



CWRU

Neighborhood Advisory Council



2024 - 2025 REPORT



A Summary of NAC Activity

February 2024 to
November 2025

- Letter from Chairs
- Overview
- Accomplishments
- Collaborations
- Work in Progress
- Future Plans

<https://case.edu/gcr/NAC>

Letter from the Co-Chairs



Janice Eatman Williams

Director of School-Based Outreach Programs, CWRU



Dr. Regennia Williams

Distinguished Scholar of African American History and Culture, WRHS

Since the last NAC report, we have witnessed both change and tremendous growth within and outside the organization.

The following pages offer a glimpse into how the continued dedication of the NAC to its mission has attracted talented new members, built new models for exploring mutual challenges, and support work that facilitates the creation of sustainable and trusting relationships.

Most recently, establishing “Action Committees” has created space for greater inclusion and outreach.

Nurturing a collaborative environment involved tending to both its internal and external workings. This meant examining the functionality of the NAC and finding gaps that needed to be addressed.

The Membership committee was created to ensure broad representation on the council, and to provide opportunities for the group to build rapport among its members. The Learning Circles committee has been charged with looking and listening outward in adjacent communities to discuss concerns and envision ideas and solutions. The Neighborhood Ambassador committee has developed programs for engaging and educating CWRU and the adjacent neighborhoods about the rich and expansive history and resources that thrive in this area of Cleveland.

The NAC remains committed to the work of building bridges of trust through engagement. As the council looks toward the future, it does so with tremendous gratitude for past and present support from many individuals and groups throughout the greater campus community. We are especially grateful for the continued support of the Office of Local Government and Community Relations, the Community Innovation Network, and particularly President Eric W. Kaler without whom the NAC would not exist. We look forward to many more years of strengthening our bond together.

Janice Eatman Williams

Regennia Williams, Ph.D.

Overview



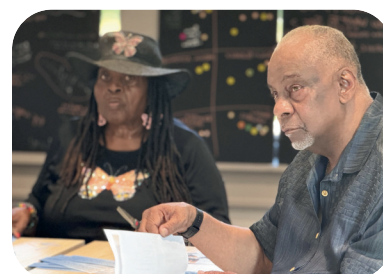
The inaugural NAC group in 2021.

Mission

The CWRU Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) serves as the community representative to University Leadership and advises on relevant issues, programs and projects that significantly impact people in East Cleveland and campus-adjacent Cleveland neighborhoods.

Objectives & Responsibilities

- Attend monthly meetings during the academic year and special meetings/events in the summer.
- Foster a sense of welcoming on campus to engage neighbors in university activities.
- Build trust and respect between neighborhood residents and CWRU through relationship building, programming, dialogue, and transparency.
- Identify community needs and collaborate to develop solutions that benefit the common good.
- Assist in sharing events and opportunities available at the university and conversely promote neighborhood resources across campus.
- Support the work of CWRU organizations that are committed to community engagement.



Accomplishments

The Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) has continued to move forward with its charge to establish and improve campus and neighborhood relationships. Since the last report in February of 2024, the council has maintained its mission of building a welcoming campus, and developed programming that strengthens ties between CWRU and adjacent communities.

Meetings

Beginning in 2024, the NAC increased the number of meetings from bi-monthly to monthly. Guests included representatives from the Division of Public Safety, Procurement & Distributions Services, and the Office for Campus Enrichment & Engagement. The CWRU Wade Park Community Engagement Center (WPCEC) has become “home” for the NAC.



Campus & Community Engagement

- Spreading the word about the WPCEC has increased meeting and programming activities since the site opened in the fall of 2024.
- NAC members have been sharing information about resources and benefits at CWRU such as the CWRU Community Card, Pre-Collegiate programs, and open events.
- Collaborating with other CWRU and neighborhood partners on large events and activities such as Parade the Circle, Family Fun Day, hosting Community Dinners, tabling at local events, and helping to organize the Community Art Exhibit hosted at the WPCEC.
- Responding to neighborhood and CWRU concerns or requests.



NAC in Action

Membership

The Membership Action Committee was created in response to a desire by the NAC to broaden community representation and build relationships within the NAC. On June 5, 2025, the committee planned a retreat at the CWRU Farm for the entire group as a way to build rapport, culture, and envision ways to continue effective work to support the mission. The committee also spearheaded the creation of group norms, and established a clear and sustainable structure for election of new members and leaders.



Learning Circles



The Learning Circles Action Committee was established to bring those affiliated with CWRU and nearby neighbors to address concerns or ideas on a variety of subjects. The first official learning circle event took place October 25, 2025 at the Martin Luther King Jr. branch of the Cleveland Public Library. The format of this type of discussion lends itself to openness, trust, and mutually beneficial outcomes which can be built upon in creative and collaborative ways.

Neighborhood Ambassadors

The Neighborhood Ambassadors Action Committee also held their first onboarding meeting concurrently with the Learning Circles Action Committee and plans to provide periodic training and events to support and encourage relationships between campus members and neighbors through asset sharing (including contributing to the growing NAC Community Asset Map), community tours (in mixed teams of 2-4 trained campus and neighborhood experts), and education sessions.



Asset Mapping



2024 Community Dinner

In November, 2024, CWRU students, faculty, and staff gathered for dinner with residents of nearby neighborhoods to discuss university and community relations, and share what makes everyone's neighborhood special. What we learned is being organized into a Story Map, which highlights the abundant assets that were shared during that community dinner, and other assets and stories that have been shared since. Currently, we have mapped some assets in the following categories: Community Organizations, Local Businesses, Parks and Green Space, and Local Artists and Festivals. This is a work in progress, and assets are continually being added to the map. An online form is available for contributions.

Story Map Initiative

A group of NAC members spent an afternoon at the Kelvin Smith Library learning how to use the arcGIS mapping software to serve as co-creators in the building of the Story Map. As it grows, there will be opportunities to join other similar asset maps that have been and are being created through other community engaged initiatives on campus and throughout the Cleveland area.



Work in Progress

Grant Program

The NAC is creating the criteria for a grant program for community-led projects, collaborations, and initiatives.

Community-Led Workshops

With direction and insights from the Learning Circles the NAC will develop (and execute a model for) community-taught workshops and experiences on a variety of topics to be determined by local interest and expertise.



Framing Inclusivity

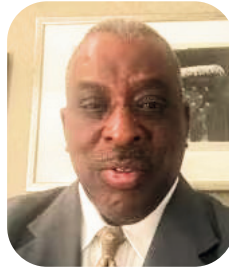


We are exploring the question: *“How do we frame the vision of a more inclusive campus community where CWRU is part of the neighborhood rather than the university distinguishing itself as one community and the areas surrounding the campus as separate ones?”*

The 2025 NAC Members



Sandra Brinson
Glenville



Darrell Fields
Forest Hill/EC



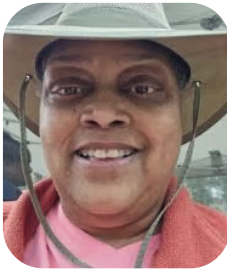
Gwen Graffenreed
Buckeye-Shaker



Gwen Garth
Central



Kevinee Gilmore
St Clair Superior



Myra Golden
Glenville



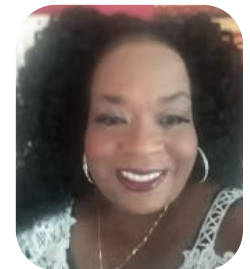
Vincent Holland
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Diane Pride Mays
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Regennia Williams*
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John Anoliefo
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Laura Cyrocki
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Sheffia Randall-
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Betsy Banks
CWRU Staff



Ainsley Buckner
CWRU Staff



Janice Eatman*
CWRU Staff



Amber Byrd
CWRU Student



Fatima Sagier
CWRU Student

Standing Observers (non-voting): "Know Your Neighbors" student representatives

NAC Administrative Team (with Co-Chairs*)

Mark Chupp, MSW, PhD, Founding Director, Community Innovation Network (CIN)
Julian Rogers, Associate Vice President, Local Government & Community Relations
JP Gaulty, CIN Staff; Na'Kiya Thompson & McKenna Uzelac, CIN Interns
Kate Klonowski, Director, Local Government & Community Relations