Emory may be a private institution, but it takes seriously its role as a member of the Atlanta community. The University’s outreach programs are numerous, they involve administrators at the highest echelons, a variety of faculty members, staff at all levels and students of every sort. Emory has offices dedicated solely to fostering positive relationships with the community, while other organizations reach out on top of their regular work.

“Emory’s faculty, students and staff share a strong commitment to our basic moral purpose of learning and teaching in the service of humanity,” said President Bill Chace. “Because Emory is blessed with enormous expertise and diverse resources, we have a responsibility to try to make a difference in the lives of those in the community who are less fortunate.”

Community relations

The Office of Governmental and Community Affairs (OGCA) acts as the liaison between the University and its Atlanta home. It cultivates relationships not only with local government, but also with neighborhood and community organizations to keep them informed about University activities.

One of the ways OGCA’s six staff members participate in community outreach is by sitting on neighborhood boards and participating in neighborhood activities. “It’s all part of giving back to the community,” said Jacqueline Anthony, director of community affairs. Anthony is one of several Emory administrators who sit on the board of the Alliance to Improve Emory Village, a group of representatives from local businesses and neighborhoods whose goal is to address the challenges facing the popular area near Emory’s main gate.

“It’s a way for Emory to be socially responsible and join with the people with whom we share our neighborhood,” she said.

Separate from OGCA is the Office of University-Community Partnerships (OUCP), headquartered at Emory’s Briarcliff Campus. OUCP was created in 2000 with the intent of integrating the University’s teaching, research and service missions with an emphasis on community service. OUCP is a part of Emory’s Center for Ethics, Public Policy and the Professions, and its efforts are truly diverse.

One of OUCP’s most innovative tools is its online Community Partnerships Database. Projects in the versatile database are sorted alphabetically by subject (such as environment, faith-based and health) and by nature (teaching, research or service). The database describes each outreach project and names a contact person. A major new initiative of OUCP is the Kenneth Cole Fellowship in Community Building and Social Change. Cole, an internationally known fashion designer and a 1976 graduate of Emory College, generously provided the gift that makes the program possible.

Nineteen undergraduate students comprised the inaugural class, and they worked at a variety of community agencies throughout Atlanta in summer 2002. Through their 12 weeks of field experience, visits to small-group meetings and an annual leadership conference, Cole fellows get to see first-hand the critical role collaboration plays in resolving important public problems.

“When we started, everybody looked a little worried and concerned, unsure of what was going to happen, excited but more nervous,” said Sam Marie Engle, OUCP senior program associate and fellowship director. “But the faces I see [now] are faces full of confidence, a lot of pride—pride in their work.”

School partnerships

Since 1986, Emory has partnered with Fernbank Elementary School and Druid Hills High School, offering students, faculty and staff of each nearby school access to research materials, the Carlos Museum, tutors and many other activities at Emory. More than 300 Emory students have participated in tutoring programs; the pastoral counseling center has offered its services; students at the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing provide physical exams and presentations on health and hygiene; and outstanding students and teachers at Fernbank and Druid Hills are recognized at an awards program.

A wide range of Emory entities reaches out to local schools. The Institute for Comparative and International Studies (ICIS), through its Community Connections Initiative, sends students, faculty and staff to Cary Research Elementary School, located in the Atlanta suburb of Doraville, to participate in cultural diversity programming. More than 80 percent of the school’s students speak English as a second language and ICIS sponsors cross-cultural events such as celebrations of Mexican and Vietnamese holidays.

Last year Emory Healthcare helped fund the John D. Henry Family Technology Resource Center at Columbia Elementary School in South DeKalb County. Emory’s gift helped purchase more than 30 computers for the center, whose goal is to teach computer skills not only to the students, but to their parents and the community at large. Emory has hired more than 20 adult graduates of the center.

Corporate giving and volunteerism

Emory Gives’ Corporate Giving program solicits donations to the University’s official corporate giving campaign, raised a record $458,000 for its six charitable partners in 2001.

“Corporate giving is one of many ways that Volunteer Emory serves the Atlanta community,” said VE Director Hildie Cohen. “The 18-member staff also coordinates weekly service trips, special events, awareness campaigns and volunteer samplers to meet the needs identified by community organizations.”

Academic and cultural partnerships

Several of Emory’s partnering activities are associated with academic and/or cultural issues. Sometimes these efforts can be groundbreaking. Case in point is Emory’s cosponsoring of “Without Sanctuary,” an exhibition of lynching photographs on display at the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site. Priestess Haleya Omolewa Eniloranorupa of the Ile Ori Ifa Cultural Center (above) gives the opening invocation.

The University’s outreach programs are numerous; they involve administrators at the highest echelons, a variety of faculty members, staff at all levels and students of every sort. Emory also is a leader in groundbreaking cultural programming, as evidenced by its cosponsoring of “Without Sanctuary,” an exhibition of lynching photographs on display at the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site. Priestess Haleya Omolewa Eniloranorupa of the Ile Ori Ifa Cultural Center (above) gives the opening invocation.

Emory’s first class of Kenneth Cole Fellows (top, pictured with, from left to right: professor Michael Owens, President Bill Chace, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, Cole and professor Michael Rich) recently wrapped up their first summer of service. Emory also is a leader in groundbreaking cultural programming, as evidenced by its cosponsoring of “Without Sanctuary,” an exhibition of lynching photographs on display at the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site. Priestess Haleya Omolewa Eniloranorupa of the Ile Ori Ifa Cultural Center (above) gives the opening invocation.