



Community Engagement Committee End of Year Report FY26

Committee Charge

The committee shall be responsible for being an ally and advocate for staff members and strive to build strong community connections within and outside of the UVM community. The committee aims to address a variety of social and economic factors as they relate to fostering a strong community. In addition, the committee shall organize, coordinate, and promote community service and volunteer opportunities within the UVM and greater Burlington community.

Members FY26

Chelsea Lynn Chu: Co-Chair

Corinne Cooper: Representative

Samantha Dickey: Member at-large

Monika Donlevy: Representative

Skye Ellicock: Representative

Whitney Feininger: Member at-large

Linda Gregoire: Member at-large

Gretchen Loft: Representative

Emily Press: Representative

Billy Rison: Representative

Laura Selin: Member at-large

Liv Townsend: Representative

Amy Vile: Member at-large

Book Club

Skye Ellicock organized book club, including book selection, developing questions and facilitating discussions. Book club sessions were hybrid to be more accessible. We also participated in the Vermont Humanities Council's Vermont Reads program, providing free books to attendees and bringing in professional facilitators.

| Book Title and Author | Semester | # of Participants |
|--|----------|-------------------|
| <i>Gather</i> by Kenneth Cadow (Vermont Reads) | Summer | 15 |
| <i>The Emperor of Gladness</i> by Ocean Vuong | Fall | 10 |
| <i>Before the Coffee Gets Cold</i> by Toshikazu Kawaguchi | Fall | 12 |

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|---|--------|----|
| <i>My Friends</i> by Frederik Backman | Spring | 17 |
| <i>The Light Pirate</i> by Lily Brooks-Dalton (Vermont Reads) | Spring | 20 |

Catamount CSA Distributions

Following outreach by Amy Vile, The University of Vermont Catamount Farm has generously committed three Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Shares to Staff Council for the 2026 Summer season for distribution among staff members each week. Staff will be able to sign up to receive one of the three free shares for one week (one allotment) during the season. Staff whose names are selected in any given week will be contacted to coordinate receiving the share at a campus pick-up location, historically at Allen House, and are removed from the recipient pool for the rest of the season.

Crafting Club

Samantha Dickey organized crafting club in collaboration with other committee members to offer a range of art opportunities for employees.

Stuff Swap

Skye Ellicock organized a Stuff Swap for staff to bring in unwanted items and take what they wanted, free of charge. Volunteers from Staff Council and the wider UVM community helped on the day of the event. Many people came throughout the 2-hour time slot and we donated what was left.

Group Walks & Tours

Several well-attended group walks and campus tours were organized throughout the year. This year committee members Amy Vile and Monika Donlevy also re-established the weekly walking series “Wednesday Walks” beginning April 15th, 2026.

Walks/Tours, Dates, Leaders:

- CREAM Barn Tour – November 20th, 2025 led by current students
- Cancer Center Tour – February 10th, 2026 led by Dr. Randall Holcombe
- Fleming Museum tour – February 19th, 2026 led by Phil Morin
- UVM Fab Lab Tour – March 31st, 2026 led by Kevin Hytten
- Horse Barn Tour – April 28th, 2026 led by Chrissy Rohan
- Proctor Maple Research Center Tour – July 9th, 2026 led by Phoebe Plank

Staff Art Show

The committee partnered with staff in the Davis Center for a staff art exhibit that opened on February 6th, 2026. Entries were collected for the month of January and displayed for several weeks in the Livak Fireplace Lounge following the opening reception. The committee received positive feedback on the event and exhibit and will consider organizing the event for a third year.

Other Projects & Considerations

Looking ahead, the committee suggests continuing the book club, crafting club, group walks, and campus tours.