As future leaders of our global society, Duke students must be more than experts in their chosen fields of study: They must be able to understand and address complex ethical questions of justice and the individual and common good. Duke University’s Kenan Institute for Ethics leads the charge to prepare our students to become moral decision-makers and thoughtful leaders.

As one of seven signature institutes at Duke, the Kenan Institute serves as a powerful force for understanding and addressing the array of ethical challenges facing individuals, organizations, and cultures worldwide. Since its founding in 1995 through the vision and generosity of the Kenan family, the institute has become a leading center for innovative experiential education in ethics. It is also a thought-leader on ethical problems faced by local, national, and global communities related to migration, human rights, religion, moral decision-making, and government regulation. And, perhaps most importantly, the Kenan Institute provides transformative programming that truly completes the Duke experience for participating students.

During the Duke Forward campaign, we seek investments that will enable us to continue to foster Duke students’ capacity for ethical decision-making, conduct interdisciplinary research to address moral issues of broad social and cultural significance, and help shape public policy and institutional practice.
MOLDING GLOBAL CITIZENS

Millions of people are forced to take refuge in other countries due to war or persecution. What is the impact on individuals, families, and communities? Undergraduate Ronnie Wimberley spent an eye-opening semester in Cairo working with refugee agencies to understand the needs of Iraqis seeking refuge in Egypt. “The most shocking part for me was how the Iraqis’ perceptions of masculinity changed as a result of displacement,” he said. “Men are expected to provide for their families, but displacement makes this difficult, if not impossible. It really changed the power dynamics in the home. As a result of this experience, I now look at the world through a different lens.”

When Wimberley and his classmates in the DukeImmerse Law, Ethics, and Political Economy of Displacement Program returned to campus, they shared their insights with other Duke students in a FOCUS course on World Refugee Policy and International Law. Those students, with the guidance of Kenan faculty experts in global migration, crafted monologues that captured the refugees’ experiences. They presented the monologues to local high school students to shed light on the global refugee situation and to expand the conversation about North Carolina’s growing migrant population.

Boundaries Not Included

ENRICHING THE DUKE EXPERIENCE

A summer in Dublin interviewing African refugees about what it’s like to try to fit into an unfamiliar society—and finding meaningful ways to help. The opening of the art exhibit you have spent a semester curating to explore what it means to “live ethically.”

The effect of challenging, transformative real-world experiences like these can last a lifetime, shaping our students’ professional and personal paths. That’s why the Kenan Institute for Ethics offers Duke undergraduate and graduate students a wide range of global opportunities for learning and service, fellowships that support creativity without bounds, a certificate in ethics to complement any major, and more.

These experiences are crucial to prepare our students for global citizenship. But demand for the institute’s growing menu of educational programs exceeds our current funding. Gifts to the Duke Forward campaign will expand access to these programs, and help us launch new ventures to reach students in life-altering ways.

YOUR GIFT OF $100,000 OR MORE to the Ethics in Education fund can support and expand programs like the Ethics Certificate, DukeImmerse, and DukeEngage Dublin that enable Duke students to connect ethics theory and practice.
Blazing New Paths

ACTIVATING DUKE’S POWER FOR THE WORLD

Just as students must get out into the world to make a meaningful impact—so too must ideas. The Kenan Institute elevates the global dialogue on ethics and provides a platform for serious thinkers to develop big ideas. Our partnerships with businesses, think tanks, nonprofits, and policymakers worldwide ensure that insights from our research inform real-world decisions. For instance, our roundtable with The Brookings Institution brought together practitioners, scholars, and policymakers to generate recommendations for immigration policy. Duke scholars presented these recommendations on Capitol Hill, at the Council on Foreign Relations and other Washington forums, and they continue to shape current policy debates.

To deepen our community’s exposure to ethics thinkers and ideas, the institute brings seasoned professionals to campus: Fiona Terry, an international expert on the ethics of humanitarian intervention, taught a joint class for undergraduate and medical students and led a symposium to explore the ethical issues that arise when providing clean water, food, or other development resources to underserved communities.

Philanthropic support will help the Kenan Institute sustain and strengthen our programs to bring more voices into the conversation about ethics, and further our mission of putting knowledge to work in service to society.

YOUR GIFT OF $100,000 OR MORE

- can support community engagement programs or scholarly symposia that bring together stakeholders to help guide policymaking on issues of importance.

YOUR GIFT OF $2.5 MILLION OR MORE

- can endow a program that brings ethics practitioners and visiting faculty to Duke to teach, study, and shape public policy.

TACKLING COMPLEX ISSUES

When the U.N. launched a working group on Business and Human Rights, they turned to the Kenan Institute to help implement its guiding principles. That partnership led to an extraordinary opportunity for recent Duke graduate Brianna Nofil to travel to Mongolia to study the impacts of new foreign-funded mineral mines on local communities in the young democracy. “It was amazing to meet with mining company representatives, government officials, and the local nomadic herders to understand each group’s interests and concerns,” she said. “Without a doubt, witnessing the efforts to reconcile business interests with human rights concerns is an experience I will draw upon throughout my career.”

Now back at Duke, Nofil—the Bear Post-Graduate Fellow in Business, Law, and Human Rights—is working with Kenan Institute faculty to study the access that victims of human rights abuses have to judicial remedy in the United States. An independent study class is giving other Duke students a chance to conduct research to expand upon her project.
DEVELOPING MORAL LEADERS

Why do people differ in what they view as moral? How do we create leaders who make wise, ethical decisions? What do college students think about cheating on exams and on romantic partners?

In the Kenan Institute’s new “MADLab” (Moral Attitudes and Decision-Making), teams of faculty, post-docs, graduate students, and undergrads are working together to answer these questions and to understand how social, cultural, neurological, and biological factors shape our views and actions.

MADLab co-director Walter Sinnott-Armstrong has led studies on how judges can use brain scans to assess legal and moral culpability when neurological issues may have affected criminal behavior. And Senior Fellow Ruth Grant has written widely on how incentives encourage—or discourage—blood donation, homework completion, and workplace productivity.

And, every five years, the Kenan Institute conducts a survey of thousands of Duke undergraduates about integrity. The study offers compelling insights into changing attitudes toward cheating, collaboration, and plagiarism, and raises important questions about how a Duke education can—and should—affect students’ integrity in all areas of life.

Fueling Uncontainable Ideas

SUSTAINING DUKE’S MOMENTUM

Should there be a market in human organs? How can religious communities best reduce poverty? Where can governments and industries effectively diminish workplace risk?

These are the types of complex ethical questions Duke faculty are tackling: questions that, by their very nature, demand broad perspectives and teamwork to answer. The Kenan Institute fosters this collaborative environment, bringing together experts across the campus and helping them advance research, create and implement solutions, and share findings with students and the greater community to help shape policy and practice.

While ethical questions arise in all areas of life, funding to study these issues in a collaborative way is limited. It also takes ongoing investment to attract outstanding faculty to advance Duke’s reputation for excellence in this arena. Providing support for our faculty and their research during this campaign is one of the most significant ways a donor can make a lasting investment in the future of ethics scholarship, teaching, and practice at Duke and beyond.

YOUR GIFT OF $100,000 OR MORE
to an Ethics Research Fund can support promising work in one of the Kenan Institute’s focus areas.

YOUR GIFT OF $1.5 MILLION
can endow an assistant/associate professorship to help us attract rising stars in the field of ethics.