

Northside Residential Fellowship Intentional Graduate Student Living in Chapel Hill's Northside Neighborhood

Background: Northside is a historically Black neighborhood in Chapel Hill whose residents live and die by the mandate to “love thy neighbor as thyself.” However, in recent years, Northside has experienced “studentification” marked by a shift from a predominance of single-family owned homes to a predominance of rental properties shared by college students. This process has disrupted the sense of community in Northside. Residents express seeing a changing neighborhood that is not “for them,” so social integration and community engagement are threatened.

Solution: The Jackson Center and community partners have enacted strategic efforts to balance the market, to educate student tenants, to retain multi-generational families, and to attract new homeowners intent on living close, connected, and proud, that have been successful. Implementing an intentional living-learning household is another strategy to preserve this vibrant neighborhood.

Purpose: The Northside Residential Fellowship Program seeks to bridge Northside residents and UNC graduate students together in a reciprocal relationship. Research demonstrates the important role neighborhood plays in the health and well-being of individuals. Therefore, we want to create a space for graduate students to become active members of the Northside community and re-establish a multi-generational neighborhood where all residents feel supported.

Program Specifics:

Student Criteria

- Graduate/Professional student
- Interests in diversity, sustainable communities, health equity, and aging
- Comfortable interacting with diverse groups and desire to live in a diverse community
- Commitment to cultural competency/humility
- A desire to live in the neighborhood for personal gain and also community gain

Engagement Practices

- BE WITH neighbors
 - Stopping by the porch, playing with the youth outside, acts of kindness
- Participation in community events sponsored by the Jackson Center and other Northside organizations
 - Block parties, cookouts, holiday gatherings
- Service pledge with a Northside organization
- Weekly shared household meal
- Neighbor engagement
 - Cooking, games, walking, fellowship, transportation
- Organized neighbor meet-ups
 - Host has opportunity to share talents/passions with neighbors