



SIGNATURE PARTNERSHIP  
INITIATIVE WITH WEST LOUISVILLE  
5-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT



AGENTS OF  
**CHANGE**



*and Community Partners  
May 2012*



Signature Partnership Mission Statement

“In collaboration with community partners, enhance the quality of life for residents in West Louisville by improving the overall educational attainment levels to equal those of Metro Louisville in general, through the integrated enhancement of health, social and economic viability of the community.”



“Nearly every Kentucky citizen has been affected by a program or initiative that had its beginnings at UofL. Our university is making the Commonwealth a better place to live, work and enjoy life.”

— Dr. James R. Ramsey, President, University of Louisville



“As a lifelong West Louisville resident and an employee of the university, I feel compelled to work toward restoring and improving the area to a place better than that of my memory. The Resident Advisory Council (RAC) provides participants an opportunity to learn from and support one another as we work together to address West Louisville’s needs.”

— Pamela Osborne, RAC Co-Chair and Director, UofL Medical School Admissions

AGENTS OF  
CHANGE

Since the University of Louisville was chartered in 1798, it has been charged with the mission of not only providing a quality education for the region’s citizens, but to act as a societal agent of change — one focused on community enrichment and improvement. Through the years it has lived up to its mission in ways extending from providing health services to the underserved and bolstering the economy to contributing numerous discoveries that both add to the general knowledge base and make an impact on many fronts and, consequently, many lives.

But few of our outreach initiatives to date have been as focused and had the potential to enact as much change as the Signature Partnership.

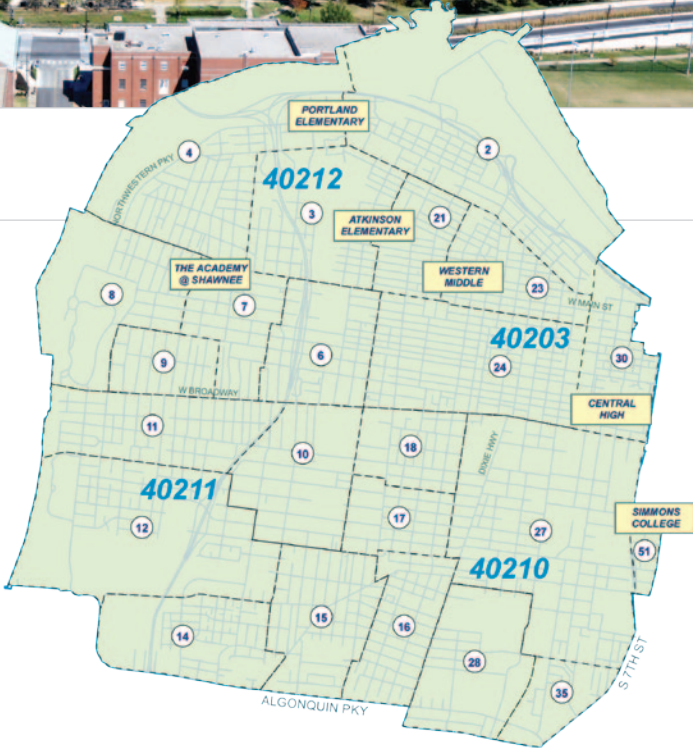
There are 79 university community partnerships that have engaged 3,024 UofL Students and 411 faculty and staff in West Louisville.

When Dr. James Ramsey became president of UofL in 2002, the university was involved in more than 1,600 community partnerships and programs. Each was well intentioned, but we were not very coordinated. We needed to concentrate on leveraging those resources that could truly make an impact.

So we did some soul-searching, driven by one simple, yet critical question: “How could UofL truly make a difference in our community?”

The Signature Partnership Initiative grew out of this self-evaluation. Today it is one of UofL’s most vital community outreach strategic initiatives. At its core is a coalition of community organizations and programs seeking to improve the quality of life for residents of West Louisville, an underserved area of the city that stretches from Ninth Street west to the Ohio River and south to Algonquin Parkway.

West Louisville was designated as the geographical focus of the Signature Partnership Initiative after discussions with community leaders and residents about the need for a more coordinated and concentrated effort to reduce or eliminate the educational,



health, economic and social disparities that exist there. The area also offers exciting potential for revitalization of schools, neighborhoods, businesses, recreational, cultural and other important community assets.

A Residents Advisory Council (RAC) was created, which meets bi-monthly and receives regular updates on the progress of the initiative. The RAC provides ongoing advice to insure that the views and perspectives of West Louisville’s residents are adequately represented and addressed. The residents work closely with the presidential-appointed University Community Partnership Advisory Board in finding ways to address these needs.

Through our Signature Partnership, the university and its partners are making a major commitment to the residents in West Louisville to build capacity by sharing our enormous pool of academic and other resources in an effort focused on providing and/or improving four essential resources:

- › educational opportunity
- › health care
- › economic development
- › social and human services

Read on to learn more about how the Signature Partnership Initiative is addressing these issues and its progress to date.



# TRANSFORMATION THROUGH EDUCATION



Jefferson County's educational attainment for adults age 25 and over significantly exceeds that of the state; however, the Signature Partnership areas of West Louisville lag well below national, state and county educational attainment indicators. West Louisville is home to the largest concentration of African Americans in the state, and Louisville ranks last among competitor cities in the percentage of African Americans with college degrees.

As such, the Signature Partnership is focused on three major education goals:

- 1) Raise reading, math and science skills to grade level
- 2) Raise the percentage of residents with high school diplomas
- 3) Raise the percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree

The university and its community partners are doing their part. In 2007, UofL initiated a special program called the Cardinal Covenant in response to college costs and the challenge for students from

low-income families to fund their education. Cardinal Covenant is the first program of its kind in the state of Kentucky, and since the program began approximately 10 percent of all Cardinal Covenant students have come from the Signature Partnership area.

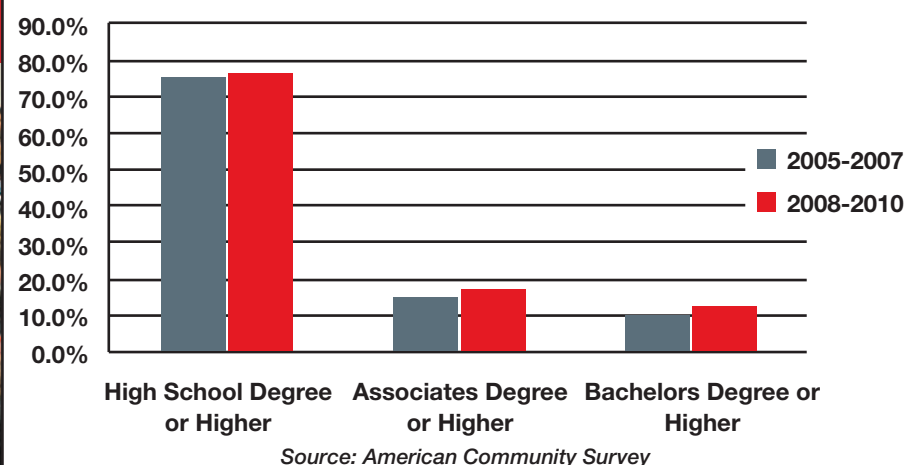
The Signature Partnership also is addressing West Louisville's educational needs by joining forces with five schools there to boost educational achievement. They include Portland and Atkinson Elementary; Western Middle; and Central High School and The Academy @ Shawnee.

UofL faculty, staff and students are teaming up with other community partners to work with teachers and parents of students in these schools. The partnership has helped them launch new events and programs

covering the gamut from science and engineering demonstrations, dental screenings and career exploration, to mentoring programs, college scholarships and initiatives that encourage more parent-teacher interaction. The goal is to help West Louisville students perform to the best of their abilities and to reduce or eliminate barriers to learning.

Recently, UofL was awarded a \$2.5 million i3 Innovation Grant — better known as GO College — from the U.S. Department of Education in partnership with the Council for Opportunity in Education and the General Electric Foundation. The GO College grant will fund a five-year program aimed at helping Louisville students, including those at The Academy @ Shawnee, prepare for college.

## Educational Attainment for Adults (25 and older) in West Louisville



Ninety-six percent of Atkinson students come from economically challenged households, but the school continues to outperform many others that have much greater resources.



## J.B. Atkinson Elementary School: A Shining Star

J.B. Atkinson Elementary School is a prime example of just how effective the Signature Partnership can be. Located in the heart of West Louisville's Portland neighborhood, Atkinson Elementary has worked closely with UofL students, faculty and staff since 2007 to help boost academic achievement among its student body.

The school's administration, teachers and staff work side-by-side with UofL to create innovative programs that are helping to enhance academic performance. UofL faculty, staff and students are involved in professional development for Atkinson teachers, community safety efforts, the Atkinson Magnet Program Design Team, the Louisville Writing Project, ballroom dance classes and the development of an early childhood development program.

The results are well documented. Atkinson student test scores are rising at a remarkable rate, student suspensions have declined significantly and teacher turnover is no longer an annual problem. Meanwhile, UofL students and faculty are gaining real-world experience in pursuit of their academic, research and professional development.

In recognition of this unique partnership, the Jefferson County Public School System recently renamed Atkinson as "J.B. Atkinson Academy for Excellence in Teaching and Learning – A University of Louisville Signature Partnership Magnet Program."

## The Successes Are Adding Up

There is no doubt that J.B. Atkinson Elementary is a shining star in the West Louisville partnership. Atkinson made a 21 percent improvement from 2008 to 2010 in number of students scoring a proficient or distinguished level on the KCCT test in both math (57 percent) and science (58 percent).

But other Signature Partnership schools have their own indicators of success, too. For example:

■ **Portland Elementary** – 67 percent of the students scored a proficient or distinguished on the KCCT test in 2010 – a 12 percent improvement from 2008; above the district average of 63 percent.

■ **Western Middle School** — The percentage of students at scoring proficient/distinguished in reading increased from 29 percent to 37 percent between 2009 and 2011, while scores of proficient/distinguished in math increased from 24 percent to 28 percent in the same time period.

■ **Central High School** — On the 2010 KCCT test, 42 percent of students scored proficient or distinguished in the writing category (above the state average of 35 percent).

■ **The Academy @ Shawnee** — The dropout rate has decreased from 2008, while the graduation rate is starting to increase. In 2009–10, there was a 9.6 percent increase in the number of Shawnee graduates that were enrolled in college (35 percent).







Central students placed first and second nationally at Marshall-Brennan Moot Court Competition in Philadelphia.

## Central High: Nurturing Future Leaders

The Central High Law Magnet Program is another example of what the Signature Partnership can achieve. This initiative brings faculty and students from UofL's Brandeis School of Law to Central High School where they introduce the students to the legal profession and provide activities intended to spark their interest in considering law as a career.

UofL faculty and students teach various topics about law and host Central students on campus to hear guest speakers in the legal profession. The partnership includes a Street Law Curriculum, Writing Skills & Mentorship Program and Marshall-Brennan Civil Liberties Curriculum.

Students also get a chance to present a case in court through participation each year in Moot Court Competition. In 2011, students from Central High took both first and second place in national competition that provides students the opportunity to practice traditional appellate advocacy, mock trial and alternative dispute resolution skills. The competitions give students access to networking opportunities and offer an up-close view of what it's like to be a member of the law profession.

The Central High Law Magnet Program is succeeding, evidenced by the fact that several student participants have enrolled at Brandeis School of Law and other respected schools of law nationwide.

## Simmons College of Kentucky

In April 2010, UofL signed a partnership agreement with Simmons College of Kentucky, a historically black institution in West Louisville. The agreement calls for the two institutions to work on aligning their general education requirements to make it easier for Simmons students to transfer their credits toward a four-year degree at UofL.

More recently, UofL, Simmons and two other colleges united to launch the Signature Partnership Education Access Center (SPEAC), a facility located on the Simmons campus designed to help adult learners work toward a college degree.

The center targets underserved populations, primarily in West Louisville, by offering adult learners assistance with diagnostic testing and advising, choosing a college, applying for financial aid and preparing for college-level class work. It complements ongoing programs such as the city's goal to boost the number of adults with a college degree through the 55,000 Degrees Initiative, a public-private partnership formed in 2010 that is designed to launch Louisville into the top tier of competitor cities with the goal of adding 40,000 bachelor's degrees and 15,000 associate's degrees by 2020.

SPEAC is the first project to come out of a recently established, four-college partnership known as the College Connection Initiative. In addition to UofL and Simmons, the College Connection Initiative includes Jefferson Community and Technical College and Spalding University. The initiative's



primary goal is to improve college readiness and, ultimately, increase the number of college-educated workers in the Louisville metropolitan area.

## The Saturday Academy

The Saturday Academy is another education initiative operating under the umbrella of the Signature Partnership. The university's College of Arts and Sciences collaborates with Jefferson County Public Schools, Councilwoman Cheri Bryant Hamilton, the Kentucky African American Heritage Foundation and the Louisville Urban League in this community-based cultural enrichment program focusing on African world history and culture.

Each Saturday session offers a new and interesting presentation on a broad range of topics, delivered by a diverse roster of guest presenters.

# BOLSTERING HEALTH, INCREASING OPPORTUNITY



The Signature Partnership collaborates with existing healthcare institutions and providers to reduce health disparities and inequities in West Louisville by providing medical and preventive healthcare services with excellence; ensuring equitable access to quality healthcare; and supporting existing efforts aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles.

The Signature Partnership has focused on three key health goals:

- 1) Reduce infant mortality
- 2) Increase life expectancy
- 3) Reduce chronic illnesses (e.g., cancer, cardiovascular disease, and mental health) through early identification and treatment

## Taking Health to the Streets

The Community Health Nursing Partnerships is one way in which the Signature Partnership is helping improve the well being of West Louisville residents through health services. This program places nursing faculty and students in a variety of education and community settings, such as Atkinson and Portland Elementary Schools and the Oak & Acorn Center, where they reinforce and teach the value of a nursing education. The program likewise supports the growth and development of children and families, which contributes to a child's ability to learn.

Working with the staff at Portland Plaza, UofL nursing students also provide services that improve the quality of life for West Louisville's senior citizens. They work with the residents individually and in group settings, as well as collaborate with the Resident Advisory Council to plan health fairs and exercise and wellness events.

In 2007 UofL partnered with Louisville Metro's Department of Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW) and the Jefferson County Public Schools to provide a fully equipped, multifunctional 40-foot mobile unit staffed by the UofL School of Dentistry and JCPS. Its main purpose is to bring dental services and immunizations to elementary and middle school children.

The partnership also collaborates with LMPHW in the Infant Mortality/Healthy Start program, which is designed to provide prevention, education and services to reduce health disparities surrounding infant mortality in underserved populations.

The UofL affiliated Kentucky African Americans Against Cancer and the Harriett B. Porter Cancer Education and Research Endowment, provided 327 programs serving 11,623 people from July 1, 2009 through Oct. 31, 2011.







### An Oasis in the Food Desert

Another partnership involving the LMPHW Center for Health Equity and the YMCA, helps neighborhood corner stores in the area’s “food deserts” — that is, those areas not served by a full-service supermarket — to carry fresh fruits and vegetables, some of which is locally grown. Known as the Healthy in a Hurry Initiative, the stores receive start-up produce and technical assistance. The partners also work with food distributors to negotiate delivery costs for businesses participating in the initiative.

UofL faculty and students in the School of Public Health and Information Sciences are doing the evaluation of this project.

### Reducing Teen Pregnancy

UofL’s Kent School of Social Work is conducting a program focused on reducing the teen pregnancy rate. CHAMPS (Creating Healthy Adolescents through Meaningful Prevention Services) includes 10 partner groups – six serving urban youth, three serving immigrant and refugee youth, and one serving former foster youth – who collaborate with the Kent School in helping teenagers avoid unhealthy relationships and risky behavior. These teens are among those considered most vulnerable to pregnancy, youth violence and diseases.

More than 1,200 young people, aged 14–19, participate. They have signed up to be part of a communication network aimed at promoting healthy relationships, self-confidence and positive communication skills. The goal is to track teens in the program for two years and to cut teenage pregnancies in half.

The program is funded by a five-year, \$4.8 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

HEALTH STATUS: MORE WORK TO BE DONE	Louisville Metro		West Louisville	
	2005	2008	2005	2008
Percentage with any type of health care coverage	85.0%	84.0%	76.6%	70.5%
Percentage overweight or obese	60.7%	63.0%	73.9%	64.4%
Percentage Who Preport Eating Five or More Servings Per Day of Fruits and /or Vegetables	27.2%	26.0%	30.2%	24.4%
Percentage Who Report a Visit to a Dentist or Dental Clinic During Past Year	66.9%	69.3%	51.0%	60.2%
Percent Who Currently Smoke Tobacco	26.0%	32.1%	35.4%	43.0%
Percent reporting asthma	15.4%	19.4%	22.0%	22.5%
Percent reporting diabetes	10.4%	11%	11.8%	18.3%
Percent reporting high blood pressure	29.9%	35%	37.2%	46.8%
Source: Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, and U.S. Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System (CDC)				



## AN EYE ON ECONOMICS

West Louisville is home to 1,500 businesses and boasts a convenient location for both companies and individuals to engage in commercial activities. It also has the existing infrastructure to support businesses, plus numerous under-utilized assets and investment opportunities.

Data from the American Community Survey (ACS) illustrates how West Louisville’s economy lags behind the rest of Jefferson County. The 2008-10 ACS data indicates that more people are unemployed; there has also been an increase in the percentage of people and families living below the poverty line. The median earnings for workers decreased by \$921 in the Signature Partnership area, while Jefferson County remained basically the same.

These statistics illustrate the importance of the Signature Partnership in obtaining its key economic goals:

- 1. Raise employment level of West Louisville residents
- 2. Raise capita income of households
- 3. Support business creation and expansion in West Louisville
- 4. Support business entrepreneurship by residents

A total of \$16.8 million in grants have been received for programs to benefit West Louisville.

Greater Louisville Inc. obtained an \$800,000 grant from the Lumina Foundation that is focused on helping working adults obtain their degrees. The Louisville Urban League and African American community leaders have pledged to promote a college-going culture and raise money for more scholarships. The goal: 15,000 of 55,000 new degree holders will be African American, which should greatly benefit West Louisville.

UofL’s Small Business Institute provides counseling and consultation to area small business owners and entrepreneurs. It has served 21 West Louisville businesses since 2007.

The HIRE Education Forum is a collaborative of postsecondary institutions throughout the Greater Louisville region. HIRE works to unite the Greater Louisville postsecondary community to effectively respond to economic development challenges by bridging the gap between academia and business and increasing our region’s graduation rate.

UofL’s Business Opportunity Workforce Development Center (BOWD) collaborated with the state’s Department of Transportation to enhance the growth and self-sufficiency of 20 under-utilized Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) firms and provided \$2 million for workforce training in highway career fields for 50 individuals. Each enrolled in an eight-week classroom training program focused on life skills and personal development, workforce readiness and transportation/construction industry orientation.

At the project’s conclusion, 60 percent of the DBEs reported an increase in bid activity on federal and state projects. They further cited their success in landing more than 383 federal and state contracts/jobs totaling \$18.3 million.





“Strong partnerships are the key to building and sustaining a vibrant community. These partnerships also enrich the teaching and learning experience of UofL faculty and students.”

— Shirley Willihnganz, Provost, University of Louisville

## SOCIAL AND HUMAN SERVICES



The Signature Partnership Initiative has a number of programs aimed at improving social and human services for West Louisville residents. Some of these are focused on capacity building in governmental and nonprofit social service organizations. UofL also works with numerous mental health, substance abuse prevention, youth-serving and faith-based agencies to offer youth mentoring and neighborhood development programs.

### Yes You Can

This grant funded program worked to enhance the effectiveness of organizations serving youth in West Louisville and throughout the community. The aim was to build, increase and sustain community and faith-based youth service providers through expanded organizational infrastructure, diversification of funding sources and collaborations to better serve those most in need. The program also provided one-on-one technical assistance and monetary awards of up to \$20,000 to approximately 14 promising organizations serving youth in 32 Louisville neighborhoods.

Yes You Can was funded by a \$500,000 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' grant and administered by UofL's Kent School of Social Work and Office of Community Engagement, Louisville Metro Center for Health Equity and the Anne E. Casey's Network Center. At the grant's conclusion in November 2010, the project team reported the following successes:

- › more than 100 youth-serving organizations with varying levels of capacity in the Louisville Metro area were identified
- › 10 training sessions were provided to 83 of these organizations on topics including grant writing/proposal development, outcome evaluation, nonprofit board development, fundraising, recruitment and retention of youth, risk management, program planning and more

› 12 youth-service providers were awarded mini grants ranging from \$13,000 to \$20,000 that provided access to consultants and additional technical assistance to further build their program capacity, with the workshops addressing revenue development, strategic planning, organizational development, coalition building, fiscal management, marketing and public relations

› more than 1,200 hours of technical assistance for the 12 grantees were provided over an eight-month period

### Mental Health

Both the Kent School and the School of Medicine have programs that provide invaluable mental health services to school-aged children in West Louisville. University faculty train and supervise student interventionists and assist the early childhood leadership to implement a program-wide positive behavior support approach to social and emotional development. Kent also works with various youth-serving, faith-based and community-based organizations in West Louisville to build their organizational capacity in serving this population.

The medical school's Department of Psychiatry has partnered with The West End School, a residential learning community supporting African American male youth, to provide evaluation and therapy for its students who exhibit behavioral problems. This project is coordinated through the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

UofL's Kent School of Social Work and School of Nursing is assisting West Louisville's elderly by partnering with ElderServe Inc. Through this partnership a wide variety of services are offered to persons who are homebound and frail, as well as to those who are well and active. Its mission is to provide a wide range of supportive human services that enables older people to live secure and self-directed lives. At present, ElderServe operates in West Louisville at the Oak and Acorn Intergenerational Center.

## COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS



### Metropolitan Louisville

Family Health Center – Park DuValle  
Family Health Center – Portland  
Greater Louisville Inc.  
Louisville Metro Government  
Center for Health Equity  
Metro Council  
Department of Economic Development  
Metro Public Health & Wellness  
Office of the Mayor  
Transit Authority of River City

### Private Business/Companies

APEX Physical Therapy  
Brown-Forman Corporation  
General Electric  
GuardiaCare  
PNC Bank

### Colleges/Universities

Jefferson Community and Technical College  
Simmons College of Kentucky  
Spalding University

### Not-for-Profit Organizations/ Foundations

55,000 Degrees Initiative  
Best Buddies  
Brownfields Institute (Parkhill Corridor)  
California Collaborative  
California Neighborhood Association  
Catholic Enrichment Center  
Center for Neighborhoods  
Chickasaw Neighborhood Association  
Council for Opportunity in Education  
Dare to Care  
Family Scholar House  
Habitat for Humanity  
Interdenominational Ministerial Coalition  
Junior Achievement  
Kentuckiana Works

Kentucky Center for African American Heritage  
Kentucky Refugee Ministries  
Kentucky Minority Business Council  
Lincoln Foundation  
Louisville Bar Association  
Louisville Central Community Center  
Louisville Urban League  
Metro Bank  
Metro United Way  
Muhammed Ali Center  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)  
Neighborhood House  
Northwest Area Health Education Center  
Park DuValle Neighborhood Association  
Parkland Neighborhood Association  
Partnership for a Green City  
Passport Health Plans  
Plymouth House  
Portland Community Center  
Portland Neighborhood Association  
Portland NOW  
Portland Plaza  
Portland Promise Center  
Presbyterian Community Center  
Russell Neighborhood Association  
Shawnee Neighborhood Association  
St. Anthony's Outreach Center  
Volunteers of America  
West End School  
West Jefferson County Community Task Force  
West Louisville Area Ministries  
West Louisville Business Association  
West Louisville Performing Arts Academy  
Yearlings Club  
YMCA  
YMCA Black Achievers

### Every UofL School and College has contributed to the work of the Signature Partnership

Brandeis School of Law  
College of Arts & Sciences  
College of Business  
College of Education & Human Development  
J.B. Speed School of Engineering  
Kent School of Social Work  
School of Dentistry  
School of Medicine  
School of Music  
School of Nursing  
School of Public Health & Information Sciences  
University Libraries

### University Community Partnership Advisory Board

Laura Rothstein, Co-Chair  
Sam Watkins, Co-Chair  
Pedro Bryant  
Rusty Cheuvront, Jr.  
Jonique Green  
Michael Gritton  
Daniel Hall  
Blake Haselton  
Jennifer Henry  
Marcia Hern  
Bobby Hickey  
Vicki Hines-Martin  
DeVone Holt  
Blaine Hudson  
Tom Jackson  
Bruce Kemelgor  
Bernard Minnis  
LaQuandra Nesbitt  
Pam Osborne  
Tony Peyton  
Ben Richmond  
Christina Shadle  
Terry Singer  
Rev. Frank M. Smith, Jr.  
Larry Stoess

Mordean Taylor-Archer  
Joe Tolan  
Mary Gwen Wheeler

### Resident Advisory Council

Bobby Hickey, Co-Chair  
Pam Osborne, Co-Chair  
John Barrow  
Doris Beeler  
Keith Bertrand  
Annie Blackshear  
Sherri Chandler  
Keneka Cheatham  
Bonnie Cole  
Michael Dean  
Brenda Fitzpatrick  
Michael Hicks  
Tonique King  
Gracie Lewis  
Ralph Merkel  
Tamika Miller Jackson  
Al Saunders  
Curtis Simoneaux-Sears  
Donovan Taylor  
Fran Thomas  
Yolanda Walker  
Roea Wallace  
Martyna Warren  
Diane Whitlock

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Muriel Harris  
Vicki Hines-Martin  
Starr Lewis  
Lee Mayer  
Cedric Powell  
Charles Sharp  
Kellye Singletary-Jones  
Gerald Tolson

To learn more about the four focus areas of the Signature Partnership, please visit the Community Engagement Interactive Data Dashboard at [www.Louisville.edu/communityengagement/data-dashboard.html](http://www.Louisville.edu/communityengagement/data-dashboard.html).

## Office of Community Engagement

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