



President's Interfaith and Community Service Challenge
Advancing Interfaith Cooperation and Community Service
In Higher Education

Background

Since his inauguration, President Obama has emphasized interfaith cooperation and community service – “interfaith service” for short – as an important way to build understanding between different communities and contribute to the common good. Interfaith service involves people from different religious and non-religious backgrounds tackling community challenges together – for example, Protestants and Catholics, Hindus and Jews, and Muslims and non-believers- building a Habitat for Humanity house together. Interfaith service impacts specific community challenges, from homelessness to mentoring to the environment, while building social capital and civility.

American colleges, community colleges, and universities have often been at the forefront of solving our nation’s greatest challenges. The White House is calling on higher education to make the vision for interfaith cooperation a reality on campuses across the country.

The White House launched the *President's Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge*, an initiative inviting institutions of higher education to commit to interfaith cooperation and community service programming on campus in August of 2011. Now in its fourth year, the President’s Campus Challenge has grown to over 400 participating institutions. Participating challenge institutions report their work on the President’s Higher Education Honor Roll in the Interfaith category to receive recognition by the White House. This process is coordinated by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Institutions can join the President’s Challenge at any time during the academic year by getting involved in the below steps.

Challenge Components & Timeline

1. **Institutions complete the registration form** found at www.ed.gov/edpartners and then return it to edpartners@ed.gov. Institutions develop a plan to launch new or build on existing interfaith cooperation and community service initiatives.
2. **Participating institutions are invited to an Annual Gathering held each year in Washington, D.C.** This event typically takes place in late September.
3. The **President's Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge Inaugural Years Report** showcases the first two years of the President’s Challenge while also providing a resource of best practices for participating institutions. It can be found at www.ed.gov/edpartners.
4. **Get engaged** online via our private Facebook page. On Facebook, search for “The Presidents’ Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge” and ask to join the group.