Boasting an incredible 522 students comprised of 437 freshmen and 85 transfer students, our Student Engagement communities are off to an impressive start. This year, our 21 Living-Learning Communities (L-LCs) are joined by 2 pilot residential living communities (RLCs): Reach for New York and Reach for Transfer Success. Hundreds of enthusiastic students were welcomed to campus by prestigious faculty, excited Community Assistants and World Ambassadors, and engaged administrators during our Kick Off event on Friday, August 21. The students’ energy did not come close to plateauing at the Kick Off!

The following day, 18 freshmen communities participated in a campus-wide scavenger hunt where they were able to get to know each other better, familiarize themselves with the campus in a fun and innovative way, and put their creativity to work! Attached are photos each World took throughout the scavenger hunt. While one of our newest communities, the World of Global Medicine & Human Rights, officially won the challenge for best demonstrating their teamwork and creativity, all communities exhibited high energy while exploring their new campus.

On August 29 and 30, nearly 300 students in Student Engagement communities spent time volunteering at Patroon Land Farm and the Regional Food Bank’s Salvage Sorting Room. Collectively, they picked and sorted over 9,000 onions and 9,000 tomatoes, put together hundreds of boxes for the Patroon Land Farm CSA, and organized countless donations in the Salvage Sorting Room, all of which will be distributed to food pantries throughout the Capital Region. Some of our student volunteers on Sunday were even featured on CBS 6 Albany!

Nearly six weeks into the semester, our students have enjoyed getting to know their faculty members better in class and over meals, participating in activities with their Community Assistants, and continuing to attend campus wide events. Our next All Community event about professional development, sponsored by Enterprise, is quickly approaching on Tuesday, October 20!
Student Engagement Kick Off

Friday, August 21 • Campus Center Ballroom
Our new Great

(Pictured: the winners of the Scavenger Hunt - World of Global Medicine & Human Rights - spelling out DANES! at each of the stops on the Hunt.)

ready for the Scavenger Hunt!
World of Career Discovery

World of Chemistry

World of Creativity & Entrepreneurship
World of Health Psychology

World of History
World of Laws & Justice

World of Psychology

World of Social Justice & Service
World of Technology

World of Theatre

World of Writing
Reach for New York

We are excited to work with our new Reach Communities!

Reach for New York

REACH for NY

A residential experience for out-of-state Freshmen

REACH for Transfer Success

A residential experience for new Transfer students
Our Great Danes Give Back!

Almost 300 Students. Two Days of Service. One Common Goal.
Our Great Danes Give Back!
UAlbany Students Volunteer by the Hundreds to Support the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York

ALBANY, N.Y. (September 8, 2015) – Nearly 300 University at Albany students from the Class of 2019 volunteered for the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York on Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 29 and 30, as part of an event designed to introduce the new class to community service while reinforcing the University’s commitment to the local community.

Student participation grew by more than 35 percent since last year, according to Student Engagement Community Coordinator Leah Rotella. Volunteers from 14 of UAlbany’s freshman Living-Learning Communities (L-LC) and many new transfer students joined as well.

"I would like to believe that this opportunity helped students realize just how tangible and far-reaching their community service efforts can be, and I hope that it inspires some of them to do more in the future,” said Rotella. “Many students were in awe when we shared with them that – collectively – they picked and sorted more than 9,000 onions and 9,000 tomatoes, put together hundreds of boxes for the Patroon Land Farm CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), and organized countless donations in the Salvage Sorting Room, all of which will be distributed to food pantries through New York’s Capital Region.”

Volunteers were recruited from L-LCs, a program that pairs on-campus housing with freshmen and transfer students who share similar academic interests and goals. For some of the L-LCs, such as the World of Sustainability, the World of Social Justice and Service, the World of Fitness and Well-Being, and the World of Health Psychology, the effort was a powerful part of greater concepts they will be studying in the classroom.

Students chose to volunteer at either the Regional Food Bank’s Patroon Land Farm, in Voorheesville, N.Y., or its main facility in Latham, N.Y. On the farm, volunteers helped weed, harvest, wash and box produce, while others sorted and packaged food and non-food products for distribution. Watch the Channel 6 videoclip.

“I want to first thank our Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Dr. Jeanette Altarriba, for her hard work and that of her team in making this logistically possible,” said Dean of the School of Social Welfare Darrell Wheeler, who is also Vice Provost for Public Engagement. “The students who participated in this volunteer experience are examples of the vibrancy of the University at Albany’s programs and commitment to engaged learning. This volunteer experience with the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York represents one of many University collaborations underscoring the centrality of volunteerism, community-engagement and educational excellence that we hope will be a common experience for our students throughout their academic careers with us.”

Mark Quandt, director of the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York, expressed his appreciation. “We are so grateful to UAlbany and the nearly 300 students from its Living-Learning Communities for spending a weekend helping the Regional Food Bank at our warehouse and Patroon Land Farm,” said Quandt. “I don’t believe we have ever had that many volunteers from a single organization before. It is amazing how much work a group that size can accomplish. I hope the students left with a full appreciation of the value their service provided to the community. Because of their efforts, many hungry people will have fresh vegetables and other nutritious food to eat in their times of need. Nothing could be more meaningful than that.”

In 2013, UAlbany President Robert Jones challenged the campus to log at least two-and-a-half million community engagement hours each year. Currently, some 7,400 UAlbany students contribute to local communities through volunteer work, courses or internships annually.

The Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York is a not-for-profit organization that collects donated food and distributes it to 1,000 charitable agencies across Northeastern New York. The food provided by the Regional Food Bank helps to feed 40,000 people each week. Learn more by visiting www.regionalfoodbank.net.