

Community Engagement Review **2009/10**

University Campus Suffolk
Waterfront Building
Neptune Quay
Ipswich IP4 1QJ

Tel: 01473 338000
Email: info@ucs.ac.uk

www.ucs.ac.uk



Engaging with the Community

UCS is committed to serving its local communities by being a beacon for aspiration and achievement, and improving attainment in the local community through research, enterprise, course development, community outreach and widening participation.

This review provides an overview of the wide range of partnerships, outreach and community work taking place at UCS between staff and students and members of the local community including with schools, colleges, public and private sector organisations or local groups, during 2009.

Conducting community engagement successfully will help UCS:

- Be seen to be giving something back to the community and not simply taking
- Create mutually beneficial relationships
- Form positive opinion from the local and wider community
- Enrich the lives of those in the local community
- Increase accessibility to UCS and the educational opportunities available
- Encourage applications from groups who might not otherwise have considered applying to higher education
- To encourage wider support of its aims and objectives
- Have a positive influence on the local community
- Have a positive effect on the local economy and a benefit to businesses in the area
- Facilitate utilisation of the buildings on campus and the resources available
- Provide a programme of participation events for the local community

The review looks at community engagement and outreach activities that are over and above traditional provision of education, and are due to staff and students affiliation or employment with UCS.

Activities could include:

- Educational outreach projects with local schools, community groups, young children or adults
- Musical theatre or performance activities
- Giving presentations/lectures at local events or conferences
- Fundraising activities or charitable projects
- Links with local rotary clubs
- Environmental work/projects
- Multi-faith projects
- Student-run projects for members of the community
- Work experience or placements within UCS for members of the community
- Membership of local bodies and organisations such as councils, Choose Suffolk etc
- Involvement of community members (including businesses) on UCS advisory boards
- Leading, collaborating and participating in community events
- Goods and facilities loaned to or opened to the community

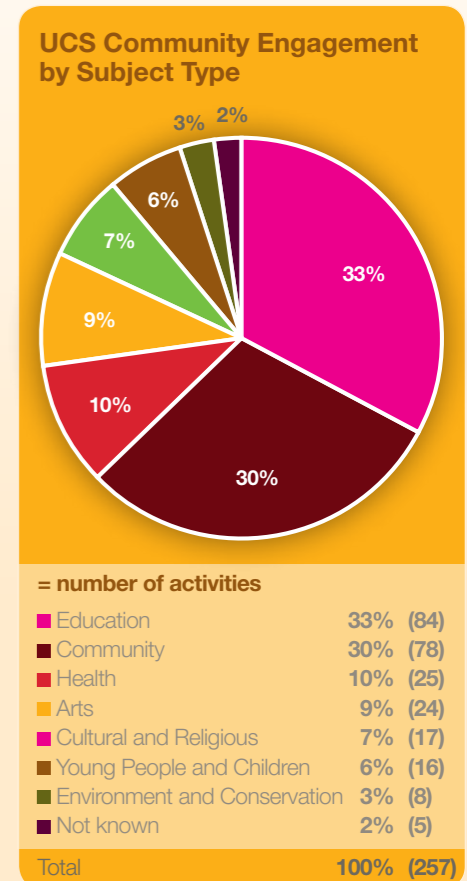
The activities reported in this publication are embedded into university life. They are not new activities to fulfill a specific agenda, but are integral to what UCS stands for and its mission to be a 'can do' university provider that aspires to the highest standards in teaching and learning, research and enterprise and works flexibly with a range of partners to fulfil mutual objectives at a local, regional, national and international level.

By 2015 UCS wishes to become a model for a new type of university by aligning with the community. Community engagement involves building effective communications with community groups and partnerships with key stakeholders. UCS acts as a transformational presence, deeply embedded, highly visible and engaged with its local communities and beyond; driving measurable change through its part in cultural, economic and social activity in the region.

Active in the Community

UCS staff were asked to record community engagement activities that took place during 2009.

- 918 staff contributed a total of 28,470 hours in UCS time to participating in community engagement activities
- 176 staff contributed a further 1,283 hours of their own time to community engagement activities
- 3,020 students gave 16,412 hours of their time to community engagement activities
- The total value of UCS community engagement activities during 2009 came to £1,350,000. This includes a cash contribution of £740,000
- As a result of these contributions, a further £1,790,700 has been leveraged from other partners
- Community engagement activities supporting education benefit from the greatest investment by UCS, 49% of the total value
- Schools and colleges benefit from 12,950 hours of staff time and are the greatest beneficiary of UCS community engagement activity
- Public sector organisations benefit from the greatest number of activities
- The School of Arts and Humanities at UCS runs the largest number of different community engagement activities at a value of £74,140 to the local community



“Establishing and maintaining links and networks with beneficiary organisations is an important benefit of community engagement work”



UCS in the Community Year 2009

At the Ipswich Campus



UCS support and sponsor the 'Creating the Greenest County awards'.

The Mind, Body and Soul exhibition promoted wellbeing and healthy living to students while also providing the opportunity for local organisations to promote their services.



Students volunteered to assist at the Latitude Festival at Henham Park, Southwold in July where they provided guests with information about the event and answered their enquiries.



In partnership with Aimhigher Suffolk, UCS gave 20 year nine students from across Suffolk the opportunity to sample what higher education has to offer on a three day non-residential Summer School at the Ipswich Campus.

The Aimhigher and UCS Family Awareness Day aimed to raise the aspirations of young people from under-represented groups while also increasing the families' understanding of higher education.

The local community embraced the first ever Christmas Fayre at the Waterfront Building. A brass band and carol singers from the local churches entertained throughout the day.

UCS delivered a number of staff development sessions to Suffolk Youth and Connexions Advisers.

Five members of UCS staff are school Governors.

UCS is a member of the Great Cornard Upper School Trust.



UCS returned to Trinity Park to attend the Suffolk Show. Lecturers and students from the sports science department demonstrated the physiological and exercise testing equipment allowing members of the public to test their fitness levels.

Staff at the Ipswich Campus held a Macmillan Coffee Morning in order to raise funds for the charity which provides practical, medical and financial support for cancer sufferers. A total of over £270 was raised for the charity.

UCS held a Swap Shop event in the Waterfront Building. UCS invited the local community to dig out their unwanted items which were then exchanged for a new outfit, a new DVD collection, or a jukebox worth of CDs and records.

UCS staff facilitated and arranged for students to be involved in the IpArt literary festival, and worked with Starbucks to give local writers the platform to perform their work to an audience. UCS, in partnership with the festival, commissioned a short story by the writer Clare Wigfall. Clare read her story for the first time at the Waterfront Building as part of the festival.

A member of the marketing team volunteered his time at Ipswich Community Radio once a month, to talk on air about what UCS was doing in the community.

UCS supplied student and graduate artwork to Kerseys Solicitors for display in their offices with the potential of selling the pieces. The display in the town centre allowed UCS to raise the profile of students' work and also established links with a local business.

The Suffolk Leadership Academy launched a joint initiative with the NHS in Suffolk to give training to managers and leaders in the NHS.

UCS Careers and Employability Service worked with the voluntary sector to identify opportunities for UCS students to engage in voluntary placements within the local community and to develop employability skills.

Across the UCS Learning Network

Students on the Foundation degree in Football Development and Coaching at UCS Lowestoft helped out at a Saturday Morning Football Club for young people in Lowestoft, and also at Waveney Football Club.

UCS Otley worked with the community in a variety of different ways.

- Garden design students worked with a local Woodbridge restaurant to help them build a new garden area for customers
- Staff supported a range of environmental projects through the Otley Green project
- Students and staff helped out at Otley Colleges' Big Day Out community event that saw over 4000 people brave the driving rain to enjoy a host of fun activities

UCS Bury St Edmunds held a Volunteers Fair to allow organisations to promote volunteering, raise their profiles and recruit volunteers.



“...committed to working with the community in a variety of ways”

UCS and Leap in the Community

Leap

UCS first developed the idea of Leap as part of their business plan in 2005, as an extension of their Learning Network in Suffolk and Great Yarmouth. UCS, in partnership with other key stakeholders in Suffolk, quickly brought Leap to fruition with its core aim to serve the local community by making education more accessible to everyone.

Part of Leap's success is due to its wide ranging partnership. Working with Suffolk County Council, West Suffolk College, The Community Forum and CSV media allows Leap to permeate throughout Suffolk and reach a large proportion of the community.

Leap invested £2,345,186 in the local community in 2009, which included £804,000 from the Suffolk County Council Economic Participation Programme, an initiative supported by the East of England Development Agency.

During 2009 the Leap Centres regularly held Open Days to give people the opportunity to have a tour around the Centres and see what facilities were available to them. The Open Days also allowed people to meet staff at the Centres and take part in free taster sessions.

Each Leap Centre held four forum meetings over the year which they invited local organisations and community groups to attend. The forums allowed the local community to engage with the Leap Centres and share information.

The central Leap team shared a stand with UCS at the Suffolk Show to raise awareness of the Leap brand and the service that was on offer in local market towns. Leap had a giant word search and maze available which children could fill in while their parents spoke to staff about the opportunities that were available to them.

The Leap Centres were involved in raising money for a number of charities including

Macmillan Cancer Support and Children in Need last year. The Murrayside Leap Centre held a coffee morning in aid of Children in Need with the chance to win a Pudsey Bear in a colouring competition and raised £38.80.

Mildenhall Leap Centre raised £40.00 for Macmillan Cancer Support where they offered coffee, cakes and free use of the internet in return for donations. They also held a poppy collection, an RNIB collection and helped Great Ormond Street Hospital raise money by selling sweets.

The Sudbury Leap Centre also held a small coffee morning to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support and raised £25.00. Next year they hope to make it a bigger event and raise more money for the charity. They also had a donation wheelie bin in aid of the British Heart Foundation at the Leap Centre, where people could

donate their unwanted clothing, books, CDs etc, rather than throwing them away. Once the wheelie bin was full the Centre would ring the charity and they would come to collect it. This was so beneficial to the charity and to the community that the Centre kept this going.

Last year Leap sponsored The Four Towns Bus in Waveney £5,000. The Four Towns Bus provides an informal meeting place, an information and advice resource and a venue for workshops, training, creative arts, study groups and social activities. The bus has a private meeting room, an internet accessible computer suite, 42" plasma TV with surround sound, a DVD player and a Playstation2.

A member of the central Leap team also offered an hour a week of their time to be co-presenter on the show 'Working Lives' at Ipswich Community Radio.



Community Engagement Office

UCS have recently established a Community Engagement Office.

Whether it be providing a small grants programme to a local charity, developing a student volunteer scheme, participating in national health initiatives or making our facilities available to local groups, we aim to deeply embed ourselves within our local community.

At UCS we very much want to hear what the community wants from us. Have a look at our website to see what is already on offer and, if you think there is something else we should be doing, then please let us know.

You can contact the Community Engagement Office at

e. community@ucs.ac.uk

t. 01473 338000

w. www.ucs.ac.uk/community

UCS Community Grant Scheme

The UCS Community Grant scheme has limited funds available each year to give to persons and bodies residing in Suffolk and Great Yarmouth. The scheme allows local groups and individuals to bid for small pots of money to support local events or activities.

Grants are mainly awarded for educational or community focused projects or activities and are normally given on a one off basis. Grants can be awarded for the following purposes (this list is not exclusive):

- Supporting local community events
- Supporting the operation of community/charity groups
- Support of clubs – with an educational nature
- Sports facilities or activities
- Special equipment for community groups, schools and colleges
- Grants for student activities (community engagement or extra curricular activities)
- Promotion of the Arts
- Adult education

For further information visit www.ucs.ac.uk/community

“...making education more accessible to everyone”