Many students who come to the University of Denver want to contribute to the public good and continue their civic development. The Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning (CCESL) leads the campus in embracing the University of Denver’s commitment to “being a great private university dedicated to the public good.” CCESL’s vision is to be a university working with communities to improve lives. Therefore, CCESL programs focus on activating student, faculty, and community potential through partnerships that are guided by a community organizing framework. Community organizing is about people working together for systematic social change.

CCESL works with students and faculty across multiple initiatives. First, the Community-Engaged Learning initiative focuses on how students can learn while working with communities. By building reciprocal relationships between classrooms and communities, community-engaged classes offer opportunities for students to advance critical thinking, develop civic skills, address public problems and become leaders. Second, the Community-Engaged Scholarship initiative focuses on helping students and faculty do research and creative work with community partners for the public good. Students take on leadership roles in research and creative work through CCESL’s Science Shop or assist faculty partners as Public Good Associates. Third, the Service Initiative offers students ways to do service with communities that focus on connecting service to academic learning through critical reflection, examination of root causes, community building and increasing campus and community capacities. Fourth, the Civic Development Initiative offers students diverse opportunities to develop their civic identities to prepare for active participation in civic life through public good work and community organizing.

From engaging with public school students through the Public Achievement program to the Puksta Scholars civic development program and DU Service and Change student-led service activities, CCESL is a gateway for students to find their voice and apply what they are learning in our world. Please visit our website at www.du.edu/ccesl or call at 303-871-3706, or email ccesl@du.edu.