



**PRESIDENTIAL CITIZEN  
SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

## **Volunteerism at the NSCC**

PCS Capstone Project

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## Our Mission

The PCS program holds high expectations that the passions of its students shine through projects that greatly improve the community. The importance of community involvement and education can be shown in a sustainable volunteer program between the Newton Street Community Center and Salisbury University through Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL). They will directly provide the center with both volunteers and additional programs that will spread awareness of their respective philanthropies. In February of 2022 there will be a pilot program instilled for the month with members of the Panhellenic community within FSL in order to provide the center with the volunteers it needs to succeed. The children of the NSCC will have opportunities to interact with Salisbury students, make connections and be introduced to the national organizations these sororities promote and their importance.

## About the Newton Street Community Center

The Newton Street Community Center was most recently renovated in order to meet the immediate needs of the Salisbury community and opened again in the summer of 2021. The center sits on the corner of Newton Street and Light Street in Salisbury and provides the necessary environment for the children and adults of the community to thrive. The center allows students to become engaged in learning while participating in programs and events held by those who partner with the center. The state-of-the-art kitchen, age-based rooms, music room, miniature library, play-space and the many resources given to or bought by the center allows these children to inch closer to success in both school and within their community. The adult classes offered allows adults in the area to expand their knowledge in order to widen their opportunities. The center's location, resources, and leaders have allowed it to flourish and improve the lives of many.

## Why help is needed

As discussed in the section above, people of all ages have found the community center to be a safe environment to become engaged in their learning and to participate in



helpful to their success. The growing center has expanded their available hours and intensity of their programs giving rise to their need for more help to execute these programs. The Newton Street Community Center is in search of volunteers and new programs that will accelerate the success of those using the center.

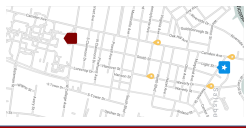


*Newton Street Community Center*

Rachel Manning is the city of Salisbury's community relations manager and has hired a limited staff in order to push start the center's success, but more help is needed. The growing number of those discovering the center and the programs being implemented has created room for volunteers. The center also has some spots within their schedule open to volunteers implementing their own programs and events. These volunteers are necessary in order to keep children engaged, implement programs of their own, aid center leaders in programs already set into action and give the children a sense of security. These volunteers are necessary in order to keep children engaged, implement programs of their own, aid center leaders in programs already set into action, and give the children a sense of security. The center has allowed for members of the community to find a safe environment to work towards their own goals and dreams. In hopes it will give this same sense of fulfillment and importance to the volunteers that allow the community members to thrive.

## Newton Street Community Center: A Needs-Based Assessment Ensuring Beneficial Programs Salisbury University's Presidential Citizen Scholars

Background	Results	Conclusions
<p>The city of Salisbury is currently renovating a building to become a community center that is in close proximity to Salisbury University's campus. The focus of the center is to expand the amount of activities and opportunities for the youth. At the beginning of the fall 2019 semester, Salisbury University's Presidential citizen scholars (PCS) met with city leaders aiming to assist with establishing programs. To ensure programs were created that would interest the community, a needs-based assessment was completed.</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Fig. 1</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Fig. 2</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Fig. 3</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Fig. 4</p> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>Fig. 5</p> </div>	<p>From the survey, we can see a large interest in art based programs at the center. According to the city of Salisbury, art programs are available at various locations, however from figure 3, it is evident that transportation to these locations could be an issue. In addition, from the survey we found that many members of the community were/would be interested in attending programs hosted by Salisbury University. This suggests that a program at the community center backed by the university would be receptive amongst community members.</p>
<h3>Survey Methods</h3> <p>PCS members first identified a direct area to conduct the survey. The area selected was formulated based on proximity to the Newton street community center, and suggestions from local community/city leaders. The area selected consisted of approximately 300 households, and a target of 10% feedback was set. Over the course of two days, PCS members went door to door asking for responses. PCS members received feedback from 49 households (~16%) in the selected area.</p>		<h3>Further Work</h3> <p>The next step for this project is establishing a sustainable program at the community center. The Presidential Citizen Scholars have proposed involving the center for student involvement and leadership to enable multiple campus organizations to address the interests identified in the survey.</p>
<h3>Map</h3> 		<h3>Acknowledgments</h3> <p>We would like to thank professor Ryan Weaver and the city of Salisbury for their current and future support in this project.</p>

*Research conducted by the 2020 cohort.*

## Efforts from a previous cohort

The 2020 cohort of PCS worked together as a class with their focused centered on the Newton Street Community Center. The center had not yet opened, and the cohort hoped to analyze data given to them by community members to discover what would be most beneficial at the center. The cohort conducted IRB approved research in the Salisbury community in order to dictate what community members desired. Their survey responses were collected from 49 households, roughly 16% of the neighborhood. Due to the pandemic, they were unable to continue their research and form a pilot program created from the data obtained. With the 2020 cohort's research in mind, we strived to provide the center with the necessities to positively impact a high percentage of the center's target community.

## Research conducted for the NSCC

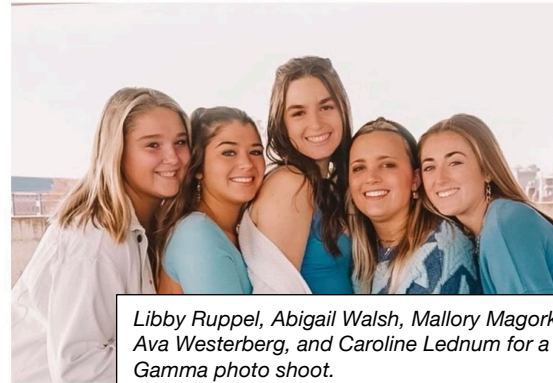
As stated, they were able to conclude their research. However, we were able to analyze the data to see what programs were desired along with what was needed. The answers varied, and included but were not limited to art programs, dance, and literary help. We plan to implement a volunteer system with the NSCC through FSL at Salisbury University and encourage the members of FSL to implement these principles into their programs however they see fit. This could be done by either providing general help with these programs, working these concepts into lessons on their philanthropy or using their individual major based knowledge to provide the students with help in these categories.



Sayuri Velazco, Libby Ruppel, Madyson Amo, Grace Bowie, Grace Lorenz, Lainey Derus, and Brigdet Hayes for a Delta Gamma photo shoot.



Sisters of Delta Gamma at their philanthropic event for Spring 2022.



Libby Ruppel, Abigail Walsh, Mallory Magorka, Ava Westerberg, and Caroline Lednum for a Delta Gamma photo shoot.

Photos of the sisters of Delta Gamma.

## Our FSL connection

As members of Zeta Psi's chapter of Delta Gamma at Salisbury University, service has always been taught and expected from the sisters. There is no exception for the other chapters that make up FSL here at Salisbury; each chapter has requirements for service hours and orients themselves around the general idea of service. As stated in article II of the Delta Gamma Fraternity, "To promote their educational and cultural interests, to create in them a true sense of social responsibility." Delta Gamma prides itself on our dedication to improving our communities and making members fulfill their social responsibility through acts of service. Jennifer Hanner, the Coordinator of Student Life, promotes these ideals and is aware of this project and the benefits it will provide FSL. She supports our endeavors and as our FSL leader understands the service advancements this can create for all of FSL.

## How we intend to use this connection

Even though Fraternities and Sororities on campus are oriented around service, it can be challenging to find opportunities that work around their schedule or strike their interest. Implementing a volunteer program with the NSCC would give chapters the opportunity to allow brothers and sisters to spend time doing good in the Salisbury community, while spreading awareness of their philanthropies and fulfilling their necessary acts of service each semester. Chapters will have specific times where their members will volunteer at the center while participating in activities such as cleaning, homework help, activity planning and more. Our dedication to our chapter and our community has allowed us to introduce this relationship in hopes the foreseeable benefits are obtained.

## Pilot Program

There will be a pilot program conducted through the months of February and March in order to gather data on the need for what we hope to implement. This program was approved by Rachel Manning as of December 9, 2021. The program will be four weeks in, there are four chapters in the National Panhellenic Conference group of FSL here at Salisbury. We are a part of the NPC and have the most knowledge about these chapters, we've decided it best for the program to begin with these chapters.

Each chapter will have two days within a week to create a plan and specialized program to bring to the center for

the children. Be it specific to the chapters' philanthropy or dedicated to the benefit of the children, each chapter will have the freedom to decide for themselves. They will receive service hours for this work, and the group founders will be able to determine if the program was successful and identify any changes that need to be made for the future. The children and the center will also be able to provide feedback for programs they wish to see in the future and whether they enjoyed their time with these chapters. Once we've determined how successful this pilot program was, we will be able to move further into our plan to create longevity through the connection between the community center and all the chapters of FSL.



Shay Grieser (DG) reading a book to two children at the community center.



Sisters of Zeta Tau Alpha leading children in a virtual yoga class.



Two children completing puzzles on the floor of the main room.

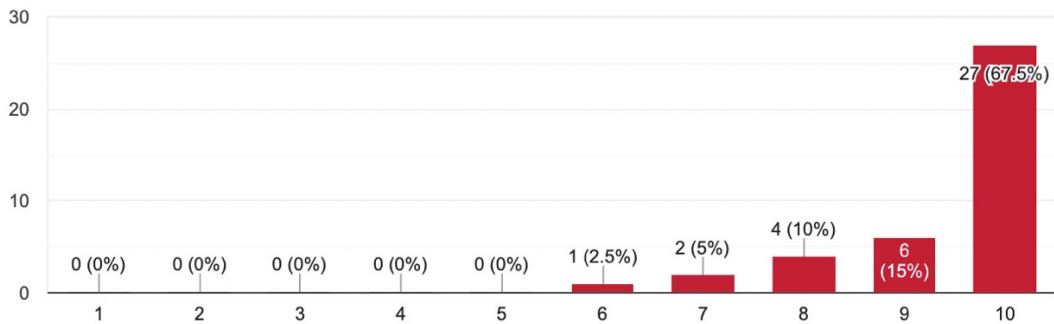


Abigail Walsh, Madyson Amo, Shay Grieser, and Sayuri Velazco on the first day of the pilot program.

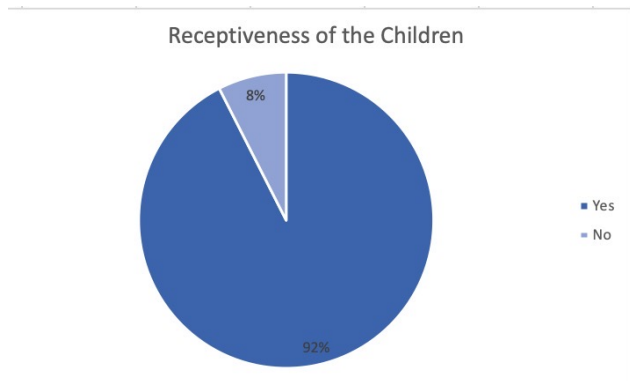
*Pictures from the pilot program.*

## Data

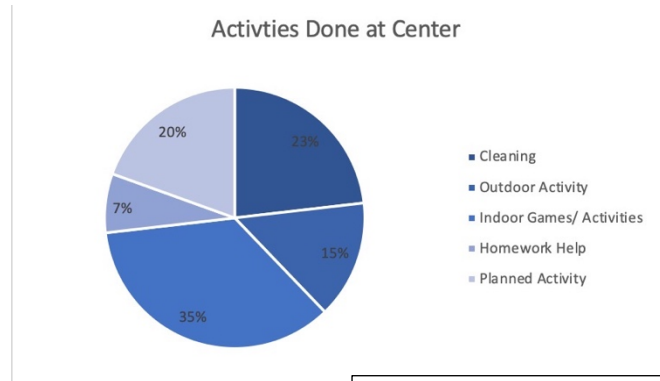
The pilot program lasted four weeks, beginning on February 22<sup>nd</sup> and ending on March 17<sup>th</sup>. All four chapters of the Panhellenic Community participated in the program and provided the center with an ample number of volunteers who made profound impacts on the kids and met the center's needs. Each chapter was given a week where they would go both the Tuesday and Thursday from 3:30 to 6:30. During this time volunteers aided in cleaning the center, provided planned activities, helped students with homework, played games with the students, participated in outdoor activities with them, helped to prepare snacks and aided in arrival and departure of the students. This can be seen in the data we collected from the volunteers as after each session they had to answer a quick survey to provide us with feedback. As expected, the pilot program was a success, and we now must aim our focus forward to discover the longevity of the program.



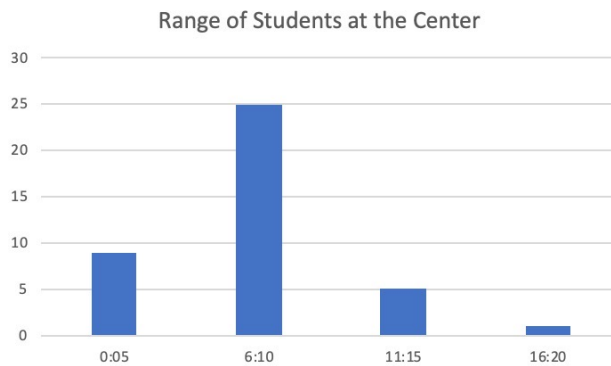
*Volunteers' ratings of how likely they are to return to the center.*



*Pie chart showing how receptive the children were to activities led by our volunteers.*



*Pie chart showing each of the activities completed by our volunteers.*



*Graph of how many students were in attendance for each session.*

## Sustainability

Fraternity and sorority life are made up of more than just the Panhellenic community. The National PanHellenic Conference (NPC), the Inter-Fraternity Council (IFC), the Multicultural Greek Council (MGC) and the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) here at Salisbury all construct FSL. Each member of FSL here at Salisbury values service and acknowledges the importance of service in our community. There are nineteen chapters within FSL and around sixteen weeks in the semester. Each week of the semester will be given to a specific chapter where they will provide the center with volunteers and hold an event at the center to promote awareness for their philanthropy. Not only will this program be beneficial to the volunteers but will also improve involvement for children within the community, help the children to make relationships with students to increase their sense of security within the community and educate them on topics they may be unaware of.

Moving forward, making this relationship sustainable through positions held within FSL which include the Community Service Chair and the Programing Director is vital to the long-term success. The volunteerism opportunities provided and the impact this will have on both members of the community and students at Salisbury University will be everlasting.

As members of PCS work towards the goals of their projects, they must also factor in how the project can continue long after their respective times at Salisbury. Sustainability is principle in reaching the full potential of the project. Our goal is to influence an innumerable amount of people and sustainability is the most efficient way to achieve this.

The community service chair and the panhellenic programming director have done a superb job in educating the founders of the project on their respective duties within FSL and how they can protect the longevity of our project. Their positions work to influence the values that the project holds, Therefore, the fate of the longevity of the project will be held in the hands of the FSL leadership. The volunteer opportunity presented to FSL will improve their campus relationships, expand student involvement, and improve the lives of those who utilize the community center. This relationship will forever promote the importance of civic engagement for FSL and keep the opportunity for FSL to be civically engaged for years to come.

The two positions previously discussed will instill requirements of service hours for FSL at the Newton Street Community Center. Although those filling these positions will change from year to year, the requirement of service hours at the NSCC for FSL will be consistent within the position. As the project continues from semester to semester the relationship between the community and Salisbury University will strengthen. This funnel of volunteers from Salisbury University to the NSCC will continue to positively impact the lives of all who participate.

## References

1. Rachel Manning: Community Relations Manager
2. Jennifer Hanner: Coordinator of Student Life
3. Kimberly Gonzalez: Community Program Specialist
4. <https://crprograms.salisbury.md/board>
5. <https://www.salisbury.edu/administration/student-affairs/center-for-student-involvement-and-leadership/greek/benefits-membership.aspx>.
6. <https://www.salisbury.edu/administration/student-affairs/center-for-student-involvement-and-leadership/greek/>

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## Special Thanks

Thank you to Ryan Weaver, Sandy Pope, and President Wight, without which we would not have a vessel to complete this project. Thank you to the faculty of the Newton Street Community Center for entrusting us with the space and time to connect Salisbury University with the community. Our last thank you is to FSL for being so cooperative and willing to be a part of this project.



The Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (PACE) is a resource center where the SU community, local government, non-profit and public groups can access knowledge and information. PACE draws on the interdisciplinary expertise of SU faculty, students, staff, and community partners. As a nonpartisan contributor, the Institute organizes projects and programs that are customized to fit the particular needs of the Eastern Shore community. For more information about PACE or the PCS Program, please contact us at [PACE@salisbury.edu](mailto:PACE@salisbury.edu)

The Presidential Citizen Scholars Program (PCS) is a multi-faceted, civic engagement experience that prepares students to become community leaders now and in the future. The PCS program offers students of all majors and levels of experience the opportunity to become engaged in the political life of the community and to develop habits of democratic citizenship. The PCS program builds on SU's mission statement "to empower students with knowledge, skills, and core values that contribute to lifelong learning and active citizenship in a democratic society." Over the course of three semesters, Presidential Citizen Scholars apply the theory and practice of engaged citizenship to cultivate a legacy project that will endure beyond their time as a student at Salisbury University.



Madyson Amo (left), and Abigail Walsh (right). Both are juniors at Salisbury University and are the founders of this project.

