

Leadership & Volunteerism
The University of Oklahoma
Annual Report 2021-2022

The mission of Leadership and Volunteerism (L&V) is to empower students to become effective leaders and active community members through participation in varied experiences, programs, and services. L&V activities help students further develop their leadership skills, assist with personal growth through student learning and connects students to volunteer opportunities in the local community and beyond. L&V programming is also developed with long-term impact in mind and how these initiatives prepare students for life after college.

Leadership education initiatives such as Leader Summit, monthly programs, and Lead Team play a key role in annual programming that helps students develop self-awareness, leadership skills, and knowledge that are all transferable to life beyond their college experience.

<https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/leadership>

Leader Summit, founded in 1995, is the premier on-campus leadership conference experience providing 400+ students (current and aspiring leaders) the opportunity to enjoy keynote speakers, presentations, networking opportunities, and a community service project. The \$250,000 endowment from the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma in 2012 (one of the largest gifts ever given to the Division of Student Affairs) allows the Summit to include national speakers and create a more engaging atmosphere at the conference. Summit evaluations show excellent results and recent Summit keynote speakers commented how special this program is and that the enthusiasm and engagement of our students on a Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m. is unmatched by any university they have visited. Each March, LEAD Night (coordinated by LEAD Team) serves as a follow-up event to Leader Summit and includes four TedTalk-type speakers and an opportunity to network with the local presenters. Leader Summit alumni often share with us their memories and impact that this program had on their development and goals.

https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/leadership/leader_summit

https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/leadership/lead_night

The Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma awarded Leadership & Volunteerism another \$250,000 endowment to ensure continued expansion of programming as well as steady funding. As part of this funding two programs, Leadership Nuggets & Impact+, were launched to create varied monthly programming opportunities which provide different formats for engagement and learning. The Read and Lead book club/lunch discussion began over 15 years ago and has grown to approximately 120 students and staff members participating with each book offered. Recent titles have included *The 5 Week Leadership Challenge*; *Atlas of the Heart*; *Killers of the Flower Moon*; *Lifescal: How to Live a More Creative, Productive and Happy Life*; *Designing Your Life*; *Steal Like an Artist*; *Discovering Your True North*; and *Dare to Lead*. Through the years, continuing staff participants have shared how they have utilized the books/resources to impact the students they work with day to day. Alumni have also indicated how they created similar programs in their new positions after college – often requesting book recommendations or use of materials from our prior discussions.

https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/leadership/read_and_lead

The Leadership Nuggets and Impact+ lunch programs allow students, faculty and staff to gain insight on important topics such as Millennials in the Workplace, Establishing Boundaries, Difficult Conversations, Authenticity and Productivity, Navigating Change, Soft Skills, Culture & Accountability, 5 Voices: How to Communicate Effectively with Everyone You Lead, The Art of Play, and Tiny Nudges Toward Happiness.

Approximately 120 participants attend these open-access, no-cost programs for students and staff/faculty members. An assessment of the monthly programs provided insight into how the information is being utilized and put into action as well as the importance of opportunities for informal networking, interaction and camaraderie. One survey respondent stated, "I really enjoy sitting at a round table with my peers, students and faculty. It's a great time to come together as an OU community and discuss these special topics. Everyone brings their own experiences and helps me to expand my perspective. These discussions are well loved and well attended. I think everyone appreciates the little breaks of sunshine and positivity into their week."

<https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/leadership/leadership-nuggets>

Lead Team is a peer education group of 40 students trained to facilitate team building and experiential leadership activities for classes, residence halls, student organizations, and local community groups. Lead Team also coordinates the LEAD Night program each spring. Last year Lead Team members also participated in personal leadership development programs designed to further build their leadership skillsets and better prepare them for life beyond college. Session topics included: Iceberg Leadership Theory, Life Story Telling Tips, Resume Building, Leadership Lessons, and Being the Best Life Host. These students also serve as the primary outreach ambassadors for Leadership & Volunteerism.

https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/leadership/lead_team

The President's Community Scholars (PCS) program, founded in 1994, is a freshman scholarship group of approximately 100+ students emphasizing community service. PCS brings together the service needs of the area to our committed students, by presenting programs, panels, and seminars that highlight the role of society needs within OU, leadership, and the community. Through PCS, students engage in outreach activities, participate in a fall and spring retreat, and attend weekly gatherings to learn ways to serve the campus and community, connect with key campus leaders, and develop leadership skills to complement their academic experience. Last year, PCS provided over 10,500 hours of community service and since 1994, the group has completed over 250,000 hours of community service. PCS students have the unique opportunity to participate in the only study abroad experiences that include a local community service component in Arezzo, Italy. The PCS staff administrator has worked hard to secure additional funding from alumni donors and campus departments to expand programming opportunities and study abroad scholarships for PCS. Upper-class PCS students are also selected to serve as a mentor for a small group of the current class. This provides a wonderful experience for these students to support other students in their first year and expands opportunities for leadership roles. PCS alumni also continue to support the current class and their leadership through their participation in alumni panels and sharing their professional expertise in meetings or special learning sessions.

<https://www.ou.edu/pcs>

OU Volunteerism provides opportunities for students to connect with local community through one-time volunteer opportunities or on-going volunteer relationships with local agencies. Leadership & Volunteerism has partnerships with more than 100 agencies, located throughout the state, needing volunteers. The GivePulse platform allows agencies to directly input volunteer needs and opportunities for students to respond to and sign up to volunteer. The volunteer coordinator serves as the primary campus contact for volunteer opportunities and volunteer response assistance for events such as tornado recovery, teacher walkouts, and local fires impacting students and staff.

<https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/volunteerism>

Leadership & Volunteerism also provides a service hours/volunteer tracking system via the GivePulse platform. The form also requires the student to determine their learning outcomes and provide a

reflection element when completing the form. OU student, staff, or faculty are encouraged to keep track of service hours, especially for future scholarships, awards, internships, and job applications. OU values and encourages others to give back to the community. Acts of service done freely outside of academic requirements or work count towards The OU Standard Award. The OU Standard Award was developed in 2015 and recognizes OU students who go above and beyond in the area of volunteerism. This award is in connection with the Oklahoma Standard, the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum campaign, committed to promoting service, honor and kindness. OU students track their hours of community service on the L&V website and are awarded a certificate and cord to wear at commencement representing their achievement. In 2022, 10 students completing more than 5,481 hours of community service collectively at 18 different agencies were honored.

<https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/volunteerism/ou-standard-award>

The Big Event was launched at OU in 1999 as the University of Oklahoma's official day of community service. The Big Event strives to unify campus and the local community through one big day of service and gratitude. The Big Event has expanded to include the HSC, Tulsa, and Arezzo campuses. Several OU alumni clubs are also partnering to organize community service efforts in their areas. Last year's Big Event included over 5,000 OU volunteers logging over 20,000 hours of community service at over 180 job sites in one day, making it the largest single-day of community service in the state of Oklahoma. It is estimated that this single day of community service saved Oklahoma non-profits \$450,00 of labor costs. Over 110 universities across the nation host their own Big Event, however, OU's Big Event is the third largest in the nation. The Big Event is the largest student-run event on campus. The team consists of about 50 students on the Executive Committee and 70 on Operations Staff. The Outreach Committee has expanded into new countries this past year with OU students hosting Big Events in Dilijan, Armenia and Seoul, Korea, while continuing impacts in Arezzo, Italy, and Puebla, Mexico. The student team also hosts The Little Event in the fall and the Executive Committee and Operations Staff works with many jobsites throughout the year to complete service projects. This year, The Big Event raised over \$45,000 in monetary donations and over \$29,000 in in-kind donations from various partners in the Norman and OU communities.

<https://www.ou.edu/bigevent>

Annual community service projects and drives (Holiday Wishes, Adopt-an-Area, United Way Campaign Drive, and the OU Fall Food Drive) are a cornerstone of Leadership & Volunteerism programming. Holiday Wishes is an opportunity we have offered for 14 consecutive years for members of the OU Community to come together to collect items for vulnerable children and families in our community during the holidays. Last year 60 student groups, offices, and departments collectively donated over 350 items for families. The Adopt-an-Area program allows student organizations to commit to maintaining 58 designated areas of campus each year and the Landscaping Department grades their location each week and winners are chosen at the end of each season. The United Way Campaign is our annual fundraiser supporting the 27 partner agencies in Norman and Southern Cleveland County. Last year, the OU Community raised more than \$120,000 through payroll deductions, one-time gifts, and event fundraisers. In its 10th year, the OU Fall Food Drive brought 28 student organizations, offices, and departments together with the goal of fighting hunger and supporting our campus food pantry by collecting over 2,400 pounds of food in conjunction with the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma's Students Against Hunger Food Drive.

https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/volunteerism/fall_drives

https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/volunteerism/adopt_an_area

To provide leadership learning opportunities to university departments, community organizations or non-profit groups, the director of Leadership & Volunteerism facilitates team-building activities and presents leadership-related programming for a variety of audiences. Partnerships include the Oklahoma Rotary – RYLA Summer Camp; OU College of Nursing Staff; The Pride of Oklahoma Marching Band leadership team; Women in Leadership Journalism Class; Student Athlete Innovative Leaders; Assistance League of Norman; Absentee Shawnee Tribe/College of Education Summer Program; Oklahoma College Public Relations Association; Gaylord PINK Grant (Pakistan, India, Nepal and Kazakhstan); Ada Women's Conference; NEW Leadership Program; OU College of Engineering Development Team Retreat; HSC Student Affairs Staff Retreat; Resident Advisor Class students; Provost's Advisory Committee on Academic Advising; and more. The director also provides consulting services for departments and individuals developing retreats and presentations/programs.

Additionally, the director teaches a 3-hour credit course, Life After OU, for College of Arts and Sciences seniors. This class introduces students to practical aspects of life after college via course materials and guest speakers addressing topics such as finances; investments; organizational skills; interviewing for jobs; employment benefits; all types of insurance; transitioning to a job/career; legal information; buying a home and vehicle; personal growth and civic engagement. Course evaluations are stellar and many students share it is the most helpful course they've taken during college to prepare them for life after graduation.

Leadership & Volunteerism maintains a robust website that provides opportunities for students to get involved in many types of activities and programs. There are also resources available for self-development and targeted information for students whether they are freshmen, transfer students or upperclass students looking to get involved.

<https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/leadership/leadership>

<https://www.ou.edu/leadandvolunteer/leadership/on-campus-opportunities>