

## Engagement Scholarship Consortium Recognizes and Supports Community-Engaged Scholarship Excellence Through Awards and Grants

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**HARRISONBURG and BLACKSBURG, Va.** – The Engagement Scholarship Consortium (ESC) has announced recipients of its 2021 Excellence Awards and Research/Creative Activities Grants. Excellence Awards nominations are sought annually from 2- and 4-year public and private higher education institutions across the country and are evaluated by a distinguished panel of scholars. The awards were conferred for the first time at the ESC Annual Conference in 2018 as part of the ESC 20/20 Vision. Focus. Impact. Strategic Action Plan. The awards program recognizes higher education institutions and their exemplary contributions to scholarship and the practice of engaged scholarship. Awards are presented in four categories, including Community Partner, Faculty, Student and Staff (new for 2021).

2021 ESC Excellence Award recipients are:

- **Purdue University**, Excellence in Community Partner Community Engagement for *Pharmacists' Engagement Transforms Community Care in Western Kenya: The Purdue Kenya Partnership Story*.
- **Michigan State University**, Excellence in Faculty Community Engagement for *The Juvenile Risk Assessment Team: Improving Juvenile Justice Through Community-Based Research*.
- **James Madison University**, Excellence in Student Community Engagement for the *Student Engagement Mini Grant Program*.
- **University of Connecticut**, Excellence in Staff Community Engagement for *Connecting Citizens to GMO Science Through Communications*.

The ESC Engaged Scholarship Research/Creative Activities Grants Program for faculty competitively awards a limited number of grants up to \$5,000 each. Begun in 2019, these grants are intended to fund one-year projects and collaborative projects among faculty from more than one discipline and/or more than one university.

2021 ESC Research/Creative Activities Grants recipients are:

- **Dr. Patricia Beierwaites**, Minnesota State University Mankato, for *Take Charge: Your Well-being and Wellness*.
- **Dr. Virginia Cope**, The Ohio State University, for *The Mardi Gras Indians of New Orleans: Cultural Preservation Amid a Pandemic*.
- **Dr. Maru Gonzalez**, North Carolina State University, for *Pilot Testing the #PassTheMicYouth Curriculum to Nurture Youth-Led Community Engagement*.
- **Dr. Lesley Harris**, University of Louisville, for *“The Promise:” Arts-Based Socially Engaged Research Exploring the Impact of Race-Based Trauma and Gun Violence in Louisville*.
- **Dr. Tracey Hodges**, The University of Alabama, for *A Collaborative, Professional Development Partnership Focused on Resetting Writing Goals and Working to Eliminate Inequities Post-COVID-19*.
- **Dr. Michael Kimball**, University of Northern Colorado, for *Heritage Conversation Partners Project*.
- **Dr. Joanne Marciano**, Michigan State University, for *“Are we gonna make a difference?” Taking Action Toward Change with Youth Through Community-Based Participatory Action Research*.
- **Dr. Socorro Morales**, University of Texas at San Antonio, *Latinx Youth Empowerment through Ethnic Studies: Developing Critical Youth Educators and Anti-Racist Advocates*
- **Ashley Pigford**, University of Delaware, for *Helping AMC Families with Assistive Devices*.
- **Dr. Traci Rider**, North Carolina State University, for *Aligning Health and Built Environment Assessment Frameworks in Affordable Housing*.
- **Dr. Pengyi Shi**, Purdue University, for *A Community Approach for Racial Justice: Decision Analytics Using Fair Machine Learning and Optimization*.
- **Dr. Deborah Tyndall**, East Carolina University, for *School Connectedness: Supporting the Emotional and/or Mental Health Needs of Adolescents in a Low-Income Middle School*.
- **Dr. Lindsey Weiler**, University of Minnesota, for *Addressing Children’s Mental Health via University-Community Partnerships*.

ESC Board President Samory T. Pruitt, vice president for community affairs at The University of Alabama, underscored the importance of the highly competitive awards and grants programs. “Support of engaged-scholarship initiatives is critical to this emerging field and its positive impact on society,” said Pruitt. “Community engagement professionals share a common value of lifelong learning and a desire to serve in ways that improve the quality of life for people and communities. Through these programs, ESC recognizes institutions and individuals for excellence in their community engagement efforts, which demonstrate innovative and practical solutions to critical challenges facing our nation and world. They exemplify the best engagement scholarship has to offer.”

The 2021 ESC Conference will take place on a virtual platform September 13–15.

The Excellence Awards program will take place Monday, Sept. 13, from 3:30–5:00 p.m. (ET). In addition to being recognized, award recipients will provide an overview of their programs and participate in a question-and-answer session focused on sharing major impacts, challenges, best practices and lessons learned.

The Research/Creative Grants program will take place Tuesday, Sept. 14, and Wednesday, Sept. 15, at 2:15 p.m. (ET) each day. Grant recipients will be recognized and will participate in a panel discussion, during which they will provide an overview of their respective projects and participate in a question-and-answer session with the other panelists, as well as with others joining the program.

For more information about the 2021 ESC Conference, including registration, visit the [ESC website](#).

ESC is the premier resource for higher education institutions and their faculty, staff, students and community partners focused on promoting excellence in the scholarship and practice of engaged scholarship locally and globally. The ESC Awards Program provides important recognition opportunities for students, faculty, staff, community partners and higher education institutions and increases opportunities for enhanced peer learning.

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