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Johnson named Engaged Faculty Scholar by North Carolina Campus Compact

This month, Dr. Kristi Vincent Johnson of North Carolina Central University (NCCU) and Dr. Ivan Weiss of Wake Forest University (WFU) will begin one-year terms as Engaged Faculty Scholars. Two faculty members from the North Carolina Campus Compact network are selected for this prestigious statewide role annually. Dr. Johnson is the first Scholar representing an HBCU since the program was initiated in 2015.

Engaged Faculty Scholars receive support from the Compact and their institutions to undertake a project to deepen the practice and scholarship of campus-community engagement at their respective schools. They will also serve as consultants to another NC college or university seeking to enhance community-engaged teaching and scholarship.

Dr. Johnson is the Director of Dance and Assistant Professor of Dance at NCCU where she received the Excellence in Teaching Award from the Department of Theatre in 2017. A performer and choreographer committed to artistic excellence, she was named the 2013 National Dance Association's College/University Dance Educator of the Year.

During her six years as an educator and community builder at NCCU, she has established a partnership between the dance program and the Durham Ballet Theatre, instituted and directed an annual high school dance day, and provided lecture demonstrations and performances for surrounding community organizations and elementary and high school dance programs. She is also the Founder and Director of a nonprofit organization called The Triangle Dance Project, whose primary purpose is to increase visibility and opportunities for independent dance artists to present choreography in a professional setting. Through this community-based organization, NCCC dance students gain practical skills in technical theatre and arts management assisting with dance production.

While pursuing her Doctorate of Education in Kinesiology from UNC Greensboro, which she earned in spring of 2021, Vincent Johnson interviewed and learned about partnerships at several different university programs and conducted an in-depth analysis on three exemplar community-campus partnerships. This research allowed her to generate and provide a framework to dance faculty of effective practices of public and private asset-based community-campus partnerships.

As an Engaged Faculty Scholar, Dr. Johnson will facilitate “The Bull City Bridge Project: Building Community Through Dance” a community-campus partnership between the dance program at NCCU and three high school dance programs in the Durham Public School system. The program will offer select high school student-dancers an opportunity to participate in a community dance ensemble receiving professional level training in preparation for a Spring 2022 collaborative concert featuring dancers from all four programs. University and secondary dance educators will work together to co-create a program where student-dancers equally benefit and grow. The project, contributes to “Collaboration” one of the four primary goals of NCCU’s strategic plan by building bridges between NCCU and Durham public schools increasing the flow of knowledge between the university and the community while expanding opportunities for integration and engagement amongst the Durham dance community. This partnership comes at a critical moment as both the university and high school dance programs were dramatically impacted by COVID restrictions. When speaking of the project Vincent Johnson noted

“I am interested in serving as a NC Campus Compact Engaged Faculty Scholar to not only stimulate conversations about how to increase engagement in the arts throughout our state, but to also promote the development of student-artists as scholars, researchers, leaders and engaged citizens.”

Engaged Faculty Scholars receive a stipend and additional funds for professional development. The scholar’s institution is encouraged to provide a monetary match, course release, or other resources.

North Carolina Campus Compact is a collaborative network of 39 colleges and universities committed to educating students for civic and social responsibility, partnering with communities for positive change, and strengthening democracy.

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