Christopher Newport University
Service and Civic Engagement Initiative
February 2008

> *"Our students should confront hunger, poverty, misfortune, human suffering and loss and through those experiences come to understand the harsh realities of this world. They must also know how their unique abilities can turn hardship into triumph and hopefully each of them will develop a life-long sense of responsibility for making the world a better place. Truly, we change the world one person at a time and it begins with each of us, here and now"* –Paul S. Trible, *President*

Christopher Newport University and the local community are proposing an exciting new partnership. The University has worked hard to pursue academic excellence and make scholarship an all-important part of the lives of our students and faculty. And while we also have endeavored to give back to our neighbors through faculty and staff outreach and by providing student volunteers to nonprofit agencies throughout the area, we would like to join the University's diverse resources—its hearts, hands, and minds—with the community's needs in broader and more fundamental ways.

We wish to make sustained community service and service learning a central part of our campus culture; we want to help our students become more intentional in connecting what they learn in the classroom—about hunger, poverty, and politics—with actions taken in the world.

The University has assembled a group of committed faculty, staff, and students—more than 60 volunteers—to find ways for members of the CNU family to help local nonprofit and municipal agencies expand their capacity to assist our neighbors.

Our outreach will proceed along five trajectories:

- A **Day of Service**, which ultimately will involve our 1,200 freshmen in hands-on service projects throughout the community;
- The **Phoenix Project,** a sustained initiative that will join the University's resources and abilities to meet community-identified needs in southeast Newport News neighborhoods. We will be assisted in this component by The Phoenix Project, a nonprofit organization headquartered in Virginia that facilitates partnerships and builds networks between universities and their communities;
- **Curricular Integration**, in which we build service learning into select academic courses so that students may be able to connect what they are learning in the classroom with actions taken in the world;
- **Research Track for Service Learning**, in which we engage the intellectual resources of the university to jointly solve community-identified problems; and
- An **International Partnership** to enable CNU students, faculty, and staff to extend volunteerism, community service, and service learning experiences into a foreign geographical and cultural context.