



# Bass Connections

## SNAPSHOT

### WHAT IS BASS CONNECTIONS?

**Bass Connections bridges the classroom and the real world, giving students a chance to roll up their sleeves and tackle complex societal problems in research teams alongside faculty and other students from across Duke.**

This campus-wide initiative offers students courses and immersive learning opportunities that cross disciplines and represent the best of Duke. Students acquire important skills in research methods and learn how to collaborate with a range of experts. This enhances their work in **project teams**, the keystone of Bass Connections. In these teams, students of all levels work together with faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and outside experts on cutting-edge research that addresses important issues such as global health, poverty, government transparency, and energy efficiency.

*The opportunity to work in small, innovative research teams is rare for undergraduates within higher education.* Beyond project teams, students can explore Bass Connections topics through Duke experiences such as Data+ and DukeEngage, by completing a senior honors thesis, and much more.

#### Why is it Important to Invest in Bass Connections?

Bass Connections is fast becoming a cornerstone of the Duke experience, and we need support from donors like you to help us sustain its momentum. Together, we can meet growing demand from faculty and students who are excited to be a part of a program that sets Duke apart and is transforming higher education for the 21st century. Donor investments will help Duke educate a new generation of versatile leaders who are adept at working in diverse teams to solve today's—and tomorrow's—global problems.

# IMPACT

## The Student Experience

Bass Connections leverages the best programs and opportunities at Duke to offer students, such as **Michelle Khalid '17**, a remarkable education. Here's Michelle's Bass Connections pathway:

When Michelle first arrived at Duke, she participated in Dukelmmers: Uprooted/Rerouted, a program centered around forced migration and refugee studies. She realized she wanted to study these issues more in-depth. So, she joined the Bass Connections project team **Displacement, Resettlement, and Global Mental Health** and studied how resettlement affects the well-being of Bhutanese refugees in Nepal, Iraqi refugees in Egypt, and Syrian and Iraqi refugees in Jordan. She and her team were the only undergraduates to present a paper on their work at an international conference in Oxford (Duke in Oxford). Michelle is also involved with SuWA, a group that provides cross-cultural interaction between Duke students and refugee women. And, she spent a summer doing DukeEngage Serbia, where she worked for the Asylum Protection Center.



"My experiences challenged me to grow both intellectually and as a person. Bass Connections has provided me with an academic passion that extends outside of the walls of the classroom."

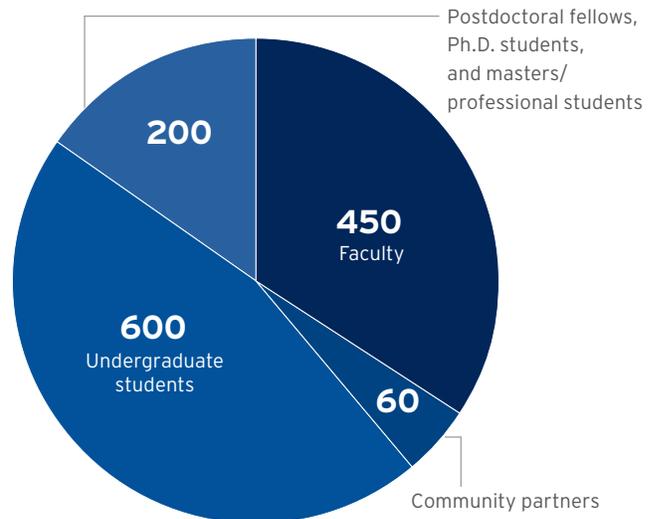
**MICHELLE KHALID '17**

## Project Teams (2013–2016)

**130 teams**

**18 Duke schools and institutes**

represented with 1,300 participants:



**Art, Vision, and the Brain.** In this project team, students and faculty explored color and the visual system by examining the Nasher Museum of Art's collection. The team analyzed how color and luminance are treated in art and processed in the brain. They used a combination of image processing analyses and spectrophotometric studies (which examines light absorption) to illustrate that color is perceptual, rather than physical. Then, they organized an exhibition and a symposium at the Nasher, "Seeing Color: Art, Vision and the Brain."

**Integrative Global Health Research on Sickle Cell Disease.** Master of Science in Global Health student Brittney Wittenbrink '16 jumped at the chance to study sickle cell disease with experts at Duke. Through a Bass Connections project team and the Duke Global Health Institute's Summer Research Training program, she contributed to a model that explains differences in severity among sickle cell patients. The model will help to improve health outcomes. Over the summer she did fieldwork for her master's thesis, interviewing patients and families in South Africa and Cameroon. "My thesis work is a smaller part of our Bass Connections team's larger model," she explains. "I like being part of a team and knowing my work will not only stand on its own but also contribute to a bigger goal."