Hi everyone. I'm Adam Westbrook and I'm the Director of the Center for Community Engagement. And as I usually do, I want to share some of my reflections on the work of the CCE this year, but I also wanted to invite you to reflect back with us.

Now this year has been a lot of things in the CCE. It's gone by fast. Student leaders have gained skills in facilitating difficult conversations and how to lead their peers, and how to grow their self awareness through the practice of self-reflection. We've worked with excellent community partners. We've grown and refined some of our programs that we've done for years and we've created new programs like the Suffolk Votes Ambassador Program to continue to meet the most pressing community and civic needs of the day. But most importantly, our students, staff, faculty, and community partners this year have had a crash course in how to adapt to difficult and unexpected circumstances.

This year has reinforced that as much as planning is an important community leadership skill, an equally important skill is the ability to adapt and work together to address new challenges that none of us knew were coming. But what we've seen this year and during the crisis is that Suffolk students, staff, faculty, and our community partners in the Greater Boston area have adapted and they have risen to the new challenges. We've been heartened and inspired by the heroism and collaboration that Suffolk and our
01:30 communities have done to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak.

01:34 Also, many of Suffolk service-learning faculty were quick to work with their

01:37 community partners and adapt their projects,

01:40 move them online to make sure their students were able to make a difference

01:43 in our community still. Suffolk students have started

01:46 fundraising campaigns for some of our partners,

01:48 they've donated items, they've made masks, and they're working together to support

01:53 our communities in any way they can. As I'm sure many of you aware,

01:58 Suffolk has also partnered with Pine Street Inn and the city of Boston

02:01 and has opened up two of its residence halls to ensure

02:04 safe places to self-isolate for many of our homeless fellow citizens,

02:08 and for many of our medical workers

02:11 fighting this disease on the front lines. This is who we are in the Greater Boston

02:17 area and this is who we are at Suffolk University.

02:20 While this isn’t the year that we’ve expected, that any of us have expected,

02:25 I've been heartened by the examples of community engagement, of leadership and

02:29 partnership that I’ve seen throughout the entire year, but

02:32 especially in these last eight or nine weeks.

02:35 Thank you to all of our student leaders, staff, faculty, and especially our

02:38 community partners here in Boston, throughout the country, and abroad. This

02:42 has been a very successful year in the Center.

02:48 [Cortney Kelly] We began the year by welcoming 50 new first-year Ram Academy

02:53 students to

02:53 Suffolk to participate in community service
and engagement projects throughout the city for three days before school started. In this process, they learned that being a Suffolk Ram means being an active member of your community.

We grew our Service After Hours program where we send students out into the community each week to four different community partner sites.

My name is Ben, I work on Service After Hours in the Center for Community Engagement. We had one of our best years of programming yet with more student leaders, more volunteers, and more hours completed than ever before.

I'd love to give a huge thanks to everyone who worked with us to make all this possible. We've done a whole lot over the past year to make the program more accessible to everyone, and we're looking forward to doing it all again with you soon.

During November, we partnered for another year with the Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion and the Queer Student Union to do a joint trans awareness and hunger and homelessness awareness month of programming.

We did several projects and donation drives and partnered with several community organizations including Oxfam, the Eliot School, and Youth on Fire, as well as Suffolk Cares. Thank you to everyone who participated.

We were also able to continue building our Suffolk Votes program this year through the hard work of our new Suffolk Votes Ambassadors. These students are dedicated to ensuring that every eligible student at Suffolk has access to register
04:10 and vote in local, state, and national elections.

04:14 These students have stepped up this year and we're currently preparing for an
04:17 intensive voter registration effort for this fall, which we're very excited about.

04:22 Hi there. My name is Molly I'm the Volunteer
04:24 Manager for Jumpstart here at Suffolk. We're an early childhood education
04:28 organization, so our members volunteer in preschool
04:32 classrooms and they help promote children's
04:35 language, literacy, and social emotional skills.
04:38 I love working for Jumpstart and I love working with the CCE
04:43 because it's just so wonderful to be surrounded by community-
04:47 driven people with a passion for social justice.
04:51 So I'm just very grateful and proud to be part of the CCE
04:55 and we hope to see you around. Take care.

05:00 [Dennis Harkins] 20 students participated in our Alternative Winter Break program,
05:04 which happens every January. So at the beginning of this year,
05:08 10 students flew to Cambodia and 10 students flew to Myanmar,
05:15 both countries in Southeast Asia, and worked with Habitat for Humanity's
05:20 Global Village Program and also worked with some public
05:26 secondary schools in each country to learn more about the education systems
05:31 in Cambodia and Myanmar. Both the Cambodia and Myanmar teams then returned to spend
05:35 the spring semester together reflecting and continuing to study
05:38 Southeast Asian affairs in an international relations course
05:42 called Conflict and Development, taught by Professor Roberto Dominguez.

05:46 We're looking forward to continuing these partnerships again next year.

05:51 [Kara Cronin] Hey guys, as an Alternative Winter Break participant this past year I went to Cambodia. It is a very unique experience. You're immersed in an entirely new culture and you get to see just how your work is impacting the family that you're helping out. It's a really incredible experience and it's one that I will always take with me and is one that I will never forget.

06:17 [Harkins] In terms of our Alternative Spring Break or our ASB program, we were able to hold all of the pre-meetings, the pre-trip meetings, but unfortunately this year the program was not able to travel to the seven different destinations across the United States.

06:39 And our students weren't able to experience the week of service that we had all been hoping for due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

06:49 That being said, we'd like to shout out all of our ASB leaders, our ASB graduate fellow, Jenn Plourde, and we'd like to shout out everybody that participated in ASB in one form or another for your dedication to service, your interest in learning more about social justice in communities across the United States, and your commitment to Suffolk, and your commitment to the work that our Center does.

07:23 [Ryan Veytsman] Hi, I'm Ryan. I was the LGBTQ+ advocacy and justice trip leader for Alternative Spring Break this past year and I've also done Alternative Spring Break for the past three years. I can truly say they are really impactful
07:35 experiences. What Alternative Spring Break is, it is a
07:38 program that teaches you about the cycle of socialization, the cycle of
07:41 liberation, different types of oppressions like classism, racism,
07:44 homophobia, and then brings you onsite during the week of spring break
07:48 to do some work about those things such as building a house with Habitat for
07:51 Humanity or meeting with various organizations
07:54 that combat racism and homophobia, et cetera. If you're interested at all, definitely
07:59 look for the applications in fall 2021, so that you can get your incredible memories too.
08:05 While this academic year has not ended in the way we expected, there's no doubt that we've had a
08:09 successful year. We in the CCE know that our successes don't come through any
08:13 single individual's effort, but anyone who works in community
08:16 engagement knows that it comes through partnership,
08:19 collaboration, hard work, and sharing resources and knowledge.
08:23 Our success in the CCE is only as strong as our partnerships are with
08:27 departments, with fellow staff and faculty and student leaders,
08:31 but especially all of our community partners here in Boston,
08:34 nationally and abroad. Thank you to all of our community partners,
08:37 staff, faculty, and student leaders for a really great year this year.
08:41 [Harkins] Congratulations to the class of 2020 and good luck.
08:45 [Kelly] Have a safe and restful summer. See you all in the fall.