PATHWAYS

civic engagement | community change

The widespread upheaval and trauma we are witnessing on social media timelines, in the news media, and in our own communities calls upon each of us to reflect, to respond, to act. How do we work towards a just, inclusive, and fair democratic society? How will you?

The development of leaders and citizens who challenge the present to enrich the future is central to the mission of the University of Michigan. The Pathways to Civic Engagement and Community Change* describes a range of possibilities by which you can engage in and contribute to communities to further U-M's mission and exercise your own power to create a better world.

These pathways intersect and overlap, demonstrating the interdependent nature of working toward the common good. There is no one single "best" path and most people move through multiple pathways over time. Each pathway outlines opportunities to engage from any location, in public health-informed ways.

For positive social change to occur, our communities rely on all of us engaging in multiple ways, along various pathways. This positive change creates conditions, access, and opportunities for everyone to have enough of what they need to thrive, which in turn creates healthier, more vibrant, equitable, and sustainable communities.

The Ginsberg Center is pleased to share these pathways with U-M undergraduate and graduate/professional students, and we are here to partner with you in moving toward a community and world where everyone thrives. In addition to the Ginsberg Center, there are many organizations, courses, and programs on campus and off that can help you on your journey.

What pathways are you on to create positive change?

*Adapted from Pathways of Public Service, in partnership with the Haas Center for Public Service, Stanford University.

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Policy & Governance

Participating in democratic political & deliberative processes, policymaking, & public governance.

➔ Vote in local and national elections. Click here to learn more and register!

➔ Complete the 2020 Census, and learn more about why it matters to your community.

➔ Learn about the processes, policies, and concepts of democracy: start here!

➔ Engage in student governance (Central Student Government, School/College student government, Residence Hall Associations, Fraternity & Sorority Life).

➔ Declare the Minor in Public Policy through the Ford School.

➔ Contact local and national elected officials to influence policy decisions.

➔ Engage in or attend a Democracy Café, political debate, or town hall to learn about and discuss various issues, initiatives, or concerns.

➔ Spend a semester of study or summer internship in Washington, D.C.

➔ Join initiatives to support democratic engagement through the Ginsberg Center or join a politically-focused student organization.

Community Organizing and Activism

Involving, educating & mobilizing individuals or groups to influence or persuade others toward attitude, policy, or culture change.

➔ Join a coalition on campus, in a professional organization, or in your community, to take action around local and/or global issues.

➔ Declare the Community Action and Social Change minor through the School of Social Work.

➔ Attend or plan a public demonstration (marches, protests, resistance efforts) to address an important community concern. (U-M safety tips for protesters.)

➔ Sign, or create, a petition advocating for an issue you care about.

➔ Use social media to promote a cause or pressing community need.

➔ Collaborate on a campaign event (knocking on doors, phone calls, tabling, etc.) to raise awareness about an issue.

➔ Collaborate with faith-based coalitions like the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice and the Interfaith Youth Core.

Direct Service

Working to address the immediate needs of individuals or a community, often through direct interaction with the people or place being served.

➔ Find and contribute to community-identified needs in Southeast Michigan through Connect2Community, in the state of Michigan through the State's Volunteer Portal, or in other communities using VolunteerMatch. Despite the limitations that COVID-19-related social distancing may have on some direct service activities, there are still multiple ways to contribute.

➔ Apply your work-study award to a role that allows you to serve directly in the community.

➔ Participate in the America Reads tutoring program or related educational support for local K-12 students.

➔ Participate in a service year program (e.g. Americorps, City Year, etc.).

➔ Commit your time and resources to mutual aid efforts. Learn more about mutual aid, and connect to local initiatives.

Community-Engaged Learning and Research

Connecting coursework, academic research, & outside of the classroom experiences to community-identified concerns to enrich knowledge & inform action on social issues.

➔ Enroll in a class that combines coursework with community field experience.

➔ Review existing publications and research, and learn more about the community issues, priorities, and initiatives that you are passionate about.

➔ Participate in a community-engaged internship or research experience through Semester in Detroit, University Career Center, and UROP.

➔ Use teach-ins, group meetings, and activities to learn about and understand the root causes, broader context, and various perspectives on the issue your group is addressing.

➔ Engage with programs that teach principles of research and design while centering community priorities like the Center for Socially Engaged Design, Community Technical Assistance Collaborative, and Citizen Interaction Design.

➔ Partner with local agencies to help survey or interview residents for community-based initiatives or services.

Philanthropy

Donating or raising funds and resources for nonprofits & other non-governmental organizations that engage in work that contributes to the public good.

➔ Plan a creative fundraising event for an organization you want to support that also educates attendees about the issue being addressed.

➔ Work with a local organization to help support a crowd-funding campaign

➔ Support charities, nonprofits, and philanthropies you care about through informed giving with GreatNonprofits, CharityNavigator or the Philanthropic Initiative on Racial Equity.

➔ Use social media platforms and other public-facing outlets to raise awareness of philanthropy efforts being spearheaded by other individuals or organizations.

➔ Participate in the U-M Development Summer Internship Program to gain skills and experience in fundraising.

➔ Organizations need more than just money. Find out the needs and collect donations (clothes, food, etc.) for an organization you want to support.

Social Entrepreneurship

Using ethical business approaches to create or expand market-oriented responses to social or environmental problems, and address the needs of underserved groups.

➔ Join a social entrepreneurship focused group, working on projects like helping teenagers interested in entrepreneurship to start a small business.

➔ If you're passionate about a particular issue, turn your ideas into impact through the optiMIZE Challenge.

➔ Visit the Center for Entrepreneurship for resources and opportunities to deepen your understanding of entrepreneurship.

➔ Visit Business+Impact at Michigan Ross for resources and opportunities to deepen your understanding and commitment to social entrepreneurship.

Additional Exploration

Hundreds of faculty and staff across campus are here to partner with and support you in moving toward a more just community and world. We encourage you to learn more about issues that inform and support these pathways by exploring the array of courses and events being offered this fall as part of U-M's Democracy and Debate Theme Semester.

A great starting point is to visit MaizePages and join one of the 700+ *Activism*, *Governance*, or *Service/Service Learning* student organizations addressing issues that may align with your passion(s) and interest(s). If there isn't an organization doing what you want to do, connect with the Center for Campus Involvement to explore the possibility of starting your own.

We also encourage you to engage with your peers, friends, and family on issues of public concern, considering the differences between discussion, dialogue, and debate, and learn more about deliberative dialogue.

To get started now, we encourage you to check out the *Community Engagement: Collaborating for Change* online course, which can help you nurture the knowledge, skills, and values to help create the positive change you seek to make in the world. All U-M affiliates (students, faculty, staff, and alumni) can take this course and receive a verified certificate for free through Michigan Online.

To learn more about engagement at U-M, please visit Engaged Michigan.

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