



# The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center Hamilton College

1999-2000 Annual Report

Volume VI, Spring 2000

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*Prof. Paul Hagstrom, Timothy Palmer '00 and Judy Owens-Manley look over data received from questionnaires sent to Bosnian refugees living in Utica, New York. This is one project of the newly formed Resource Center for Human Services, a joint program of the Levitt Public Affairs Center and the Oneida County Funders Council that focuses of community-based research.*

## Students survey impact of refugees

The Utica area has the fourth highest density of refugees in reference to total population in the United States. Since 1979, there have been 8,691 refugees resettled in Utica. The largest refugee groups have been Bosnians (3,430); Asian and Vietnamese (2,000); and those from the former Soviet Union (1,872). In all, refugees have relocated from 22 or more countries,

and most have to learn English as a second language after arriving.

There has been a great deal of interest in the surrounding community to know the impact that these refugees resettling in Oneida County are having on the area. Congressman Sherwood Boehlert also expressed his interest in having the Levitt Center do an independent study of the economic impact of

refugees.

Since early summer of 1999, a research project has been underway at the Levitt Center involving students as a class project and as paid research assistants. Other components of the research project have involved Hamilton faculty and another area college, Empire State College.

*(continued on page 2)*



# Students survey impact of refugees

*(continued from page 1)*

Professor Paul Hagstrom began preparing for the economic impact study over the summer together with Judy Owens-Manley, Ph.D., MSW, Research Coordinator for the Resource Center for Human Services. Ani Drescher, '00 gathered data and worked with a database provided by the Mohawk Valley Center for Refugees to establish a baseline of information from which to draw. Amela Porcia '99 worked together with Owens-Manley to enlarge the scope of the research through a survey of Bosnian refugees that would study refugee adaptation to the community as well as give economic information from refugees resettling five years apart.

Professor Gary Wyckoff led a seminar in Public Policy during the fall with six students who made an economic impact study specifically of the Bosnian refugees. The students did research in teams of two that studied costs and benefits for educational services, social services, employment, etc.

Their findings were preliminarily presented to a group of Hamilton College faculty and a few invited members of the community and were basically positive regarding the benefits that refugees bring. They are working on finalizing their presentation to give to a larger group.

The hands-on research has been a lesson in itself, for students and faculty learned that a survey of large numbers of refugees does not work well. Because the refugees are a transitory population, large numbers



*Judy Owens-Manley presents to a conference she helped organize, "Communities that Care." Funders and community leaders from throughout Oneida County took part.*

of surveys could not be delivered due to outdated addresses. Although one of Wyckoff's students in particular, Joseph Nebbia '00, made a heroic effort to go through the phone book and update addresses to resend surveys, even the most recent phone book was already out-of-date for many!

In addition, we learned that giving personal information was an uncomfortable process for people who have so recently been persecuted. In this regard we have helped the Oneida County Executive's office as they plan for the upcoming census. They anticipate similar problems in reassuring refugees that providing personal information for the census is safe.

Compiling and interpreting data for the economic impact study will be completed in late Spring. Hagstrom is now working with Tim Palmer '00 whose computer skills have made him a valuable research assistant. The research has been aided by a partnership with Empire State College, a division of the SUNY system. Professor Reed Coughlan received a grant from the SUNY Research Foundation for a sabbatical that included funds for research assistants, and three Hamilton students, Joseph Nebbia '02, L. D. Platt '01, and Palmer, have provided assistance through these funds.

Coughlan, together with Owens-Manley, is studying refugee adaptation

to the community, but the method has been revised. The research is now being done through personal interviews of Bosnian refugees selected because they have some measure of "successful" adaptation, either they are pursuing United States citizenship or have become homeowners in this community. The interviews utilize the original survey questionnaire with some modifications.

The survey questionnaire is also being adapted as a program evaluation tool for the Refugee Center itself. The questionnaire will be given after refugees have been here four months, the usual time it takes to find a job. The data will then be used to provide feedback to the Refugee Center about services needed, and it will also provide information about the economic and adaptive aspects of resettlement during the refugees' first year.

Hagstrom plans to lead a presentation to the community on the results of the completed study. Coughlan and Owens-Manley will present a paper, "Cross-Cultural Transition: Bosnian Refugees in Upstate New York," at the University of Bergen in Norway in July and Hamilton College students will be continuing research.

*-Judy Owens-Manley*



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# Students learn about Civil Rights

## Levitt Center sponsors “freedom ride” through the South



*Redell Armstrong '02 approaches a statue representing the dogs that threatened African Americans during the early days of the Civil Rights Movement. This statue is found in Kelly Ingram Park, Birmingham, Alabama, one of the sites visited by Prof. Marcy Sack's history class during their tour of the South.*

Twelve students in Professor Marcy Sacks' African American History class had a rare opportunity to walk a “trail of tears” and experience first-hand some of the most important sites in civil rights history. Accompanied by Maurice Isserman, Hamilton's William R. Kenan Professor of History, the class boarded an Amtrak train in Utica during March break in 1999 and headed south.

The first stop was Atlanta where they met Congressman John Lewis, former national chairman of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). He recounted his experiences as a child growing up in rural Alabama, his first meeting with

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his involvement in the struggle for human rights.

Later a tour guide from the Atlanta Preservation Center gave them a walking tour of the Sweet-Auburn district, home to many Black-owned businesses during the late nineteenth century. They toured the site of Ebenezer Baptist Church where Dr. King was pastor, the King national historic site and the headquarters of the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC).

Next the train took them to Birmingham, passing through Anniston, Alabama, the site of the 1961 bombing of the Freedom Riders' bus. They

visited Selma, and walked across the Edmund Pettis Bridge, site of Bloody Sunday in 1965 when Alabama State Troopers blocked a group of marchers led by John Lewis, and chased them with tear gas and billy clubs. Joanne Bland, a participant of that march who now serves as the secretary for the museum built at the site, took the group on a tour of the city, explaining that some racial separation still exists.

From Selma they drove the historic route of the march to Montgomery in 1965, passing the marker of a white Detroit housewife who was killed by KKK members as she shuttled marchers back home to Selma. In front of the

*(continued on page 4)*



## The students said...

*"To be in the actual room, overlooking the balcony where Martin Luther King was assassinated moved me to tears...I can never read or think about the Civil Rights Movement the same way again. I think this is what learning history is about."*

Tagor A. Ariot '99

*"I learned to appreciate the people who faced fire hoses, vicious bites by dogs, and even death to ensure that one day I will enjoy the freedoms they never had."*

Cecilia A. Odoch-Jato '02

*"The intra-group relationships formed during the trip ...cannot be duplicated in the classroom or dormitory...Living and traveling together forged mutual respect, admiration, and trust between individuals who might not have seen eye-to-eye in any other setting."*

Stephen R. Davis '00

## Students learn about Civil Rights

*(continued from page 3)*

Southern Poverty Law Center they dipped their hands in the water of the fountain dedicated to civil rights bearing the words "Until justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream." They read the names of 40 people killed in the struggle for civil rights, and listened to Mrs. Johnny Carr who took part in the Montgomery bus boycott.

During a tour of the Alabama State Capitol the students were stunned by the depiction of a different view of history - the walls are decorated with a portrait of George Wallace, a mural of the conflict of whites and Indians, a glorified scene of an antebellum plantation, and three African-American men hauling bales of cotton.

The next stop was Birmingham where they toured Kelly Ingram Park, the site of the police attack on civil rights protestors using fire hoses and police dogs. (See photo on page 3.) They then visited the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church where four teen-age girls died in a bomb attack in 1963. Across the street is the Civil Rights Institute with exhibits that chronicle the struggle for

human liberty in the South, and currently taking place in other parts of the world.

Students took some time to discuss some of their differing reactions to the trip, struggling with different perceptions and concerns. "This was the first conscious effort made by students to bridge some of the racial divides that exist in this country, even among people who describe themselves as open-minded," said Sacks. "This was, in many ways, the most profound learning experience of the trip."

The train took them to New Orleans where they explored the tastes, sights and sounds of Bourbon Street. At the Laura Plantation they learned about the

use of slaves in sugar production and how the B'rer Rabbit stories were born.

Passing through Mississippi and on to Memphis, they

walked down Beale Street where the Blues came to life. They took a tour of the Slavehaven Estate, part of the Underground Railroad, and passed a slave auction site.

The train took them on to Chicago where they visited the home of one of the African American students for some good home cooking. "This experience helped to further build bridges as students shared social time in unique ways," explained Sacks.

The tour ended in the Newberry Library, as historian James Grossman discussed the significance of the Great Migration and its implications. That evening the group boarded the train and returned to Clinton, only thirteen days older, but much wiser. Many said this had been a life-changing experience.

-Sally Carman

*"This was the first conscious effort made by students to bridge some of the racial divides that exist in this country, even among people who describe themselves as open-minded"*



*(L to R) Redell L. Armstrong '02, Mario K. Henderson '00, Prof. Marcy Sacks, and Arthur J. McCann '00 dip hands in the "waters of justice" at Alabama's Civil Rights Monument.*



# Pilot project provides access to college for disadvantaged women

The newly formed ACCESS project strives to raise single mothers on welfare up from the lowest rungs of the economic ladder. The plan is to provide the support, such as affordable education, child care, and transportation, needed by poor women to enable them to hold better paying jobs and thus support their families.

The new government initiatives that move women with children from financial support into the work force do not provide the necessary skills and services necessary for them to become self-sufficient. Thus this project was conceived by a group of concerned members of the Hamilton

*(continued on page 6)*



*Above: Prof. Erol Balkan, Prof. Vivian Adair and Sharon Gormley preside at the fall conference they organized to kick off the ACCESS project, partially sponsored by the Levitt Public Affairs Center.*



*On left: Joycelyn Moody, a former welfare recipient and now a professor at the University of Washington, describes her struggle to gain an education in the face of adversity.*



*Conference attendees from across the country learn about the ACCESS project, a pilot program to give welfare recipients the education needed to obtain meaningful work. This event was sponsored by the Levitt Public Affairs Center.*

## Access project provides education

*(continued from page 5)*

College community. Erol Balkan, James L. Ferguson Associate Professor of Economics, and Vivyan Adair, Assistant Professor of Women's Studies (and a former welfare mother herself), are Co-Directors of the project. Sharon Gormley, Staff Assistant to the Dean of Faculty, serves as Project Director.

Organizers approached the Levitt Council who approved a large grant as seed money for the project. Sizeable

grants have also been obtained from the Community Foundation and the Freauhoff Foundation. The Kirkland Project for Gender, Society and Culture and the Departments of Economics and Women's Studies have also contributed. Other grants may be forthcoming in the future.

Brian Wing, Commissioner of the New York State Office of Disability and Temporary Assistance, was the opening speaker at a conference held in the Bristol Center in October 1999. He

described the new programs being implemented on the state level, and the difficulties faced in providing "safety net" support for those who need it most.

A panel of six women, former welfare recipients, described with emotion the multitude of barriers they had to overcome to reach their current positions. Five of these women hold doctorates and teach at the university level, and the sixth is a librarian with a Masters in Library Science.

RoAnne Destito and David Townsend, from the New York State Assembly, and Raymond Meier, New York State Senator, described legislative efforts to address the problems, and the difficulty of finding long-term solutions. They seemed to generally agree that the ACCESS project has potential to be of great benefit to the community.

*-Sally Carman*



*On left: panel participant Betty Lowe MLS describes the difficulty of balancing study with meeting her children's needs while on welfare.*



*New York State Representative David Townsend and New York State Senator Raymond Meier discuss planned state projects with Professor Paul Hagstrom, panel facilitator for the ACCESS conference held in the Bristol Campus Center in October.*



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# Levitt Scholar Program expands

As the Levitt Scholar Program becomes more well known, more departments at Hamilton College are recommending students, and more schools are inviting these Scholars to speak. This program began in 1993 with twelve students, mostly government majors. Each year students from more disciplines have been included. Such diverse subjects as art, biology, music and classics are now part of the program. For the first time we have a group of math majors training to present at high schools.

Scholars are chosen for their

outstanding work and communication skills. Then they complete a course in communication with Prof. Susan Mason, Director of the Program in Public Discourse and the Teacher Education Program. She helps them hone their skills, and target their presentations to make them appropriate for a high school audience.

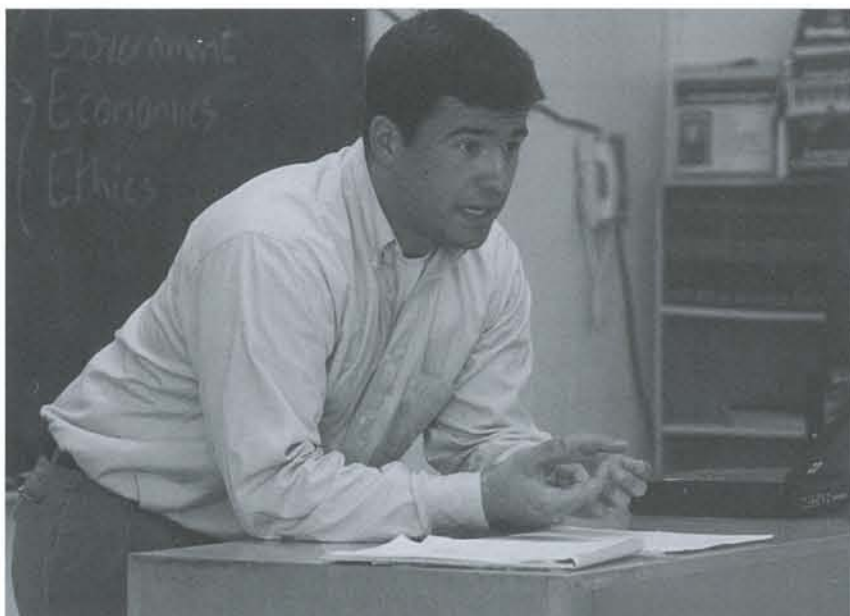
The Scholar Program has also become the model for the new Program in Public Discourse developed by Prof. Mason. She noticed that public presentations became more powerful when based upon a particular disci-

pline. Students can speak more knowledgeably and with more enthusiasm about subjects that are their primary area of study. Also, the presentation differs according to the type of information and the audience. For example, in some subjects a team approach is used, some may use posters or other visuals, some are more technical and some more general.

The challenge for Levitt Scholars is to tailor these college subjects for high school classes, giving them enough substance to be interesting, but not so weighty that high schoolers will not be able to relate to them. Once the topics are developed they are sent to high schools within an hour or two radius of the College. Teachers select speakers based on these subjects, and then Sally Carman, Administrative Assistant for the Levitt Center, matches these requests with the schedules of the Scholars and makes the necessary arrangements.

Evaluations received from the teachers have been outstanding. (You will see some examples of these on the following pages.) There are three groups of Levitt Scholars presenting this year: fall 1999 (trained the previous spring), winter 1999 and spring 2000.

-Sally Carman



*Christopher Plecs '99 (above and on right) presents to a group of Oneida High School students. He involves them in a simulation to better understand the project he worked on with Wendy Worms '99 for their senior project in public policy, an evaluation of the effectiveness of some of the new welfare initiatives.'*





## **Feedback on Levitt Scholars:**

*"Jeff was enthusiastic and interesting. He helped students think about party affiliation. Thank you Hamilton College!"*

S. Lynn Volp  
Social Studies Department  
Vernon Verona Sherrill H.S.

*"Martha's strength was in the good rapport she had with the class... [She] instilled in the students an interest in learning and experiencing another culture."*

Jan Joslyn  
English teacher  
Herkimer High School

*"Your speakers are always well prepared, interesting, and present valuable role models for high school students."*

Carolyn Schmidt  
Social studies teacher  
Chenango Forks High School

*"Andrew's excitement, energy, and fun personality came through ...I think the students got a lot from it. The Power Point presentation was excellent. I enjoyed Andrew a great deal!"*

Wendy Sanders  
Biology teacher  
Mohawk Central School

*"Martha brought the class to life with good questions."*

Brenda Bigelow  
English Department Chair  
Christian Brothers Academy  
Syracuse

*"The Public Speaking class was especially interested in the topic. It was very informative and well researched."*

Marie A. Palmer  
English Department  
Mohonasen High School

## **Levitt Scholar topics - Spring 1999**

- John Belniak**, "In what ways do an author's experiences influence his or her works?"
- Christine Blethen**, "Gender Equity and the Supreme Court - why aren't we there yet?"
- Allison Brill**, "Imagining a past: creating, imagining and constructing the memory of the Holocaust."
- Noah Chrismer**, "Does the trend toward liberalization in the Anglican church mirror trends in society today?"
- John Doench**, "How can history and science be combined to answer great questions?"
- Lisa Fairley**, "The changing image of Native Americans."
- Carrie Fassett**, "From casinos to Capitol Hill: the changing nature of Native American nations' relationship with the federal government."
- David Gaynes**, "More than soup kitchens: the complex industry of hunger relief."
- Elizabeth Guancial**, "We can't live without them - why are proteins so important?"
- Rebecca Hamm**, "What are the social implications of the Human Genome Project?"
- Kathrine Hauschild**, "The Red Guard: Chairman Mao's response to 'Flower Power'."
- Aaron Healey**, "Raising capital: what is the role of money in presidential primaries?"
- Maria Hillis**, "Why can't certain animals eat their broccoli?"
- Sarah House**, "Up the down staircase: the glass ceiling in corporate America"
- Rebecca Ann Libed**, "In what ways do domestic service workers relate to their employers?"
- Melissa Minton**, "Transforming an idea into a work of art."
- Heather Rae Obleman**, "How many bulls will fit in an elevator?"
- Andrew Osterman**, "How do government officials manipulate their image in the press?"
- Christopher Plecs and Wendy Worms**, "Is welfare reform working?"
- Jeffrey Ranen**, "Has the Republican Party become a party of the South?"
- Martha Rundles**, "The role of women during the Romantic Period of literature."
- Jack Spangler**, "Jesse Ventura wrestles his way into the governor's mansion."
- Andrew The**, "In what ways will gene research impact the future of medicine?"
- Christopher Wagner**, "Is China moving from Communism to Capitalism?"
- Katherine Wasilenko**, "Does a country need education to modernize, or must it be modern to accept education reform?"
- Justin Widener**, "Why do parasites cause giant growth?"

## **Fall 1999**

(See topics above)

**Rebecca Hamm**  
**Aaron Healey**

**Andrew Osterman**  
**Jack Spangler**

## **Winter 2000**

- Margo Anderson**, "How do social movements bring about change?"
- Jessica Koff**, "What effect does self-objectification have on a woman's test performance?"
- Nadia Sangster**, "Is the modern view of the ancient classics a true one?"
- Sarah Winne**, "Does an intersection require a traffic light? Using math to decide."





Levitt Scholar Class - Spring 1999: (left to right) Justin Widener, Elizabeth Guancial, Heather Obleman, Melissa Minton, Lisa Fairley, Allison Brill, Rebecca Hamm, Christine Blethen, Aaron Healey, Martha Rundles, Sarah House, Jack Spangler, Prof. Susan Mason, Carrie Fassett, Jeffrey Ranen, Katherine Wasilenko, David Gaynes and Rebecca Libed. Missing from the photo: John Belniak, Noah Chrimer, John Doench, Maria Hillis, Andrew Osterman, Christopher Plecs, Andrew The, Christopher Wagner and Wendy Worms.

## Statistics

Number of Levitt Scholars- 26  
 Number of requests- 83  
 from 40 schools  
 Number of classes that hosted  
 Levitt Scholars- 96  
 Number of schools that hosted  
 Levitt Scholars-38  
 Departments represented:  
 Anthropology  
 Art History/Art  
 Biochemistry  
 Biology  
 Communication studies  
 Comparative Literature  
 English  
 Government  
 History  
 Philosophy  
 Public Policy  
 Religious Studies  
 Russian  
 Sociology  
 Women's studies

## Schools served in 1999

Amsterdam	Jordan Elbridge
Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, PA	Little Falls Library
Baldwinsville	Madison Oneida BOCES
Bergen Catholic, NJ	Maine Endwell
Binghamton	Marcellus
Bryn Mawr, Baltimore, MD	Masterman, Philadelphia, PA
Chatham	Mohawk
Chenango Forks	Mohonasen
Christian Brothers Academy	Mount Markham
Clinton	New Hartford
Cooperstown	New York Mills
Delaware Academy	Oneida
East Aurora	Pittsford Sutherland
Fayetteville Manlius	Poland Central
Forest Hills, Queens	Proctor
Frankfort Schuyler	Rome Catholic
Guilderland	Rome Free Academy
Herkimer	Sauquoit Valley
	Vernon, Verona, Sherrill
	Westmoreland



### More feedback from schools:

*"Students were impressed that John was able to connect his theme with their own course material. [He included a] project for students to complete...terrific."*

Regina M. Berivino  
English teacher  
Westmoreland High  
School

*"Katie's topic was extremely relevant and useful for my AP discussion. [She] demonstrated good knowledge and real love of her topic [and] made it interesting for my sophomores."*

Kimberly Carrier  
AP European History  
teacher  
Rome Free Academy

*"The word game had an immediate impact and set the stage for the premise that the context in which you learn (or think) helps determine your personal outcome and attitude. She was open to questions and answered them fully. Bravo to everyone involved!"*

Christine Fluke  
Spanish teacher  
Maine-Endwell High  
School

*"Noah related the specifics to other areas so the students could see the connection. [He] made the topic interesting for the students [and] discussed the issues that would interest them."*

Colleen J. Panebianco  
Social studies teacher  
New York Mills High  
School

*"Elizabeth was wonderful...She integrated the subject areas into the majors students were interested in."*

Mary Ann Mazzola  
AP chemistry teacher  
Proctor Senior High  
School

## Scholar Topics - Spring 2000

**Jill Allen**, "How do we look at people who are handicapped?"

**Sarah Atwood**, "Consumer beware: college marketing can be misleading."

**Sarah Byrne**, "Can the media be trusted?"

**John Farranto**, "The American crowd - a mob scene. Are Americans given a "bad rap" in films?"

**Aaron Holmes**, "What effects does corruption have on Third World Nations?"

**Saadiah Lababidi**, "How did colonialism affect the image of Africans in the western media?"

**David Leung**, "What is the Asian influence on American Culture?"

**Benjamin Mann**, "How do Christian right-wing leaders compare with characters in Star Wars - Luke Skywalker or Darth Vader?"

**Yvette Padilla**, "Is there gender or race bias in evaluating teachers?"

**Linda Retallack**, "The Civil War - not just a battle of arms but a clash of cultures."

**Emily Roynestad**, "Women's Work in Chile - how is it changing?"

**Tamar Scoggin**, "Tibetan artists in exile - maintaining their culture through art."

**Meghan Steed**, "Who owns the land - the Oneida Indians or the home owners?"

**Mara Whalen**, "Do you want to live in Paris?"

**Elyse Williams**, "Costa Rica: a foreign experience that hits close to home."

**Tricia Woodward**, "How can we examine college "view books" with a critical eye?"

**Shauna Wreschner**, "'Weeding out' the news - how can we best interpret the media?"

## Evaluation course offers applied research

A new course is being offered during the Spring semester in the Government Department. Seminar in Program Evaluation: Domestic Violence Services in Oneida County is being taught by Judith Owens-Manley, Ph.D., MSW., and there are twelve students enrolled. The Seminar is an applied research course that includes content on both program evaluation and the applied research area, Domestic Violence.

Students will be learning how to do a needs analysis, process analysis, and outcome evaluation for services to victims, intervention groups for

batterers, and recipients of services through the Family Violence Option under the TANF legislation. Small groups of students will work to complete evaluations for the three groups of services, and the culmination of their work will be an edited report from the Resource Center for Human Services in addition to the three evaluations.

Seminar in Program Evaluation will be taught each year with a different content area, but it will always include a component of applied community research.

-Judy Owens-Manley

*This issue is dedicated to the memory of Richard William Carman (June 5, 1933 to September 24, 1999) - may his concern for education and making the world a better place be continued.*



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# *Analysis Projects benefit public agencies*

## Projects in 2000:

### **Economic Development Zones in Oneida and Herkimer Counties**

*Jennifer Irvine '00 and Kelly McKeown '00*

Mohawk Valley EDGE submitted a proposal requesting an analysis of the New York State program designed to assist urban areas in economic distress. This program, known as the Economic Development Zone Program (EDZ) offers special tax credits, reduced utility rates, and special low-interest loans to new or expanding businesses in these designated zones.

EDGE requested a cost-benefit study of these incentives, including the time and cost necessary for the book-keeping and completion of forms required by this program.

Jennifer Irvine and Kelly McKeown have been reviewing this program as their senior project, a requirement to complete their major in Public Policy with Professor Paul Gary Wyckoff. First they reviewed applicable laws

regarding the incentives offered by the State. They also reviewed previous studies of the effectiveness of various tax incentives and abatements. They learned that the impact of economic development can vary dramatically based on different demographics, and the complexity of the problem makes it difficult to measure.

A final report will be presented in May.

### **Clinton Chamber of Commerce Study**

*James DiNardo '00*

The local Chamber of Commerce is interested in building upon the unique qualities of Clinton, a small town with large variety of services for its size. These include a complete public school system, a parochial school and a college, health services, stores, art center, restaurants and recreational

facilities. James DiNardo will be surveying the goods and services available, and determining what important ones may be lacking. Also he will survey shopping, work and commuting patterns. He will later present recommendations for community action at a public forum

## Projects in 1999:

### **Long-term Welfare Dependency in Oneida County**

*Chris Plecs '99 and  
Wendy Worms '99*

### **Good Intentions, Difficult Choices, Questionable Outcomes**

*David Gaynes '99*

### **Effectiveness of In-home Community-based Long-term Care Services for the Elderly**

*Cara Rosenberg '99*

### **Gravel Mining in Central New York**

*Peter Merkel '99*



*Erin Bryant '00 and Phuong Nguyen '01, who have been working with Prof. Judy Owens-Manley, update social indicator data for the social service providers and the Funders Council. This is one project of the Resource Center for Human Services.*



# Faculty and Student Research Projects

## Oneida Lake Project

Beth Hiscott '00 spent the summer of 1999 working with Prof. Eugene Domack to collect sediment samples on the eastern edge of Oneida Lake, about 15 miles north of the College. They were assisted by Tiffany Tchekerides, a junior at Syracuse University. Their purpose was to determine the change in the shoreline during the last 10,000 years.

Working along the eastern shoreline of Oneida Lake, they collected over 25 short bucket auger cores from various geomorphologic features. They discovered prominent sets of beach ridges that date to about 10,750 years ago.

They also mapped an early bay fill lowland. There are indications of a number of buried forests within floodplain deposits which should provide good radiocarbon dating to determine the age of the shoreline.

They will be continuing their sampling in the summer of 2000.

-Eugene Domack



*Beth Hiscott and Prof. Eugene Domack study the printout of ground penetrating radar used to analyze soil samples taken in Verona Beach State Park. By means of carbon dating and the location of ridges beneath the surface formed by prehistoric waves, they are able to determine that Oneida Lake originally extended far inland about 10,000 years ago.*

### Hamilton Alum? You can help.

Contact Jennifer Irvine '00, (photo below) the Alumni Liaison for the Levitt Center, at (315) 859-4061, by email: [jirvine@hamilton.edu](mailto:jirvine@hamilton.edu), or visit the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center in KJ 137. Her job is to link volunteer alumni with students and faculty.



## Alumni Fellows Program

The Alumni Fellows Program is designed to harness the experience and expertise of Hamilton's alumni and link these with students working on academic projects. This can be done in a variety of ways: speaking with class groups, providing students with information not currently available, acting as an expert evaluator of student work, providing an insider's view on a particular issue or subject, or perhaps connecting students with friends, colleagues or acquaintances of alumni who possess relevant information or knowledge.

Recent student inquiries represent typical requests made to Jennifer Irvine '00, Alumni Liaison. A student in a government class sought an expert opinion for a group seminar entitled "What is the greatest cause of war?" In the fall a senior developing a thesis topic was concerned with modern foreign policy regarding Islamic tribes, such as the Taliban, in Afghanistan.

Discussing a topic with an expert is often the most beneficial means of understanding complex issues.

Irvine has been compiling a more current and comprehensive database of alumni volunteers. Promoting the Alumni Fellows Program to the Hamilton community is a top priority for the spring semester. An advertising campaign has been initiated to better inform students of the program's existence, purpose, and capabilities.

Many alumni have graciously offered their time and knowledge to the program. Presently there are more than 100 alumni volunteers. Although the program is primarily targeted towards students who major in government, economics, world politics or public policy, there are also requests to speak with experts in other fields. We are continually expanding the number of volunteers and areas of expertise.

-Jennifer Irvine



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# Field Schools and Trips

## Learning about Kenya

In connection with the spring course, Seminar on Contemporary Kenya, Associate Professor of Government Stephen Orvis will lead a Levitt-funded, three-week Kenya Field School in May-June 2000. The twelve students in the course will travel to Kenya for a three-week, hands-on educational experience.

In Nairobi, the nation's capital, they will meet with members of parliament, political activists, and Kenyan scholars to discuss current issues in Kenya. They will go on a day-long educational

tour of the city and its neighborhoods and spend part of a day working with a local women's self-help group.

In Mombasa, the second city situated on the Kenyan coast, the group will examine the role of Islam in East Africa, including a historical tour of the old city of Mombasa, presentations by a leading Swahili poet and Swahili wood carvers, and discussions with a local journalist and a Muslim human rights activist.

The students will have a four-day "home stay" in a rural area with

families involved in the Greenbelt Movement, a rural women's environmental and feminist movement. Students will work with the group in the rural area and live with families there. Finally, the group will examine environmental and tourism issues involving both the coastal reef and the Rift Valley game parks.

The Levitt Center is funding approximately half of the cost of the total trip, without which the field school would not be possible.

-Stephen W. Orvis

## Students travel to London

### Exploring the Role of British Heritage

During the first week of Spring Break, Professors Patricia O'Neill (English) and Kevin Grant (History) will conduct twenty Hamilton students on a Levitt-funded field trip to apply their knowledge of British culture in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to sites that commemorate Britain's imperial history.

They will examine how the significance of such sites as the British museum, Trafalgar Square, and the cenotaph memorial have changed as the city surrounding them has been diversified by the dramatic influx of immigrants from former imperial territories. The trip will serve as an experiential component of this team-taught course and as a forum for individual student research projects on the politics of national heritage in Britain's multicultural society.

Some of the issues which students might pursue are suggested in David

Lowenthal's highly acclaimed book *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*, which is the first reading for the semester.

How do the demands of history to represent the past as accurately as possible meet the requirements of heritage to celebrate the achievements of a nation? What concessions should institutions of global expanse such as the British Museum make to nationalist demands for the return of antiquities? What do sites like the Albert Memorial mean to post-colonial visitors and immigrants?

Combining the study of the past with study of present purposes of monuments and museums, students will bring their work in class and in London together at the end of the semester in public presentations to the campus as a whole.

Such a course, which is multidisciplinary and extends students' learning beyond the classroom, will provide a pilot for other courses the faculty hopes to offer through the sophomore program. Funding by the Levitt Center has made it possible for students, many of whom have never traveled abroad, not only to think globally but to experience the history and culture of the British empire in its contemporary context.

-Patricia O'Neill

*David Gaynes '99 represents the student team as they present their ideas on key reforms for the social security system at the National Press Club. (See story on page 14)*





# Does social security have a future?

## *Students present their ideas to National Press Club*

Students in Professor Gary Wyckoff's Topics in Public Policy course traveled to Washington D.C. in March 1999 hoping to dazzle policymakers with a reform plan that might salvage the social security system.

David Gaynes '99, Cara Rosenberg '99, Jameson Toner '99, Chris Snow '99, Jennifer Irvine '00, Wendy Worms '99, Bjorn Franson '00, and Tonya Bloomer '00, crafted a reform called "The 888 Key Plan," to not only ensure the solvency of social security, but also to meet the needs of those who depend on their social security checks. This eight-part reform incorporated both conservative and progressive measures, appealing to all sides of the debate, as well as a greater commitment to educating the public about the savings and retirement options available to them.

Accompanied by professors Gary Wyckoff and Philip Klinkner, they presented their plan to a panel of four experts at the National Press Club. Peter J. Ferrara of the CATO Institute objected to nearly all points of the

reform on the grounds that it was a "bad deal made worse." However, since he does not believe there is a need for social security and is a strong advocate of complete privatization of the system, his response was expected.

Their second critic was Julie Kosterlitz of the National Journal. Although she had little to say about the financing aspect of the plan, she deemed it "political suicide." The third expert on the panel, Robert Reischauer of the Brookings Institute was somewhat more positive saying "I like the direction you're going in, I just don't like the car you're in."

Eugene Steurle of the panel concluded with some encouraging remarks. He commended the class for tackling such a project and suggested that they look at the eight-part reform plan from a more demographic and macro-level perspective.

They then met with Congressman Sherwood Boehlert (R-Utica) for an engaging discussion about the potential effects of this plan on his constituents. The next stop was the Social Security Administration where they met with the

Director of Communications Phil Gambino. He discussed their plan from a public relations and education perspective saying that not enough government funding is available to publicize new reforms.

The highlight of their day was a meeting with "Washington's most informative guy," Social Security Specialist of the Senate Finance Committee, Alex Vachon. He praised the students' calculations and said that these were more accurate than those obtained by a group from the Kennedy School. His only concerns echoed those of Julie Kosterlitz, namely that the political parties will not compromise.

After a day spent listening to responses from Kosterlitz, Boehlert, and Vachon about the politics of the social security debate, and witnessing the polarized viewpoints of Ferrara and Steurle, the message was clear. Social security is in danger, however, the chance of a massive reform being implemented is unlikely given the politics of the debate.

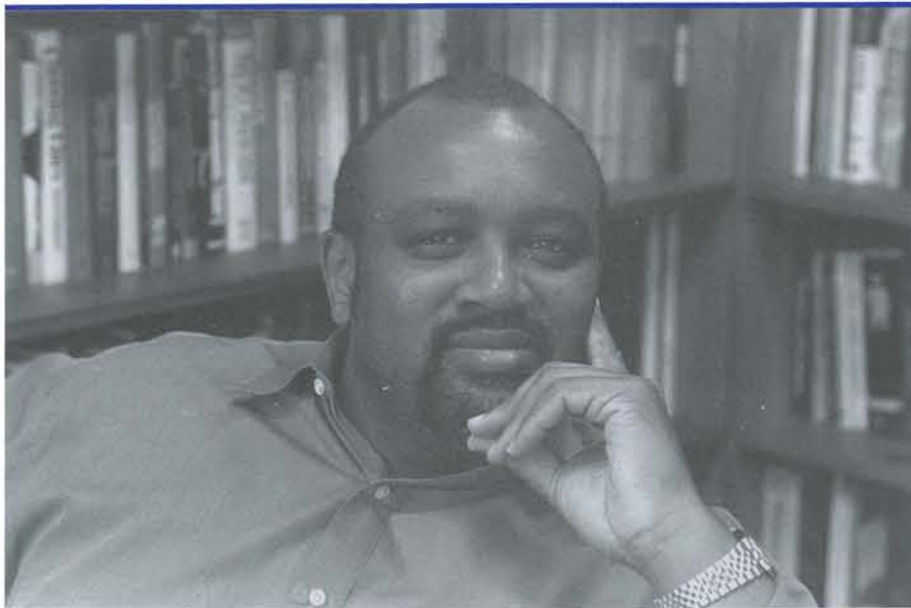
The process of developing this reform plan and then taking it to Washington was a great learning experience. Jennifer Irvine, seemed to agree: "Personally, I discovered that programs which make the most economic sense are rarely the most politically feasible, and vice versa."

*-Tonya Bloomer*



*Jameson Toner, Tonya Bloomer, Christopher Snow, Cara Rosenberg, Prof. Philip Klinkner, Bjorn Franson, Jennifer Irvine, David Gaynes and Wendy Worms give their professor, Gary Wyckoff, a boost after speaking to the press in Washington, DC in spring 1999.*





Each year the Levitt Council selects a theme. The theme for 1998-1999 was race and ethnicity. During the 1999-2000 academic year the Levitt Center is sponsoring speakers on the general theme of religion and public affairs.

Glenn Loury, Professor of Economics and Director of the Institute for Race and Social Division at Boston University spoke to students about "Color blindness does not imply, nor is it implied by racial justice" as part of a panel on Race and Ethnicity in April.

## Speakers come to campus

The Levitt Center sponsored the following speakers as part of a series on Race and Ethnicity

**Glenn Loury**, Professor of Economics and Director, Institute for Race and Social Division at Boston University

**Terry Pell**, Senior Counsel, Center for Individual Responsibility, Washington, DC

**Tom Sugrue**, Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania

The Levitt Center contributed toward part of the expenses of the following speakers. The co-sponsors are shown in parentheses.

Robert Audi (Philosophy)  
Black and Latin Student Union

Cultural Awareness Series:  
Felipe Luciano  
Himilce Novas  
Randall Robinson

Rebecca Pierce Bomann (Sociology)

Bruce Bueno de Mesquita (Government)

Michelle Chang (Government)  
Arnett Doctor (Multicultural Affairs)

Jean Bethke Elshtain (Government)

Roy Ginsberg (Government)

Michael Kazin (History)

Lisa Lewenz (Hillel)

Leon Litwack (History Department & President's initiative on race)

Liam Mahony (Latin American Studies, Government)

Vivian Malone-Jones (Multicultural Affairs)

Anthony McFarlane (Student Activities)

Barry Mehler (Panel on race)

Rev. Irene Monroe (Rainbow Alliance)

Philosophy panel (Philosophy):

Susan Bassett

Mark Murphy

Dave Paulsen

Laura Rozen (Government)

Yaaron Sideman (Hillel)

Claude Steele (Psychology)

Sun Yan (Government)

Ana Zentalla (Kirkland Project)



Rebecca Pierce Bomann '97 (left) discusses her recently published book based on her research in Colombia.



Michael Kazin (right), Professor of History at Georgetown University, shares some insights about the student protests of the '60s. He and Maurice Isserman, Professor of History at Hamilton College, co-authored the book America Divided.



# Race survey makes national news

This summer, the Levitt Center released its survey of the Racial Attitudes of Young Americans. The survey was developed last spring by the students in Government 340 (Race and American Democracy) and supervised by Professor Philip Klinkner. The survey sought to better understand some of the issues and trends in American race relations that might confront us in the next century by polling a national sample of 1001 young Americans between the ages of 18 and 29. Zogby International of Utica, NY conducted the survey.

The survey found reasons for both optimism and pessimism regarding the racial attitudes of young Americans. Most optimistically, this age cohort expresses strong levels of support on a variety of issues related to race relations. For example:

- Respondents overwhelmingly supported the idea of multicultural education.
- More than 56 percent said that the federal government should make sure that “black people get fair treatment in jobs.”
- More than 60 percent said that the federal government should make sure that “white and black children go to the same schools.”
- More than 57 percent agreed with the statement that “Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.”
- Most of those surveyed saw a need to balance racial diversity with academic achievement in admitting students to college.

Furthermore, most respondents stated that they were comfortable in a variety of interracial circumstances. For example:

- Over 70 percent said that they would attend a concert where they were likely to be the only person of their race there.
- Most surveyed had a positive or a

neutral response to a member of their family dating someone of a different race.

- Most (72.4 percent) said that they would consider dating someone of a different race.

Despite such positive findings, several aspects of the survey suggest a more pessimistic assessment. For example:

- A majority (50.3 percent) supported a philosophy of “separate but equal,” by agreeing with the statement, “It’s OK if the races are basically separate from one another as long as everyone has equal opportunities.”
- A majority (54.5 percent) said that it was unlikely that the United States would elect a black president in the near future.
- Only 21.5 percent of respondents rated race relations in the U.S. today as good to excellent. 57.9 percent described them as fair and 19.4 percent as poor. Moreover, most (52.3 percent) saw race relations as staying the same or getting worse. 45.9 percent saw them getting better.

Race also still matters in the social lives of young Americans. For example:

- Only 47.7 percent of respondents stated that they had dated someone of a different race, but 75.3 percent said that they had dated someone of a different religion.
- Only 47.2 percent said that they would consider marrying someone of a different race, but 64.4 percent said that they would consider marrying someone of a different religion.
- Over 90 percent (91.1 percent) said that they heard racist jokes, comments, or language at least occasionally. Over a third (36.6 percent) said that they heard them often.

- Less than half (48.2 percent) said that in adopting a child, the race of the child would not matter to them.

The survey was released in August by the Levitt Center in conjunction with the NAACP and Zogby International. The press conference announcing the survey was carried live by C-SPAN. The survey was also widely reported in the national media, including stories on NPR, BBC, and CNN, and in the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Atlanta-Journal Constitution*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *New York Post*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Washington Times*, among many others.

According to Klinkner, “This survey was exactly the type of thing we are trying to do with the Levitt Center: helping Hamilton students to develop research that will allow them to have an impact on important public affairs issues. The students did a great job and it showed in the overwhelming interest in the survey.”

Full survey results can be found at: <http://www.hamilton.edu/home/racesurvey/>

-Philip Klinkner

This report is published yearly by the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center at Hamilton College.

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