusion

At its core, DukeEngage offers an unparalleled opportunity for students to collaborate closely with faculty and partners in communities different than their own. Through this experience, students turn classroom knowledge into action supporting systemic change across the globe. They bring back to campus refined real-world skills, a better ability to work across difference, a deeper understanding of their academic and career trajectory, and a more coherent sense of individual and collective purpose.