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## Pitt honored with Carnegie Community Engagement Classification

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School of Education Dean Valerie Kinloch reads to children during a Black History Month event last year at the Homewood Community Engagement Center. (Aimee Obidzinski/University of Pittsburgh)

**By DONOVAN HARRELL**

The Carnegie Foundation has recognized the University's community service initiatives with the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification.

A select group of Universities is chosen every five years to receive this honor, according to Pittwire, and on Jan. 31, Pitt joined the 358 other institutions that received the designation.

The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, which has been around for 14 years, is housed at Brown University. It's given to institutions after a period of self-evaluation and an assessment by a national review committee from Swearer Center for Public Engagement at Brown University, according to Pittwire.

Pitt has partnered with several community organizations as part of its community outreach initiatives. These include AIDS Free Pittsburgh Partnership, Place-Based Justice Network, Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities and Gwen's Girls/Black Girls Equity Alliance.

Lina Dostilio, associate vice chancellor for community engagement, said Pitt has partnered with some community organizations for more than 30 years.

"Pitt's application for the classification truly reflects the breadth of community-engaged work happening across the campus, much which has been ongoing for decades," Dostilio said in an emailed statement.

Pitt's Community Engagement Centers in Homewood and the Hill District, in particular, are outreach programs neighborhood residents have praised.

"They're collaboratively developed with members of the neighborhoods in which they are located, and because of that, have been wildly successful in bringing community and University members into deep partnership," Dostilio said. "Through this work and new initiatives that we will launch under the next strategic plan, we will continue to strengthen and deepen our community commitments: I'm excited about the future of engagement at Pitt."

Kathy Humphrey, senior vice chancellor for Engagement, and Provost Ann Cudd released a joint statement on Jan. 31 praising the designation and thanking the Pitt community for its hard work on engagement initiatives.

"For many years, Pitt has sought to obtain this honor," the statement read. "This designation speaks to our university-wide commitment to strengthening communities, transforming lives and to truly making a difference."

Paul Supowitz, vice chancellor for Community and Governmental Relations, added that the Pitt community's combined dedication to community engagement has helped improve community partnerships.

"In the Office of Community and Governmental Relations, it's been a core purpose of ours to make sure that community voice is heard internally," Supowitz said. "This type of open communication has helped to strengthen University and community partnerships overall."

And Pitt doesn't intend to let up on community engagement as the Plan for Pitt 2025 will continue to highlight "strengthening communities" as one of the University's goals.

Humphrey and Cudd also invited the Pitt community to celebrate this designation at the Community Engaged Scholarship Forum on March 3. Registration is available here.

More information about Pitt's community initiatives can be found on Pitt's Community Engagement Report.

*Donovan Harrell is a writer for the University Times. Reach him at [ddharrell@pitt.edu](mailto:ddharrell@pitt.edu) or 412-383-9905.*

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University of Pittsburgh  
Craig Hall, fourth floor  
200 S. Craig St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

412-648-4294  
[utimes@pitt.edu](mailto:utimes@pitt.edu)

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