

THE BINIENDA CENTER FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The Binienda Center for Civic Engagement was established originally as the Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement in the Spring of 2006 by a group of distinguished faculty at Worcester State University.

The center was gifted by the family of John Binienda in 2014 and the center renamed in the honor of our distinguished Alum. Currently located in the Office of Student Affairs (Student Center room 335) the mission of the Center is to challenge students and faculty to investigate social problems by examining their root causes in the classroom while simultaneously addressing them in the community. To accomplish this successfully, students and faculty are encouraged to work collaboratively with community partners to design effective research and service projects. We facilitate projects such as Jumpstart, an Americorps pre-school literacy program. We sponsor alternative spring break trips, including one to the Mote Marine laboratory on Summerland Key, Florida. We offer reciprocal partnerships with public, private and non-profit organizations in communities to address critical social issues. One of our central projects remains a living learning community, the Community Leadership Experience (CLEWS) that invites students to play an active and positive role in campus life. The hope of our civic engagement projects is that higher education institutions engender students' civic learning through participation in civic engagement, academic coursework, extracurricular activities and off-campus programming. Used effectively, civic learning and civic engagement prepare individuals for effective democratic participation, which in turn promotes growth of healthy communities, global economic vitality, social and political well being, and positive human interactions. Faculty, staff, students and community partners needing support in civic learning and engagement practices are invited to contact the center's director at: WSU_BiniendaCenter@worcester.edu