

Building on a Foundation of Public Service

President Jonathan Koppell intends to make public service a “signature hallmark” of a Montclair State University education. The idea is to take his experiences as dean of the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions at Arizona State University to amplify the commitment already in place at Montclair to serve and engage communities beyond campus.

His goal is for Montclair to be the premier public service university in New Jersey, where students have an opportunity to build a four-year public service training program into their college experience. By taking the helm, Koppell joined an institution with a strong foundation that will enable it to reach that goal.

For years, Montclair has worked with communities in need and with the state to improve lives and serve the public, from creating programs in urban settings to invest in K-12 education and diversify the teacher pipeline, to serving as the state’s clearinghouse for autism services for children and families, to coming up with sustainability solutions to challenges incurred through climate change.

Here are just a few of the many ways the University has partnered with communities to serve the public and improve lives:

CENTER FOR AUTISM AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

In its nine years, the Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health at Montclair State has offered professional development, education, clinical services, community programs and research opportunities in the areas of autism, infant and child development and early childhood mental health in New Jersey. The Center also serves as a clearinghouse, coordinating autism research and treatment projects throughout New Jersey. Its multidisciplinary services include a clinic for families from pregnancy to age 12; an infant mental health curriculum and school-based, early childhood mental health promotion program.

THE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Each year the Center for Community Engagement leads more than 1,000 students in partnership with 200+ community partners to seek solutions to issues of public concern. It also coordinates AmeriCorps volunteers, Bonner Leaders and a host of public service and initiatives, including a University-assisted, full-service Community School Initiative in Orange, New Jersey, that – with the support of grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education – has made a difference in the lives of public school students and their families at two underserved schools for the last several years.

URBAN TEACHER RESIDENCY

In partnership with the Newark Board of Education and Orange Public Schools, Montclair has created the Urban Teacher Residency to improve student achievement by applying rigorous, research-based teacher preparation to the needs of the districts. Just one of the programs in the schools, the Urban Teacher Residency is designed to recruit talented individuals – especially people of color and individuals from other occupations – into the teaching force; provide critical professional development to improve the quality of both new and prospective teachers; increase teacher retention rates; and ultimately improve student achievement.

P-CASA, PROJECT COPE IN PATERSON

The Paterson Coalition Against Substance Abuse – aka P-CASA – works to eliminate alcohol, tobacco and drug use among the city’s young people through outreach, education, community empowerment and collaboration with the help of Montclair faculty; a 10-year federal Drug Free Communities grant; and strong partnerships with the city of Paterson, civic associations, faith-based organizations, parent groups, schools, social service agencies, law enforcement and media.

THE PSEG INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES

The PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies supports transdisciplinary research and community projects that aim to grow more resilient communities

across the globe. Through partnerships with New Jersey-based and multinational corporations and organizations, the PSEG ISS addresses local and global sustainability challenges, including climate change, emissions, energy, clean water, waste, food and food insecurity. It involves students interested in sustainability through its Green Teams

“It’s that we take responsibility for addressing the needs of the communities. We will be a partner with governments, nonprofits, individuals who are seeking to address the greatest challenges.”

transdisciplinary internship program in which teams serve corporations, organizations, nonprofits, municipalities and community groups to address sustainability issues identified by host organizations.

THE CLEAN ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY ANALYTICS CENTER

CESAC, a public research and technical assistance center, facilitates research analysis for clean energy development in the state, the country and abroad. It identifies, quantifies and interprets the ramifications of clean energy development and facilitates energy planning, providing support for clean energy policies, technology and practices through research and programs to build a sustainable energy economy.