

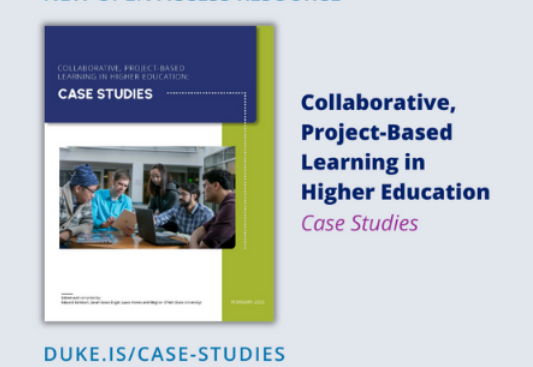
Welcome to the new school year! CHER is excited to continue strengthening mutually beneficial partnerships between Trinity College and Hartford. In the 2024-2025 academic year, **1,214 Trinity students** engaged with a CHER program at least once, learning from our Hartford community partners.

Please join us in welcoming the new CHER Faculty Lead, Davarian Baldwin, Paul E. Raether Distinguished Professor of American Studies and Founding Director, [Smart Cities Research Lab](#). Professor Baldwin's academic and advocacy work has focused on global cities and particularly the diverse and marginalized communities that struggle to maintain sustainable lives in urban locales. This work takes place across the country and as far away as London, Rotterdam, and Bangkok. Baldwin is the award-winning author of several books, most recently [In the Shadow of the Ivory Tower: How Universities are Plundering Our Cities](#) and served as the consultant and text author for [The World of the Harlem Renaissance: A Jigsaw Puzzle \(2022\)](#). His commentaries and opinions have been featured in numerous outlets, from NBC News, BBC, and HULU to *USA Today*, *The Washington Post*, and *TIME* magazine. Baldwin was named a 2022 Freedom Scholar by the Marguerite Casey Foundation for his work in racial and economic justice.

Whether you're a student, staff member, faculty member, or community partner, please read on to learn about upcoming events and how to connect with CHER's five programs.

Upcoming events and deadlines

- **September 26: MOCA's Community Harvest Bash.** Visit the community garden, join activities, and eat great food at Trinfo, 1300 Broad Street, Hartford. 3:30 pm - 6:00 pm.
- **September 26: Campus Compact Webinar Presentation.** The Liberal Arts Action Lab team will be presenting a webinar as part of [Campus Compact's Award-Winning Advice: Service Learning & Community Research](#) series that highlights exemplars in community engagement and past Impact Award winners. 11:00 am. [Register here.](#)
- **September 29 to October 10: Food Drive.** Drop off non-perishable food items at the library.
- **October 22: Red Cross Blood Drive.** The American Red Cross will have its semester blood drive. Washington Room. 10:00 am - 3:00 pm.
- **October 26: Halloween on Vernon Street.** Children under 12 are invited to trick-or-treat on Vernon Street at Trinity. 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm.
- **November 10: Blood Drive CT Blood Center.** Washington Room. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm.
- **November 20: 24th ACES Thanksgiving Drive Donation Deadline.** Food donations will be accepted at the Office of Community Service and Civic Engagement. Checks should be made out to the Trustees of Trinity College and sent to Joe Barber at Box 702574.
- **December 3: Community Learning Research Fellows Presentations.** Trinity students present research or creative projects completed in partnership with Hartford-area organizations and faculty sponsors. Library Room 182. 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm.
- **December 10: Liberal Arts Action Lab Digital Poster Presentations.** Teams of students from CT State Community College and Trinity present semester-long research with Hartford partners. 1 Constitutional Plaza. 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm.



Trinfo Reopening Celebration

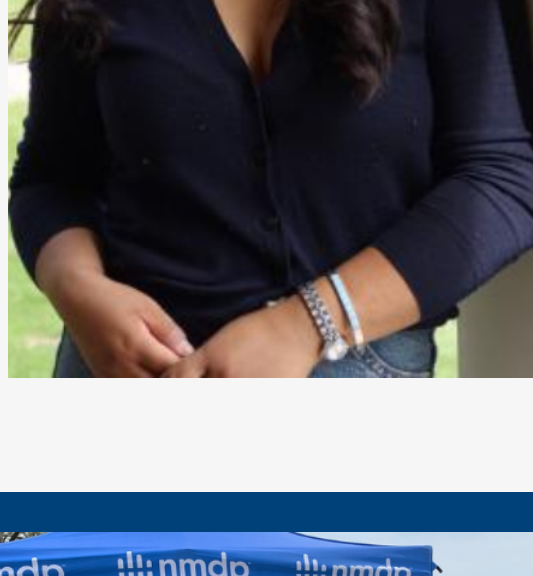
On September 6, Trinfo, formerly known as Trinfo.Café, reopened its doors after renovations, celebrating 25 years of community service. The reopening event included community partners, residents, city and state officials, as well as faculty, staff, and students from Trinity College. Closed during the 2024–25 academic year, the building received significant upgrades, including new flooring, upgraded bathrooms, an accessible front entrance, updated HVAC and safety systems, as well as new signage and a refreshed logo. While Trinfo continues its vital mission to bridge the digital divide, we are excited to broaden our scope. Trinfo's new educational access programs will include FAFSA workshops, writing assistance, college admissions support, financial aid guidance, and career readiness services, alongside essential social services and legal aid consultations. We're also eager to strengthen our partnerships with city and state organizations and maintain Trinfo's community garden. Trinfo thrives on mutual trust and collaboration, always striving to serve Hartford residents better and deepen the bond between Trinity College and the community. We invite you to explore Trinfo's rich history and relive the highlights of this special day. [Take a look at the history of Trinfo and a recap of this special day.](#)

Liberal Arts Action Lab Recognized in National Case Study

The Liberal Arts Action Lab (LAAL) is proud to be featured in Duke University's Collaborative, Project-Based Learning in Higher Education case study as one of the innovative programs highlighted. We invite faculty, staff, and administrators to explore this open-source resource, be inspired by the approaches shared, and consider how collaborative projects can enhance learning at their institutions. [Check out our case study.](#) This semester, the LAAL is excited to share three new projects students will be working on:

- **Housing Equity Project** with [CT Tenants Union and Connecticut Fair Housing Center](#) (co-instructed this semester through a Mellon Grant Co-Instructor Award, which supports collaborative teaching with community partners.)
- **Transportation Equity and Parking Justice Project** with [Advocacy to Legacy, Inc.](#)
- **Inclusive Community Cinema Project** with [Cinestudio](#)

The LAAL is also currently accepting student applications for our Spring 2026 projects, [apply today!](#)



Jessica Cruz '26 Receives Campus Compact's Newman Civic Fellowship

Trinity College's Jessica Cruz '26 is a recipient of the 2025-26 [Newman Civic Fellowship](#) from [Campus Compact](#), a national coalition of colleges and universities working to advance the public purposes of higher education. The fellowship is a yearlong program that recognizes students for their leadership potential and commitment to creating positive change in communities. Jessica is a BA candidate in Educational Studies and an active student-worker for several CHER programs with a deep commitment to educational equity, community engagement, and building inclusive communities. Regarding Jessica's nomination, President Daniel G. Lugo shared, "Jessica's thoughtful leadership and reflective practice make her an outstanding representative of Trinity College and a strong voice in the next generation of civic leaders." Congratulations Jessica!

Beyond Do-it Day: Trinity Athletics Year-Round Commitment to Service

Each year, Trinity Athletics goes beyond the playing field to foster stronger connections between Trinity College and the community. What begins with "Do-it Day" in the fall extends into a year-round commitment to service and sustainability. Football players serve weekly meals at shelters in Hartford and host "Be the Match," leading to multiple successful bone marrow matches. Ice hockey, track and field, cross-country, and basketball teams contribute to blood drives and Thanksgiving food drives, while squash players mentor youth through Capitol Squash. At the same time, the Sustainable Athletics Representatives Program empowers student-athletes to encourage environmental responsibility across teams, organizing food drives, and hosting awareness games. Together, these initiatives make service an integral part of the athletic experience, shaping habits of leadership, service, and civic engagement that extend far beyond sports and the campus. [Read more.](#)

Announcing the 2025-26 Community Learning Faculty Fellows (CLIFF)

CHER congratulates Trinity College faculty who will be part of this year's Community Learning Faculty Fellows program. This program introduces faculty to community engagement pedagogy and supports them in designing a Community Learning component to be taught in an upcoming course. This year, five fellows will be supported in course design, and two fellows will be supported in co-instructing a course with their community partner.

[Tanetta Anderson](#), Senior Lecturer in Sociology

[Shoshana Goldstein](#), Assistant Professor of Urban Studies

[Molly Helt](#), Associate Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience

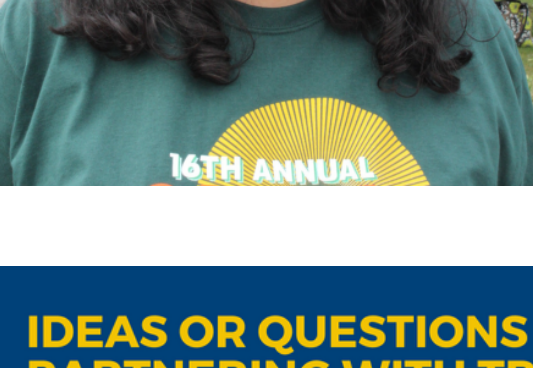
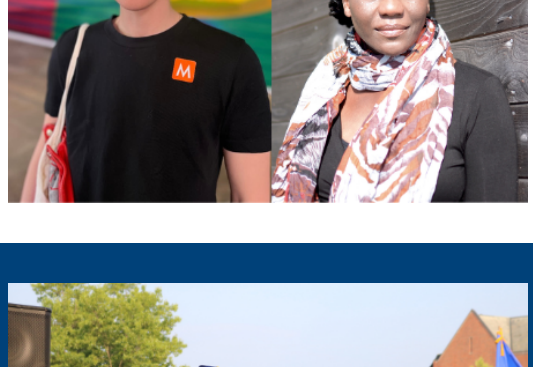
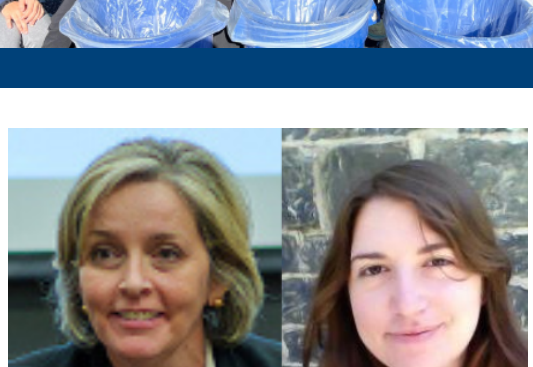
[Chitra Jogani](#), Assistant Professor of Economics and International Studies

[Anna Terwiel](#), Assistant Professor of Political Science

Co-Instruction with Community Partners Fellows:

[Derin Atalay](#), Director of the Liberal Arts Action Lab and Lecturer in Public Policy & Law, and Sarah White, community partner, Connecticut Fair Housing Center and Connecticut Tenants Union

[Catina Bacote](#), Associate Professor of English



HMTCA - Trinity College Partnership Over the Summer

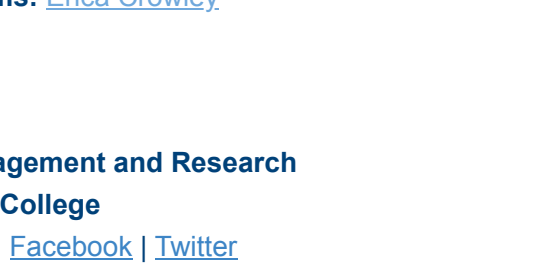
The partnership with HMTCA brought vibrant energy to the Trinity College campus during the warm summer months. The season began with a graduation ceremony for HMTCA seniors, hosted at Trinity College and highlighted by a keynote address from former President Joanne Berger-Sweeney. Congratulations to all HMTCA Seniors! HMTCA students participated in two enriching opportunities: the Summer Writing Institute and the Designing Your College Experience program. Supported by the Allan K. Smith Center for Writing and Rhetoric and the Career and Life Design Center, these programs equipped students with valuable tools for personal, academic, and career development. Rising seniors participated in the Summer Writing Institute, where they strengthened their college-level writing skills through interactive workshops led by Dr. Tennyson O'Donnell and his faculty. Meanwhile, the Designing Your College Experience program, open to students in grades 10–12, guided participants through essential steps in preparing for life after high school, including major exploration, personal branding, and career planning, using design-thinking strategies to help them make informed choices about their future.

Student Highlight: Mafer Vacca '27 Finds Home in Hartford

Meet Mafer Vacca '27, an Urban Studies major who has found a meaningful sense of belonging in Hartford through her work as a CHER Community Engagement Fellow, a teaching assistant for the Liberal Arts Action Lab, and in her involvement as a Research Fellow and participant of the Public Humanities Collaborative. She has channeled that passion into hands-on civic engagement, such as participating in walking tours, research, cultural events, and connecting students with Hartford. [Read Mafer's story.](#)

IDEAS OR QUESTIONS ABOUT PARTNERING WITH TRINITY COLLEGE?

CONNECT WITH THE CHER TEAM.



Center for Hartford Engagement and Research

at Trinity College

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300 Summit Street

Hartford, CT 06106

Find or Post Volunteer Opportunities in the Hartford Area