

Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CCECS)

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Introduction

Established in 2008, the Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CCECS) mobilizes resources on campus and works closely with local, regional, and international partners and stakeholders to provide opportunities for AUB students, faculty, and staff to respond to social and civic needs, and to bridge the theory-practice divide by developing knowledge that is derived from operating in complex landscapes. The Center's operations are categorized under the following main sectors: Community Outreach, Community Development and Projects, Supporting Service Learning, and Leadership Program (University Scholarship Program).

- **Community Outreach:** provides opportunities for AUB students, clubs and societies, and faculty and staff to engage and connect with the community based organizations that best satisfy their aspirations, match their expertise and respond to critical societal needs. The scope of voluntary services ranges from daylong activities to weeks-long volunteering camps. The Center's database of community partners is continuously updated, evaluated, and modified based on AUB participants' reflection following their internship experiences.
- **Community Development and Projects:** CCECS partners with academic units at AUB, community representatives, and local and international stakeholders, to design and develop strategic projects that aim at initiating incremental change within sclerotic settings. The overarching paradigm for community projects is developmental planning that seeks to integrate traditional spatial planning with social and economic planning, and to include a participatory process aimed at empowering the poor and marginalized.
- **Supporting Service Learning:** The incorporation of Service Learning in the educational programs at the university is a prime goal of the CCECS. To achieve this goal, the Center is coordinating with and supporting faculty members to integrate a Service Learning component within their courses to enrich and enhance academic course content by offering students the knowledge, skills, and values they will need for well-rounded civic engagement. The Center's Community Based Projects offer an opportunity for students and their advisors to gain hands-on experience by working directly with targeted communities.
- **Leadership Program:** University Scholarship Program students attend rigorous training workshops offered by CCECS on presentation skills, conducting needs assessment, proposal writing, and other related topics that prepare them with the necessary tools needed for the implementation of community based projects. This program is a consolidation of the community outreach, community projects, and service learning components, with an overarching aim to cultivate high standards of civic engagement values among the scholarship students. The methodological framework applied by the Center in this regard enables the scholarship students to become proactive agents in responding to the pressing needs of their respective communities.