



The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center Hamilton College

1997 - 1998 Annual Report

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Anissa Dean '98 (Sociology) and Joann Pailey '99 (American Studies and Art) shared their research with students at Whitesboro High School. They were among 22 Hamilton students selected by the faculty as Levitt Scholars to present their research work to area schools.

Levitt Scholars share research

Ranging from an actual robot demonstration to a poetry workshop, this year's Levitt Scholars offered unique and thought-provoking presentations to local schools. In this fifth year of the program, sponsored by the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center, the 22 student speakers represented 12 disciplines from across the College. Levitt Scholars spoke to enthusiastic audiences in 64 classes from 30 area schools. Among the research presentations were:

- How can a robot see? Mary Dias took her robot with accompanying camera and computer to class to demonstrate the unusual way of "seeing" that it uses to avoid obstacles.

(continued on page two)

Feedback on Levitt Scholars:

"Matt Sircely's presentation was truly outstanding... He brought in a number of complex concepts and issues in a style that was both accessible and challenging to students. He also was a model...of someone using his personal qualities and his intellectual abilities to contribute to 'making a difference' in the world...I want to express my appreciation to Hamilton College...Hamilton is positioning itself as a regional resource and providing a dynamic model."

Carolyn Schmidt
Sociology teacher
Chenango Forks High School

"Some of my students expressed an interest in taking a robotics course as a result of [Mary Dias'] speech to us. I was very impressed with how knowledgeable she was."

Deborah Amuso
Chemistry teacher
Camden High School

"My students were fascinated - as was I! Elizabeth [Rothenberg gave] an incredible presentation. We really enjoyed this!"

Mary Martin
Social Studies chair
Greene Central School

"[Karlen] Chase was well received by the students and a good role model because of her serious interest in poetry and writing. She had a good rapport with the 10th graders and conveyed some useful insights into writing."

Jan Joslyn
English teacher
Herkimer High School

Levitt Scholar topics 1998

- Sabra Barnett '98** "The generation gap in entitlements - how does age affect political decisions regarding Social Security and Medicare?"
- Kim Boulanger '98** "How can you prepare now for the career you want?"
- Niisha Butler '98** "Is Ghana a democracy?"
- Karlen Chase '99** "Finding your inner poet"
- Jonathan Cornwell '99** "Liberalism versus libertarianism - theory and practice"
- Anissa Dean '98** "How do black men and women adjust to life in a white college?"
- Mary Dias '98** "How do we teach a robot to see where it is going?"
- Deanna Falbo '98** "What role do gender and race stereotypes play in the novel *Gone with the Wind*?"
- Eli Koppel '98** "Why do political incumbents have the advantage?"
- Jenna Koserowitz '98** "Does the media mold the image that girls have of themselves?"
- Kau (Tommy) Liem '98** "How will China's economic reform influence its future development?"
- Anne Marcoline '98** "How does American literature help us understand American history?"
- Jason Mitchell '98** "Gerrit Smith - a forgotten abolitionist"
- Todd Monsell '98** "How to research, annotate and edit - a preparation for college work"
- Joann Pailey '99** "What has been the history of homelessness in the United States?"
- Adam Polak '98** "How have perceptions changed about the Easter Rising in Dublin, Ireland?"
- Elizabeth Rothenberg '98** "It's magic in sixteenth century England"
- Preeti Samarasan '98** "How did memorials of World War I influence the rise of nationalism in India?"
- Seth Schwartz '98** "How has the Kibbutz system changed in Israel?"
- Matthew Sircely '98** "In what ways does industrial agriculture impact the ecology of Costa Rica?"
- Corey Stark '98** "Is democratic consolidation possible in Guatemala?"
- Matthew Thornton '98** "Why is scientific research so important?"

(continued from page one)

- Karlen Chase showed that anyone can write and understand poetry. She encouraged students to "find their inner poet" by developing fresh images and creating their own poems.
- The impact of agriculture on the ecology of Costa Rica was a popular topic, as Matthew Sircely traveled to five schools to share his first-hand experiences in Central America with 11 classes.
- Elizabeth Rothenberg unveiled the history of magic in sixteenth century England.

- Jonathan Cornwell discussed theories of liberalism and libertarianism from a philosophical perspective.
- Matthew Thornton described the application of scientific research.
- Seth Schwartz described his experiences living on a kibbutz and the changes in the Israeli culture.
- Jason Mitchell presented his research on Gerrit Smith, a Hamilton alumnus and an important abolitionist during the Civil War era. Jason has continued working with students as a social studies teacher at New Hartford High School.



Pictured above: In a sociology class at Whitesboro High School, Joann Pailey describes the ways in which poverty and homelessness have been experienced during different eras throughout our history.

On left: Anissa Dean presents the results of her interviews with black and white college students regarding their social experiences to a social studies class.

- Tommy Liem talked about the potential future impact of the many economic changes in China.
- Eli Koppel explained the reasons why political incumbents have an advantage.
- Jenna Koserowitz discussed the often distorted and sometimes dangerous images of themselves that young girls learn from the media.
- Based on her work in the Career Center, Kim Boulanger addressed the practical topic of preparing for a career.

A new group of Scholars will present to high schoolers in spring 1999. Again they will take part in an intensive seven-week training course in communications conducted by Susan Mason, director, Program in Teacher Education.

"[Preeta Samarasan was] the best we've ever had - and there have been great ones before! Wow - what a candidate - very good topic for our students!

Debbie New and
Donna Meeks-McCarten
Global studies teachers
Canastota High School

Schools served:

Averill Park High School
C. W. Baker High School
(Baldwinsville)
Bethlehem High School
Binghamton High School
Brookfield High School
Camden High School
Canastota High School
Chenango Forks High School
Cooperstown High School
Delaware Academy
Fayetteville Manlius High School
Frankfort High School
Greene High School
Guilderland High School
Herkimer High School
Jamesville Dewitt High School
Jordan Elbridge High School
Maine Endwell High School
Marcellus High School
Mohenason High School
New Hartford High School
Niskayuna High School
Nottingham High School
Poland High School
Rome Catholic High School
Stockbridge High School
Voorheesville High School
Westmoreland High School
Whitesboro High School
Vestal High School

Levitt Scholars and advisors are honored at annual lunch



The 1997-1998 Levitt Scholars and their advisors were honored in May for presentations to 64 classes during the semester. Pictured from left to right are: Tommy Liem, Adam Polak, Matthew Thornton, Prof. Steve Orvis, Deana Falbo, Joann Pailey, Liz Rothenberg, Prof. Dennis Gilbert, Kim Boulanger, Prof. Kevin Grant, Prof. Frank Anechiarico, Jason Mitchell, Prof. Naomi Guttman, Prof. Esther Kanipe, Karlen Chase, Prof. Maurice Isserman, Anissa Dean, Todd Monsell, Anne Marcoline, Prof. Gary Wyckoff, Preeta Samarasan, Seth Schwartz, Prof. Jeffrey Pliskin, Jenna Koserowitz, Jonathan Cornwell and Sally Carman. Missing at the time of the photo were: Sabra Barnett, Niisha Butler, Mary Dias, Eli Koppel, Matt Sircely, Corey Stark and Prof. Susan Mason who trained Scholars in a rigorous seven week course in communications.

Sally Carman assumes administrative assistant post

After five years of service to the Levitt Center as a half-time staff assistant, Sally Carman was recently named to a new full-time administrative position. She will continue to oversee the Levitt Scholars Program and Levitt Center publications as well as monitoring the budget and planning conferences.

Her new areas of involvement will include expanded work with the Alumni Fellows Program and web page development. Much of the day-to-day operation of the computer research laboratory has been turned over to the Information Technology Services department, though Carman will continue to oversee the purchase of specialized software and peripherals, as well as administering the Levitt



network server. She will also assist the new research coordinator of the Oneida County Human Services Resource Center, one of the Center's major

programs.

Carman holds a M.A. degree from Syracuse University in human nutrition with 12 credits in newspaper journalism from the Newhouse School. She has 25 years of experience in publications from previous positions with the American Management Association and the Unitarian Universalist Association. She considers the opportunity to interact with so many interesting people to be an important benefit of the job.

According to Levitt Center Director Philip Klinkner, "When we decided to upgrade the Center's support staff, there was no question that Sally was the person to hire. She's done great work over the last five years and I'm eager to work with her in the future."

Philip Klinkner becomes new director

Associate professor Philip A. Klinkner assumed the post of director of the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center in June 1998. He has been a member of the Hamilton College government department faculty since 1995. A graduate of Yale University, he is originally from Iowa and received his B.A. degree from Lake Forest College in Illinois. He taught four years at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles and has served as a research fellow and guest scholar at The Brookings Institute in Washington, D.C. He also led Hamilton's Semester-in-Washington Program in Fall 1995.

Klinkner specializes in American politics, particularly political parties,

elections, and race and American politics. His publications include: *The*



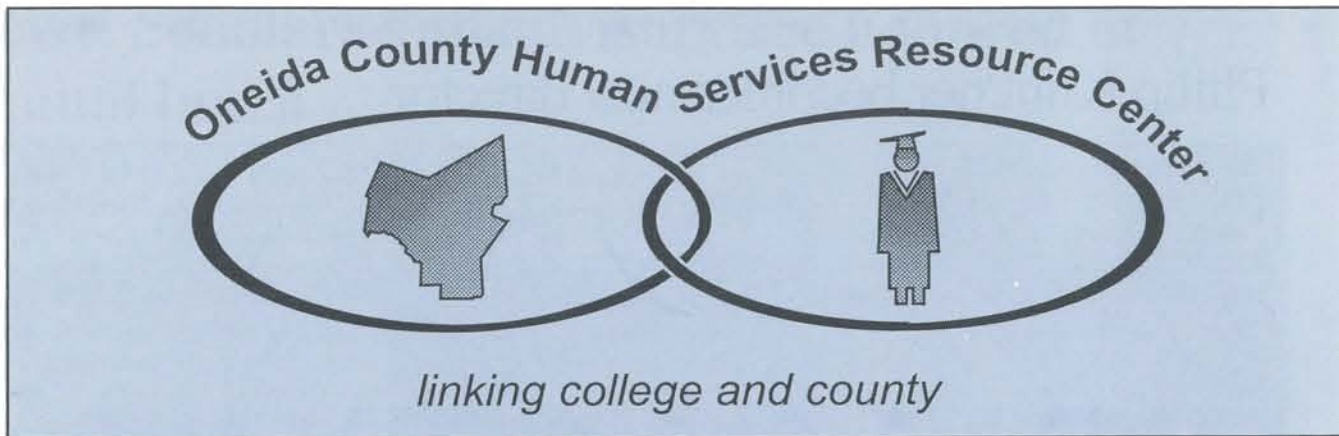
Losing Parties: Out-Party National Committees, 1956-1998 (Yale University Press, 1994), *Midterm: The Elections of 1994 in Context* (Westview Press, 1996) and *The Unsteady March: The Rise and Decline of America's Commitment to Racial Equality* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1999). In 1995 Prof. Klinkner won the Emerging Scholar Award from the Political Parties and Organizations Section of The American Political Science Association.

"The Levitt Center is a wonderful and unique resource," states Klinkner. "I'm looking forward to expanding our current programs and developing new ones in order to further enhance the excellence of public affairs education at Hamilton."

New Levitt Council represents many departments



The Levitt Council for 1997-1998 is pictured. From the upper left and proceeding clockwise: Richard Werner, Philosophy; Erol Balkan, Economics; Frank Anechiarico, Government; Henry Rutz, Anthropology; Gary Wyckoff, Government and previous Director of the Levitt Center; Dennis Gilbert, Sociology; Carol Drogus, Government; and Maurice Isserman, History. For the Fall 1998, Alan Cafruny replaced Frank Anechiarico who is running the Semester in Washington Program. Daniel Chambliss is standing in for Dennis Gilbert who is on leave for the academic year. New Director Philip Klinkner is pictured at the top of the page.



A cooperative venture of Hamilton College and the Oneida County Human Services Funder's Council

Resource Center Mission

The Oneida County Human Services Resource Center is located in the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center at Hamilton College. The Resource Center is a partnership between the Oneida County Human Services Funders Council and Hamilton College. Its purpose is to:

- Provide the Oneida County Funders Council with timely, high quality research on public issues
- Provide an opportunity for students and faculty to extend

academic education through applied learning and research.

The Resource Center achieves its objectives by arranging cooperative research projects with members of the Oneida County community, faculty and students at Hamilton, and other local postsecondary institutions.

One of the Resource Center's highest priorities is to identify community needs both in Oneida county and

surrounding region. The Center is also committed to examining the distribution of area human service resources to help human service funders and providers better understand the needs of Oneida County residents and to develop a more proactive role in dealing with community issues. Such efforts can help to make Oneida County a more healthy and prosperous place for all its residents.

Social Needs Forum

At a Social Needs Forum in January, the Resource Center team, headed by Kimberly Torres '97 and assisted by Hamilton College students Christopher Plecs '99 and Robert Wild '98, presented their report on social indicators. Held at Mohawk Valley Community College, the forum attracted more than 100 social service providers, funders and other community leaders. Participants took part in discussion groups that examined the social indicators, identified information gaps, and prioritized areas of need.

Kim Torres served as research coordinator of the Resource Center for the 1997-98 academic year. A new research coordinator will begin in January, funded jointly by Hamilton College and the Oneida County Human Services Funders Council.



Chip Bassett

Chip Bassett is an associate planner for the Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program. As an integral part of the Resource Center, Chip has been closely associated with the Center since its inception and was instrumental in its development.

Chip serves as a liaison linking faculty and students with the community of human service providers and funders. This is accomplished both through spending one or two afternoons a week on the Hamilton campus and through attending regular meetings of the Funders Council. He meets with staff and students, oversees

their work, offers them direction and provides resources within the community. An example of this role



was evident last spring as Chip worked with Professor Frank Anechiarico's Public Administration class that was conducting research on foster care. Chip provided local background, suggested contacts, offered feedback and organized local forums. These forums gave students and faculty the opportunity to discuss issues with local policy makers.

Currently, he works closely with Professor Philip Klinkner, the new director of the Levitt Center, to ensure collaboration between the Resource Center, the Funder's Council and the human service providers in the community. Chip continues to offer direction for ongoing research on social needs within the community.

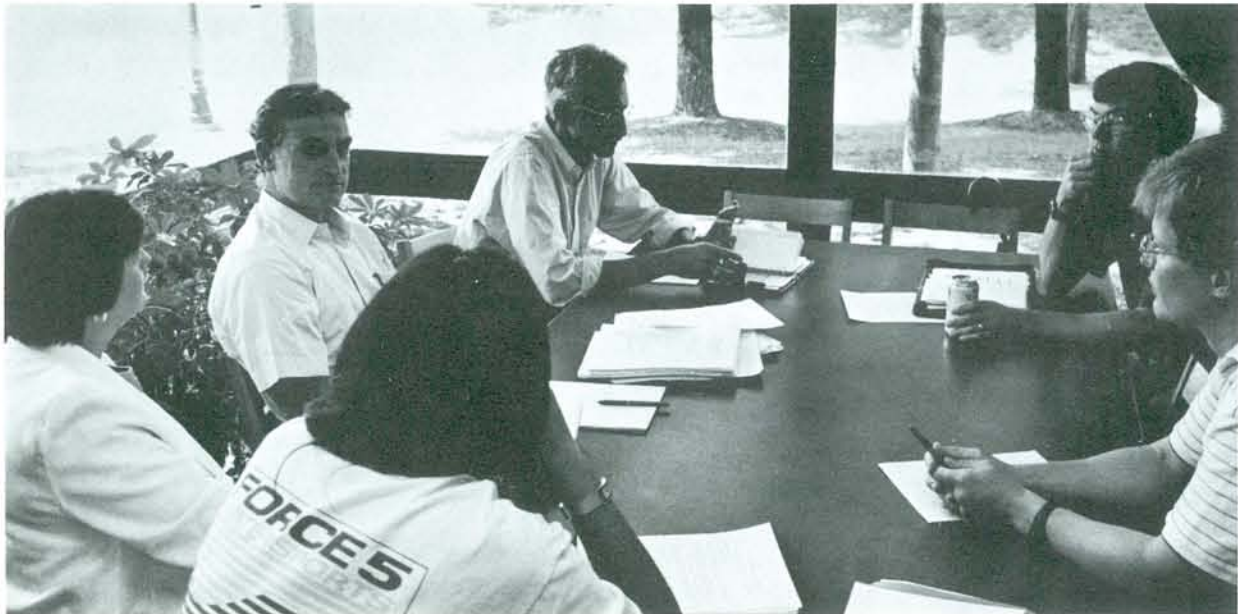
Class tackles foster care

The 22 students taking the American Public Administration course taught by Professor of Government Frank Anechiarico assumed the challenge of analyzing the complex and troubling subject of foster care. They first divided the subject into

discernable parts. One group looked at the legislation governing foster care; another group focused on the local administration of foster care services; other students interviewed foster parents and some older foster children. Students wrote papers which

Anechiarico organized into one report.

The report, titled "Foster Care and Permanency Planning in Oneida County, New York," was presented to a forum of administrators and foster care unit supervisors from the Oneida County Department of Social Services.



Kimberly Torres, research coordinator for the Resource Center, meets with Jan Squadrito from the United Way of Utica; Chip Bassett from the Herkimer-Oneida Counties Comprehensive Planning Program; Frank Anechiarico, professor of government, whose class focused on foster care permanency placement; Gary Wyckoff, former director of the Levitt Public Affairs Center and associate professor of government; and Paul Hagstrom, associate professor of economics, specializing in welfare reform issues.

Analysis Projects benefit public agencies

Projects conducted in Spring 1998

Culture change in New York State welfare: The experiences of welfare professionals and clients (see story on page 10)

by Lisa McKinney, SUNY Institute of Technology, Utica-Rome; Christopher Plecs '99, Hamilton College; Kimberly Torres '97, research coordinator, Hamilton College

First call for help: Cost-benefit Analysis of a Comprehensive Information and Referral Service for Oneida and Herkimer County

by Pat Irving '98 and Andrew Eakin '98

Poverty, the home environment and student achievement: A study for the NYS Department of Education

by Katy Pollock '98

Highway Development: An analysis of the Route 7 corridor

by Sean Fay '98 and Christopher Kelly '98

Striving for excellence: The potential impact of a high-stakes testing program for NYS high school students

by Charles Waterman '98 and Keith Wandtke '98

Student achievement and the concentration of poverty: A study for the NYS Department of Education

by Ani Drescher '98

Griffiss Business and Technology Potential Uses: A cost benefit study for Oneida County EDGE

by Jamie I. Harris '98 and Suraj Kunchala '98



Richard Bernstein '80, first vice president and chief quantitative strategist of Merrill Lynch & Company, took part in a panel on Global Economic Turmoil in September with Derek Jones, James L. Ferguson Professor of Economics; Jeffrey Pliskin, associate professor of economics; and Hongyin Wang, assistant professor of political science at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.

On-going analysis projects in Fall 1998

Procedures to assess and track change in aging clients: A study for the NYS Office for Aging

by Cara Rosenberg '99

Impact of welfare reform on food banks and soup kitchens:

A report for United Way of Greater Utica

by David Gaynes '99

Inventory of soil contamination sites in Utica: An economic development study for the City of Utica

by Brett Geruntino '99

Financial costs and revenues from gravel mining: A project for the Cayuga County Planning Board

by Peter Merkel '99

Costs and labor effects of separate classes versus mainstreaming of students with disabilities: A report for the NYS Department of Education

by David Haley '99

Characteristics of long-term welfare recipients: Surveys, focus groups and interviews conducted for Oneida County Department of Social Services

by Christopher Plecs '99 and Wendy Worms '99

Alumni Fellows Program

Colleges link with alumni to study welfare change

Climbing down from the “ivory tower” at Hamilton to go into a welfare office to interview social workers and clients causes culture shock to say the least. Learning the impact of welfare reform in terms of real impact to real families was a revelation to the student researchers.

The project began with a request from the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance to learn more about changes in local welfare offices caused by the recent sweeping changes in the laws requiring that “welfare” be turned into “workfare.” This daunting task was taken on by then Levitt Center director, Gary Wyckoff and Kimberly Torres, a 1997 Hamilton graduate who spent the 1997-1998 academic year working as

research coordinator for the Levitt Center. Kim’s dual major in both sociology and government at Hamilton provided excellent preparation for the task. Chris Plecs '99 also worked on the project.

In an effort to coordinate with other area colleges, Wyckoff formed a team that included Lisa McKinney, a student at SUNY Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome; and her advisor, David P. Hakken, professor of anthropology.

Wyckoff turned to Dick Couper, trustee emeritus of Hamilton, who introduced him to his good friend, Frederic Hayes '47, a Hamilton alumnus with many years of experience in consulting in the social service field. Input was also given by Judith Manley Owens, a graduate student in social

work at SUNY in Albany.

The study investigated the way in which local offices in three counties were communicating the changes in the law to the public aid recipients. This extensive survey sample included no less than 62 caseworkers, examiners and administrators in three counties, as well as 113 clients.

Hamilton Alum? Interested in Helping the Levitt Center?

Contact Kirk Tashjian '99 who is the alumni liaison for the Levitt Center. His job is to link volunteer alumni with students and faculty.

Faculty share ideas at weekly current affairs lunch



Faculty members gather every Thursday in the Levitt Center to share lunch and discuss current affairs. Pictured from left are: Nesecan Balkan, lecturer in economics; Jeffrey Pliskin, associate professor of economics; Erol Balkan, associate professor of economics; William Domhoff, professor of sociology from University of California; Cheng Li, associate professor of government; Philip Klinkner, director of the Levitt Center; Bruce Laingen, Linowitz Professor of International Affairs and president of the American Association of Ambassadors; and Derek Jones, professor of economics. If you are in the area and interested in attending, contact Sally Carman for details (315-859-4451 or scarman@hamilton.edu).

Kornfield talks with seminar class via videoconference

The intricacies of Medicare legislation are a mystery to most people. However, students in Gary Wyckoff's seminar on the social security system are trying to unscramble the puzzle. Fortunately they found a "Medicare wizard" to help them through the maze of legal jargon.

Thomas Kornfield, one of the Alumni Fellows volunteers, graduated from Hamilton in 1991 and now works for the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MEDPAC), a group that advises Congress on Medicare legislation. Kornfield remembered his days as an economics major at Hamilton, and called with an offer to help current students. As luck would have it, his expertise was a perfect fit with Wyckoff's class.

He conducted a lively question and answer session with the class via the new video conference center on the third floor of Christian Johnson Hall, and helped the students wend their way

through all the jargon.

This experience encouraged him to visit campus for Fallcoming when he met for lunch and spoke in person with Wyckoff's class.

As part of the Alumni Fellows Program, Kornfield also assisted David Haley '99 with information for his senior project.



Thomas Kornfield '91 interacts via video conference with students in Gary Wyckoff's senior seminar on Social Security and Medicare.



The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center has a new look. The computer carrels were moved to the back of the room to provide additional space for informal meetings and the weekly current affairs luncheons.

Center studies race and ethnicity issues

To help focus the Center's efforts, the Levitt Council chose to emphasize the topic of race and



ethnicity for the 1998-1999 academic year. To kick off the topic, the Levitt Center brought Julian Bond to campus in October. Bond is currently chair of the NAACP and has been a leading advocate of civil rights since the 1960s. While a student at Morehouse College in Atlanta, he founded the Committee on Appeal for Human Rights and helped form the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

He was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives in 1965, but was barred from his seat because of his opposition to the Vietnam War. He later served four terms in the Georgia House and six in the Senate. He is currently a member of the history faculty at the University of Virginia and a distinguished scholar in

residence at the American University in Washington, DC.

While at Hamilton, Bond met with students in a seminar entitled, "The Black and White '60s." That evening, he gave a public address, "Civil Rights: Then and Now" in the Chapel to an overflow crowd of students, faculty, staff, and members of the local community.

In addition to Julian Bond, the Levitt Center is also sponsoring several other projects and events on the topic of race and ethnicity during the year, including a field trip this March for students in Instructor Marcy Sacks' African American history class. The students will travel by train to many of the sites that have figured prominently in African American history: Atlanta, Montgomery, Birmingham, Selma, New Orleans, Memphis, and Chicago. They will also meet with some of the people who helped to make that history, including Congressman John Lewis, a former civil rights activist and a participant in the 1961 Freedom Rides, the 1963 March on Washington, and the protests at Selma in 1965.

Students experience Harlem

"My trip to Harlem allowed me to see the places I have been studying. It made my studies seem less like a story and more like a reality," exclaimed Anne Rienhoff '99. She and 18 other students in Instructor Marcy Sacks' history class on the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s took part in a field trip to Harlem sponsored by the Levitt Center as part of its focus on race and ethnicity.

During a whirlwind day, trip participants went on a walking tour of historic Harlem and visited the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a branch of the New York Public Library and one of the nation's largest collections of resources

on African American history and culture. Other participants had this to say about the trip:

"I particularly enjoyed seeing some of the homes of people we have studied. I found myself imagining what it must have been like to walk through the front door in the 1920s. I was also surprised by the architecture of Harlem. The amount of natural light that was exposed, because of all the low buildings, was like nothing I have ever seen in New York City before.

-Brian Grzymalski '99

"We learned a lot, and became more comfortable with each other as a class which I am positive will open up discussion in this seminar... a bonding experience that will forever engrain the things I have learned in this class."

-Heather Balderson '00

"I thought it was great for this class, mostly well-to-do white students to see that Harlem isn't the combat zone it is portrayed to be. I also took home some great soul food!

-David Bolger '99



Julian Bond speaks with Nancy Rabinowitz, professor of comparative literature, at the reception held in his honor. In the background, Todd Franklin, assistant professor of philosophy, converses with Ruth Gardner '99.



Julian Bond meets with a class and speaks individually with students before his presentation in the evening to a capacity crowd in the Chapel.



Speakers

The following speakers were sponsored in full by the Levitt Center:

Julian Bond

Chair, NAACP

Richard Bernstein

*'80, first vice president,
Merrill Lynch and Company*

Hongyin Wang

*Political Science professor,
Syracuse University*

The following speakers were sponsored, and events organized by the departments in parentheses. The Levitt Center provided additional financial support:

Vivyan Adair

(Kirkland Project)

Byllye Avery

(Kirkland Project)

William Domhoff

(Sociology)

Peter Edelman

(Kirkland Project)

Kathryn Edin

(Kirkland Project)

Patrick Fagan

(Government)

Stanley Fish

(English)

Laurie Garret

(Biology)

Susan Love

(Kirkland Project)

Antonine Maillet

(Romance Languages)

Rogers Smith

(Government)

Alan Taylor

(History)

Clarence Walker

*(Black & Latin Student Union
and Philosophy)*