**IMPACT/ReNU – NUB Presentation – Fall 2020**

Slide 1 – Title Slide

Slide 2 – What is IMPACT/ReNU?

* Background:
  + IMPACT and ReNU Niagara were two programs that were merged in 2017 to better connect students to opportunities in the community
  + IMPACT is the evolution of how Niagara University does Service Learning – you will see more about this in subsequent slides
  + ReNU Niagara has been NU’s flagship community outreach program since 2006, working in the community to develop partnership, participate in projects, and to build the capacity of community organizations to address needs

Slide 3 – The Need for IMPACT

* This is why we do what we do
* Our local communities have many needs – most of which are as a result of high poverty rates – according to 2017 American Community Survey, 27.5% of Niagara Falls residents live below poverty level – a number that can get as high as 80% in certain neighborhoods
* (Review data with students)

Slide 4 – IMPACT Overview

* (Click the link to play video)
* Videos were created by an NU marketing student

Slide 5 – IMPACT is..

* (each box can be clicked to show short videos for each IMPACT theme)

Slide 6 – Service matters to…

* IMPACT projects provide opportunities for students to gain real-world experience in their field of study, to better prepare you for future careers and provide you with concrete experiences that you would be proud to include on your resume.
* IMPACT projects are great opportunities for students who are still unsure about what direction that want to go in – to “sample” different careers, so to speak, through a project that benefits the community while aiding in the student’s decision-making.
* We know that employers also care about service. Listed on the slide are the Civic50 – an annual list of the 50 most community-minded companies in the nation, as determined by a survey. These are public and private companies with U.S. operations and revenues that exceed $1 billion annually. They are selected based on four criteria: Investment in community engagement; Integration of community engagement programs with business interests and functions; Institutionalization of community engagement through organizational policies, systems, incentives; and how the company measures the social impacts and outcomes of their community engagement programs.
* We know that service matters to these companies. In fact, 56% of these companies include community engagement in their performance reviews. 78% person of these companies actively measure and report on their social impact. More than half of these companies connect community engagement with skills development; and 25% of volunteer experiences are skills-based.
* Time spent in service carries a great value. According to independentsector.org; the value of a volunteer hour is $24.69. Skills-based service, on the other hand, is valued at a higher rate. The NU IMPACT model determines this rate based on major and the mean income of professions within each major.

Slide 7 – IMPACT Project Phases

* It is important to understand that an IMPACT project – like all projects – could happen in different timeframes. A project could take a semester, a year, or multiple years.
* What we believe is important as that students are engaged in all facets of a project:
  + For Freshmen, the “Discover” phase is particularly important – this is your opportunity to learn about the community, to identify needs, and to explore ways to match your skill sets and personal/professional goals to identifying solutions for those needs.
  + The meat of project implementation comes through the middle three dots on the slide – Planning, taking Action, and Analyzing the Impact.
    - The analysis piece is particularly important as we want to know as many details about what your project accomplished as possible.
    - While other universities typically emphasize the number of hours students spend in the community – we want to know about the great outcomes you are producing *for*the community – about the quality of service, not just the quantity.
  + The final phase is Commitment – wherever you end up in the world after you leave NU, we hope that your time here builds within you a commitment to serving your community.

Slide 8 – Entrepreneurism/Academic Integration

* This slide shows potential project areas within each of the four colleges here at NU
* Project development involves some entrepreneurial thinking – to solve complex problems, we need to develop complex solutions
* These lists are just scratching the surface

Slide 9 – Imagine the Possibilities – Think Like an Entrepreneur

* There has been a lot of good news lately for Niagara Falls!
  + A private equity firm recently purchased more than 30 buildings along Main Street – a critical commercial corridor ripe for redevelopment
    - See: <https://www.niagara-gazette.com/news/local_news/dozens-of-main-street-properties-sold-in-m-deal/article_73677020-98c7-5fa0-9026-67799244d00f.html>
  + The City of Niagara Falls just received a $10 million grant from the State of New York for the Downtown Revitalization Initiative
    - See: <https://www.wkbw.com/news/local-news/niagara-falls-is-getting-a-10-million-state-grant-to-help-redevelop-its-downtown-area>
  + Niagara University’s Global Tourism Institute will be opening this fall – and will feature business incubator space focused on tourism technology and other entrepreneurial endeavors
    - See: <https://news.wbfo.org/post/niagara-global-tourism-institute-eyes-highly-visible-intersection-business-incubator-space>
* Optional exercise: in small groups or as a class: Think like an entrepreneur.
  + Now that you know some of the issues facing our local community of Niagara Falls (from slide 3), and seeing the opportunities presented in these articles – what would you do, as an entrepreneur or social entrepreneur?
    - *Social entrepreneur – a person who establishes an enterprise with the aim of solving social problems or effecting social change.*

Slide 10 – Project-based Examples

* Here are four real examples of IMPACT projects that NU Students have been involved with in past semesters (\*\*Highlight one or two\*\*):
  + Accounting: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)
    - Each year, accounting students participate in the VITA program where they prepare income tax returns for community members, particularly those that are low income or senior citizens. These tax returns are done at no cost to the individuals or families.
    - Outcomes: in 2019, 92 NU students filed a total of 503 returns, which equaled roughly $500,000 in tax return dollars for the local community
  + Social Work: Street Outreach/Point In Time Count
    - Niagara Falls is part of what is called a “Continuum of Care” (CoC)– a planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals. This program is through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
    - HUD requires that CoCs across the country participate in the annual Point In Time Count – an unduplicated count, on a single night in January, of the people in a community who are experiencing homelessness.
    - NU students and staff have been volunteering for the PIT count for years, but in the 2018-19 academic year these efforts were really ramped up.
    - 12 Social Work students took part in a year-long street outreach program that included a four part training in the fall semester on topics like Street Outreach Best Practices/Safety and Trauma Informed Care. The training series better prepared students to participate in the Point In Time count, early in the spring semester.
    - Outcomes: the number of homeless individuals identified increased almost 300% from the previous year, due to having more people involved in the PIT count. This will lead to additional resources and funding for the local community to use in addressing homelessness.
  + CIS/Food Marketing: Niagara Falls Local Food Action Plan
    - During the 2018-19, students in the Niagara University Food Marketing Association (NUFMA) partnered with the Niagara Falls Local Food Action Plan to identify food access points throughout Niagara Falls, to create an up-to-date and accurate picture of the food desert situation in the community.
      * *Food desert – an urban area in which it is difficult to buy affordable or good-quality fresh food*
    - In the fall semester, NUFMA students developed a database of potential food access points and created a survey to use when visiting these locations.
    - In the spring, students started with a specific neighborhood to test out their survey. They visited several stores and inventoried the types of food available – with a focus on fresh produce and other healthy food items.
    - Outcomes: the survey was tested and finalized, to be used during the 2019-20 academic year to collect data throughout the city. Data will then be turned over to Computer Information Sciences (CIS) students who will develop maps using GIS software.
  + Education: Linking Literacy to Movement
    - Program for students in 4-6th grades at Cataract Elementary
    - Students from the College of Education plan and implement literacy lessons targeting specific literacy skills such as reading, writing, comprehension, etc. about the “sport of the day.”
    - NU athletes facilitate the second portion of the program, showing youth basic techniques and tips for the sport they just learned about
    - Outcomes:
      * 36 Cataract Elementary students were provided with literacy tutoring and were introduced to sports they may not have tried prior to program.
      * 10 undergraduate education students and 71 NU athletes have participated, becoming role models for youth who attend and gaining hands-on experience for their future careers.

Slide 11 – IMPACT Connects

* IMPACT Connects is an online system used to connect students to service opportunities and organizations in the community
* **PLEASE ASK STUDENTS TO SIGN-IN TO THE SYSTEM WHILE IN CLASS – USING PURPLE PASS CREDENTIALS**
  + To do so, visit: Niagara.galaxdigital.com
* IMPACT Connects gives students access to more than 600 agencies throughout Western New York who are looking for volunteers
* The system will be used to track service, outcomes and hours – if you are required to do service for any reason – as part of a course, a club, a sports team, or otherwise – you will need to use IMPACT Connects to track your service.
* The system provides a volunteer resume with infographics that show your involvement in service while here at NU – great to use when preparing resumes