



**2023-2024**  
**Distinction**

*A story of success*

**Center for Integrative &  
Experiential Learning**

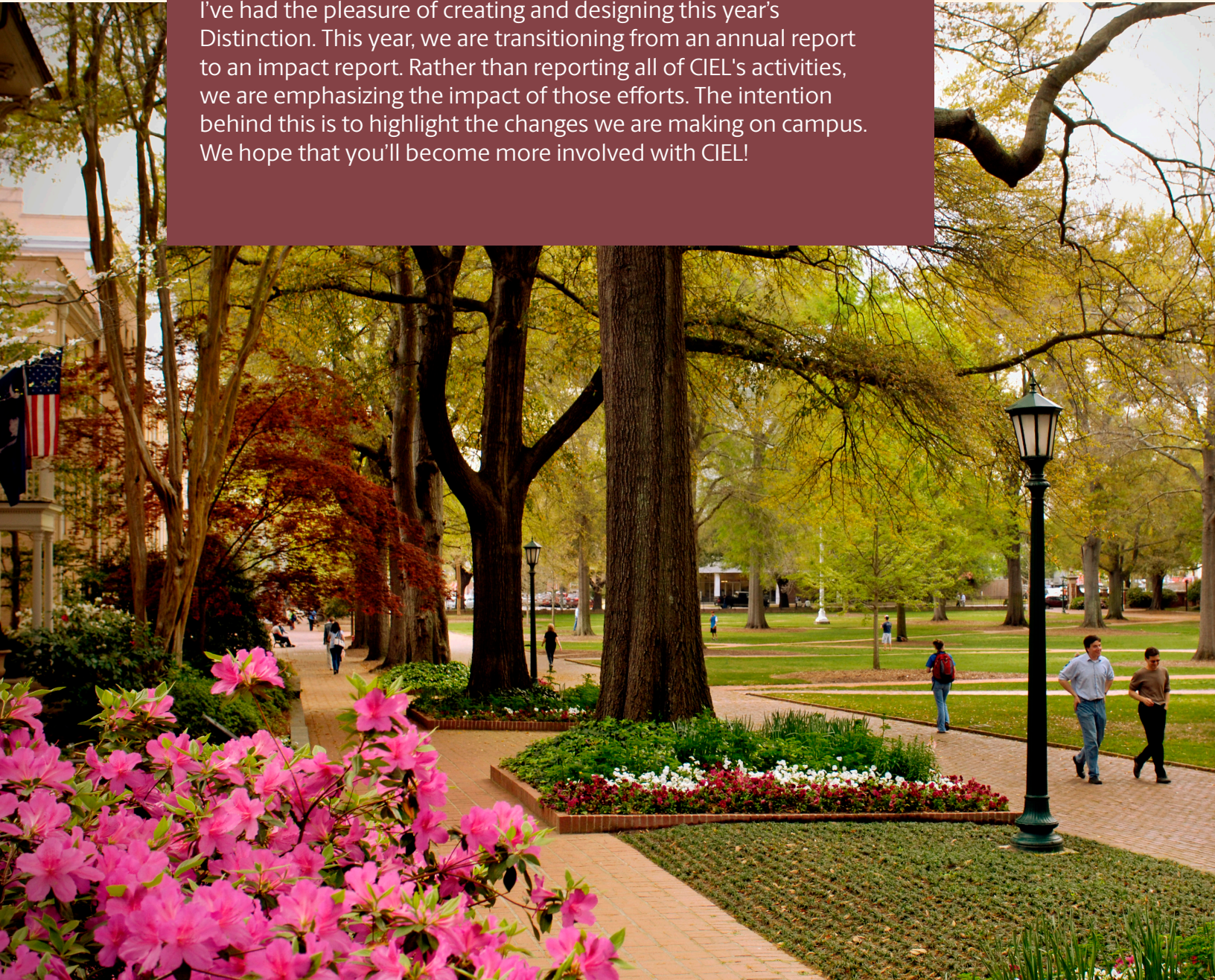
# MESSAGE FROM THE Editor

---



**Hi! I'm Tyla.** I'm a 2024 graduate of the University of South Carolina with a Bachelor of Arts in Global Studies. Interning with CIEL has been a great experience for me to better communicate with a diverse range of audiences. This internship has helped me grow as a professional, communicator, and colleague!

I've had the pleasure of creating and designing this year's Distinction. This year, we are transitioning from an annual report to an impact report. Rather than reporting all of CIEL's activities, we are emphasizing the impact of those efforts. The intention behind this is to highlight the changes we are making on campus. We hope that you'll become more involved with CIEL!



# TABLE OF Contents

---

<b>Welcome</b>	<b>pg. 1</b>
Message from the Editor	pg. 2
Message from the Executive Director	pg. 4
Overview of CIEL	pg. 5
<b>Quality Enhancement Plan</b>	<b>pg. 6</b>
My USC Experience Database	pg. 7
Faculty & Staff Grants	pg. 8
Logistics Support	pg. 9
Carolina Engage Grant	pg. 10
Reflection Station	pg. 11
<b>Graduation with Leadership Distinction</b>	<b>pg. 12</b>
Pathway Spotlights	pg. 13
GLD Events	pg. 15
Advising	pg. 17
Alumni Initiatives	pg. 19
<b>Student Leadership Opportunities</b>	<b>pg. 21</b>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<b>pg. 23</b>
<b>Marketing &amp; Outreach</b>	<b>pg. 24</b>
<b>Presentations &amp; Accomplishment</b>	<b>pg. 25</b>
<b>CIEL Staff</b>	<b>pg. 26</b>
<b>Contact and Giving</b>	<b>pg. 27</b>

# MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director

---

**Greetings** from CIEL!

On behalf of my team, I am proud to share our annual impact report with colleagues and friends of CIEL. AY 2023-2024 marked another incredible year of accomplishments in the Center for Integrative and Experiential Learning. You will find highlights of some of our most significant achievements throughout this edition of Distinction.

We celebrated our 10th Year of Graduation with Leadership Distinction throughout 2023 and, by the end of spring 2024, awarded a total of more than 3,800 students with this special academic recognition since announcing our first class of graduates in 2014. I am continually amazed at the breadth and depth of learning that students articulate in their ePortfolios as they connect and integrate within and beyond the classroom experiences. We would not read these students' stories without the people behind the scenes who make it happen. GLD continues to be a shining star because of the investment that Lauren Epps, Sarah Matthews, Gina Spence, and Dr. Matt Childs have made to this program. Their dedication to GLD and passion for its sustained excellence are remarkable.

Among our notable accomplishments, I am excited to announce the launch of the first of several planned alumni awards. In spring 2024, we recognized two GLD alumni from the class of 2014 with our inaugural Distinguished GLD Alumni Award. Look inside to read about our outstanding recipients!

Experience by Design, our institutional Quality Enhancement Plan, successfully reached the midpoint of a five-year implementation and assessment plan under the keen guidance of Dr. Amber Fallucca. This year, the Carolina Engage Grant received a record number of student applications for funding to participate in a lifechanging, beyond the classroom experience. Through the establishment of grant funding programs and reflection resources for faculty and staff, CIEL has supported the development of new projects and enhancement of existing programs to broaden representation of students participating in high impact practices and experiential learning.

It has also been a year of change and growth in CIEL. Amber Fallucca transitioned into a new leadership role on campus as Director of Carolina Experience, while Julie Boyken and Laszlo Folks moved into other positions at USC and UCSD, respectively. We are so grateful for their many contributions to CIEL and Experience by Design. We welcomed four new staff members to our team: Uniqua Jackson, Deidra Pompey, Niky McDonald, and Julia Ballou. Our new-look team remains committed to the mission, vision, and core values of CIEL and to continued service to USC Columbia and the Palmetto College campuses. Reach out and let us know how we can help support you with your integrative and experiential learning practices and programs. We are here to help.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Charlie Pierce, Ph.D.  
Faculty Executive Director of CIEL  
Interim Director of the Quality Enhancement Plan



# OVERVIEW OF CIEL

---

## Our Mission

To advance integrative and experiential learning across within and beyond the classroom experiences at the USC Columbia and Palmetto College campuses for students, faculty, and staff by providing programs, developing resources, conducting outreach, and facilitating assessment.

## Our Vision

To foster an enriched educational environment through purposeful within and beyond the classroom experiences that deepen the impact on student learning and enhance their preparation for the future.

## Our Goals

Provide Graduate Distinction Program (GLD) Recognizing Integrative Learning and Leadership

Elevate Experiential Learning Opportunities (ELOs).

Implement Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

Expand USC's efforts in integrative and experiential learning scholarship and professional development

*Building leaders through meaningful engagement and reflection.*

# QUALITY ENHANCEMENT Plan

---

CIEL is finishing the third year of Experience by Design, the Quality Enhancement Plan for SACSCOC accreditation. The focus of the QEP at USC Columbia and the Palmetto College Campuses has been student groups that tend to be less engaged beyond the classroom with lower retention and graduation rates, including pell-eligible, transfer students and students identified as men. For 2023-2024 academic year, the focus has been underrepresented minority students.



## USC providing expertise to shape other QEPs

Dr. Amber Fallucca served as a Lead Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Evaluator for another institution in Georgia in October 2023. In this role, Dr. Fallucca led the SACSCOC Onsite Committee in the review, evaluation, and sharing of feedback to the institutional leadership as it sought to successfully initiate its new QEP.

## USC QEP AS A MODEL FOR OTHERS

The progress and success of USC's QEPs, USC Connect and Experience by Design, is being noticed by other institutions during their QEP processes.

### North Carolina State University

Focus was on the design and writing of a successful proposal for a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) focused on beyond the classroom engagement, experiential learning, and reflection.



### Clemson University

Focus was on the assessment plan and recommendations for sampling student work to evaluate QEP learning outcomes.



### Ohio State University

Focus was on the implementation of scaled ePortfolios across student populations/experiences in support of their general education program.



# USC EXPERIENCE Database

The My USC Experience database is a resource for students to find ways to get involved beyond the classroom and experiential learning opportunities. Examples include student organizations, service-learning, community service, internships, study abroad, and research. Getting involved can help student apply skills learned in the classroom, pursue areas of interest, connect with faculty, staff, and their peers, and shape their career path. Experiences in the database may appear in the My USC Experience co-curricular transcript, a beyond the classroom counterpart to the academic transcript.



**856** database entries



**4,084** database visits, an increase of **84%** over 22-23

*Data recorded between 8/1/23 - 4/15/24.*

## DATABASE PARTNER

**CIEL's** partnership with the Education Abroad office is an example of an important collaboration that fosters personal and professional development and the opportunity for students to participate in study abroad offerings around the world. Through the My USC Experience Database, CIEL can advertise engagements under the "international learning" and "campus involvement" categories that students access for course overviews, dates of travel, contact information, and application instructions.

*"One office cannot do it alone—it takes a village to provide access to the tools students need to succeed as they explore their interests and reach their goals."*

**Dasya' Young | Faculty-Led Program Coordinator  
Global Carolina Education Abroad Office**



# FACULTY & STAFF Grants

---

CIEL offers three grants to promote student engagement beyond the classroom (BTC). These grants support new and revised programs, as well as collaboration between departments, offices, academic units, and student affairs.

## Integrative and Experiential Learning Community of Practice Grant

Up to \$5000 to develop or revise a course or program that provides students with the opportunity to engage in beyond the classroom experiences. Grantees participate in a community of practice to provide and receive support while completing their grant project,

### 2023 Communities of Practice (CoP) Cohort

**Jason DeBacker & Beth Watson, Economics**

Economics community project with local companies

**Jessica Efenbein, History**

History convening and traveling exhibit on lumber industry

**Kelly Goldberg, Archeology**

Archaeological mapping project with educational partners

**Stephanie Nace, SVAD**

Graphic design community project with educational partners

**Melanie Palomares, Psychology**

Psychology internship partnering peer leaders with faculty

**Charles Schumpert, Biology**

Biology Lab program partnering students w/ faculty

**Loren Tharp, Biology**

Psychology internship partnering USC students with at-risk youth



CoP recipients pose during the year-end celebration in April.

**\$35000**

awarded in 23-24

**270**

students impacted

## BTC Departmental and Unit Grants

Up to \$3000 to build a new program, or enhance an existing one, that engages students beyond the classroom and contributes to departmental or unit learning outcomes.

### 2023 Department/Unit Grant Recipients

**Dave Barbeau, Geology**

GEOL 500: Field Geology (Field Camp Experience)

**Rachel Callow & Dominic Armstrong - School of Music**

The USC - Castleton Experience (staged vocal performance)

**\$30000**

awarded in 23-24

**372**

students impacted



# GRANTS Continued

## Jabari Evans, School of Journalism & Mass Communications

David Banner #HipHop50 Panel Discussion

## Rebecca Gettys, University Libraries

We Read: A Campus Book Club

## Amanda Heisman, SC Honors College & TRIO

First-Gen Gamecock Graduation Success Program

## Anna May, Social Work

Buddhism and Social Work Global Classroom Experience

## Brian McCaster, CEC Student Services

Minority Makers: Enhancing Student Engagement through IEL in the College of Engineering Maker Lab

## Ebony Toussait, International Student Services

Kumbaya: The History of Gullah Geechie Culture through Storytelling (SOST 298)

## Paulia Williams, TRIO

PSYC 360: Bulding a Collectivist Culture of Resilience Among Cubans in a Post-Revolution Society

## Rolling BTC Grant

Faculty and staff involved in 4-year degree programs at the USC-Columbia and Palmetto College campuses can apply for a rolling grant to support smaller one-time engagements as part of a course or program. Up to \$300 is available to proposals that promote engaging students beyond the classroom and reflection on those engagements.

# \$1760

awarded in 23-24

# 592

students impacted

# LOGISTICS SUPPORT

**CIEL** offers support for faculty and staff who are considering, planning or expanding ways to integrate experiential learning into their courses. CIEL can assist with connecting with community partners, travel and ticketing, and more!

## Increasing Access to BTC Experiences

This year, we are celebrating an accomplishment in increasing accessibility to transportation for USC BTC providers. In partnership with Transportation, faculty and staff can now obtain transportation services at a discounted rate of \$300. This cost can be reimbursed by a **Rolling Beyond the Classroom Grant**.



Sarah Williams, School of Music, brought students in her History of Western Music class to the Columbia Museum of Art with CIEL logistics support and a Rolling BTC Grant in April 2024.

## How to get support

Incorporating beyond the classroom experiences can take some time and effort on the front end – let us help! Fill out the form:



# CAROLINA ENGAGE Grant

Full-time undergraduate students at USC Columbia and the Palmetto College Campuses can apply for up to \$500 to support beyond the classroom experiences. Eligible expenses include lodging and registration for conferences, travel, and professional clothing. Once awarded, students are required to track and submit expenses and a reflection on the experience. Reflections are submitted via Garnet Gate, and can be done in a number of formats, including essay and video. Reflections are used to assess the learning outcomes of the QEP.



**\$80606**  
awarded in 23-24

**194**  
students impacted

*Data recorded between 7/1/23 - 5/31/24.*

## STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

**Ariana** Bachini graduated from Indian Land High School and USC Lancaster in spring 2024 with an Associate in Science degree and Leadership Distinction in Research. Ariana received the Carolina Engage Grant to attend the Southeast American College of Sports Medicine Conference in Greenville, SC in February 2024. She travelled to the conference with her research mentor and CIEL Fellow, Dr. Elizabeth Easley, and presented a poster entitled *Fat-Free Mass and Handgrip Strength In NJCAA Athletes Based on Self-Reported Strength Training*. She also took advantage of the opportunity to learn from other presenters.

Ariana found the entire experience impactful, from applying for the grant, to the conference itself, to the reflection exercise afterward, saying it gave her the opportunity to “truly contemplate what I wanted out of the conference and the reflection allowed me to understand and reflect on what I had experienced. I believe it allowed me to have a deeper understanding of the experience overall.” After graduation, she plans to continue her education and pursue a career in medicine.

*“The CEG allowed me to take my first steps into the professional research world. I was able to gain experience in essential aspects of research, such as applying for grants and attending professional conferences. and speak with assertive confidence.”*

**Ariana Bachini | CEG Recipient**  
Spring 2024 graduate from USC Lancaster



# REFLECTION Station

In partnership with Rhodos Fellows Living Learning Community and the Gamecock iHub, CIEL created a reflection station for students to look back on their various experiences and save video or audio files for future use. Demand for the reflection station continues to grow as more students, faculty, and staff learn about its use and the impact the video recordings have on students.

Individual requests for reflections are facilitated by CIEL staff as well as trained Gamecock iHub interns who guide students during the reflection process by providing structured reflection prompts and serving in an interview method support role.

## Fall 2023

In Fall 2023, multiple students from the TRIO Opportunity Scholars Program and a psychology course utilized the station to reflect on their coursework.

## Spring 2024

In Spring 2024, the reflection station was used during Capstone's Hot Cookie Friday event, the College of Arts and Sciences' SC State Agency Industry Day internship and networking event, as well as a South Carolina Honors College archeology course.



Video stills demonstrate how students used the Reflection Station at events during the 23-24 academic year. Through this reflection method, students process their experiences and articulate what they mean their growth and in terms of future goals.

# GRADUATION WITH Leadership Distinction

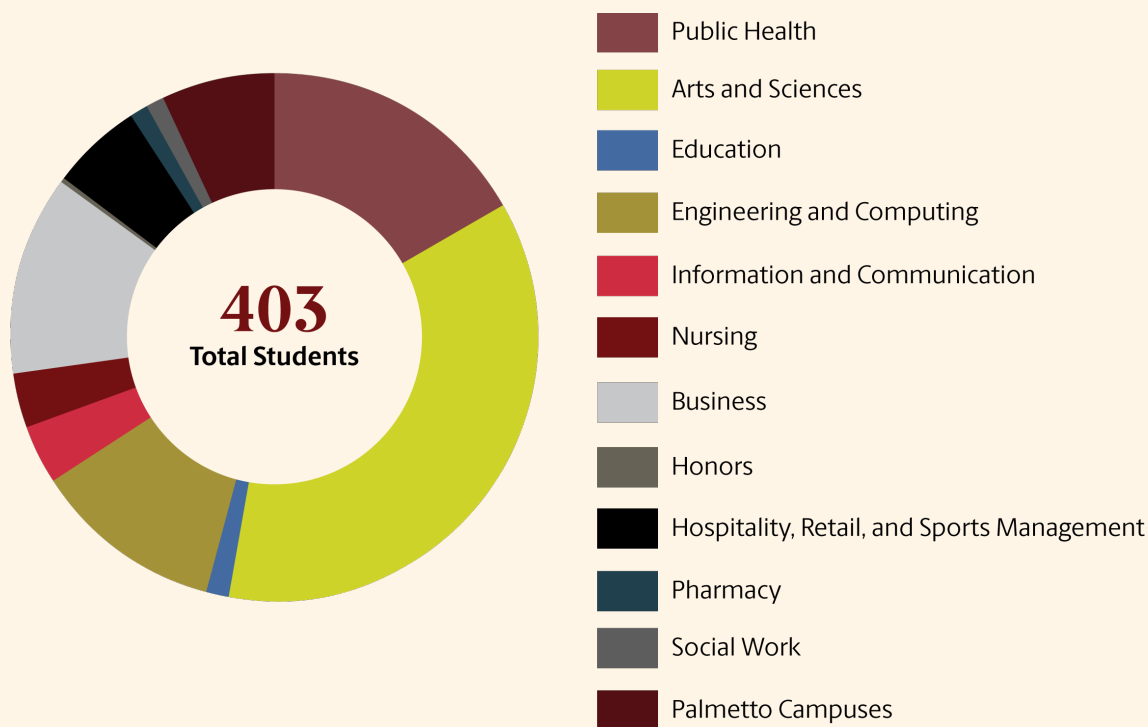
Graduation with Leadership Distinction (GLD) is an official academic distinction USC undergraduate students may earn acknowledging both within and beyond the classroom learning. Students reflect on these experiences, connect them, and articulate their meaning and key lessons learned through integrative learning.

Through integrating these experiences while developing the ePortfolio for GLD, students demonstrate critical thinking, written and verbal communication, as well as problem solving and leadership skills. The ePortfolio can help graduates navigate the next steps after graduation!

After a student earns GLD, it appears on their official USC transcript and diploma. They also receive as garnet, black, and white cords to wear at graduation. GLD graduates stand out from their peers at graduation and beyond.



## GLD Students by College



**GLD recognizes integrative learning, defined by the American Association of Colleges and Universities, as:**

*Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus.*

**~8%**  
of each graduating class earns GLD

# PATHWAY **Spotlights**

Students can pursue GLD in one of five different focus areas, called pathways, that align with their interests and experiences during their time at USC.



## 39

Community  
service



## 6

Diversity &  
Social Advocacy



## 38

Global  
Learning



## 218

Professional &  
Civil Engagement



## 102

Research



**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

### **Aneesa Zahran | Fall 2023 | Nursing**

Aneesa volunteered at the Columbia Islamic School in addition to completing nursing clinicals, working at EdVenture Children's Museum, and participating in the Prisma Health Scholar Program. She pursued GLD to reflect on these experiences, saying "It had been such a long journey and I wanted to embark on a project that would feel like a proper conclusion to my time at university." Aneesa currently works as a nurse in Florida, applying the lessons she learned from her experiences at Carolina. One key lesson the distinction between equity and equality when serving a wide range of patients and the importance of an equitable approach to patient care. Of GLD, Aneesa states "It is a great way to reflect on the experiences you had and derive greater meanings from them than you may have even realized!"



**DIVERSITY & SOCIAL  
ADVOCACY**

### **Nazharee Cloude | Spring 2024 | Biological Sciences**

In addition to volunteering at the Free Medical Clinic in Columbia and participating in medical mission trips in Central America, Nazharee studied the effect of implicit bias on Black maternal health. She pursued GLD in Diversity and Social Advocacy because it not only "connected my experiences, but also portrayed who I am and my efforts in life and academia perfectly." After graduation, she plans on attending medical school and becoming a physician, where she will apply her insights based on her experiences at USC, including actively challenging the perpetuation of stereotypes in order to provide equitable care. Of GLD, Nazharee says "My experience not only helped me better recognize how beautifully impactful my journey has been throughout college but highlighted the values I want to carry forward!"





## GLOBAL LEARNING

### Brooke Patton | Spring 2024 | International Business

Brooke participated in the Darla Moore School of Business Responsible International Leadership Cohort program, studying abroad at ESSEC Business school in France in 2022. Brooke also traveled to 18 countries in Europe, immersing herself in new cultural experiences through the lens of the locals. After returning to the U.S., she reflected on her travels through GLD. Brooke wrote about the importance of international relationships in an interconnected global world and experiencing cultures other than one's own. She is now finishing the accelerated Master of International Business program at Darla Moore School of Business. Of GLD, she states "It's a remarkable opportunity to deepen your understanding of yourself and your experiences."



## PROFESSIONAL & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

### Kaleb Phelps | Fall 2023 | Public Health

At USC, Kaleb was involved as Vice President of the Beta Nu Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., University Ambassador, and had an hospital internship. He pursued GLD because it would allow him to reflect on what he gained during college and how he could apply those lessons in the future. He shares that "GLD challenged me to reflect, and notice how lessons from my coursework were applicable in my leadership, work, and internship experiences." Upon reflecting on his experiences, Kaleb evaluated his critical thinking and argumentation skills, and their importance to his future in laws school and as an attorney. In addition to reflecting on how his experiences have prepared him for the future, Kaleb shares pursuing GLD "allowed me to look back and cherish everything that I had accomplished in my 3.5 years at Carolina!"



## RESEARCH

### Cameron McDuffie | Spring 2024 | Integrated Information Technology

While earning his degree, Cameron did cybersecurity research, worked in IT, and took advantage of job shadowing and conference opportunities. He pursued GLD to dive further into his field of study and reflect on how the pieces connect, stating "It's one thing to learn something in the classroom, but an entirely different thing to use that same concept in practice." He credits his U401 instructor with helping him make invaluable connections between experiences; "my UNIV 401 professor was one of the greatest teachers I've had throughout my college experience. He encouraged me to dig deeper and find real meaning in my experiences, and it paid off." Cameron currently works as an IT Manager at USC.



# GLD Events

## Write Nite

**October 4, 2023 and February 20, 2024 | Patterson Hall**

Write Nite is an event hosted by CIEL for students working on their ePortfolio, the culminating project to earn GLD. Write Nite provides students with a dedicated time and space to write, as well as writing assistance. CIEL advisors and Peer Writing Lab Tutors from the Student Success Center help students through brainstorming, reviewing essays, and providing feedback.

*"Attending Write Nite helped me enormously as I was able to complete writing my ePortfolio. As a student with a busy schedule, finding dedicated time to write was challenging. However, Write Nite provided structured time in my day and the ideal environment to complete all sections of my ePortfolio."*

**Mariya Pieris | Spring 2024 Graduate  
GLD in Professional and Civic Engagement**



## Fall Showcase

**November 17, 2023 | Hollings Library Program Room**

CIEL hosts the Fall Showcase every November. At this event, GLD students from USC Columbia and Palmetto College Campuses graduating in December present on one of their beyond-the-classroom college experiences to meet the GLD presentation requirement. Faculty and staff partners serve as reviewers and have meaningful conversations with presenters.

**28**  
presenters

**20**  
reviewers



Zora Tyson (Spring '24, Community Service), presents at Fall Showcase.



*"I was super impressed with the students' ability to share their connections and how it led to their end results of working in their field. It truly was a full circle moment!"*

**Julie Boyken | Fall Showcase Reviewer  
Capstone Scholars**



# GLD Events

---

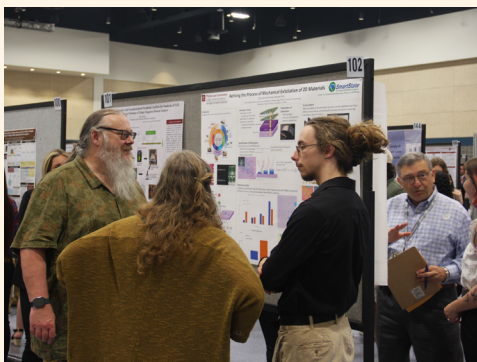
## Fall Cording Celebration

**December 4, 2023 | Harper Elliott 320**

Graduates, alumni, and campus partners celebrated the achievements of Fall 2023 GLD graduates and the 10th anniversary of GLD. In addition to enjoying refreshments, graduates received their GLD cords and a commemorative 10-year pin. Campus partners also received a pin and certificate of appreciation.



A Fall 2023 graduate receives their GLD Cord and 10-year GLD celebration pin.



Student experiences and key lessons are discussed at Discover USC.

## Discover USC

**April 19, 2024 | Columbia Convention Center**

Every April, Discover USC showcases students' scholarly pursuits in and out of the classroom. 382 GLD students from the Columbia and Palmetto College campuses presented their experiences and learning at this poster event.

## GLD Cording Ceremony

**April 22, 2024 | Russell House**

At the GLD Cording Ceremony, spring graduates earning GLD are recognized for their accomplishment and receive their GLD cord. University administration, CIEL partners, and friends and family of the graduates participate and celebrate at a reception afterward.



GLD graduates anticipate the start of the GLD Cording Ceremony to receive their GLD cords.





# ADVISING

---

We believe students learn best through their experiences and subsequently reflecting on those experiences facilitated within and beyond the classroom.

The purpose of GLD advising is to help students gain awareness of opportunities and make connections between experiences to inform decisions in the future. GLD advisors facilitate “Intro to GLD” meetings which cover topics such as identification of resources, specific requirements to earn GLD, and the GLD application process. Advisors also facilitate ePortfolio meetings which support students actively working towards the ePortfolio requirement through discussions of drafts, feedback, and the GLD ePortfolio rubric.

## Intro Advising

Advisors meet with students anytime from their first year to the beginning of their final semester. We customize our approach to each student, but generally we learn about what a student is involved in, as well as their interests for future involvement and goals. We connect them to the offices and resources to help them get involved. We discuss which GLD pathway is the best fit, the requirements, and plan to complete them. For seniors, we finalize the GLD application and plan for the presentation and ePortfolio requirements.



*“Every question I had was cleared up and I have a much better feeling about reaching my goals after meeting with my GLD advisor.”*

Intro Appointment Advisee | Fall 2023

## ePortfolio Advising

The ePortfolio is the culminating project of GLD. It is a website where students articulate transformative learning that has taken place for them throughout their experiences at the University of South Carolina. Students write 5 essays, three of which are focused on specific lessons learned from reflecting on and connecting coursework with BTC experiences. There are two methods of support for students: University 401 for GLD and structured advisement.

### UNIV 401

University 401 for GLD is a 1-credit hour course designed to support students through the process of creating the ePortfolio in the fall or spring of the final year of their undergraduate studies. It is offered in full semester, half semester, and online formats. It is even offered in the summer!

**346**

students enrolled  
in UNIV 401 in  
2023-2024

*"It's really revealing how much we can get out of students if we only push them a little more to reflect on their journey, make connections and figure out where they're going. If that's an exercise an undergrad doesn't go through, we're really robbing them of one of the greatest benefits of undergrad education."*

**Nina Moreno | UNIV 401 Instructor**  
**Languages, Literatures, and Cultures**  
in an interview with Hannah Cambre, Communications Specialist,  
Office of the Provost, January 2024.

### Structured Advising

Sometimes, students aren't able to take UNIV 401! That's where structured advisement comes in. Structured advisement is an 8 week process in which students meet with CIEL advisors, Faculty Fellows, and/or trained university staff partners. Students meet with their advisor 3 times – twice in a small group setting and once in one-on-one meeting to discuss progress and essay drafts.

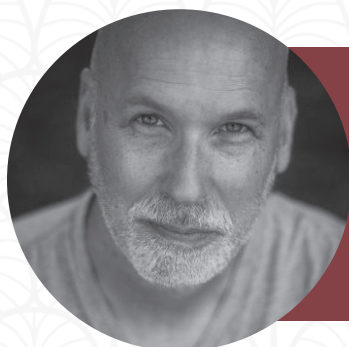
*"My advisors were both extremely kind, patient and helpful in all my meetings. Super thankful for them through this process."*

**Structured Advising Student | Fall 2023**

**103** structured  
advisees for  
2023-2024

### Faculty Fellows

Faculty Fellows serve as advocates for integrative learning and provide faculty perspectives and recommendations to CIEL. They explore the application of integrative learning strategies to their own programs and support students in developing Graduation with Leadership Distinction ePortfolios in the structured advisement process.



*"Being able to both lead and learn from a variety of students with uniquely different world views and skill sets as we work collaboratively to develop and elevate their experiences, their voice and their purpose, so they can stand tall in their brilliance."*

**Mike Watson, Ed.D. | Senior Faculty Fellow | Retailing**  
on what he enjoys most about working with students in the structured advising process

# ALUMNI Initiatives

CIEL began an alumni engagement initiative in 2020 with the first GLD Alumni Survey and GLD Alumni Panel. In 2023-2024, alumni engagement expanded to invite GLD alumni to CIEL events and the creation of a LinkedIn GLD Alumni Group and inaugural Distinguished GLD Alumni Award. Efforts will continue to engage alumni with CIEL and current students.

*"I knew that my coursework directly related to my internship experiences but I was able to dig much deeper and make much more meaningful connections with the GLD process and now I have a much better idea of exactly how my experiences can contribute meaningfully to my future."*

Grace Keiper | Political Science | Spring 2024  
GLD in Professional and Civic Engagement



## Alumni Panel October 10, 2024 | Online

The 3rd annual GLD Alumni Panel took place in Fall 2023. Panelists Esha Hegde (Research '23) and Jenna Wilson (Community Service '23) shared their GLD experience with current students, including what experiences they used to earn GLD, what the writing the ePortfolio was like as well as lessons learned, hints, and tips. The hour-long panel was hosted by GLD advisors Akilah Alwan (Research '18) and Sarah Matthews.



GLD alumni hosts and panelists pose during the GLD Alumni Panel. (left to right, top to bottom: Esha Hegde, Akilah Alwan, Sarah Matthews, Jenna Wilson)

## LinkedIn Group



One reason students pursue GLD is to connect with other student leaders, who later become leaders in their fields and communities. To sustain a GLD network, CIEL launched a LinkedIn GLD Alumni Group in December 2023. In the group, alumni can share photos, memories, recent accomplishments, job opportunities, industry insight, and even promote their own small businesses or projects.

GLD Alumni can join the LinkedIn Alumni Group by searching "USC GLD Alumni" group on LinkedIn.

## Alumni Award

The first Distinguished GLD Alumni Award was awarded in spring 2024. Members of the first class of GLD, who graduated in 2014, were eligible to receive the award. The premise of GLD is integrative learning, which means making connections between experiences to solve problems and lead. The award recognizes the sustained commitment to making a difference by using resources to positively impact others in any capacity in any community. This year, there were two recipients of the Distinguished GLD Alumni Award, Dr. John Clegg, Assistant Professor of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Oklahoma and Coy Gibson, Director of Finance and Operations in the Anne Frank Center at USC. The recipients received a plaque and were recognized at the 2024 GLD Cording Ceremony.



*"It is difficult for me to imagine how he could better manifest the integrative philosophy in his life--the way he fuses and combines insights and experiences from travel around the world, cross-cultural competencies, content knowledge, business skills from his studies, and his style of work..."*

**Nomination quote for Coy Gibson**  
Spring 2014 Graduate | Political Science  
GLD in Professional and Civic Engagement

*"Leadership Distinction was not only the research experiences I had and not only how it has led to me to where I am today, but is a mentality and an idea of what research leadership looks like."*

**Dr. John Clegg | Spring 2014 Graduate**  
Biomedical Engineering | GLD in Research



# STUDENT LEADERSHIP Opportunities

In addition to offering resources to get involved, grants, and Graduation with Leadership Distinction, CIEL offers students opportunities to grow, develop their skillsets, and give back to USC.

## Student Advisory Council (SAC)



SAC is a focus group of students for CIEL who positively impact the learning environment at USC. Members provide student perspectives and valuable insight on a variety of CIEL initiatives and resources including, but not limited to, experiential learning, integrative learning, GLD, and the development of CIEL in relation to USC's Quality Enhancement Plan. While participating in SAC, students meet and network with other student leaders, professional staff and faculty. Students also benefit from an increased understanding of GLD, which helps them articulate connections from college experiences.

*"Overall, CIEL's Student Advisory Council has taught me the importance of diversity of thought and the impact of individuality on a group's creativity, which I will now actively seek to incorporate into my career following my graduation."*

**Megan Carey | Spring 2024 | Accounting and Finance  
GLD in Professional and Civic Engagement**



## Marketing Internship

The CIEL team includes a marketing intern (or two!) every year. Marketing interns assist with making graphics, flyers, invitations, digital displays, and the annual impact report. Interns have also had the opportunity to manage the CIEL newsletter and social media.



*"My favorite part about working as a Marketing Intern with CIEL has been creating new content for my portfolio while also learning how to collaborate and communicate with others, including my supervisor. I believe that the collaborative environment CIEL promotes is a great space for students to express their own creativity and talents."*

**Tyla Tipton | Spring 2024 | Global Studies**

# STUDENT LEADERSHIP Opportunities

---



## Graduate Practicum Experience

Graduate students in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Graduate Program at USC have fulfilled their practicum requirement in CIEL. Practicum students gain practical experience with advising, event planning, assessment, outreach, and instructing.

*“My favorite part about working in CIEL has been getting to connect with students from different backgrounds and majors and guide them through the GLD process. It has been very rewarding to teach UNIV 401 and assist students in the creation of their eportfolios.”*

**Dylan Adame, M.Ed. | Spring 2024**  
Higher Education and Student Affairs



## Student Assistant

Teamwork makes the dream work, and our undergraduate student assistant provides support to CIEL on everything from grant management to event implementation and outreach. Payton Ruth (Psychology '26) served in this role in the spring and fall semesters of 2023.



# PARTNERSHIPS

---

*Thank you for contributing to, and advancing, a culture of integrative and experiential learning. Collectively, our efforts enrich the Carolina college experience and prepare students for the future.*

Since 2011, CIEL (formerly USC Connect), has grown in staff, reach, and impact. This would not be possible without the support and involvement of USC students, administration, and faculty and staff from all corners of USC Columbia and the Palmetto College Campuses. This support and partnership with CIEL over the last 10 years has resulted in over 3,800 GLD graduates and expanded offerings including grants for students, faculty and staff, logistics support, and a database to promote experiential learning.

## Opportunities

Carolina Engage Grant Rater

Discover USC Poster Reviewer

Experiential Learning Opportunity Committee

Faculty Fellow

Faculty and Staff Grants

Fall Showcase Poster Reviewer

GLD Course Review Committee

GLD ePortfolio Reviewer

Graduate Student Practicum

Integrative and Experiential

Learning Certificate

Class Visit or Tabling Event Host

Pathway Partner

Palmetto College CIEL Fellow

Student Advisory Council

GLD course submission

Undergraduate Internships

University 401 for GLD instructor

## PALMETTO COLLEGE CIEL FELLOW

**CIEL** has amazing partners on the Palmetto College Campuses to facilitate GLD and advocate for integrative and experiential learning on their respective campuses. This year, USC Sumter Registrar Alex Floyd joined CIEL as a CIEL Fellow. Alex has had a busy first year, coming to Columbia on multiple occasions for trainings, meetings, and other events. We are so grateful for the commitment of Alex and all of our PCC Fellows!

*"I wanted to give back to USC Sumter and pour into the students the way that the faculty and staff poured into me when I was a student here. I have never been supported like that in any other facet of life and I just want my students to feel the same way."*

**Alex Floyd | Registrar  
USC Sumter**



# MARKETING & Outreach

CIEL has been hard at work to spread the word about opportunities to get involved, grants, and GLD! Here are the highlights.

## Palmetto College Visits

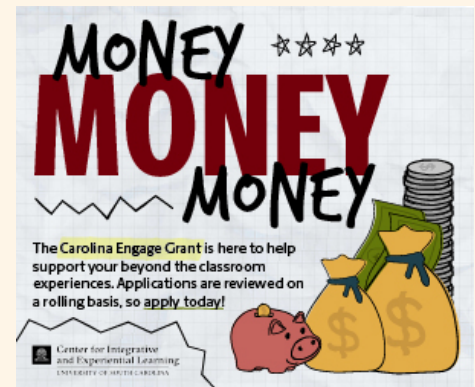
CIEL visited USC Lancaster and Sumter to talk with students, faculty, and staff about opportunities available to PCC students through CIEL, like CEG and GLD!



CIEL Staff present at USC Lancaster.

## Garnet Media Group

Digital and print resources through The Daily Gamecock, Carolina Insider, and social platforms.



Graphic created by Garnet Media Group advertising the Carolina Engage Grant.

## Digital Accessibility in Social Media and Marketing: CIEL's Efforts Toward Inclusivity

By Akilah Alwan, Program Advisor

Digital accessibility is the implementation of intentional adaptations and accommodations within the digital space to ensure that people with various disabilities are included and can effectively utilize online resources.

This past academic year, we have been brainstorming ways to increase our accessibility in the digital space and beyond. In March 2024, we held a sandbox session to discuss our current support for students with disabilities pursuing GLD and where we can improve these efforts. We also began experimenting throughout our social media and marketing with different ways to produce ALT-text, Closed-Captioning, and audio narration for our videos. Finally, we are practicing higher consciousness of the needs of the visually impaired in our design process, focusing on color-blind friendly and high-contrast color palettes.

## OUTREACH EFFORTS

CIEL offers workshops and presentations for classes and registered student organizations. Presentations can be customized to the audience and focus on Graduation with Leadership Distinction and/or Integrative & Experiential learning.

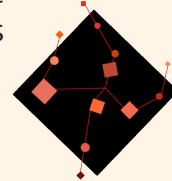
**79%** increase in events from 2022-23, including class visits, tabling events, student organization meetings, etc.



# PRESENTATIONS & Accomplishments

---

**Amber Fallucca** and **Charlie Pierce** presented a poster entitled *Integrative Learning and ePortfolios at 10 Years: One Institution's Journey and Celebration of a Hallmark Capstone Program at the University of South Carolina* in January 2024 at the Association for Undergraduate Education at Research Universities (UERU) National Conference in Washington DC.



**Association for Undergraduate Education at Research Universities**

**Amber Fallucca** and **Charlie Pierce** presented *Lowering the Barrier: Understanding the Challenges with Underrepresented Student Participation in High-Impact Practices* in January 2024 at the Association for Undergraduate Education at Research Universities (UERU) National Conference in Washington DC. A roundtable discussion also took place.



**Amber Fallucca** presented *Campuswide Collaborations and Opportunities with QEP Target Student Populations* in December 2023 at The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Annual Meeting in Orlando, FL.

**Charlie Pierce** presented *Building Bridges through a Community of Practice* in September 2023 at the Society for Experiential Education (SEE) 52nd Annual Conference in Orlando, FL.



**SOCIETY FOR EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION**



**Sarah Matthews** presented *Know Thyself: Integrative Learning for Personal and Professional Development* in May 2024 at the NASPA-SC Drive-in Conference at Newberry College, Newberry, SC.

**Lauren Epps** and **Charlie Pierce** presented a professional development presentation in February 2024 to the University Advising Center at USC-Columbia.



**UNIVERSITY OF South Carolina**

# CIEL Staff

---



**Charles Pierce**  
Faculty Executive Director



**Lauren Epps**  
Associate Director



**Deidra Pompey**  
Experiential Learning  
Coordinator



**Gina Spence**  
Program Advisor and  
Data Coordinator



**Sarah Matthews**  
Program Advisor and  
Marketing Coordinator



**Akilah Alwan**  
Program Advisor



**Uniqua Jackson**  
Business Manager



**Niky McDonald**  
Student Grants  
Coordinator



**Julia Ballou**  
Program Advisor and  
Outreach Coordinator

## THANK YOU, AMBER!

**After 9 years** of dedication to CIEL, Amber Fallucca transitioned into a new role as the inaugural Director of the Carolina Experience in February 2024. We want to take a moment to thank Amber for her exceptional service to our office and acknowledge the profound impact she has had on our team and the work we do. Amber's hard work and expertise have been invaluable assets to CIEL and we are grateful for her local, regional, and national contributions to integrative and experiential learning and assessment. Amber, and now the Carolina Experience, will always have a special place on the CIEL team.





**Center for Integrative  
and Experiential Learning**

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

803.777.3272  
Legare College, Room 120  
ciel@sc.edu | sc.edu/ciel

*Building leaders through meaningful engagement and reflection.*

# GIVING

## Donate to CIEL

CIEL (formerly USC Connect) supports students in meaningful beyond-the-classroom experiences at USC-Columbia and the Palmetto College campuses through grants and programming. Ready to help us have even more of impact? Your donation helps us engage today's learners and prepare tomorrow's leaders, one student at a time.

**Visit** <https://donate.sc.edu/> and search for the Center for Integrative and Experiential Learning Fund (a32008).