

CALDWELL FELLOWS

2022 - 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



The Caldwell Fellows Program develops the next generation of self-aware, globally-minded humans who engage in creative, conscientious leadership.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



DR. JANICE ODOM

The field of Leadership Development is relatively new to higher education. In the past two decades theory, practice, and assessment for leadership education have grown significantly. It is all the more remarkable that the social visionaries of the Smith-Richardson Foundation, at the end of World War II, assessed the global need for ethical leadership and courageously initiated university leadership programs in their home state of North Carolina. Guided by Banks Talley, NC State accepted one of five grants from Smith Richardson, and in 1968, NC State had its inaugural class of 'Richardson Fellows'. Renamed the NC Fellows, and in due time the Caldwell Fellows, only NC State has taken that initial grant and given it the institutional support for it to thrive. The annual mission to identify persons of character from among the most promising students in the university's first-year class and pour them into relationships and experiences to develop their leadership capacity was handed to Gerald Hawkins. He injected wisdom and presence into the role of Director, guiding thirty-four years of Fellows into leadership roles in their various career fields, communities, and families. I was passed the baton by Gerald in 2003 to become the program's second Director. In this role, I am daily awed by the consistency of dedication and commitment that move us forward. Our purpose and values are timeless. What changes are the faces and stories of our students and, following the growing research in leadership development, our practices. Each year we strive to capture the stories of our students and their journeys of growth along with our alumni and their stories of impact in the world. We hope this 'Year in Review' channels the energy, hard work, and joy of this great endeavor. On behalf of the fine folks who serve with me on the Caldwell Fellows staff, we invite you to join us in paying tribute to those who set the vision and the countless individuals who have supported it with their time, talent, and treasure.

OUR VALUES

● SERVANT
LEADERSHIP

● PRINCIPLED
REFLECTION

● PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT

● RIGOROUS
INTEGRITY

● THE AUTHENTIC
SELF

These values are the driving force that permeates everything we do as Caldwell Fellows. These values are folded into our curriculum and programming at each stage of students' development. This year, we were delighted that Gabby Chiarenza '23 took the time to capture the essence of three of these values as experienced by current students. She interviewed current students to learn how they apply the lessons they are learning in the Caldwell Fellows Program in their day-to-day lives.

Make sure to read more about their take on [servant leadership](#), [personal development](#), and the pursuit of the [authentic self](#).



ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

The Caldwell Fellows Program's true impact is illustrated in the lives of our alumni. Personal stories, gatherings, mentoring, and leadership demonstrate their engagement with our community and beyond.

CHARLOTTE MIXER

AUGUST 2022

Charlotte area Caldwell Fellows alumni and friends joined together to reconnect with each other, share their memories, and learn about a recent gift from John F. and Penny Higdon, of Matthews, North Carolina.

[Read more.](#)

55TH ANNIVERSARY LAUNCH

SEPTEMBER 2022

The North Carolina Fellows (now Caldwell Fellows) classes from the 1970s spent a weekend reconnecting, reliving the magic, and learning about the current state of the program.

[Read more.](#)

RALEIGH MIXER

SEPTEMBER 2022

Twenty Raleigh area alumni joined the Caldwell Fellows class of 2024 for a lively evening mixer at the City of Raleigh Museum as part of a weekend retreat focused professional development aligned with servant-leadership values.

[Read more.](#)

TRIAD MIXER

OCTOBER 2022

The Caldwell Fellows Class of 2023 met with alumni, friends, and staff from the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) in advance of their time at the CCL in Greensboro, North Carolina.

[Read more.](#)

SELECTION WEEKEND EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2023

To honor our 55th anniversary, the Caldwell Fellows Program celebrated during Selection weekend with an alumni conference featuring guest storytellers from our ranks. This event was followed by a reception at the Chancellor's residence. Selection Day brought over 90 alumni from all corners of the country to help us select the Class of 2026. And of course, we celebrated in style at our annual Gala - back in person for the first time since 2019.

[See photos from the Gala.](#)

WILDERNESS EXPEDITION

MAY 2023

This year's trip leaders were Julia O'Brien '20 and Jerrica Kirkley '06. They led nine explorers on an outdoor adventure like none other in the backcountry of Colorado. The trip will included backpacking the Collegiate Peaks and whitewater rafting.



CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2023



We are proud to recognize the Caldwell Fellows class of 2023 graduates for all of their accomplishments throughout their time at NC State. They have left an impressive legacy that will continue to impact future generations. As our graduates spread out into new jobs, graduate programs, the Peace Corps and other service commitments, we are hopeful for the positive impacts they will make in their careers, communities, and families. [Learn more.](#)

WELCOMING THE CLASS OF 2026



THE CLASS OF 2026

This year there were more applicants than ever. The program had a record 315 applications from talented and engaged students from all backgrounds across NC State University. [Read more.](#) You can learn more about each member of the class of 2026 [here.](#)



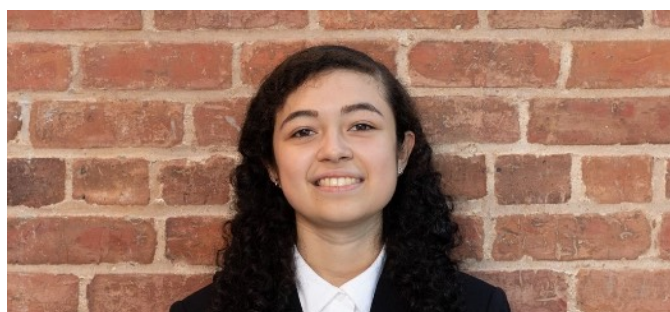
STORIES OF IMPACT

CURRENT FELLOWS SHARE
THEIR STORIES



LP MANCINI

2023 graduate LP Mancini, who earned a degree in fisheries, wildlife, and conservation biology with a minor in plant biology, has embarked on a journey to hike the entire length of the Appalachian Trail. [Read more.](#)



BRIANNA DIAZ

2023 graduate Brianna Diaz is continuing the Caldwell Fellows spirit of servant leadership. She committed to serving with the College Advising Corps supporting underrepresented students with the tools they need to be successful in their post-secondary plans. [Read more.](#)



CHRIS OATES

2023 graduate Chris Oates served as a teaching assistant for the Habitat for Humanity service-learning team. Through their service, the team created ArcGIS mapping data to support Wake County Habitat for Humanity to further their mission of housing equity.

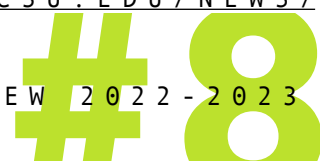


GRACE SULLIVAN

Grace Sullivan, from the Caldwell Fellows class of 2025, is spending her summer learning more about the realities of agriculture in America as part of an internship through the Natural Resources Conservation Service. [Read more.](#)

YOU CAN FIND MORE ON OUR WEBSITE AT
[HTTPS://CALDWELLFELLOWS.NCSU.EDU/NEWS/](https://caldwelfellows.ncsu.edu/news/)

CALDWELL FELLOWS YEAR IN REVIEW 2022-2023



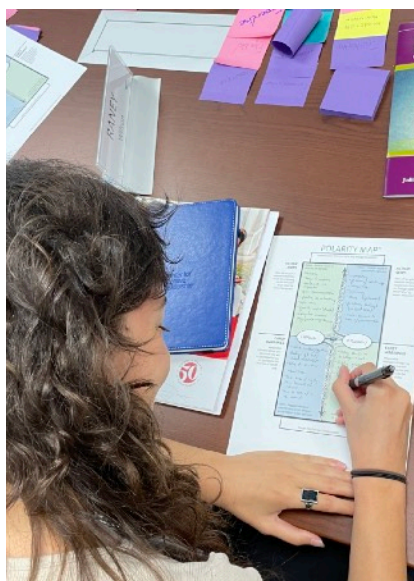
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

At the core of the Caldwell Fellows Program design are practices of experiential learning. These program elements provide opportunities for Fellows to apply leadership concepts in real-world communities, bridging the gap between theory and practice. This approach allows our students to develop and refine their leadership skills through practical experiences, enabling them to gain valuable insights, learn from failures, and enhance their problem-solving abilities. Additionally, these practices foster self-reflection and personal growth as students navigate challenges, collaborate with others, and make decisions in dynamic environments. Some examples of program components that foster experiential leadership development are listed below.

PEER - TO - PEER
LEARNING

COMMUNITY - BASED
LEARNING

TRAVEL - BASED
LEARNING



PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING

Peer-to-peer learning strategies have a profound impact on college students. By engaging with their peers, Fellows share knowledge, insights, and experiences in a relatable and accessible manner. This approach fosters a collaborative and inclusive learning environment where students actively participate and contribute to each other's learning. Ultimately, these models empower students to take ownership of their education and cultivate a deeper understanding of the subject matter. The Caldwell Fellows Program creates vessels for these types of learning experiences through our Dinner Seminar series, class retreats, and student leadership teams.



CALDWELL DINNER SEMINARS

Recognizing that many of life's most important conversations happen at the dinner table, every month, all classes of Fellows share a meal with one another around an annual program theme. Fellows are invited to join in thoughtful conversation that is often led by special guests of the program. Last year's theme followed the thread of 55 years of Caldwell Fellows and included alumni storytellers.

CALDWELL LEADERSHIP TEAMS

In an effort to provide students with on-going leadership opportunities that have an immediate impact, Caldwell Fellows are invited to step into roles and teams that support the life and mission of the program. These teams help ideate and facilitate programming related to the Dinner Seminars, program communications, celebrations, new student recruitment, and philanthropic efforts.

COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

SERVICE - LEARNING TEAMS

The Caldwell Sophomore Seminar exposes newly admitted Fellows to the principles of servant leadership while engaging them in our local community through service-learning teams. The consistency of weekly service with our community partners and the longevity of these partnerships, from three to fifteen years, model the fact that effective social change and leadership are built on relationships, commitment, and patience. Each team is led by an upper-class Fellow who mentors the team and serves as the community liaison. These upper-class Fellows make up the TA (teaching assistant) team for the sophomore seminar and receive intensive training in team leadership and semester-long coaching for their continued leadership development. [Read more](#) about our local service-learning partners.



COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

S H A C K - A - T H O N

Shack-a-thonShack-a-thon is an annual NC State tradition that addresses the issue of affordable housing by supporting the work of Habitat for Humanity. Student organizations across NC State converge on the Brickyard for a week to build shacks, raise money, and educate their peers about the pressing issues of housing insecurity across the nation. The Caldwell Fellows team that participates each year takes full charge of designing, building, and supporting the life of the shack over five days. [Read more](#) about Shack-a-thon 2023



COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

SATELLITE



SATELLITE embodies NC State's land-grant mission to serve the state of North Carolina. Since 1997, Caldwell Fellows have served as the home for this STEM outreach program to introduce students from rural North Carolina high schools to science and technology related educational and career paths through a five-day overnight camp on NC State's campus. Caldwell Fellows plan and lead the full camp experience from designing the camp curriculum and recruiting campers to serving as counselors for the 60 high school sophomores as they traverse NC State, engaging with professors and hands-on learning across the spectrum of STEM education. Campus partnerships and generous contributions from alumni and corporate sponsor BASF, enable the goal of a camp that is economically accessible; the cost of attendance is \$25.

Brodie Smith '24 states, "As Co-Director of SATELLITE I've been challenged solve problems, collaborate my peers, and give direction to the program. I've gained firsthand experience of servant leadership. One of the biggest challenges I faced was knowing when to prioritize my own well-being; an empty cup cannot pour into others. SATELLITE has had a profound impact on Fellows, NC State students, and over 1,000 high school students across North Carolina; putting our land-grant university first." [Learn more.](#)

TRAVEL-BASED LEARNING

Urban adventure: Seattle

Global perspectives: Portugal & the Camino

Wilderness Expedition

Learning via travel holds significant value for college students. It provides unique opportunities to experience different cultures, traditions, and perspectives firsthand, fostering a greater appreciation for diversity and global awareness. By immersing themselves in new environments, our students broaden their horizons, challenge their assumptions, and develop a more nuanced understanding of the world. Secondly, travel enhances experiential learning by providing practical, real-life situations where students can apply their academic knowledge and skills. It promotes critical thinking, adaptability, and problem-solving abilities, as students navigate unfamiliar territories and encounter diverse challenges. Lastly, travel encourages personal growth, self-confidence, and independence, as students step out of their comfort zones, build resilience, and deepen their self-reflection practice. Caldwell Fellows offered three such programs in 2023. You can learn more about the urban adventure in Seattle by reading [this brief article](#). You can learn more about our recent international immersion and the 2023 Caldwell Wilderness Expedition on the following page.



THE POWER OF THE OUTDOORS

EXPLORING THE COLORADO BACKCOUNTRY & THE CAMINO PORTUGUES



Even though many of us intuitively understand the power and pull of spending time outdoors, we don't always acknowledge its tangible benefits. There is a significant and growing body of research that empirically outlines those benefits. The positive impacts of spending time outdoors include reduced anxiety, sharper mental focus, improved physical health, an increased sense of belonging, and a deeper appreciation for one's place in the world. In an age of overwhelming data saturation, screen fatigue, virtual reality, and mental health crises; it is more important than ever for college students to have access to and support for meaningful engagement in the outdoors. For two and a half decades, the Caldwell Wilderness Expedition has provided Fellows with world-class outdoor leadership development experiences. Maintained by the model of Caldwell alum Mark Wagoner (Class of 1993) and funds given in his memory, our team of alumni wilderness leaders provides the expertise and leadership that accelerates our students' growth and development. This year's trip leaders were Julia O'Brien '20 and Jerrica Kirkley '06. They led nine current Fellows on an outdoor adventure like none other in the backcountry of Colorado. The trip included backpacking the Collegiate Peaks and whitewater rafting.

This summer also saw a second iteration of what may possibly become a newly minted Caldwell experiential learning tradition. Janice and Chester were joined by 14 students for a cultural exploration of the major cities of Portugal, followed by a six day traverse of the Camino Portugues from Vigo to Santiago de Compostela, Spain. This unique approach to exploring the Spanish countryside provided students with rich opportunities for

independent self-discovery, cross-cultural encounters, and deep reflection at a time of personal transition.

Both of these experiences serve as powerful models of the benefits of time spent away from our digital lives, plugged into unfamiliar terrain. These experiences provide opportunities for students to clear out mental clutter and distractions, embrace novelty and uncertainty, and listen for answers to their own big questions as they journey through uncharted territory.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING GRANTS

The Caldwell Fellows Experiential Learning Grant (CFELG) provides students with the opportunity to undertake intentional, individually-tailored learning experiences to which they may not otherwise have access. The point of this funding is for students to engage in critical thinking and planning that links their personal and professional goals to experiences that will challenge them and increase their capacity to learn. Examples of approved experiences from this year are listed below.

Enhancing Cultural Competency in Spain	Engineers Without Borders Guatemala Monitoring Trip
Animation Master Class & Professional Technology	T Rowe Price Internship
Servant Leadership: Alternative Spring Break Trip	Google UX Design Professional Certificate
Alaska Mountaineering NOLS Expedition	Internship with North Carolina Supreme Court - Office of Administrative Counsel
Birthright Trip to Israel	Collaborative Research of Biochemical Traumatic Brain Injury Diagnostics for Improved Patient Outcomes
2023 Sloan Sports Analytics Conference	Shadowing with Architects in Boston to Determine a Career Mission
Legislative Internship Program	Crowder Construction Company Internship: Graham Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion
Tesla Internship	Berks County Medical Society Summer Research Internship
Improvisational Piano Lessons At Village Music School	Regulatory and Stewardship Internship with Syngenta
Caldwell Fellows Portugal and NW Spain trip	Three Mile Island 2 reactor internship with Energy Solutions

For a more in-depth look at what Caldwell Fellows did with experiential learning opportunities in the 2021-2022 academic year, take a look at their reflection posters. They presented these posters at our August Dinner Seminar. You can read more about that session [here](#).

A CULTURE OF PHILANTHROPY

One fact that distinguishes our program from other scholarship programs, is that we are named not for a benefactor, but a role model. Former Chancellor John T. Caldwell stands as a powerful model of servant-leadership, character, and spirit. Our financial resources are a different story. They tell the story of NC State's land grant mission and the collective energy and generosity of countless individuals that have allowed this work to carry on for fifty-five years. The amount of any particular gift is relative to an individual's means and all are valued equally. The number of alumni and friends who support this work is quite extraordinary: Caldwell Fellows have the highest level of alumni engagement of any University constituency. On this point, we admit to being a bit competitive; we seek to deepen it. Our mission is to responsibly transform the resources we are trusted with into experiences and relationships that galvanize not only the students we serve, but the communities they touch. As a land-grant University, NC State exists to serve the people of our state and the Caldwell Fellows Program is the servant-leadership program within the servant university. With abundant gratitude, we acknowledge the countless individuals who give of their time, talent, and treasure to enable this transformative work.

One campus-wide tradition that supports our work is NC State's Day of Giving. Each year we are humbled by the power and magnitude of energy we receive from our community on Day of Giving. This year we received financial support from more than 250 donors and raised over \$130,000.

And as always, if you are interested in learning more about how you can invest in tomorrow's servant-leaders, [learn more on our giving page](#).





OUR TEAM

At the heart of the Caldwell Fellows Program are the staff who seek to model the program values and practices of servant-leadership with all student interactions. While each staff member brings specific expertise, the work is a team approach.



T A B I T H A H U N T

A 2017 alumna of NC State, Tabitha brings her skills in professional event leadership combined with her budget and administrative leadership from serving NC State libraries. She manages complexities with expertise and personal care.



C H E S T E R B R E W E R

A known face to many at NC State, Chester joined us this year after ten years with University Scholars. A skilled experiential educator and outdoor education enthusiast, Chester's insight, creativity, and humor are significant to our work of student development. Chester also leads our program communications.



J A N I C E O D O M

For 20 years Janice has sought to expand the program's experiential learning curriculum, build community partnerships and deepen the program's connections across campus and with our sister organization - The Center for Creative Leadership. She has particularly enjoyed engaging the Caldwell alumni network as partners in the development of our students and, with the teamwork of the staff, empowering students to take leadership roles within the program.