

The Westside Communities Alliance (WCA) is a communications network managed by the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts with support from the College of Design, Office of Government and Community Relations, and Center for Serve-Learn-Sustain at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Launched in 2011 in partnership with the neighborhoods of English Avenue and Vine City, the Alliance works to build and sustain relationships among other constituencies across communities west of the Connector, and with others, in order to partner on issues of common concern. Considering over half of the city's college students conduct their studies there and the neighborhoods are facing overwhelming developmental change, the Westside is a popular area for Tech faculty/staff/students to conduct both studies and service.

The WCA facilitates place-based campus-community relationships with partner groups and organizations west of Georgia Tech. We promote an ethical approach to engagement that builds upon a 5-year history with westside communities. The WCA model incorporates a call-and-response method that recognizes the importance of community expertise supported by academic expertise. Using this operational frame, we envision a future where we stand united in support of strong, vibrant sustainable communities surrounding Georgia Tech's campus.

Current Fall 2016 Opportunities/Projects:

- WCA Data Dashboard (<http://wcatadashboard.iac.gatech.edu/>): The data dashboard synthesizes an abundance of city data into a format that is both visually and geographically user-friendly. Students and faculty can use this resource to find information on community demographics, the education system, public safety, and historic events and statistics at the neighborhood, NPU, and school cluster level.
 - o WCA Staff will offer weekly office hours and provide small group or class trainings on using the dashboard to answer, inform, or guide research projects and reports.
 - D.M. Smith 102 – Mondays and Thursdays from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
 - Contact – Katie O'Connell, Project Manager
 - o We are seeking students and/or courses to partner with us to improve various portals including support with design, information gathering, and technical support
 - Ex. A Data Visualization class might build a heat map of data points
- Westside Resource Center (<https://www.facebook.com/thewestsidelab/>): The Resource Center is a community space that allows residents to utilize internet-accessible computers and WiFi free of charge.
 - o We seek students to serve as volunteers to assist users with basic computer skills such as creating e-mail accounts, using a search engine, paying online bills, etc.
 - Hours of Operation: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 2:00 – 6:00 pm
 - o On Wednesdays, the WCA uses the center for classes and workshops. We invite faculty members and/or students to work with us to host small group activities for community residents there.
 - Examples: How to Build a Raspberry Pi, Basic Excel Spreadsheet Functions
- Westside READY (Revitalizing Education And Developing Youth) and CEISMC (Center for Education Integrating Science, Math, and Computing)
 - o Opportunities to volunteer with and to create after-school activities for students at the new Michael Hollis K-8 STEM Academy, in addition to providing support for parents and teachers.