

At Pitt, we do more than volunteer. We serve. With the community.

Volunteer service is one of the many ways University of Pittsburgh students, faculty, staff, and alumni engage with the people and communities of Pittsburgh. Every volunteer is unique and every act of service is special. What unites us is a shared commitment to realizing a world where everyone thrives. So we're asking: **What does it take for children and communities to thrive?**

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING WITH COMMUNITIES

Communities already know what they need. In fact, they've known for a long time and they started working on it long before we showed up. Our role as invited volunteers is to support the work communities are already leading.

Through **The Pittsburgh Study**, community members identified what matters most for child thriving:

- Racial Justice, Equity, & Inclusion
- Caring Families & Relationships
- Strong Minds & Bodies
- Healthy Environments
- Vibrant Communities
- Positive Self-Worth
- Fun & Happiness
- Safety

THE PITTSBURGH STUDY is a community-partnered study to find out what works to help children thrive. A decades-long effort to address the root causes of inequity, The Pittsburgh Study exemplifies community engagement practices that inspire our framework for volunteering.

Learn more at thepittsburghstudy.org

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING FROM RESEARCH

Around the world, governments and international organizations are using data and research to develop frameworks to help us understand the conditions that affect people's lives. When our public service is guided by these frameworks, our efforts are more likely to make positive change.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.

Taking action to address these conditions can have transformative effects on people's lives by improving health and reducing disparities.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services groups the **Social Determinants of Health** into 5 domains:

- Economic Stability
- Education Access & Quality
- Health Care Access & Quality
- Neighborhood & Built Environment
- Social & Community Context

WHAT WE'RE DOING ABOUT IT

Pitt is uniquely positioned to bring together the wisdom of communities and the insights of research. As a globally connected institution, we're fluent in the national and international research about thriving. As a locally embedded public institution, we're connected to the lived experience of communities.

Our six focus areas combine the community needs identified by The Pittsburgh Study and the conditions for thriving identified by the Social Determinants of Health:

Education: Supporting the potential of local K-12 students

Basic Needs: Expanding access to food, housing, clothing, and sanitary items

Health Equity: Responding to disproportionate health outcomes

Civic Participation: Encouraging full, informed participation in civic life

Digital Access & Equity: Fostering full inclusion in our digital society

Economic Opportunity: Connecting people and businesses to resources that support economic inclusion and advancement

These focus areas guide our volunteerism and public service efforts to ensure that we will make the greatest impact as we joyfully share our time and resources serving *with* the community.

HOW WE'RE DOING IT

The Plan for Pitt identifies three foundational strengths of the University:

- Our People: scholars, learners, and leaders pursuing knowledge
- Our Programs: academics, research, and service
- Our Purpose: improving lives and communities

These strengths make an impact through engagement with Our Partners: the community organizations, systems, and residents we work with. It's through service with our partners that our strengths matter the most.

We're gathering Pitt's strengths from across the University to work toward child and community thriving. To do this right, we're partnering with communities as co-leaders and basing our volunteer service on:

- **Shared values:** We're engaging with a commitment to anti-racism, accountability, and humility through pre-service training, ongoing discussions, and continual consultation with partners.
- **Shared strengths:** We're matching Pitt's strengths and resources with community assets and needs, with a focus on health and wellness
- **Shared leadership:** We're building relationships based on respect and reciprocity by acknowledging our complicated legacy and committing to more equitable and just partnership.
- **Shared action:** We're volunteering to build capacity for what's already working and expand access to resources that can bridge the gaps.

When we align our efforts, small steps add up to a big difference. Students, faculty, staff, and partners come together to work on solution-sized projects that make transformative change.

GET INVOLVED

Volunteer service is one of many ways that Pitt engages with the community.

This framework was co-developed by the [Office of Engagement & Community Affairs](#) and [PittServes](#) to show that action taken in any one of our volunteer focus areas can lead to impact in child and community thriving.

Contact the [Office of Engagement & Community Affairs](#) to learn more about Pitt's neighborhood commitments.

Contact [PittServes](#) to learn more about the six pathways to civic growth at Pitt.

→ **Community members** can find opportunities to partner with Pitt at community.pitt.edu

→ **Pitt students, faculty, and staff** can find a volunteer opportunity at volunteer.pitt.edu

→ **Pitt schools, units, and labs** can align to this framework by emailing communityinfo@pitt.edu

At Pitt, we do more than volunteer.

We serve, With the community.

TO REALIZE
thriving communities

We lift up community assets and bright spots

We work *with* (not *for*) community partners

We bring resources to the table



TO REALIZE
more impactful service

We develop shared values with community partners

We serve with joy and humility

We share our energy and expertise



TO REALIZE
an engaged university

We build on Pitt's strengths in health, research, and service

We partner with communities as co-leaders

We learn more and enrich our discoveries



Our anti-racist foundation makes this possible.

We base partnerships on respect and reciprocity

We commit to long-term, human relationships

We acknowledge harm and work toward an equitable future

Visit community.pitt.edu to get involved

What we're learning with communities

Racial justice, equity, & inclusion are fundamental

Beautiful, healthy environments make a difference

Caring families & relationships matter

Thriving kids have strong minds & bodies

Vibrant communities sustain thriving

Every child needs fun & happiness

Positive self-worth gives meaning and purpose

Safety is a pre-requisite

What we're learning from research

Economic stability keeps people on a steady path

Access to quality education has lasting impacts

Access to quality healthcare is critical

Neighborhoods & environments affect health and well-being

Social and community contexts can reduce negative impacts

What does it take for children & communities to thrive?

What we're doing about it

Supporting local K-12 education

Meeting people's basic needs

Working to achieve health equity

Bolstering civic participation

Closing gaps in digital access & equity

Advancing economic opportunity



How we're doing it

We're mobilizing Pitt to realize a community where every child thrives.

Shared values based on anti-racism, accountability, and humility

Shared strengths that match Pitt resources with community assets

Shared leadership through relationships, respect, and reciprocity

Shared action that builds capacity and expands access

When we align our efforts, small steps add up to transformative change.

Visit
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to get involved