

DELIBERATIVE CITIZENSHIP INITIATIVE

DAVIDSON COLLEGE

A network diagram background consisting of a complex web of thin grey lines connecting various nodes. Some nodes are highlighted with larger, colored circles in shades of blue, orange, red, and purple. The background is a light, pale blue gradient.

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

INTRODUCTION

Our contemporary public sphere is in crisis. We have deep concerns about our society, and yet we feel unheard and unrecognized. We want to understand the concerns of others, and yet we are anxious about interacting with those we disagree. Our civic life has thus become fragmented and incapable of fostering deep engagement on the issues that most animate and trouble us. Against this backdrop, Davidson College initiated the Deliberative Citizenship Initiative (DCI), a campus- and community-wide project focused on the uses of deliberation as an alternative to the non-constructive cross talk that has come to dominate our public discourse.

This annual report seeks to capture the dynamism and energy of the programs and people that have been a part of the DCI's inaugural year at Davidson. Each page of this report offers a glimpse into the past year and the power - both actual and potential - that thoughtful, courageous deliberation and deliberation-oriented programs have to influence and transform our society.



DCI OVERVIEW

MISSION

The Deliberative Citizenship was designed to create opportunities for Davidson College students, faculty, staff, alumni, and members of the wider community to productively engage with one another. on difficult and contentious issues facing our community and society.

VISION

Building democracy, one conversation at a time.

GOALS



TEACH DELIBERATIVE SKILLS



REINFORCE HUMANE INSTINCTS



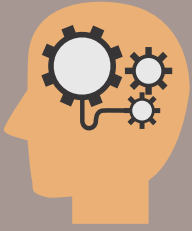
BUILD MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY



CATALYZE CREATIVE SOLUTIONS



ANALYZE THE DELIBERATIVE PROCESSES OF THE INITIATIVE ITSELF



" DELIBERATIVE "

relating to discourse that contributes to both shared and new understandings of a particular issue that transcend previously-held positions and enable collective decisions and actions



" CITIZENSHIP "

a sense of identity and set of actions, dispositions and sensibilities associated with public life and the work of acting together to solve a society's common problems (independent of one's legal or immigration status)



DELIBERATIVE CITIZENSHIP

Deliberative citizenship encompasses multiple forms of discourse and complements other forms of citizenship

CONVERSATION



DISCUSSION



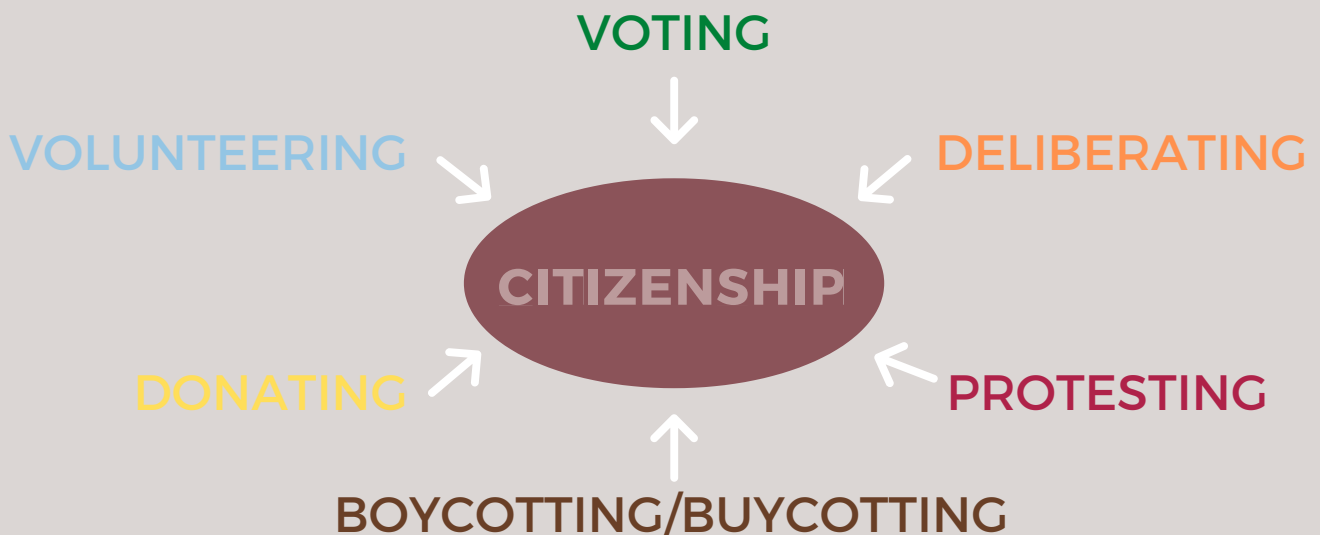
DIALOGUE



DEBATE



DELIBERATION



PROGRAMS

The work of the Deliberative Citizenship Initiative is divided into four program areas:



Deliberation Across the Curriculum

Deliberation on Campus

Deliberation in the Community

Research on Deliberation

DISPOSITIONS

Through examining the relevant academic literature, learning about the work of deliberation practitioners, and discussing the experiences of the Davidson community, the DCI has identified the following dispositions as critical to the success of deliberative enterprises and foundational to its activities:

EGALITARIANISM

OPEN-MINDEDNESS

EMPATHY

ANTICIPATION

CHARITY

EVIDENTIAL EMPHASIS

ACTION ORIENTATION

ATTENTIVENESS

COMMUNAL ORIENTATION

LEARNING ABOUT AND DOING DELIBERATION



PROGRAMS

- 13** Fellows
- 82** D Team Participants
- 13** D Teams

EVENTS

- 9** Expert Panelists
- 4** Deliberative Forums
- 3** Deliberative Speakers
- 1** Training Workshop

75%

AVERAGE EVENT YIELD

From registration to attendance

229

FORUM ATTENDEES

Total attendance at deliberative forums

246

SUBSCRIBERS

Recipients of bi-monthly newsletter and DCI Blog updates, members of WildcatSync portal, and YouTube channel subscribers

258

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

Across Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn

3,190

WEBSITE VISITORS

Individuals who have accessed the website since its launch in July 2020



"The DCI's way of soliciting input, ensuring clear dissemination of information and opinions, and then encouraging conversation through breakout rooms is brilliant. So impressed."

- Deliberative Forum Attendee

"Since I got to Davidson College, I have been looking for a space to deliberate on (not debate) political beliefs and perspectives. The DCI is a wonderful addition to the Davidson campus and community. I've been a part of a D Team for two semesters, and I cannot speak highly enough of my experience."

- D Team Member

"The Deliberative Citizenship Initiative is amazing!! Beyond content, the experience helped me understand how to manage conversations that might deal with contentious issues, a gift these days."

- Deliberative Forum Attendee





"I was able to share my beliefs and perspectives, as well as understand beliefs and perspectives that contradict or challenge my own. My time with the DCI through D Teams was a truly intellectually humbling experience."

- D Team Member

"The entire program was very thoughtfully designed, well-attended, and it created a space that ignited extraordinary conversations. I have attended many housing forums lately, and last night was one of the most productive by far."

- Deliberative Forum Attendee

"I graduated from Davidson over 50 years ago. The D Team experience allowed me to dialogue with current students and learn their perspectives on current issues. I recommend D Teams to alums to allow them to learn from a different generation as well as to learn skills in addressing hot topic issues in a deliberative fashion."

- D Team Member

DCI FELLOWS

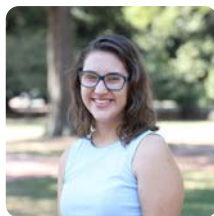
Deliberative Citizenship Initiative Fellows spend the academic year playing a leadership role in the initiative by immersing themselves in deliberative theory and methods, helping select the topics for D Teams and Deliberative Forums, facilitating robust deliberations on those topics, and documenting their experiences through blog posts and reflections. Fellows have the opportunity to contribute to the urgent and important work of bringing people together to explore how and why their perspectives are both similar and different - and begin building common solutions to our collective challenges.

2020-2021 FELLOWS

13 individuals, including Davidson College students, faculty, and staff, were selected for the inaugural cohort of DCI Fellows. [Click here for their bios.](#)



Kyle Broxton '22



Cadie McNaboe '22



Ty McLaren '22



Camryn Ellis '21



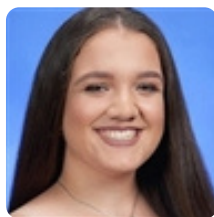
Andrew Gardner '21



Sandro Chumashvili '24



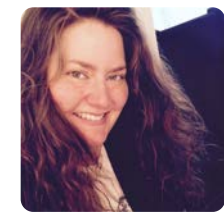
Steve Kaliski
Faculty | Theatre



Sam Bonge '22



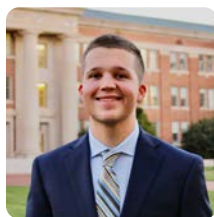
Dalton Langdon
Staff | Career Development



Heidi North
Staff | WDAV



Maddie Buitendorp '22



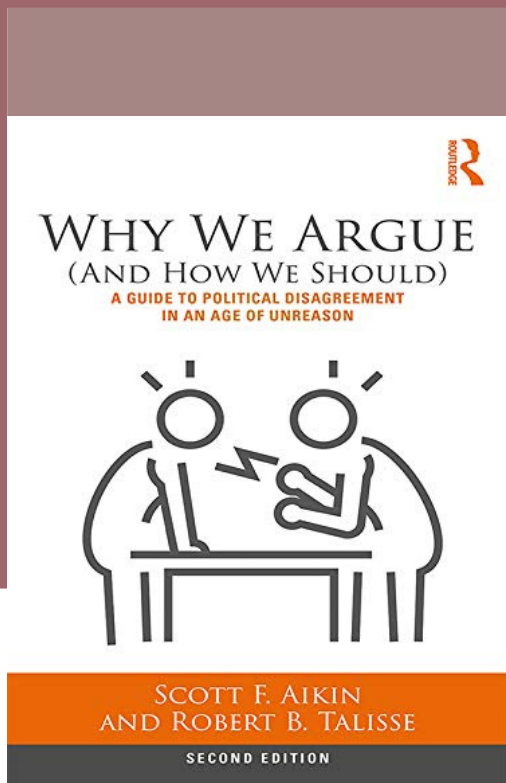
John Leiner '21



Joshua Yesnowitz
Faculty | Political Scicenc

DCI FELLOWS

Over the course of the past year, DCI Fellows analyzed and discussed deliberative ideas from a wide range of academic, practitioner and news sources. They also explored how different humane instincts are relevant to deliberation and how different programs are fostering deliberation across the country. The Fellows then applied what they learned to facilitating D Teams and deliberative forum small groups. In the spring semester, they also developed and implemented their own individual, small-scale deliberative projects.



LivingRoom
Conversations

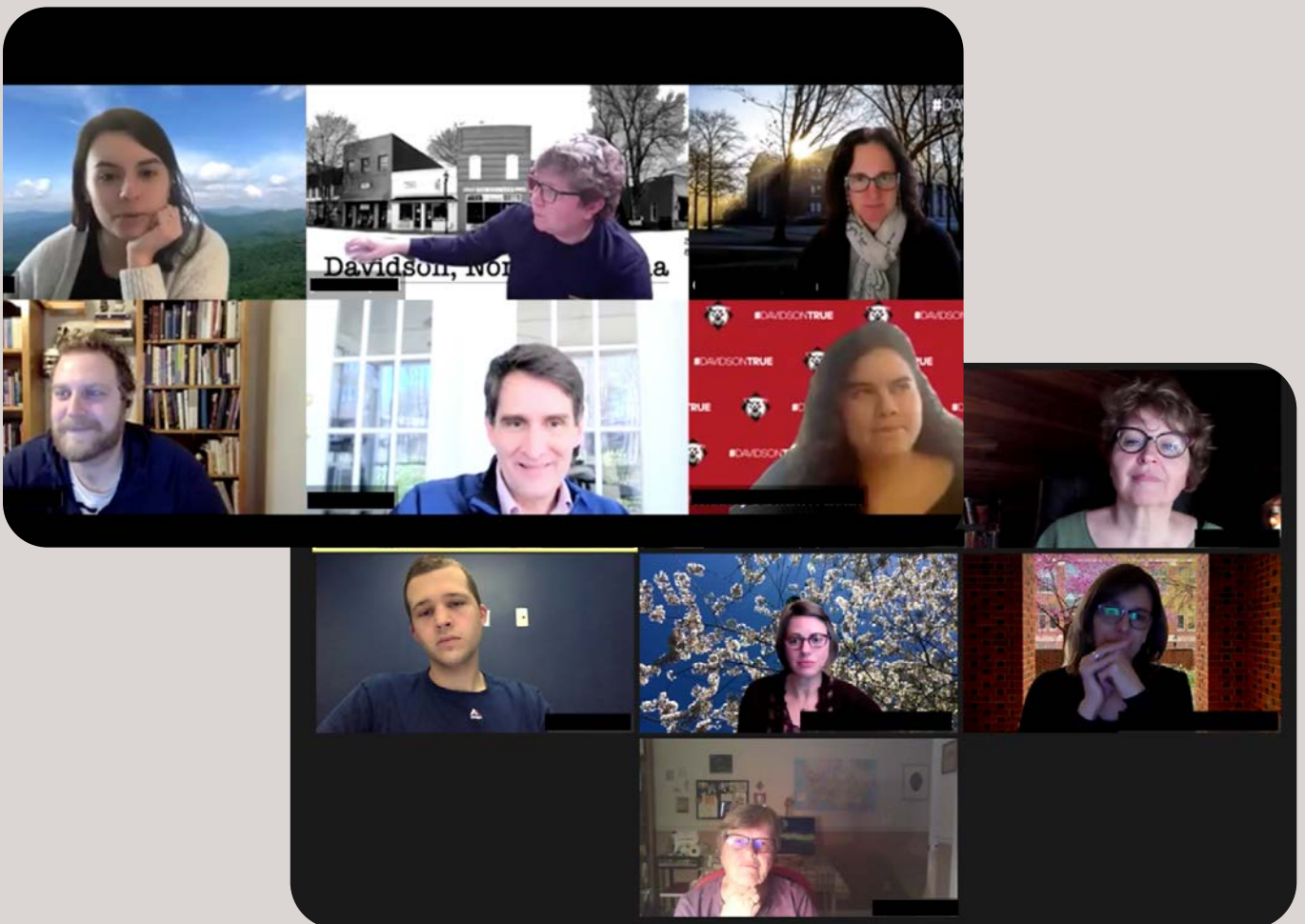
NATIONAL
ISSUES
FORUMS

JOURNAL OF
DELIBERATIVE
DEMOCRACY

OpenMind™

DELIBERATIVE "D" TEAMS

D Teams are small groups of 4-8 individuals with diverse viewpoints who share a commitment to meet once a month, get to know each other on a personal level, and share their perspectives on difficult issues facing our society. Each D Team is facilitated by a pair of DCI Fellows, who have been trained and certified as deliberative facilitators. D Teams provide a practical opportunity for members of Davidson College community and the general public to engage across political and social differences, learn and practice deliberative skills, and discuss creative ideas to inspire change.



DELIBERATIVE "D" TEAMS

In 2020-2021, D Teams met virtually via Zoom. While initially intended as a COVID-19 safety measure, the virtual format enabled participation of individuals, including several Davidson College alumni, who might not otherwise have been able to travel to campus for in-person meetings. For each meeting, participants and facilitators were provided with a deliberation guide and background information from either National Issues Forum (NIF) or Living Room Conversations (LRC), or an original, DCI-developed guide. After each D Team, the DCI distributed "Beyond the Deliberation," a pathways document with resources, readings, and action steps for participants to get informed, get connected, and get involved on each of the topics.

FALL D TEAM TOPICS

- Politics: Can We Talk? (LRC)
- Healthcare (NIF)
- A House Divided: Getting the Political System We Want (NIF)
- Policing (DCI)
- Local Legacies of Slavery (DCI)

SPRING D TEAM TOPICS

- The COVID-19 Pandemic (DCI)
- Environmental Challenges of the 21st Century (DCI)
- Economic Mobility (DCI)
- Gender and Sexuality (DCI)

DELIBERATIVE FORUMS

In 2020-2021, the DCI hosted four deliberative forums, one-time events open to members of Davidson College and the wider public designed to introduce participants to the basic dispositions and skills of deliberation. Similar to D Teams, all four deliberative forums were hosted virtually via Zoom and utilized DCI-developed deliberation guides and background information, which Fellows used to facilitate breakout rooms.

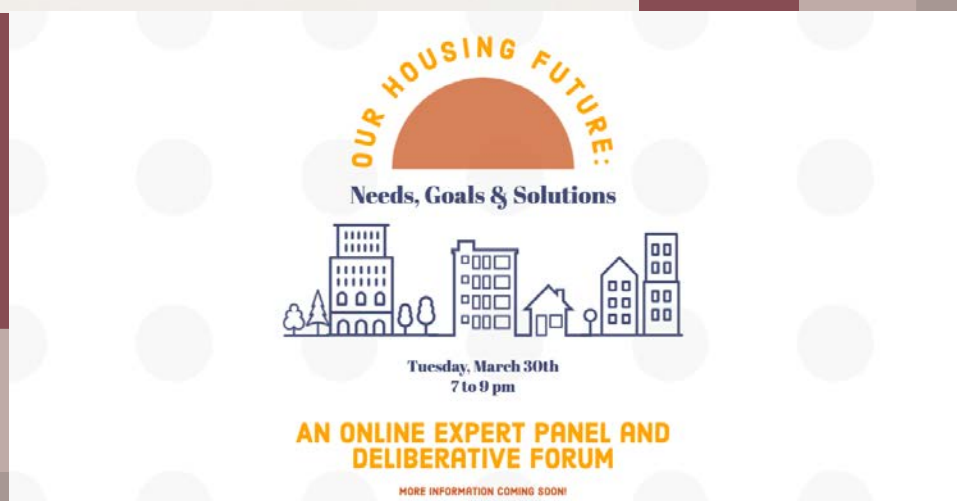
FALL 2020



DELIBERATIVE FORUMS

For the two spring semester forums, the DCI piloted a hybrid model of deliberation which combined an expert panel with small group deliberation breakout rooms. Expert panelists for "Reforming the Supreme Court" included legal scholars from Yale, the University of Chicago, Northwestern, and Boston College Schools of Law, while the experts for "Our Housing Future" represented a variety of local perspectives including the Town of Davidson, UNCC, A Roof Above, the Locke Foundation, and the Smithville Community Coalition.

SPRING 2021



GUEST SPEAKERS

The deliberative guest speaker series introduced the Davidson community to different theoretical and practical approaches to deliberation from similar initiatives as well as the deliberative democracy, civic republicanism, and other related literatures.



Daniel Layman

Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Davidson College

"Deliberation Nation?"



Martín Carcasson

Professor of Communication Studies and Director of the Center for Public Deliberation at Colorado State University

"From Polarized to Collaborative: Deliberation in Action"



Debra Hawhee

McCourtney Professor of Civic Deliberation at Penn State University

"Rhetoric, Deliberation, and Democratic Life"

FACILITATION TRAINING

Building on its first training workshop offered in Spring 2020, the DCI hosted a deliberative facilitator training for the inaugural cohort of Fellows. This 8-hour training introduced the Fellows to specific skills to improve their ability to both listen and deliberate with others, and to facilitate such deliberations as part of D Teams, deliberative forums, and other deliberative events.



Hosting a Deliberation



Utilizing Expertise



Styles of Facilitation



Asking Good Questions



Deliberative Theory

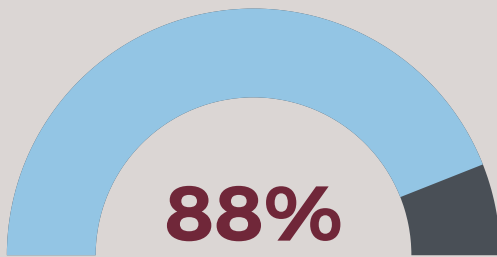


Organizing a Deliberation

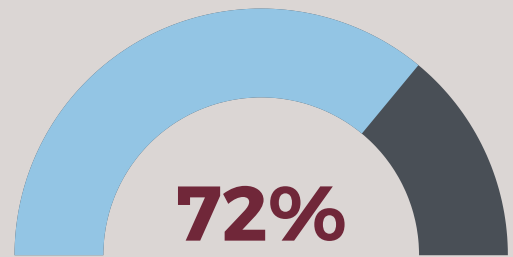


RESEARCH

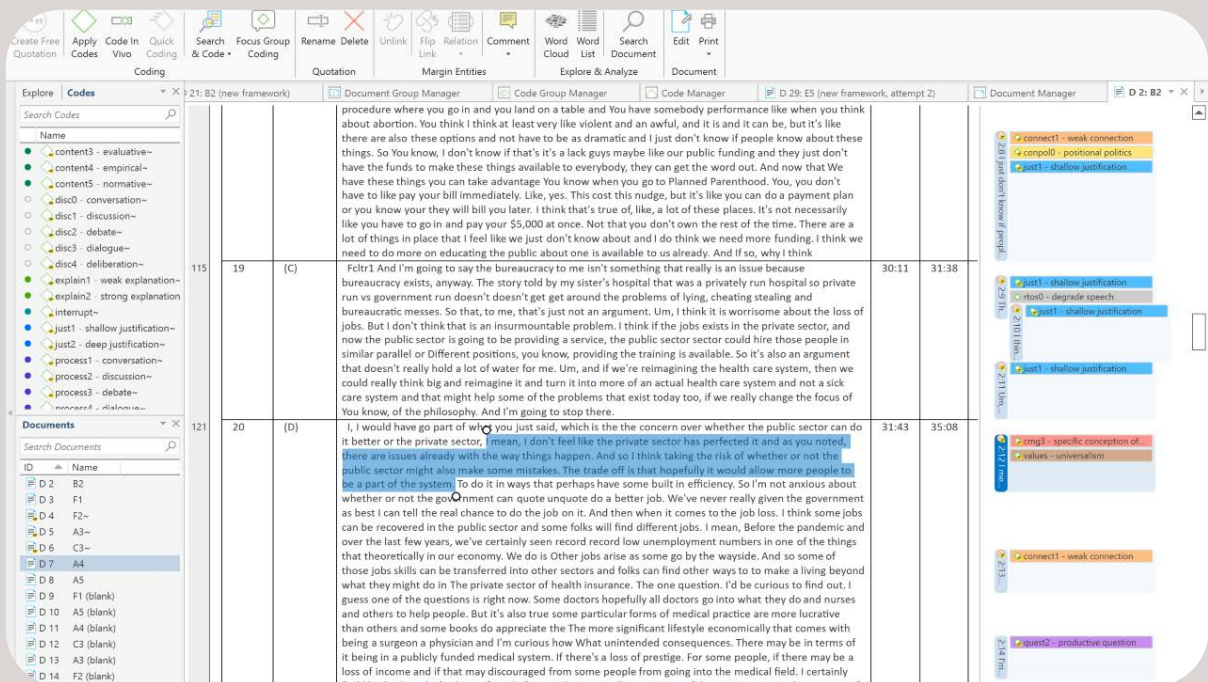
The DCI is committed to supporting research on deliberation and has systematically assessed the effects of its own activities by tracking, analyzing, and reporting on its inputs, processes, outputs, and outcomes. In addition to coding anonymized transcripts from D Teams to study the quality of discourse, the DCI has also distributed surveys to D Team and deliberative forum participants, as well as to the DCI Fellows to measure their growth and overall satisfaction with DCI activities.



of spring deliberative forum respondents said the deliberation gave them sufficient opportunity to express their views



of D Team respondents considered carefully what others with different views from their own had to say



RESOURCES

In addition to the DCI website, DCI has developed a number of resources. These include deliberation guides, "how to" resources, a deliberation facilitator's handbook, digital badging and certification, and more!



"How to Disagree"

"DCI Guide to One-on-One Conversations"

"Tips for Virtual Deliberation"

10 DCI Issue Guides





SUMMARY

As has been said countless times, the past year bore witness to unprecedented challenges across our nation. The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, national racial reckonings, and a deeply partisan and polarizing election cycle created a uniquely challenging context for the DCI's inaugural year. Yet despite these obstacles, the DCI had a great year with victories both big and small.

Deliberative forums and D Teams created much-needed environments to build community and productively engage with others on the difficult issues our society faced this year. The Fellows program and facilitation training empowered students, faculty, and staff with the skills and knowledge to promote more productive public discourse. The DCI website and its numerous issue guides, pathways documents, and resources enabled DCI participants to consider new ideas and find ways to continue developing their own deliberative skills and humane instincts.

Energized by the outstanding feedback, participation, and support from this past year, the DCI looks forward to 2021-2022 and more opportunities to build our democracy, one conversation at a time.

DCI LEADERSHIP

CO-CONVENERS AND STAFF

- **Graham Bullock**, Faculty Director, Associate Professor of Political Science
- **Byron McCrae**, Co-Convener, Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students
- **Stacey Riemer**, Co-Convener, Associate Dean of Students and Director of the Center for Civic Engagement
- **Van Hillard**, Co-Convener, Director of College Writing Program and Professor of Rhetoric and Writing Studies
- **Kyle Broxton**, Student Co-Convener, Junior at Davidson College
- **Cadie McNaboe**, Student Co-Convener, Junior at Davidson College
- **Clare Magee**, DCI Coordinator

2020-2021 ADVISORY COUNCIL

- **Lisa Forrest**, Leland M. Park Director of the Davidson College Library
- **Amoura Carter '07**, Center Director for Sylvan Huntersville
- **Chris Clunie '06**, Director of Athletics at Davidson College
- **Peter Henry**, Pastor at Davidson College Presbyterian Church
- **Eboni Thomas '23**, Sophomore at Davidson College
- **Daniel Layman**, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Davidson College
- **Barbara Lom**, Professor of Biology at Davidson College
- **Nade Bai '22**, Junior at Davidson College
- **Evan Rothman '22**, Junior at Davidson College
- **Jerry Hopkins '64**, Retired President of Worldwide Insurance Services
- **Pam Dykstra**, Curriculum Chair for Davidson Learns
- **Marya Howell '91**, Director of Alumni and Family Engagement at Davidson College
- **Lia Newman**, Director and Curator of Art Gallery at Davidson College
- **Erik Eva '22**, Junior at Davidson College
- **ChiChi Odo '22**, Junior at Davidson College
- **Walter Snipes**, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Residence Life at Davidson College



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