

00:07 [Adam Westbrook] Hi everyone. I'm Adam Westbrook and I'm the Director
00:09 of the Center for Community Engagement. And as I usually do, I want to share some
00:13 of my reflections on the work of the CCE this year,
00:16 but I also wanted to invite you to reflect back with us.
00:19 Now this year has been a lot of things in the CCE. It's gone by fast.
00:23 Student leaders have gained skills in facilitating difficult conversations
00:27 and how to lead their peers, and how to grow their self awareness through the
00:31 practice of self-reflection. We've worked with excellent community
00:34 partners. We've grown and refined some of our programs that we've done for
00:38 years and we've created new programs like the Suffolk Votes Ambassador Program
00:42 to continue to meet the most pressing
00:45 community and civic needs of the day. But most importantly, our students, staff,
00:50 faculty, and community partners this year have had a crash course in how to adapt
00:55 to difficult and unexpected circumstances.
00:58 This year has reinforced that as much as planning is an important community
01:02 leadership skill, an equally important skill is the
01:05 ability to adapt and work together to address new
01:08 challenges that none of us knew were coming. But what we've seen
01:13 this year and during the crisis is that Suffolk
01:16 students, staff, faculty, and our community partners in the
01:19 Greater Boston area have adapted and they have risen to the
01:23 new challenges. We've been heartened and inspired by the
01:27 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 students to

02:53 Suffolk to participate in community service

02:56 and engagement projects throughout the city for three days before school
02:59 started. In this process, they learned that being
03:01 a Suffolk Ram means being an active member of your community.
03:06 [Westbrook] We grew our Service After Hours program where we send
03:08 students out into the community each week to four different community partner sites.
03:12 [Ben Flanders] My name is Ben, I work on Service After Hours in the
03:15 Center for Community Engagement. We had one of our best years of
03:18 programming yet with more student leaders,
03:20 more volunteers, and more hours completed than ever before.
03:24 I'd love to give a huge thanks to everyone who worked with us to make
03:27 all this possible. We've done a whole lot over the past
03:30 year to make the program more accessible to everyone,
03:33 and we're looking forward to doing it all again with you soon.
03:36 [Kelly] During November, we partnered for another year with the Center for Student
03:39 Diversity and Inclusion and the Queer Student Union to do a joint trans
03:43 awareness and hunger and homelessness awareness month of programming.
03:46 We did several projects and donation drives and partnered with several
03:49 community organizations including Oxfam, the Eliot School, and
03:53 Youth on Fire, as well as Suffolk Cares. Thank you to everyone who participated.
03:58 [Westbrook] We were also able to continue building our
04:00 Suffolk Votes program this year through the hard work of our new Suffolk Votes
04:03 Ambassadors. These students are dedicated to ensuring
04:06 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

05:55 I went to Cambodia. It is a very unique experience. You're immersed in an

05:59 entirely new culture and you get to see just how your work is impacting the

06:04 the family that you're helping out. It's a really incredible experience and it's

06:07 one that I will always take with me

06:10 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

06:24 to hold all of the pre-meetings, the pre-trip meetings, but unfortunately

06:31 this year the program was not able to travel to the seven

06:35 different destinations across the United States.

06:39 And our students weren't able to experience the week of service that

06:45 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

06:53 ASB leaders, our ASB graduate fellow, Jenn Plourde, and we'd like to shout out

07:00 everybody that participated in ASB in one form or another

07:05 for your dedication to service, your interest in learning more about

07:09 social justice in communities across the United States,

07:14 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

07:28 for Alternative Spring Break this past year and I've also done Alternative Spring

07:32 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.