This year, hundreds of Hamilton students became involved in public affairs through the programs provided by the Levitt Center. Students engaged important policy issues in their local community, in the global arena, as well as in the world connecting both local and global concerns. Whether they were tutoring refugees for citizenship tests, debating election issues, or listening to Nobel laureate Joe Stiglitz talk about the challenges of globalization, students gained an appreciation for the complexity of public policy issues.

Much of the programming this year revolved around the theme of “The U.S. Budget: Politics, Policies and Priorities.” Students heard from experienced policy makers like Alice Rivlin, Doug Holtz-Eakin, and Alan Hevesi and had opportunities to question and challenge a diverse set of views.

Another important initiative this year was the widespread adoption of service learning projects in several classes, made possible by the support of the Levitt Center. Students tutored refugees, helped low income workers fill out income tax returns, and assisted non-profit agencies in Utica developing web sites that were accessible to the disabled, among other endeavors. Many students in these classes commented on what a tremendously valuable and eye-opening experience these projects provided. More on this and other Levitt Center activities is provided in the following pages.

Ann Owen
Director, Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center
This year’s Levitt Center Speaker Series “The U.S. Budget: Power, Politics and Priorities” introduced Hamilton students to an array of intellectually challenging speakers.

The speakers represented a wide range of political views. Many of the speakers had substantial policy experience, an invaluable asset in helping students make the connection between the classroom and policies enacted in the real world.

Following each lecture, students and other audience members had the opportunity to engage each speaker in thoughtful discussion.

Current Levitt Council

Ann Owen, Director of the Levitt Center and Associate Professor of Economics
Douglas Ambrose, Sidney Wertheimer, Jr. Associate Professor of History
Alan Caffrune, Henry Platt Bristol Professor of International Affairs
Jennifer Irons, Assistant Professor of Sociology
Robert Simon, Professor of Philosophy
Stephen Wu, Assistant Professor of Economics
Paul Gary Wyckoff, Associate Professor of Government and Director of the Public Policy Program

ex officio
Dr. Judith Owens-Manley, Associate Director for Community Research
Sharon Topi, Levitt Center Administrator

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Levitt Public Affairs Center Annual Report 2004-2005
Alice Rivlin Opens Levitt Speaker Series
by Emily Lemanczyk ’05

Alice Rivlin, Brookings Institute’s senior fellow and director of its greater Washington research program in economic studies, presented the lecture, “Why The Federal Budget Matters to Your Economic Future” on October 11 in the Chapel. Rivlin began her lecture discussing the current presidential campaign and the role of the economy in the upcoming election. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, she said, neither presidential candidate is focusing on the federal budget and the deficit. Currently the federal government is paying $422 billion dollars more than it is collecting in taxes. She compared this spending to a “national credit card,” explaining that the next generation will have to pay the bill. As time progresses, she explained, national spending and the deficit will become increasingly important, as the population ages and medical costs continue to rise.

“Unless we raise taxes - other programs will be squeezed out,” she said. This issue poses a huge dilemma for elected officials over the next few years.

Rivlin examined both presidential candidates and their view on the economic state. She claimed that her goal was not to persuade her audience to vote for one candidate or the other, but rather to persuade her audience that the issues concerning the federal budget and the deficit are in fact important. Bush is currently emphasizing the recent progress over the last year-and-a-half. Kerry, on the other hand, is focusing on the negative aspects of the current economic situation, including the high unemployment rate. “Nobody is actually lying,” Rivlin stated after describing the differences in each candidates’ platforms; they are just choosing to focus on different sides of the same situation.

Rivlin described that the most recent economic recession was not that deep by historical standards. While Bush’s tax cuts helped to alleviate the recession, had they been better designed they would have helped more. While the tax cuts helped, “at what cost did they work?” No matter who wins the election, he will be faced with three “daunting economic problems,” she said. The first will be the unsustainable deficit in the budget; the second will be the aging population. The third problem will be the large number of low-wage workers.

After describing each problem in depth, as well as the Clinton administration’s attempt to deal with the federal deficit in the late ’90s, Rivlin claimed that any solution “will require ideological flexibility.” Democrats and Republicans will need to work together to come up with viable solutions.

Nobel Prize Winner Joseph Stiglitz Speaks on Globalization
by Caroline O'Shea '07

Joseph Stiglitz, winner of the 2001 Nobel Prize in Economics, gave a lecture titled “Globalization and Public Policy” on April 8. Stiglitz has served as a member of the Council of Economic Advisors and as Chief Economist and Senior Vice President of the World Bank, and he is currently a professor at Columbia University. His lecture addressed the ways in which globalization and public policy have interacted in recent years, as well as the continuing debate over who benefits from globalization. Ann Owen, economics professor and Director of the Levitt Center, introduced Stiglitz by saying that he is an ideal speaker to bridge the gap between academic study and public policy.

Stiglitz began his lecture by discussing the riots at the December 1999 round of trade talks in Seattle, WA. Before this event, public attention was not as focused on the issue of globalization and its potential drawbacks. In fact, said Stiglitz, the dissent surprised proponents of globalization who believed that the process was making everyone better off around the world. The controversy generated at the Seattle round increased public and media interest in investigating what globalization was actually doing. After this, Stiglitz said, it became clear why the protesters had concern about the trade talks — globalization had certainly made some richer, but statistics show that the poorest countries have gotten poorer as well. They have been made worse off, in Stiglitz’s opinion, because of the asymmetric nature of the trade agreements that have grown out of globalization.

The current trade agreements in agriculture are a prime example of this asymmetry said Stiglitz. “The US maintains agriculture subsidies exceeding the total income of sub-Saharan Africa. How can they compete?” Subsidies, such as the $3-5 billion given to US cotton farmers, lower the global price of cotton and hurt 10 million sub-Saharan cotton growers. The asymmetry also occurs in the trade of manufactured goods, with escalating tariffs on industrial products targeting the poorest countries, Stiglitz said.

Intellectual property rights have become important because of a change in global economic architecture, Stiglitz continued. Currently only 13-14% of US production is in manufacturing, with much more production in the service and information sectors. Intellectual property rights interfere with economic efficiency and create monopolies, which Stiglitz pointed out is not usually a goal of trade. However, these intellectual property rights are maintained because they provide an incentive for research and development. During the 1994 Uruguay round of WTO talks, Stiglitz and the Council of Economic Advisors opposed a policy of unbalanced intellectual property rights called TRIPS because it would deprive less developed countries of life-saving medicine and technology. However, the US trade representative has the final say on the trade negotiations. These trade reps are accountable to multinational corporations and banks and understand profitability and market access, Stiglitz said. This issue continues to be controversial in the area of AIDS medications for Africa.

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Developed countries have not followed up on their promises to promote development through trade liberalization. Since 1994, US subsidies have doubled, Stiglitz said. He called the 2003 Cancun round of negotiations, at which developing countries began to demand more fair trade agreements, a “victory for democracy.” These talks had greater transparency and press coverage, less hardnosed bargaining on the part of developed countries, and a greater awareness of what globalization is doing to less developed countries.

Stiglitz continued by talking about the effect of globalization on America. While the US as a whole has benefited enormously from globalization, he said, not everyone in the nation is experiencing the benefits, and the winners are not compensating the losers. The US also has a large trade deficit, which Stiglitz called a problem of macroeconomic mismanagement.

Stiglitz finished his lecture by talking about global financial markets. The global reserve system in which countries hold US dollars as reserves essentially means that all countries are lending money to the US at a very low interest rate, while the US is often lending them money at a much higher rate. Essentially, Stiglitz said, the United States is getting more foreign aid than it gives out, and this system will eventually have to break down. This is particularly true now that the US dollar is not as reliable a store of value as it once was.

The rule of law is beginning to make its force felt in international trade and globalization now, Stiglitz concluded. At least today, he said, the powerful are now being held accountable for the effects their economic behaviors have on others, and 2-3 billion new people are being integrated more equitably into the global economy.
Douglas Holtz-Eakin Speaks on Federal Budget Outlook
by Caroline R. O’Shea ’07

Douglas Holtz-Eakin, director of the Congressional Budget Office and Trustee Professor of Economics at the Maxwell School of Syracuse University, gave a lecture titled “The Economic and Budget Outlook: Policies and Priorities” in the Chapel on April 11. Holtz-Eakin began by discussing what the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) does and how it came to be. Created 30 years ago by the Budget and Empowerment Act of 1974, the CBO emerged out of a conflict between Congressional leaders and President Nixon over the implementation of the federal budget. The purpose of the CBO is to give Congress the ability to formulate, organize and track the U.S. Budget, independent from the Office of Management and Budget in the executive branch. Essentially, Holtz-Eakin said, the CBO is a high level consulting firm for the US Congress which provides analysis on the budgetary impact of every bill that comes out of committee. This comes to over 2000 estimates a year.

Holtz-Eakin outlined some of the major events and policy changes in the past several years which have had a large impact on the federal budget, including tax cuts, the No Child Left Behind act, 9/11, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. There are an enormous array of policy initiatives in which economic knowledge needs to be considered, he said. For example, proposed changes in prescription drug regulations required the CBO to estimate costs in a market that did not yet exist with only vague outlines. To do this, they relied on research from academia, think tanks, and business. “Everything I’ve taught has turned out to be more real life than I ever dreamed,” Holtz-Eakin said of being an economics professor. “You use the same tools to predict effects.”

With the new Congress, Holtz-Eakin said, everything regarding the budget is on the table, including both taxing and spending policy. Currently, approximately 1/6 of the federal budget is military spending and 1/6 is other discretionary spending, while 2/3 of the budget is dedicated to entitlements and mandatory programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. The budget deficit for fiscal year 2004 was $412 billion — an all time dollar high, though it represented a lower proportion of national income than deficits in the 1980s, he said.

Holtz-Eakin said “The CBO creates a baseline projection for the future budget outlook by asking what would happen if the government was on fiscal autopilot?” The current CBO projection shows a decrease in deficits over the coming years. It is important to consider what is and is not factored into the projection, he said. The current projection assumes above-trend economic recovery will continue, and also assumes that current tax changes will expire and not be renewed. Not included in the CBO projection are Medicare changes which may increase spending, as well as future costs for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is difficult to make projections based on current law, Holtz-Eakin said, because current law does not reflect future policy directions. These policy directions cannot be predicted because of the vastly different priorities that exist in the political environment.

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Holtz-Eakin went on to talk about some of the issues in the 2/3 of the budget which makes up entitlements such as Social Security, which he said is definitely an important issue to be addressed. The key policy problem with Social Security, he said, is that “benefits will be above revenues as far as the eye can see.” We need to bring the system into alignment sooner rather than later, he said, so that people can plan ahead and less adjustment will be necessary to sustain the program. By law, Holtz-Eakin is not able to make policy recommendations as director of the CBO. However, he discussed some of the pros and cons of the pre-funded and pay-as-you-go approaches to Social Security. Pay-as-you-go allows genuine social insurance for everyone, he said, and can have the effect of redistributing wealth. A pre-funded system allows the possibility of higher returns as well as labor market and savings incentives. Both have the transitional cost problem of “getting from here to there,” he said. In general, Holtz-Eakin said, policy goals should be considered first and then a system of finance should be determined to fit these goals, as the government has much more flexibility in its budget policy than a private corporation does.

Abortion Issues Examined

This spring the Levitt Center sponsored a special two-speaker examination of abortion issues. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, Eleanor Raoul Professor of History at Emory University, and Gloria Feldt, former president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, provided disparate views on the abortion debate. On January 27, Fox-Genovese began her lecture “Life or Death: Who Decides?” with the comment that “the topic of abortion is as controversial as any topic we will discuss in our lifetime.” She expressed her strong views against abortion in terms of what it means to be human, women’s rights, and racial issues.

On February 2, Gloria Feldt gave a talk based on her most recent book, *Stop the War on Choice: How to Fight Forward for Reproductive Rights*, her first lecture after stepping down as president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America. Feldt began her lecture with a brief history of Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger’s battle with government censorship in her attempt to provide women with medically accurate information about health and sex. She went on to discuss what she describes as the “war on choice,” her conviction that reproductive rights, which she believes are fundamental human rights, are in danger, and what pro-choice activists can do to “fight forward for reproductive rights.” The controversial topic of abortion prompted extensive question and answer sessions following both lectures.

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Patrick Aylward of the Federal Office of Management and Budget gave a presentation in Frank Anechiarico’s American Public Administration course on October 18, a class which is a requirement for all Public Policy majors. Aylward discussed his recent duties in Iraq to a captivated student audience and spent the second half of the class answering students’ many questions. He also included in his presentation an appealing argument about the rewards of public service.

Joshua Bratter, Hamilton ’95, an expert on immigration law, returned to the Hill in October to speak to students in Jenny Irons’ Immigration and Identity class. He also offered a student visa workshop in which he discussed new aspects of the immigration law and its relationship to national security. Bratter’s visit was co-sponsored by the Career Center.

Lawrence Korb, Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress, spoke on November 10 about “National Security in an Age of Terrorists, Tyrants and Weapons of Mass Destruction.” After defining terrorism as a tactic, not a group, Korb spoke about the three solutions our government might use when faced with a threat to national security – preemptive war, deterrence and containment, and cooperative multilateralism. Korb described situations where each of these methods was appropriate and effective, and explained why he believed preemptive war did not achieve the desired result in the current war in Iraq. In closing, he offered solutions to contemporary military conflicts, and emphasized that America’s presence in the world cannot be one-sided, but that our country must adopt an approach of cooperative multilateralism.

Leila Talani, Director of Studies for the Politics with Economics Programme of the Department of European Studies at the University of Bath, UK; and a Lecturer at the London School of Economics and Political Science, presented “The Dollar, the Euro, and the Future of European Integration” on February 27. Dr. Talani discussed the history of the European Union and the European Monetary Union, and explained why some nations opted to join the EU or the EMU and others did not. Further, Talani described the relationship between the US dollar and the Euro, arguing that recent depreciation of the US dollar in relation to the Euro was not due to any intrinsic strength of the European Central Bank, the Euro, or the European economy in general. Professors Didar Erdinc and Alan Caffray served as commentators, offering brief remarks following the lecture and fielding questions from the audience.
Donald Kettl, political science professor at the University of Pennsylvania and nonresident senior fellow at the Brookings Institute, discussed new problems and challenges to current US government on March 7 in his lecture “The Next Government of the United States: Strategies for the 21st Century.” Kettl began his presentation by comparing the way disaster situations were handled in New York and at the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Kettl described how advance strategic planning and unified incident command allowed efficient handling of rescue efforts at the Pentagon, while chaos reigned at the World Trade Center due to communication problems between local agencies and first responders. What one can learn from this scenario, Kettl argued, is that problems in government do not stay confined within the artificially constructed bureaucratic and structural dividing lines defined by state, local, or federal governments. For example, problems of homeland security may exist on the national or international level, but response to terrorist attacks begins at the local level. The government of the 21st century will frequently encounter problems, including balancing government budgets, that strain the boundaries between local, state, national, and international boundaries, as well as the distinction between the public and private spheres. Kettl concluded his talk by offering solutions to potential problems, and stressing the importance of civic accountability, communication, and cooperation in addressing challenges of governance in the 21st century.

Dinesh D’Souza, the Robert and Karen Rishwain Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and former senior domestic policy analyst in the White House during the Reagan Administration, presented a lecture on April 20 in which he discussed many topics from his most recent book, What’s So Great about America. D’Souza raised many issues, among them American foreign policy and the relationship between the United States and the Middle East, anti-American sentiment, and immigration. D’Souza argued that many people wish to come to America because it is seen as a land of opportunity, where citizens are given the freedom to determine their own destiny. An extensive question and answer discussion followed the lecture.

New York State Comptroller Alan Hevesi presented the final lecture in this year’s Levitt Speaker Series, with a discussion on April 27 about the New York State and federal budgets, and the tremendous debt incurred by both. Hevesi argued that the current trend in government to consciously use debt is both irresponsible and dangerous. In response to New York State’s 49 billion dollar debt, Hevesi offered the solution of austerity—freeze all budgets for a number of years, raise taxes and cut programs evenly. In addition to discussing budgetary problems, Hevesi spoke about the impact of corruption and corporate scandals on the economy, arguing for a regulatory system with more control over vendors for federal agency and public authorities.
Hamilton College Awarded VISTA Grant for Community Programs
by Vige Barrie

Hamilton College’s Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center received an AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) grant to hire two Hamilton graduates to engage in community outreach programs in Utica for the 2004-2005 academic year. Both VISTA workers were hired to assist with projects focused on increasing the number of Hamilton students working in the community through service-learning courses, federal work-study programs and as volunteers. The VISTA positions are renewable for up to three years.

Amanda Siepiola, who graduated from Hamilton in 2002, focused on ensuring the success of Project SHINE (Students Helping in the Naturalization of Elders). This program is designed to help immigrants and refugees over the age of 50 in the Mohawk Valley learn English language skills, become more actively engaged in their community and pursue U.S. citizenship. Project SHINE is another grant received by the Levitt Center and is a replication of a project originally developed at Temple University. Project SHINE is now active on 16 campuses across the nation. Hamilton College applied in partnership with Utica College through the Levitt Center.

Hamilton College maintains an outreach office at the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees for this program. Project SHINE operated at other sites as well this year, including ESL classrooms run by Madison-Oneida BOCES and a new outreach site for Vietnamese refugees through St. Frances de Sales. Siepiola, the VISTA Worker, worked this year to develop Hamilton’s capacity to provide one-on-one tutoring for senior citizens at community sites such as churches, synagogues and mosques.

Charles Francis, a 2004 Hamilton graduate who lives in the Cornhill section of Utica, dedicated his efforts to the Cornhill Caring Community project which is part of the county-wide Communities that Care (CTC) initiative facilitated by the Levitt Center over the past few years. CTC is designed to promote effective collaboration between schools, health and human service agencies, government, law enforcement, local business, faith organizations, and the community. Francis spent his first year in the position organizing various facets of the community to come together in planning for positive youth development. His work in the Cornhill community dovetails with the participation of Hamilton College in facilitating the development of a Community School at the site of Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School. MLK has been the site for service-learning among Hamilton students in Education and Women’s Studies courses over the past several years.

Dr. Judith Owens-Manley, Associate Director of Community Research for the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center is the director for Project SHINE, while Siepiola serves as the Campus Coordinator for Hamilton and the Community Site Coordinator for the project. Owens-Manley also serves as director of the Cornhill Caring Community project and the VISTA Project Supervisor.

New York Campus Compact, a coalition of more than 50 colleges and universities promoting active citizenship as an aim of higher education, is the agency through which Hamilton was awarded this funding.

“The Hamilton College site of the New York Campus Compact AmeriCorps*VISTA project has been setting the standard among its fellow member-campus sites for innovative programming design, creative local collaboration efforts, and effective implementation practices. More than at any other project site, the Hamilton College VISTA members have been successful in realizing the project goal of bringing the diverse wealth of campus resources to the service of low-income communities according to the needs and preferences determined by the residents of those communities, which the VISTA members helped identify through targeted outreach and needs assessment efforts. The results of the two Hamilton College VISTA members’ work and the impressive list of organizations they currently partner with speak for themselves. They are establishing working and sustainable links between the local low-income communities and Hamilton College that thrive on the active participation of both low-income residents and campus representatives (both students and faculty) and which are resulting in real benefits for everyone involved.”

—Daniel Sargent, NYS VISTA Program Specialist
Levitt Center Supports Service Learning at Hamilton

The Levitt Center has increased student and faculty involvement in the Greater Utica community through service learning projects over the last several years. Through two grants obtained in 2004, the Levitt Center significantly expanded service learning opportunities for students and faculty. A grant from New York State Campus Compact provided two AmeriCorps VISTA workers to coordinate two comprehensive service learning projects.

During the 2004-2005 academic year, over 200 Hamilton students participated in service learning projects that helped to connect the Hamilton community with its surrounding neighbors. These opportunities were facilitated by the Levitt Center which acted as a liaison between Hamilton faculty and students and non-profit organizations in Utica. The Levitt Center provided support for these classes in a variety of ways, including scheduling, transportation of students to Utica, and providing a forum for faculty involved in service learning projects to discuss pedagogical issues.

There are two important components in a service learning project. First, students provide meaningful community service. Just as important, however, is the second component in which the experience that the students have augments the learning they do in the classroom. The service is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the course by infusing theory with practice and by including structured time for students to reflect on their experience.

One example of service learning’s new presence on campus is the introduction of Project SHINE (Students Helping in the Naturalization of Elders). Project SHINE is a national program that links college students with older refugees and immigrants seeking to learn English and navigate the complex path to U.S. citizenship.

Eighty-nine Hamilton students participated in the SHINE program. By the end of the 2004-2005 academic year, SHINE students provided over 1,800 community service hours to the Utica community.

Service Learning Statistics

* Over 200 students provided more than 2,000 hours of service

* Project SHINE students tutored more than 200 refugees and immigrants from more than a dozen different countries

* Hamilton students assisted with the preparation of tax returns that brought $374,129 in Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) back to Oneida County
Project SHINE was not the only service-learning option on campus this year. The Levitt Center also supported other faculty members interested in linking their courses to the community. Several of these were coordinated by Charley Francis as part of a second VISTA project: the Cornhill Caring Community. Examples include:

- Chaplain Jeff McNarn’s Sophomore Seminar, 1968: Students in Revolt, where the students served at JCTOD Outreach, the Home Ownership Center, Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School and attended community meetings. They learned about the role of neighborhood organizations in promoting social change while comparing the role of students in that process in 1968 with today.

- Professor Brian Rosmaita’s students in his Computer Science course, Applications, Implications and Issues, conducted audits of local agencies’ web sites to determine if they were accessible to the disabled and offered suggestions for improvements to the Resource Center for Independent Living, the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Utica Municipal Authority.

- Professor Paul Hagstrom’s Economics of Poverty students volunteered with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program and the Resource Center for Independent Living, preparing taxes free of charge to members of the Utica community and helping to bring $374,129 in Earned Income Tax Credit dollars back to Oneida County.

- Students in Professor Judy Owens-Manley’s Seminar in Program Evaluation learned how to conduct a program evaluation and carried out a second year evaluation of the HOPE VI Project, a federally funded housing project in Cornhill.
The service-learning experience in each of these courses surely met the needs of the Utica community; however, the students seemed to gain much more than they gave from the experience. They connected today’s public affairs issues with their academic material, which, in turn, led to a greater understanding of pressing issues and of their ability to contribute, make a difference and become more civically engaged in our society. One Project SHINE student explains, “SHINE is one of my last activities at Hamilton and through the program I’ve learned to appreciate the people of Utica, recognize the refugee population here, and what it takes to get citizenship.” Faculty members have also noticed the impact of service learning on their students. One faculty member notes, “Now that I’ve taught the course this way, it added so much that I can’t imagine teaching it any other way!”

Learners from many countries pose with Liz Debraggio ’07 and Kelly Stryker ’05 (back row, center) at the Refugee Center in Utica

Student reflections on service-learning

“I think that meeting students and talking to them about their backgrounds has been the most interesting, and most important, part of my SHINE experience. I firmly believe that we could solve a lot of the world’s problems by just listening to others.” — SHINE student

“I found the service-learning component of the course to be the most valuable. By evaluating and implementing other web sites for accessibility, I was able to use all I had learned throughout the course.” — Colby Bishop, Computer Science 107: Applications, Implications and Issues student

“I realized how naive I was to believe that blind people didn’t use the web. I learned that the web is not merely for our sighted society and that one important part of computer science is making this technology available to everyone. This feeling of making a difference was by far my favorite part of the course.” — Kristen Alongi, Computer Science 107: Applications, Implication and Issues student

Faculty reflections on service-learning courses

“The service learning turned out to be very important for the class pedagogically—it really motivated the students to learn the material, and then gave them the opportunity to apply what they had learned (and learn new stuff) while working with production-quality web sites.” — Brian Rosmaita, Computer Science professor

“What has struck me about the SHINE students is that all of a sudden in a topic unrelated to a surface level to SHINE, they will bring up an observation that they’ve made from their experience there. It’s great.” — Margaret Gentry, Women’s Studies professor

“A senior called it one of the most meaningful experiences in his life. In his final paper he interwove the Vietnamese texts we had read with the experiences of the women he had tutored, finding each echoing and deepening his understanding of the other.” — Diane Fox, Asian Studies professor

“Through the Volunteer Tax Assistance Project, students are forced to draw connections between the scholarly literature and tax policies toward the poor, the implementation of tax policy and the impact of policies such as the EITC on people’s lives.” — Paul Hagstrom, Economics professor
Hamilton Students Participate in Their Community
-by Charley Francis

Charley Francis, the Hamilton College VISTA Community Outreach Coordinator, organized an Urban Service Experience (USE) trip to provide Hamilton students the opportunity to work for community programs in Utica over the College’s spring break. The Levitt Center provided funding and logistical support for this program.

Francis and five Hamilton College students participated in the project. Keshab Ghimire ’07, Ngoda Manongi ’08, Philip Odusote ’07, Miranda Raimondi ’08 and Aletha Asay ’05 devoted their break to community service in Utica, tackling projects from painting to tutoring. The group spent their nights in the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes on Genesee Street, and in addition to their hard work, enjoyed the opportunity to experience much of what Utica has to offer — good ethnic food, local cafes, music, and more.

The USE group volunteered at many local organizations: youth outreach programs such as JCTOD and the Thea Bowman House, the Rescue Mission, the Refugee Center, the Cosmopolitan Community Center, and more. They spent time with children, painted rooms, publicized community outreaches, and provided general help to these non-profit organizations. The service was meaningful and useful, but for the students, perhaps the most exciting thing about it was making a connection with the community.

In addition to volunteer work, the group also had seminars and reflection times with community members and Hamilton faculty and administrators. Students were led in sessions to connect what they were learning throughout the week with concepts taught in the classroom, emphasizing the connection between academics and service/local issues. Faculty members and administrators who participated were Bonnie Urciuoli, Susan Mason, Jeff McArn, Judy Owens-Manley, and Mark Montgomery.

The group further benefited from two community meetings. The students met many local residents and were able to see firsthand the process of how the community gets things done. Some of the conversations they had with local people were very powerful. In general, the students got to know the city, the neighborhood, and its people better. The students learned a great deal about this community in particular and about the unique strengths and challenges in an inner-city environment. All of the students reported being changed in some way through this experience.

The original concept of an Urban Service Experience was developed by the Kirkland Project and run as an orientation prior to the school year and during winter break. The Spring USE program extended the community outreach experience for a week-long series of opportunities for service and reflection focused in the inner-city area of Cornhill.

Aletha Asay ’05 interacts with children at JCTOD
Francis also organized other activities in the Cornhill community in which Hamilton students and faculty participated. Three seminars were held in Fall '04 as an orientation to the Utica community. The seminars revolved around themes of “Meet Your Neighbor”, “Empowerment”, and “Hunger” and were held in the Community Outreach Office located in the Refugee Center. Seminars were co-led by staff of area human service agencies and by community leaders such as Bill Phillips, local councilman, who gave a neighborhood walking tour.

The Hamilton Jazz Combo and Jazz Ensemble entertained in Cornhill in two separate concerts. The first was held at the Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School in November ’04 and was attended by all of the students and teachers there. The second was held at the Cosmopolitan Center, which has recently relocated in the Loretto Center. The Jazz Ensemble played for 150 residents of the Cornhill community. Information about community services accompanied the college players at the concert.

Community breakfasts and dinners organized by Francis, which were held at St. Frances de Sales Parish Center, have brought residents of the community “to the table” to discuss issues of importance for youth and families. HAVOC members cooked and served dinner for a group of 40 neighborhood residents one evening in January, another example of creating partnerships between the College and the community.

Community agencies and organizations as partners

Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI), HomeOwnership Center, Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees (MVR), New York State Public Housing Authority Director’s Association, Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL), Utica Municipal Housing Authority, BOCES Utica Access Site, Matt Apartments, St. Francis De Sales, Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School, Jesus Christ Tabernacle of David Outreach (JCTOD), Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA), Councilman Bill Phillips’ Office, City of Utica, Rebuild Mohawk Valley, Inc., Housing Visions, Inc.
Levitt Center provides program evaluation for the HOPE VI Project

Hope VI (Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere) is an 11.5 million dollar HUD-funded grant to the Utica Municipal Housing Authority (MHA) to provide better housing opportunities for residents of Utica's deteriorating Washington Courts public housing development. The project aims to relocate Washington Courts residents to better housing, create new scattered-site housing opportunities in the neighborhood of Cornhill, and to rehabilitate the Cornhill neighborhood through renovated and new housing, parks and recreational facilities and a Community School. MHA contracted with the Levitt Center to complete a program evaluation for the HOPE VI project. Dr. Judith Owens-Manley drew up the evaluation plan for the 5 years of the HOPE VI project and provides overall supervision for student participation in completing a yearly evaluation. Students participate through a Program Evaluation Seminar taught during the spring semester, in addition to working as research assistants during the fall and spring semesters or over the summer through a HOPE VI summer service fellowship.

During the 2005 spring semester, 6 students in the Seminar in Program Evaluation worked in teams of two to complete an evaluation of the second year of the project. Three teams focused their efforts this year on needs assessment, process analysis and outcome evaluation in three areas: the former residents of Washington Courts who are currently employed; the new residents of the Cornhill neighborhood that have moved into the renovated apartments comprising the Kembleton Project, Phase I of HOPE VI; and the housing and surrounding areas of the targeted renewal areas for neighborhood improvement in Cornhill.

Students presented results of their work at a luncheon for the staff of the HOPE VI project at the end of the semester and conducted a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the project as it currently stands. Program evaluation reports are available on the Levitt website at www.hamilton.edu/levitt. The summer service fellowships have contributed significantly to the program evaluation and to the HOPE VI Project.

Other Community Connections

A Family Treatment Court (FTC) began in Oneida County in February 2005 with Dr. Judith Owens-Manley, Associate Director for Community Research, as the Program Evaluator on a 10-person planning team led by Oneida County Family Court Judge James Griffiths. Family Treatment Courts follow a recent model of problem-solving courts in providing increased services and accountability for parents with substance abuse problems in danger of losing their children to ensure more timely permanence. This project is supported by a Department of Justice training grant, and Owens-Manley traveled with the planning team to Toledo, Kansas City and Sacramento this year to develop an effective plan for Oneida County. We plan to involve Hamilton students in service-learning projects with the FTC during the 2005-06 school year.

The Women's Fund of Oneida and Herkimer Counties raises funds and provides grants to support women and girls. The Women's Fund, which is affiliated with the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, Inc., partnered with the Levitt Center to produce a two-part report on the status of women and girls in the communities comprising Oneida and Herkimer Counties. Student research assistants worked with the Associate Director to produce Part I, and proposals are underway to fund and develop Part II, utilizing the talents and skills of both faculty and students. Professor Carol Droog's' class, Politics of Gender, engaged with the Women's Fund project in Fall 2004 to interview human service providers in the community about the needs of women who come to them for assistance. The class focused on refugee women, elderly and disabled women, single-parent heads of households living in poverty, and women who have experienced domestic violence. Reports generated by the class were shared with the Women's Fund.
The Levitt Research Fellows Program supports student-faculty collaborative research on issues related to public affairs. Students selected for the program receive a $3,500 summer stipend and a research budget of up to $500. Last year, eight students were awarded the Levitt Fellowships and spent the summer of 2004 working closely with their faculty advisors on their chosen research projects. At the end of the summer, students wrote papers and gave public presentations of their results. Several students continued their work during the following academic year, incorporating it into their senior thesis.

Many students find the opportunity to engage in research with faculty to be extremely rewarding. Yin Tian '07 explains, “I feel very lucky to become a Levitt Fellow. Better yet, the project I am doing is about my home country. This is one of the benefits I get for being a small liberal arts student. Because of the scale of the community, the college can provide us with enough opportunities to do what we feel confident doing.”

Christopher Bordoni collaborated with Professor Julio Videras on a project which examined whether the socio-economic identity of a community plays a role in the enforcement of environmental regulation. His final results appear in “Ethnic Fragmentation and the Enforcement of Environmental Regulation: Evidence from Administrative Enforcement in New Jersey and New York.” This work has culminated in a joint paper with Professor Videras that has been submitted to be considered for publication in an academic journal.

Alexis Buscaglia '05 (left), working with Professor Alan Cautby, examined the effect on France of the newly ratified European Union Constitutional Treaty of 2004. Alexis continued to pursue this research in the academic year to fulfill the requirements of her major. The results of her research appear in her senior thesis, entitled “France’s Decline within the EU as a Result of Expansion.”

Svetoslav Derderyan '06 collaborated with Professor Alan Cautby on his Levitt research project, “European Enlargement, the War on Iraq, and the Future of the Trans-Atlantic Relationship: Will the EU Speak in a Single Voice in the 21st Century?” In an attempt to create reasonable predictions of how the Trans-Atlantic relationship between Europe and the US is likely to evolve, Svetoslav examined pro-American sentiment in Eastern and central European countries, particularly Bulgaria and Hungary, in the years after the end of the Cold War.

Using data from the Health and Retirement study, Qi Ge ’06 examined which behavioral factors influence people’s decisions to purchase private health insurance coverage. Qi worked closely with Professor Steve Wu on his project, “Behavioral Determinants of Direct-Purchase Health Insurance Coverage.”

Danielle Levine '05 spent part of the summer working with Professor Steve Orvis in Kenya, gathering information for her project. Danielle investigated the impact of agricultural revitalization in less developed countries. Her work eventually became her honors thesis in Government, entitled “Strong Institutions: A Foundation for Development.” Her thesis was a case study of the Kenyan coffee and tea sectors.

In collaboration with Professor Yael Aronoff, Jonathan Rick '05 questioned whether or not the current war in Iraq had sufficient justification in his paper “The 9/11 Effect.” His project analyzed American military response to 9/11 in light of perceived threat (whether Saddam Hussein was deferrable), Saddam Hussein’s collaboration with Al Qaeda and other terrorists, and Iraq’s relationship with other Gulf states.
Chris Takacs '05 (left), a sociology and philosophy double major, examined urban America’s public spaces in “Coping in the Metropolis: The Architecture of Public Life in American Cities.” With faculty advisor Professor Dan Chambliss, Chris studied the origin and evolution of attitudes that predominate in urban public spaces (indifference, cynicism and communalism), as well as their implications for urban living, the design of public space, and the health of the society that holds them.

Working with Professor Cheng Li, Yin Tian '07 examined the effects of Wal-Mart on both Chinese and American labor markets in her project “Wal-Mart in China: The Gigantic U.S. Corporation’s Expansion Will Ruin China’s Labor Market.” Yin spent much of her summer conducting research in Shenzhen and Shanghai, China.

**Levitt Community Service Fellowships 2004**

The Levitt Center funds one Community Service Fellowship each year for a student to have a summer internship providing service to non-profit agencies in the Greater Utica community. In 2004, three additional internships were funded through other grants. Joshua Bruff '05 was placed with Oneida County Communities That Care, a coalition of community agencies, and worked directly with inner-city minority youth at JCTOD Outreach in the Cornhill section of Utica. In addition, Ernesto Medina '06 and Ricky Reichenbach '06 worked with Dr. Judith Owens-Manley (below, left) and the staff of Hope VI to continue a program evaluation of the housing renewal project. Each year, the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant to the Utica Municipal Housing Authority funds a summer internship at Hamilton College. During the academic year, research assistants complete the program evaluation for HOPE VI under Owens-Manley’s direction.

Anna Arnold '04 (above, right) worked on a summer project funded by The Community Foundation of Herkimer-Oneida Counties to evaluate programs for which they provide grants throughout the year.

“It was nice to do a lot of work and put in time to something that you know in the end is going to help people.” —Ricky Reichenbach

“It is rewarding to know that in some small way my fellowship contributed toward the establishment of better neighborhoods and better communities in one of the most impoverished areas of Utica.” —Ernesto Medina

“My fellowship experience at the Community Foundation has been extremely rewarding. It has been a great way for me to both tie up my experience at Hamilton, and to indulge myself in the working and non-profit worlds.” —Anna Arnold
Levitt Fellowships – Summer 2005

The following students were selected to receive Levitt Fellowships for Summer 2005. They will be working with their faculty advisors throughout the summer on these research projects:

- **John Adams '06 with Frank Anechiarico** “Consolidating Local Government: A Viable Cost-cutting Measure for Onondaga County?”
- **Tamin Akiki '08 with Paul Hagstrom** “Do home country experiences influence economic outcomes of immigrants in the United States?”
- **Elizabeth Debraggo '07 with Paul Hagstrom** “September 11 and the Effect on Immigrant Composition and Wages”
- **Alexandra Field '06 with Alan Cafruny** “Franco-German Relations After the Iraq War”
- **Qi Ge '06 with Derek Jones** “Determinants of Firm Performance: Evidence from Panel Data for Bulgaria, Russia and the Baltic Republics”
- **Ernesto Medina Gomez '06 with Erol Balkan** “Have NGOs and anti-globalization activists helped the poor? A study of the impact on the poor of World Bank projects and transnational protest”
- **Jason Hecht '06 with Alan Cafruny** “Unstable Ground: The Implications and Potential Consequences of Germany’s Defection from the Stability and Growth Pact”
- **Lindsay Martin '07 with Jenny Irons and Rob Martin** “Forbidden Words: Speech Codes on America’s Campuses”
- **Diana Mastrocola '06 with Steve Ellingson** “The provision of social services for girls in Utica’s non-profit sector, using Girls, Inc. as a case study”
- **Peter Mucha '06 with David Rivera** “Putin’s Past and Russia’s Future: Putin’s career in the KGB and Russian Politics”
- **Brendan O’Brien '07 with Sharon Rivera** “Ethnicity and Democracy in Ukraine”
- **Yejun Qian '08 with Cheng Li** “Behind the Poisonous Electronic Waste Trade: An Analysis of Policy Incentives of U.S. E-waste Export to China”
- **Caitlin Rochford '06 with Alan Cafruny** “Foreign energy use and its connections to potential changes in domestic energy policies”
- **David Turchin '06 with Steve Orvis** “Agricultural Subsidies: U.S. cotton subsidies and the plight of Western Africa”

Community Service Fellowships – Summer 2005

**Communities That Care Fellowship – Jeremy Kozak '06**
CTC is a cooperative initiative of community agencies and organizations formed to address risk and protective factors for positive youth development in Oneida County. The focus of Jeremy’s work will be with the Cornhill Caring Community, a local implementation of the Communities That Care, a nationally recognized best practice model.

**HOPE VI Fellowship – Niels Lesniewski ‘07**
Niels will be focusing on completing the second year program evaluation for HOPE VI with Dr. Judith Owens-Manley.

**HOPE VI Special Project – Alexis Mann ‘05**
Alexis will be documenting the history of Washington Courts and its residents through photography and interviews of their life in the housing project.
Every semester since 1993, the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center has sent Hamilton students to area high schools to speak on a wide variety of topics. These Levitt Scholars are juniors and seniors selected by faculty members for their outstanding research and communication skills. This year, our 32 scholars represented 14 different majors. Levitt Scholars first complete an Oral Communications course taught by Professor Susan Mason. During this class, they hone their public speaking skills and learn to tailor their presentation to a high school audience.

This year, 32 students participated in the program, including two Scholars from last year. In addition to speaking at several area high schools, many Scholars brought their presentations to home schools during Hamilton’s Spring Break. In addition to speaking to high school classes, Liz Dolan ’05 tailored her presentation to the entire Brookfield Central School student body as part of their Honor Society Induction. Local educators participating in the program consistently commented on the high quality of the students’ presentations, and Scholars embraced their task with enthusiasm and enjoyed the experience.

### Participating High Schools, 2004-2005

- Amherst Regional High School (Amherst, MA)
- Bronx High School of Science (Bronx, NY)
- Brookfield
- Camden
- Canastota
- Collegiate School (Richmond, VA)
- East Syracuse-Minoa
- Frankfort-Schuyler
- Herkimer
- Jamesville DeWitt
- Marcellus
- Mount Markham
- New Hartford
- Oneida
- Proctor
- Queensbury High School (Queensbury, NY)
- Seton Academy (Villa Park, IL)
- Stockbridge Valley
- Trinity Preparatory School (Winter Park, Fl)
- Trumbull High School (Trumbull, CT)
- Vernon Verona Sherrill
- West Genesee
- Wheatley School (Westbury, NY)
- Whitesboro

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*David Gordon ’05 spoke to students about the use of biodiesel at Hamilton*

*Erica Gomez ’05 spoke about hip-hop*

*Ashlyn Field ’05 used her experience in the Hamilton Career Center to teach students how to write a professional resume*
Comments from Scholars about their experience:

“Great opportunity to relate to the [high school] kids what they can do ...the experience was great!” Peter Mucha

“It was an extremely valuable experience, and an honor to be present to make the address at such a prestigious occasion,” Liz Dolan, regarding Brookfield National Honors Society Induction

“Very helpful and informative! I loved them and have gained more confidence as a speaker,” Amy Schloerb

“Why European Union Expansion Affects the United States,” Katie McLoughlin
“9/11, Al Qaeda and Saddam,” Jonathan Rick
“Beyond Bond: The Facts Behind the Myths of Intelligence Work,” Peter Mucha
“Lifetime Tenure on the Supreme Court: How Important Is It?” Natalie Brennan
“Imagined Communities in Post-9/11 New York City,” Ashley Herriman
“Presidential Communication Strategies,” John Pearson
“Modern Soul Food: Dangerously Delicious,” Ghiane Jones
“Direct Democracy and the New England Town Meeting,” Sandy Webb
“AFPep: A Potential Breast Cancer Drug,” Kate Dorsey
“Biodiesel at Hamilton College,” David Gordon
“Water Policy Challenges of the 21st Century,” Britten Chase
“Being Foreign in America,” Lisi Krainer
“Bilingual Education,” Kirsis Genao
“Proxemics: An Interactive Talk,” Chris Takaes
“The Effects of the Music Industry on American Youth,” Erica Gomez
“The Evolution of the American University and Its Students,” Ryan Burns
“The Relationship between Perfectionism, Eating Disorders and Academic Performance,” Caroline Steers
“Social Supports and Moving: A Case Study and Implications for the Future,” Hannah Toce

Levitt Scholar Topics 2004-2005

“Audition Technique: A Workshop,” Amy Schloerb
“Contemporary Documentary Films,” Alexandra Sweet
“The Entrepreneurial Spirit,” Scott Cohen
“Creating a Professional Resume,” Ashlyn Field
“IM-ing Our Way Into the Future: How Online Communities Alter the Lives of Students,” Liz Kennedy
“Lessons in Leadership: Personal Decision Making for the Public Good,” Liz Dolan
“Fast Fiction: How to Recognize and Create a Successful Short Story,” Rachel Manwill
“From Odysseus to Harry Potter: The Underworld and the Study of Myth,” Brian Sweeney
“Write Stuff: A Creative Writing Workshop,” Kristen Hague
“Iraq and the Ethic of International War,” Nate Adler
“Recent Genocide: A Case Study of the Myth of Altruistic Aid,” Douglas Chiciak
“The Important Struggle for Democracy: The Case if Kenya,” Danielle Levine

Comments from Teachers about Scholars’ Presentations

“The issue was wonderful and proved to be a great topic of conversation. I learned a few new things as well!”

“Very engaging – students loved the ‘brush with fame,’ and that helped keep even the fringe kids focused. They listen better when it comes from another source, not just the boring teacher”

“Very applicable – similar to many discussions [from class] ... great reinforcement of my work with them”

“The speaker modeled her topic with enthusiasm, energy and passion”

“She was clearly a school leader and spoke from the heart”

“He showed students how academic coursework can translate into useful research”
Levitt Center Hosts Three Panel Discussions
by Caroline O’Shea ’07

The Levitt Center drew on faculty resources to facilitate community discussion about current policy issues. Early in the year, a faculty/student panel discussed the film, Fahrenheit 9/11, a second faculty panel discussed policies of the Clinton administration prior to the campus visit of Bill Clinton, and a third panel discussed the topical issue of Social Security reform.

- The Arthur Levitt Center for Public Affairs presented the controversial Michael Moore documentary Fahrenheit 9/11 to a packed KJ Auditorium on September 23. Afterwards, most audience members stayed to listen to a panel discussion about the film and about the issues that it raises. The panel featured students Hilary King ’05 and Joe Jansen ’07, government professor Phil Klinkner, and comparative literature professor Peter Rabinowitz. The panelists’ remarks were followed by questions and comments from the audience that led to a heated discussion between people of many different viewpoints. The conversation ranged from issues of truth and the purpose of documentary filmmaking to the issues about terrorism and the war in Iraq that the film raises.

- In anticipation of President Bill Clinton’s visit to Hamilton, the Levitt Center sponsored a panel discussion on the successes and failures of his administration on Nov. 8. The panel talked about the Clinton administration’s policies in the realms of economics, humanitarian intervention, and the reconstruction of Russia. Economics professor and Director of the Levitt Center Ann Owen, a former Federal Reserve economist, spoke about the economy of the Clinton years. Steve Orvis, government professor and an expert in the politics of Africa, discussed the Clinton administration’s various interventions (or lack thereof) into civil wars and humanitarian crises. Government professor David Rivera, whose research interests focus on international relations and Russian politics, spoke about the effectiveness of the Clinton administrations dealing with the post-Cold War, democratizing Russia. After the panelists concluded their talks, history professor Doug Ambrose moderated a question and answer session with members of the audience. The discussion followed up on the panelists’ talks as well as touching on some other issues including US policy in China and Afghanistan.

Elections 2004

“This is a great opportunity to facilitate the conversation and provide a site where people can deliberate and discuss with people they might not have otherwise deliberated and discussed with,” Professor of Communications John Adams told Syracuse Post-Standard reporter Nancy Buczek, who covered the story September 29.

In addition to DebateWatch, the Levitt Center encouraged dialogue about the 2004 Presidential election with “Speaker’s Avenue,” a special edition of its weekly Think Tank. In the spirit of Speaker’s Corner in Hyde Park, London, the Levitt Center provided Hamilton community members the opportunity to voice their opinions about politics and the upcoming election. Students and other Hamilton community members gathered on Martin’s Way to speak their mind and engage passersby in discussions about important political issues.

Analysis Projects

Each summer, analysis projects are solicited from state and local agencies and government officials. The seniors in the Public Policy Program taught by Professor Paul Gary Wyckoff have the opportunity to select a project that aligns with their interests in lieu of their senior thesis. The research they accomplish provides data of special interest to the agencies, and the students gain some real world experience. This year, 5 seniors conducted public policy projects:

“The Cutler Hypothesis: Measuring Quality of Life for New York Medicaid Reform,” by Elizabeth Dolan and Katrina Lexa. New York has the highest Medicaid spending in the nation. Elizabeth and Katrina found that an almost complete absence of patient outcome data made it nearly impossible to tell if additional spending in a county increased patient health or wasted money on unnecessary procedures. Therefore, the students recommend that the first step in reforming Medicaid should be to implement a comprehensive system for collecting patient outcomes. (Sponsoring Agency: New York Department of State)

“Greater Efficiency in Public Construction: An Argument for the Repeal of Wicks Law,” by Chris McPherson and Juliette Senk. In New York State, most public agencies that build or renovate structures are required to contract separately with each of the major trades involved in construction, rather than utilizing a single general contractor. The requirement is known as Wicks Law, and it is intended to lower costs and provide more opportunities for smaller contractors. Chris and Juliette performed a cost-benefit analysis of the law, and concluded that it should be repealed. (Sponsoring Agency: New York State Division of the Budget)

“Late Budgets in New York State: What Can Be Done?” Sidney Martinez. New York State has a history of late state budgets. Sidney compared budget procedures in New York with those in other large states, and performed a statistical analysis to determine which factors influence whether a state’s budget is late. He concluded that New York State should implement new budget procedures, including a time limit on the deliberation of the budget by the legislature. (Sponsoring Agency: New York State Division of the Budget)
Think Tanks combine stimulating topics, conversation and lunch

With topics ranging from fractal geometry to enemy combatants, this year’s Think Tank engaged many students and faculty in thoughtful and lively discussions. Think Tank is a student-directed organization sponsored by the Levitt Center that strives to increase dialogue between professors and students outside the classroom. On Fridays, students and other members of the Hamilton community gather for lunchtime discussions, which are facilitated by a faculty member.

This year, Hilary King ’05 and Stephanie Godleski ’05 put together a fascinating program, with eight faculty-led discussions and one special edition “Think Tank at Speaker’s Avenue.” Ann Owen, Director of the Levitt Center and Associate Professor of Economics, led the first Think Tank with her discussion of the “Economic Plans of the Presidential Candidates,” followed in November by Assistant Professor of Government Rob Martin with “Presidents and Enemy Combatants: 1798 and 2001” and Visiting Assistant Professor of Government Peter Cannavo’s discussion about the theoretical ideas of places and spaces in “Founding and Preservation: the Practice of Place.”

Other Think Tank topics and faculty guests included Walcott-Bartlett Professor of Religious Studies Jay Williams, who spoke about “The Secret Teachings of Je Su: The Discovery of an Ancient Gospel,” Assistant Professor of Physics Gordon Jones with “Schroedinger’s Cat: Dead or Alive? (or Both?),” and a highly illustrated presentation of Fractal Geometry by Mathematics Professor Richard Bedient. Lecturer in Computer Science Kevin Kwiat discussed “The Ultimate Computer Virus and Its Implications.” In April, Director of Opportunity Programs and POSSE Mentor Phyllis Breland engaged students with “So ... What’s Your Plan?” Anthropologist Douglas Raybeck wrapped up the year with his lively discussion about the possibilities of extraterrestrial life, intelligence and civilization entitled “Is It Intelligent to Search for Extraterrestrial Life?”

Johanna Reed ’06 and Emily Colbert ’06 will co-direct Think Tank in 2005-2006.