



The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center Annual Report 2017-18

The Levitt Center provides opportunities for Hamilton College students to develop the academic knowledge and practical skills needed to understand and address persistent social problems in innovative, effective, and ethical ways. Effective and ethical solutions to social issues require an ability to imagine others' experiences and to respond in meaningful, empathetic ways.

Social Innovation: Our social innovation initiatives introduce students to the ideation and creative problem-solving processes, and nurture creative solutions to social problems with mentoring and financial support.

Public Scholarship: Our research grants, speaker series, and curricular support create opportunities for academic study and deep understanding of complex social problems, the constraints of action, and possibilities for change.

Engaged Citizenship: Our service learning courses, public service internships, and workshops help students understand the needs and circumstances of others, and develop the skills needed to work successfully and ethically with them.

Transformational Leadership: Our leadership programming works to develop self-awareness as a tool to confront challenges. It nurtures transformational leaders who follow ethical principles, inspire others, and use creativity and innovation to implement change.

Photo: The Levitt Center's Social Innovation Team meeting in the Social Innovation Lab to discuss their upcoming projects.

Letter from the Director

From the Director of the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center

The goal of education, Jean Piaget said, is not to increase the amount of knowledge in a person's head, but to create the opportunities for invention and discovery. The goal of education should be creating people who are capable of doing new things.

While we may not pledge allegiance to this quote in the Levitt Center, I think it captures the assumptions we implicitly operate with when we think about our programming, and about what we want to offer to students. And it is the students themselves, I'll add, who push us to think about that work, and to think about how to help them invent, discover, and do new things.

I am constantly reminded by my discussions with people at other colleges that we are extraordinarily lucky to have this resource. I want to say how grateful I am for the willingness of the people who work in Levitt to do so much for our students; for the other people around campus—faculty, staff, administrators—who are willing to work with us and support our mission; for the alumni who are willing to work with our students; and for the generous gifts from donors and the College's financial support. One of the great opportunities I have as director is that I get to learn about the broad base of support we have here at Hamilton and beyond.

The 2017-18 Levitt Center Council was composed of faculty from Russian, Sociology, Economics, Creative Writing, Biology, Geoscience, Government, Art, Philosophy, and History, and as usual we found that this diversity of ideas and commitments made for both respectful and enlightening discussions of programs, of student projects, and of postgraduate fellowship proposals. I always find that time spent with my colleagues in these meetings restores my faith in civility, and reminds me that, even when we disagree, we are all motivated by the same thing—to do the best we can with what we have for our students. We want them to discover their passions, but also to try things out, to try to make a difference, and to see themselves not as passive receptacles of information, but as agents.

Some of the public interest internships we supported in summer 2017 included:

- A rising senior who worked in the Public Defender's office as an investigative intern for the New Haven, CT Superior Court.
- Another rising senior who worked with the National Parks Conservation association (with another Hamilton alumnus) on policy research.
- A student who worked with The Public Theatre, one of the country's first nonprofit theatre companies. The Public emphasizes the role of theatre in civic issues and discussion.
- A student who worked for a land conservation organization in Seattle, Washington.

The Levitt Center funds also supported students pursuing individual research projects, which were undertaken with faculty members. Included among these were:

- A project researching public health and water-related infrastructure in Utica.
- Research that analyzed women's political work in Buenos Aires.
- A project dedicated to understanding early childhood education and the literacy gap in the US.
- A project examining the causes and effects of underdevelopment in Caribbean countries.

Letter from the Director

The Center supported several research groups as well, including groups that researched:

- The role of social media in the 2016 presidential election.
- Childhood malnutrition in Argentina.
- The Utica refugee population's access to US financial institutions.

This summer (2018) we have funded 58 students through 6 different programs: our electoral politics internships; our public service internships; our public philosophy research groups; our Levitt research groups; our Levitt research fellows; and our social innovation fellowship program, which is supporting one student's work in Nepal, and another who is working on human ecology in Japan.

As I said, we are all very lucky to be able to provide these kinds of opportunities to the Hamilton community. The annual report will give you more details about the many other programs and projects we have been able to support this year. And we look forward to continuing the work in 2018-19.

Marianne Janack

Director of the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center,
And the John Stewart Kennedy Chair of Philosophy

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Public Scholarship

Public Philosophy Seminars

Following its inaugural 2016-17 academic year, the Public Philosophy Seminar program has continued to invite speakers to visit the Hamilton community and give Hamilton professors the opportunity to host discussions and lectures that highlight the intersection of academic knowledge and public engagement. The seminars, lectures and workshops facilitated through the Public Philosophy program serve as supplements to faculty-led initiatives that seek to address value-laden questions from an interdisciplinary perspective and employ methods that require some degree of community engagement. Additionally, the program's design makes explicit the connections between scholarship and service by acknowledging that scholarship and teaching are not immediately transferable and that successful public engagement requires an additional and different set of skills. This year the Public Philosophy program helped make five seminars possible.

Professor Heather Sullivan, Professor Yvonne Zylan, and Professor Gbemende Johnson (Hamilton College) with Professor Ann Lin and representatives of ACTS

Alternatives to Solitary Confinement for Incarcerated Youth

October 31 to November 3, 2017

This Public Philosophy Seminar, led by Assistant Professor of Government Heather Sullivan, was developed to foster connections between the Hamilton community and local organizations working on criminal justice reform, especially as it concerns incarcerated youth. Prof. Sullivan invited Associate Professor of Public Policy Ann Lin of the University of Michigan to attend the seminar, where she discussed the need for and implementation process of prison reform policies with students and faculty members. To facilitate the spread of academic and professional knowledge to local groups, the seminar also included members of Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse (ACTS), an organization working to abolish the solitary confinement of youth and decrease the juvenile population in Onondaga County jails, at that time developing a proposal to the county government addressing these concerns. This proposal, along with other efforts and campaigns, eventually led to the effective outlawing of Onondaga jails' juvenile solitary confinement in September of last year. Associate Professor of Sociology Yvonne Zylan and Assistant Professor of Government Gbemende Johnson also participated in the seminar.

Professor Heidi Ravven, Professor Jaime Kucinskas, and Professor Abhishek Amar (Hamilton College) with Professor Marc Gopin

The Art of Citizen Diplomacy in an Age of Religious Conflict

February 28, 2018

Heidi Ravven, Bates and Benjamin Professor of Classical and Religious Studies, led this faculty working group and seminar with Assistant Professor of Sociology Jaime Kucinskas and Associate Professor of Religious Studies Abhishek Amar, and invited Professor Marc Gopin of George Mason University—whose work they were studying—to give a public lecture and lead a workshop on his concept of “citizen diplomacy.” As director of the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy & Conflict Resolution (CRDC), Gopin has led projects addressing conflicts in Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, Israel, and Palestine. He also trains people to understand and implement peacebuilding strategies. Broadly, Gopin’s research focuses on the interaction between competing values and international problems surrounding globalization and development, social justice, and cultural conflict.

Public Scholarship

Professor Frank Anechiarico (Hamilton College) with Judge Ralph Eannace, Carol Fisler, Judge Jack Elliot, and David Jacobowitz

The Justice System and the Mentally Ill

April 23, 2018

Professor of Government and Law Frank Anechiarico and students organized a seminar presenting work Prof. Anechiarico has done with Judge Ralph Eannace of the Utica City Court and convening a panel discussion on best practices in mental health courts. Mental health courts, a relatively recent innovation in the US court system first established in the early 1980s, differ greatly from traditional court proceedings and divert defendants with mental health issues into long-term court-supervised treatment programs, instead of into prisons. The common practices of these courts—including regular status hearings, specialized dockets, and the design and implementation of community-based programs by mental health professionals—have since been adapted in areas like Huntington, WV to inform the non-punitive, treatment-focused structure of their specialized drug courts. Joining the seminar’s panel were Carol Fisler of the Center for Court Innovation, Judge Jack Elliott of the Rochester City Court, and David Jacobowitz of the University of Rochester Medical School’s ECHO program.

Professor Cynthia Downs (Hamilton College) with Dr. Jon Harrison and Dr. Barbara Han

Scaling of Defense Workshop

July 12-13, 2018

For July 12th and 13th of this summer, Professor of Biology Cynthia Downs organized a seminar and working group on the epistemological and practical problems of biological scaling. Essentially, scaling concerns itself with predicting biological behaviors, processes, and organ characteristics in adult species or large groups of organisms based on observations of juveniles or smaller groups and individual organisms. Prof. Downs invited Dr. Jon Harrison of Arizona State University and Dr. Barbara Han, a disease ecologist at the Cary Institute and the University of Georgia. Dr. Harrison, who has worked with a variety of government agencies and NGOs, is currently applying scaling theory to manage the impact of locust swarms in Asia; Dr. Han is studying the spread of recent outbreaks of the Ebola and Zika viruses to map the large-scale patterns of infectious disease and create data-driven predictions about future outbreaks. Dr. Han and Dr. Harrison delivered talks open to the interested public over lunch at noon on both days of the seminar, and worked with Prof. Downs and some of her students in her Levitt-funded summer research group to draft a short paper detailing the need to further research the limitations and uses of biological scaling.

Professor S. Brent Rodriguez-Plate

Interfaith/Interfilm

February 27 to May 29, 2018

Visiting Professor of Religious Studies S. Brent Rodriguez-Plate, partnering with the Interfaith Coalition of Greater Utica and Munson-Williams-Proctor Art Institute (where screenings were held), created this series to establish a safe and productive space to explore the clashes and intersections of religious traditions and facilitate a public forum for thinking about the role of religion in modern public life, spurred by a brief guiding response made by a member of a local religious community. The series took place on the last Thursday of each month and began with a screening of *Sacred: Milestones of a Spiritual Life*, a collaborative project of over 40 filmmaking teams around the world immersing viewers in a wide variety of spiritual practices and the part they play in practitioners’ daily lives. The second film in the series, *Dalya’s Other Country*, follows the Syrian teenager Dalya, whose family was displaced by the Syrian conflict, and her experience navigating her highly politicized identities (i.e. as both a Muslim and refugee in America). *Eve and the Fire Horse*, the third in the series, dramatizes a precocious young girl from a very traditional Chinese immigrant family in Vancouver’s attempt to reconcile her Confucian and Buddhist upbringing with her older sister’s conversion to Catholicism and synthesize these philosophies to bring new meaning to her life. The final screening consisted of two short films: Pixar’s *Sanjay’s Super Team* features a first-generation Indian boy’s awakening to Hindu deities through his interest in Western cartoons; *Ave Maria*, a short comedy film, begins with a convent of Palestinian nuns opening their door to a group of Israeli settlers who crashed into their wall—it’s Saturday, so they need someone to call for them, but the nuns have all taken a vow of silence.

Public Scholarship

Public Philosophy Working Groups, Summer 2018



Using Technology to Track Human Rights Abuses, led by Prof. Sharon Rivera:

Student Research Assistants Diana Perez '21, Maya Figliuolo '21, Antton De Arbeloa '21, and Savannah Kelly '21 will spend this summer on campus working with Associate Professor of Government Sharon Rivera to explore the uses of emerging digital technologies in the investigation and documentation of human rights abuses around the world, inspired by work done at the Human Rights Investigations Lab at the University of California, Berkeley's Human Rights Center. Prof. Rivera's group will evaluate the rise in visibility of victims of human rights abuses reporting on the ground through social media like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter in areas traditional media or human rights organizations have difficulty reaching. They will also consider the use of other technologies like satellite imaging (made more available by Google Maps) to track and verify these reports from anywhere around the world. Beyond looking at how these technologies directly help to document human rights abuses; the group will also examine the implications and limitations of using the evidence garnered from emerging technologies to raise awareness of and ultimately to prosecute human rights violations.

Freedom of Expression at Small Liberal Arts Colleges, led by Prof. Todd Franklin:

Dorothy Poucher '21, Hillary Bisono Ortega '21, Kayla Self '21, Laura Rodriguez '20, Nana Kwame Odamtten '20, Alexander Cook '20, and Melissa Mouritsen '20, led by Professor of Philosophy and Africana Studies Todd Franklin, will participate in a working group examining the timely issues of free expression and hate speech in higher education through the lens of small Liberal Arts colleges, paying particular attention to Hamilton's own 50-year-old statement of free expression. Starting with a wide view of the issue, the group will look at how various schools, comparable to and including Hamilton, express and negotiate the relationship between a community ethos and formal policy. Building on a series of events about free speech at Hamilton this past year, Prof. Franklin's working group will both attempt to draw out the complications and issues surrounding free expression in academia. They hope to ultimately develop approaches and draft ideas that could be used to improve Hamilton's own free expression policy and present their recommendations to the College's administration.



Left to right: Professor Todd Franklin, Laura Rodriguez '20, Kwame Odamtten '20, Kayla Self '21, and Dorothy Poucher '21. Photo by Nancy L. Ford

Public Scholarship

Scholar-in-Residence Program

Our Scholar-in-Residence program enables us to bring scholars to campus for prolonged interaction with Hamilton College students. Scholars present on topics of intellectual and social importance and interact directly with students. This year, our scholar-in-residence, Professor of International Political Economy at King's College London Leila Simona Talani held two lectures highlighting the political and economic ramifications of Brexit and the European migrant crisis, as well as a lunch discussion on women and political science.

The Levitt Center *presents*



**EUROPE'S
MIGRATION
CRISIS**

with Dr. Leila Talani



Dr. Talani is the director of studies for the politics with economics program of the department of European studies at the University of Bath, U.K., and a lecturer at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Feb 12. 7:30 PM. KJ Red Pit (127).

In Dr. Talani's first lecture, focused on the current crisis in Europe centering around what are generally categorized as "economic" migrants by European peoples and governments as opposed to refugees seeking political or religious asylum, but clarified that this separation is extremely muddled in practice—political crises, civil war, and other sources of violence like religious or ethnic conflict often contribute not only directly to migrants' desires to emigrate but also to the poverty and lack of opportunities they are fleeing. Additionally, Talani laid out some of the paradoxes of European migration policies: although the EU's policies are very stringent, people migrating is inevitable, the number of them is increasing, and migration has some very real potential benefits to the European economy. Migrants reduce wages (a double-edged effect: good for employers, but not for native workers) but also, in a more clearly positive manner, help stabilize the European welfare state for its aging baby boomer generation by increasing the tax base of young workers paying into pension and social safety net funds. However, Talani cited the perceptions among Europeans of the social, political and cultural conflicts both in migrants' home countries and those anticipated once they arrive in Europe as the primary factor in anti-immigration sentiment and policies. She also discussed how organized crime groups help migrants enter and go on to leverage this

and coerce migrants into working in Europe's informal or shadow economy. Talani further mentioned a correction to a particularly American misconception: most migrants, especially in Europe, in fact enter their host countries legally with a visa or another temporary form of immigration status and end up staying illegally once their legal status runs out.

Dr. Talani's second lecture covered an even more complex topic: the economic interconnections between Britain and the EU and how this relationship could have consequences for British economic and political life. As negotiations between the UK and the European Union are still going on, much of Talani's talk cited her research on the ways major financial markets in London have "adapted" themselves, creating something of a parallel economy so that, post-Brexit, the stock and future commodities markets will remain connected to the European market. These moves are so striking, as many smaller factories in England have already been hit with retaliatory measures from EU-member shipping fleets, that Talani and other scholars in the UK have begun referring to the phenomenon of "Divergent Capitalisms," cautioning against the idea of an overarching capitalist order. This allows the conceptual space to examine the ways localized capitalist systems will differ between a country and a continental/global market, or even between a small coastal fishing village and the major financial center of that very country.

Public Scholarship

Judge Robert Katzmann, Justice and Security Scholar-in-Residence

"Courts, Congress, and the Meaning of Laws"

April 26, 2018

Robert Katzmann, Chief Judge of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, gave a fascinating lecture about the nuances of law, particularly regarding the often-overlooked necessity and pitfalls of its interpretation. Those who do not practice law tend to assume that a certain law or statute says what it means, but one of the most vital roles of courts in the US is the elucidation and application of legislative decisions through interpretation. To illustrate this point, Judge Katzmann began his talk by asking the audience to try and interpret the phrase "convicted in any court:" does this apply to convictions in another country? If so, does it matter if the government one was convicted by were authoritarian or democratic? After letting them struggle with these questions, Katzmann cleared up a common misconception for the gathered community members: most people assume that the Supreme Court only rules on matters of constitutional law—a full two-thirds of the Court's docket in fact involve statutory interpretation, or the interpretation of laws enacted by Congress.

The Levitt Center presents
a Lecture in Justice and Security:

COURTS, CONGRESS, & THE MEANING OF LAWS



with Judge Robert Katzmann

*Katzmann is the Chief Judge
for the U.S. Court of Appeals
for the Second Circuit.*



April 26

4:15pm

Bradford Auditorium (KJ 125)

Made possible by the Continental Fund.



Katzmann then outlined his own philosophy of interpretation, which is strictly opposed to textualism and originalism (methods commonly employed by conservative members of the Court, most prominently the late Justice Antonin Scalia) and necessitates a thorough review of related cases and legislative history. His approach toward interpreting a statute looks at the structure of the legislation, how its wording is used in other related statutes, common law, how agencies have enforced the statute in the past, and various legal canons. Katzmann further asserted that this method not only helps judges, but also aids in the continuation of democracy in the United States: by reading the materials that inform the writing and passing of a law, judges can put themselves "in the shoes of Congress" and thus approach the best possible faithfulness to the original intent of the law, which cannot be found in the text of the law itself. By promoting this method, judges can not only take the considerations of Congress into account but can put pressure on lawmakers to be more open and transparent in their deliberations: by insisting on the need to understand Congress' process, courts can hopefully reduce the backroom horse-trading through which laws are often passed.

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Levitt Summer Research Fellows

Every summer, the Levitt Center funds students who wish to pursue a research question of their own design. The students work closely with a faculty advisor on their project, which culminates in a 25 to 30-page research paper and a presentation of their choosing. The goals of the Research Fellows program are to support independent research that aligns with students' academic goals, to create pathways for future research, and to support the development of knowledge and skills that help to understand and address persistent social problems. This past summer, eleven students conducted research projects as Levitt Summer Research Fellows.

Emily Alexander '19 and Professor Peter Cannavò

"Value of Sustainable Practices on Public Health in Utica"

Emily Alexander '19's research into water-related infrastructure in Utica explores intersections of environmental science, government and stewardship in the local community. Alexander (majoring in Geoscience) decided to develop her interest in Public Health while helping to highlight the sustainability of water infrastructure in Oneida County. Alexander first became interested in water-related infrastructure when looking at the twelve sustainability traits outlined by Greening USA, a nonprofit sustainability organization in Syracuse. She decided to apply Greening USA's rubric to Utica, highlighting one specific trait to better focus her research: since these traits "are all interconnected, I believe focusing on becoming sustainable will not only improve the environmental situation but also the health of people in Utica." Due to concerns over the age and quality of water infrastructure systems, this is especially relevant to Utica as the city government considers plans for renovation. Alexander saw this project as a method to "influence change in the community to focus on sustainability" and—through her analysis of public health and water quality data—to better understand water-related infrastructure systems and their importance to Oneida County.

Mackenzie Bettmann-Adcock '18 and Professor Nhora Serrano

"From Dictatorship to Democracy: The Female Experience in Buenos Aires"

Mackenzie Bettmann-Adcock '18 conducted her research project in Buenos Aires on Argentine women's rights movements. She worked with Visiting Professor Nhora Serrano throughout her research. From May to July, Bettmann-Adcock attended events sponsored by women's rights organizations and conducted interviews with women at the events. Since the interviews were in Spanish, she built a basis for her research paper by transcribing and translating them. Taking information from interviews with 18 women, Bettmann-Adcock included a diverse range of stories and experiences to report on different perceptions of women's movements in Buenos Aires. Her interactions at the women's rights events not only contributed to her research for the project, but also empowered Bettmann-Adcock to "learn about the country [and] explore new places and meet new people." Her experience working with Professor Serrano was very collaborative and supportive, as she could use Professor Serrano's expertise in the Spanish language to help craft the perfect interview questions and translations for her research.

Sabrina Boutselis '19 with Professor Meredith Madden and Professor Vivyan Adair

"Narrowing the Literacy Gap: Examining Difference in Early Childhood Education"

Sabrina Boutselis '19, driven by her interest in education, pursued a noble research goal: examining the role inequality plays in preschools and how economic disparity affects kindergarten preparedness. Boutselis observed three preschools of different racial and socioeconomic backgrounds. She visited each site six to eight times to collect data, analyzing how students were taught to identify differences in pedagogy between the preschools. Boutselis' observations were paired with research in educational theory, using pedagogical concepts to better understand the teaching styles in her sample schools. Boutselis, looking to study possible solutions, stated that she has an interest in "studying the effectiveness of home-based learning programs as supplements for students in underfunded areas." She wants to use her research to promote better teaching methods in underfunded areas, and it has clarified Boutselis' own intentions to become an

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educator: she says her goal is to “understand the specific challenges facing the system, so that I am able to work with them in mind.”

Kaygon Finakin '19 and Professor Nigel Westmaas

“The role of International Institutions in the continued oppression, exploitation and underdevelopment of various Caribbean Countries”

Kaygon Finakin '19 used her Levitt summer research project to connect her areas of interest in the classroom and broader goals for the future. Finakin lived the first 10 years of her life in Jamaica and continues to visit annually. After moving to the Bronx, she decided her goal was to move back to Jamaica and become a policymaker. Finakin’s summer research was inspired by an Africana Studies course featuring films detailing external exploitation of Caribbean nations like Jamaica and Haiti. Majoring in world politics with a concentration in poverty and underdevelopment, Finakin has a solid framework for devising a summer research project investigating these issues. Finakin worked with Professor Nigel Westmaas and the Levitt Center to study how international institutions perpetuate the exploitation, oppression and underdevelopment of Caribbean nations. Her goal was to “look at the work of political actors in the region or previous political actors in the region and understand what they want versus what they’ve been given in the international system since independence.” Finakin’s summer research focuses on the challenges presented to the Caribbean region internationally and possible public policy solutions for these challenges.

Jane Haffer '19 and Professor Julie Starr

“Branding and Person-Making in Business School”

Jane Haffer '19 spent her summer at the Owen School of Business Management’s Summer Business Institute at Vanderbilt University. The program is designed for liberal arts undergraduates who do not have the opportunity to major in a business-related field. With the support of Julie Starr, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Haffer scrutinized how a business school teaches and facilitates the way students ‘brand’ themselves. In this ‘person-making’ process, she identified the interplay between two seemingly contradictory requirements: being original and creative and being malleable and conforming. Haffer’s research explored how ‘self’ is understood and deployed as a resource, and how ‘experts’ in the field—and her peers—(re)produce and confirm such notions and practices.



Kaygon Finakin '19 discusses her research with faculty advisor Prof. Nigel Westmaas. Photo by Nancy L. Ford

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Sabrina Gattine '18 and Amelia Mitchell '18 with Professor Frank Sciacca and Professor Heather Sullivan

"Child Malnutrition and Response in Argentina"

Sabrina Gattine '18 and Amelia Mitchell '18 spent their summer volunteering at various organizations combating child malnutrition in Argentina. They found that although there are many organizations in Argentina focusing on child malnutrition, many of the most prominent are linked to a single founding organization, CONIN (Cooperadora para la Nutrición Infantil). Each center's methodology owes much to the design of CONIN under founder Dr. Abel Albino—whom Gattine and Mitchell were lucky enough to interview—as adapted to their location. Gattine and Mitchell had an interesting experience comparing the multiple CONIN centers and contrasting unaffiliated organizations with the CONIN design. They also transcribed their interviews, performed content analysis, and researched background information for their research papers. In her focus on methods that promote community participation, Mitchell found commonalities in the tactics organizations use to engage families and the local community. Mitchell was pleased to confirm her hypothesis that organizations would emphasize community participation in their methodologies, as each person interviewed discussed the value of community involvement in creating lasting change. Gattine took a different direction in her research, focusing on how child malnutrition is approached in urban versus rural environments. In the end, Gattine and Mitchell found that there are numerous valuable methods employed in Argentina to combat child malnutrition, with initiatives at every community level to elicit greater involvement in its eradication.

Bridget Lavin '18 and Professor Jeanne Willcoxon

"Speaking Out: How Documentary Theatre Provides a Voice to Sexual Assault Survivors"

Bridget Lavin '18, a Theatre and Women's Studies double major, spent her summer researching the intersection of the federal statute covering sexual violence at schools (Title IX) and the stories of survivors of that violence. This led her to create her own theatre performance, based in the genre of verbatim theatre which, as Lavin explains, "is wholly based on truth: true stories, true words, true experiences, which makes it even more impactful and suited toward making social change through art." The intention for the piece was to create a platform for survivors of on-campus sexual violence to share their stories. While survivors themselves did not appear in the production, Lavin was challenged to voice their stories onstage. Lavin shared, "I'll have to be very conscious that I am speaking with my participants, allowing their voices and perspectives to be shared, rather than speaking for them, and manipulating their words to further a political narrative." Lavin performed her piece, entitled "Speaking Out," on campus during the academic year. The project and research were funded by the Levitt Center.

Elizabeth O'Keefe '20 and Professor Gbemende Johnson

"The Role of Identity Politics of the Latin American Community in the 2016 Election"

Elizabeth O'Keefe '20 spent her summer researching Latino voting behavior to understand why the Republican party retained the same share of the Latino vote between the 2012 and 2016 presidential elections. The research project included a case study in presidential election campaigns from 2000-2016 and a quantitative analysis of American National Election Studies (ANES) public opinion survey data. O'Keefe used these strategies to describe the importance of campaign strategy, party entrenchment, and post-Great Recession socioeconomic status in the 2016 voting choices of Latino voters. Working with her academic advisor Professor Gbemende Johnson, O'Keefe concluded that increased party entrenchment hindered Clinton's ability to grow the existing Democratic Latino voter base. A lack of grassroots campaigning efforts and Latino-targeted advertising on the part of the Clinton campaign was also found to be significant.

Erich Wohl '18 and Professor Jaime Kucinkas

"Analyzing African American Achievement in Fortune 500 Companies"

Eric Wohl '18 wanted his Levitt Summer Research project to have a very practical application. Inspired by his sociology curriculum abroad at the University of York in England, Wohl thought about how experiences with implicit racism, racial perceptions and career success differ in the US and UK. Looking for insight relevant to African-American students at Hamilton, Wohl interviewed 16 African-American Hamilton alumni who graduated after 2000. One common theme of the

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interviews was the emotional toll that some interviewees experienced by feeling unwelcome or out-of-place in their workplaces. Wohl had not previously found information supporting this phenomenon, and his previous review of literature did not mention this emotional toll or possible coping mechanisms. He further found that many of the alumni with this experience organized formal or informal support groups with other people of color, which clarified Wohl's goal: to develop a solution-oriented approach to these issues. Wohl found that he could present information in a way that was more valuable to his audience than the existing literature he had read before beginning his research. By not only acknowledging problems but by proposing solutions, Wohl "wanted to make a point of saying yes, these are the issues, here are some ways that you can work around the issues."

Kyung Noh '18 and Professor Kevin Grant

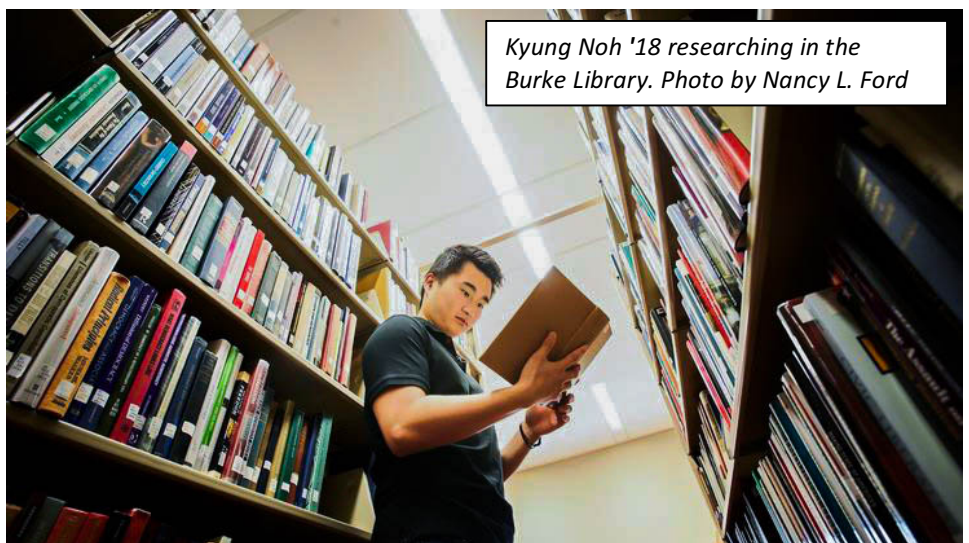
"Analyzing the Effects of Western Human Rights Standards on South Korean Culture and Politics"

Discussing an upcoming seminar with Professor Kevin Grant, Kyung Noh '18 became fascinated with the differences between civil rights and human rights. After WWII, human rights were conceptualized by the UN as an international standard; Noh wanted to compare this idea of human rights to its conceptualization in Eastern Cultures. Connecting the project to his own cultural heritage, Noh at first explored human rights throughout Asia, then specifically in South Korea. Noh personally benefited from his work, saying, "Since beginning my research, I have discovered the empowering effect of studying my heritage." Looking at the western-influenced human rights movement, Noh posed a question: "How could the U.S. have simultaneously been so dedicated to pushing human rights issues and also upholding Korean dictators who clearly did not care about these issues?" Taking this as a research agenda, Noh examined the political motives behind human rights movements after the start of the Cold War. Noh focused on the relationship between South Korea and the United States, looking at US condemnation of dictators and the creation of inconsistent or contradictory narratives around these regimes. Noh's goal was to explore how the concept of human rights has been applied and reflects the complex agendas and conflicts of the nuanced cultural world around us.

Sophia Rachad '18 and Professor Erol Balkan

"Public Health & Development: Serving the Underserved: A Case Study of Morocco"

Sophia Rachad '18 is interested in pursuing medicine in her home country, Morocco. Upon realizing that she knew more about the US healthcare system than the Moroccan one, she decided to apply for Levitt funding to do hands-on research at a hospital in Casablanca, Morocco. Interning at the Hôpital Mohamed Bouafi and observing the maternity ward, Intensive Care Unit and surgical procedures, Rachad hopes to understand some of the challenges that are relevant to this public hospital. She also started reviewing relevant literature to find sources that will help extrapolate her personal observations to public healthcare in underserved regions and the problems its systems face in general. Using specific examples of necessary services like mental health wards, Rachad aims to concretely understand the state of the healthcare system in Morocco. Combining her knowledge of economic structures in comparable systems with her own research into the barriers facing the healthcare system in Morocco, Rachad hopes to devise policies and guidelines to assist in reforming the healthcare system she is observing.



Public Scholarship

Levitt Summer Research Groups

Levitt Research Group Grants support groups of Hamilton students completing summer research projects in collaboration with at least one faculty advisor. The research projects last for 8 to 10 weeks and help to answer an overarching research question. Students and their faculty advisors regularly meet face-to-face to communicate and coordinate research efforts. The grants are intended to encourage both faculty and joint faculty-student publications. In particular, we encourage research that will be useful for policy makers or other researchers, especially projects that address local issues. In this way, the grants help to cultivate positive social change. The Levitt Center funded two research groups during the summer of 2017.

Professor Heather Sullivan and Professor Joel Winkelman with Allyson (Ally) D'Antonio '20, Alexandra (Allie) Gale '19, Caroline Moore '19, and Micaela Rostov '19

"Legitimacy and Social Media: Trump's Retweets"

Allie Gale '19, Caroline Moore '19, Ally D'Antonio '20, and Micaela Rostov '19, participating in Profs. Sullivan and Winkelman's summer research group, analyzed Donald Trump's retweets between the announcement of his candidacy and the first three months following his inauguration to discern any changes in the patterns of retweets and explore theories of legitimacy presented in the political science literature. Each student selected specific facets of this retweet behavior, and the study's preliminary findings suggested that (as in many other ways) Trump followed some predictable patterns but not others. Caroline Moore compared Trump's patterns to those of Marco Rubio (the candidate most expected to secure the nomination), finding that Rubio's retweet patterns reflected a much more professionalized campaign. Whereas Trump retweeted almost exclusively random citizens, the Rubio campaign used retweets to advertise media appearances and endorsements. Micaela Rostov and Allie Gale analyzed the overall strategy of Trump's retweet behavior, focusing on the types of accounts that Trump retweeted over the course of the campaign and following the inauguration. Their analysis indicated that Trump's retweet behavior over time became more conventional, i.e. conforming to more professionalized strategies like that of Rubio's team. Ally D'Antonio focused on how Trump interacted with the media via retweets and found that nearly all this retweet behavior lies within a small subset of conservative news media—a trait inconsistent with his general trend of increased professionalization, which would favor broader and more varied engagement.

Professor Paul Hagstrom, Professor Chaise LaDousa, and Professor Javier Pereira with Megan Bates '18, Micaela Caterisano '19, Mariani German '19, Almahdi Mahil '20, Ben Morgan '19, Thomas Morris '18, Hersheena Rajaram '19, and Morgan Walsh '18

"Refugee Connections to Utica and US Financial Institutions"

Building on Professor of Economics Paul Hagstrom's decades-long (since 1999) research into the refugee community of Utica, last summer this group conducted a large-scale survey—reaching more than 400 people—that explored the access this community has to financial institutions. Broadly speaking, he has found that a refugee household typically needs some financial help (through resettlement programs, public education, welfare, or Medicaid) in their early years in Utica, but end up being a net boon to the local economy through their participation in the labor and real estate markets. Over the past few years, this group of professors has come to focus their summer research on examining why refugees stay in Utica in the long run: this includes anthropological studies into cultural factors (such as having an established community that can understand your experience) and looking at how institutions in Utica directly and indirectly support refugee families. The survey found that the high level of accessibility to financial institutions for refugees in Utica both upon arrival and afterward greatly facilitates their ability to become a part of the community and go on to be a positive force in the local economy.

Public Scholarship

Course Development Grants

The Levitt Center provides course development grants to faculty wishing to incorporate the theory and practice of social change, using the lenses of transformational leadership and social innovation, into a new or existing course. It is expected that faculty will teach a course in their field of study that helps students gain the academic knowledge and relevant skills needed to address persistent social problems in effective, innovative, and meaningful ways.

Faculty Awards for 2018

Mariam Durrani

“Crossings and Transgressions: On Migration and (Im)Mobilities”

Assistant Professor of Anthropology Mariam Durrani will be offering a course incorporating experiential learning to explore the implications of border-crossing/transgression in the current globalist movement. Going beyond the movement of people themselves, Durrani will encourage students to investigate the ideas and images of “itinerant figures of different orders:” the images of refugees, domestic/migrant workers, migrants, and terrorists in the cultural imagination. To disentangle the multiple meanings of mobility and immobility, students will critically engage with contemporary political discourse, popular media, and legal/institutional policies to learn how and why these structures and practices pathologize or permit movement and stasis among different peoples. Students will also be assigned ethnographic monographs to better understand how migration and the migrant subject have been theorized throughout the 20th Century. Durrani will also partner with SHINE and organize visits to Utica’s Refugee Center to provide students with an opportunity to “understand the spatial experiences of refugee immigrants as they navigate new locales” and will encourage her students’ creativity and digital fluency by developing a podcast essay assignment for them to organize their thoughts on course material.



Professor Meredith Madden

“Pedagogy, Power and the Politics of Knowledge”

Prof. Meredith Madden’s upcoming course fosters students’ critical examination of educational approaches and institutions by linking critical pedagogic theory with active participation in local classrooms. While thoroughly discussing and analyzing the primary concerns of critical pedagogy, students in “Pedagogy, Power and the Politics of Knowledge” will also introduce writing workshops planned by small student groups to area schools, libraries, and after-school programs. By working with local students, participants will not only better understand the central questions of critical pedagogical theory (such as, “Whose knowledge matters?” or “How do students experience claims to knowledge?”), but also try to achieve one of its broadest goals: to actively and consciously disrupt power relations within classrooms through the engagement of multiple experiences and voices, thus disclosing a space for a more diverse knowledge. Students will explore the efficacy of their narrative writing and spoken word workshops in both fostering the voices of the youth they work with and unsettling the traditional pedagogical dynamic which typically excludes those voices.



Public Scholarship

Faculty Awards for 2018 (continued)

Jace Saplan

“Music as Resistance”

Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities and Vocal Studies Jace Saplan is receiving funding for a course that will examine how music is used as a substructure for building and sustaining liberatory movements. The course will draw on folksongs and scholarship on the music of Indigenous struggle, Holocaust resistance, and Black and Latino Power movements, as well as the music made in resistance to Japanese internment and the role music plays in LGBTQIA and women’s rights activism. Crucially, Saplan is inviting students to explore communal music-making processes, and will host artists, conductors, and activists on campus to share their artistic process and their experiences of the role of music in protest/resistance movements. These resident artists and organizations will engage the class in both learning about the traditions of protest music and actively collaborating to participate in a communal music-making process to create new pieces. To further this active participation, Prof. Saplan will include two acoustic guitars in the classroom to encourage the class to practice their music-making capabilities.



Professor Nhora Lucía Serrano

“Immigrants and Comics”

Visiting Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature Nhora Lucía Serrano will be leading a course examining the changing roles and narratives surrounding immigrants in comics from the 1900s to the present day. Inspired by her own scholarly work on comics, the current political climate surrounding immigration, and her own experience as an immigrant and naturalized US citizen originally from Colombia, Serrano hopes to illustrate “the scholarly inter-relationship between creativity, engaged citizenship, and social innovation” and galvanize students to engage in and transform US immigration policy. Students will study a wide range of comics that show the centrality of the “immigrant” trope and the immigrant experience to the development of 20th century comics medium, the varied and evolving ways in which the immigrant subject has been represented and constructed, and the reflexive effect these representations have on the identities of the immigrants whose stories they tell. In short, the course aims to foster civic engagement through critical examination of the interplay between the development of a new medium and the identities it represents.



Public Scholarship

Professor Janelle Schwartz

“Common Experience Seminar, Adirondack Program”

The Common Experience Seminar, led by Prof. Janelle Schwartz, explores the structure and ethics of intentional living-learning communities by recreating them on a smaller and more accessible scale, thus allowing students to better appreciate the nature of their connection to and ability to have an impact on their own social environment. Centered on food systems and food waste, the CES program requires students to practice communal cooking of meals and explore internships in the Adirondack region, both of which foster sustainability and environmental stewardship; additionally, CES students attend seminars, host guest speakers, participate in field visits and kitchen workshops, and watch documentary films about the region and conservation more generally. This year, Prof. Schwartz will be expanding the course to include consideration of the issues surrounding food justice, particularly food insecurity, in the Adirondack region and encourage students to think about and develop plans to address these issues through mini-initiatives throughout the course.



Professor Jeanne Willcoxon

“Theatre for Social Change: Youth and Education”

Prof. Jeanne Willcoxon’s course will ask students to evaluate the potential impact of applied theatre theoretically and through case studies of its use in different programs, while also asking students to reflect on how they can prevent benefiting themselves more than the communities they try to reach as they develop and implement their own applied theatre programs. Applied theatre, often occurring in non-theatrical spaces (e.g. street theatre), attempts a direct intervention in issues confronting members of marginalized communities; this course will focus on how theatre can empower and educate youth through reflecting on Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed, storytelling circles, and the process of devising and introducing original performances with community partners. Prior to beginning work in earnest on their community projects, students will also research and discuss on the methods of Minneapolis’ Neighborhood Bridges Program, a literacy program which aims to promote critical and creative literacy by transforming classrooms into non-traditional theatrical spaces. This course examines the intersections of theatre, education, and social change while inviting students to critically think about their own role in the application of theatre to social problems.



Public Scholarship

Levitt Center Speaker Series

The Levitt Center Speaker Series is committed to enhancing the academic experience of our students by introducing them to a wide array of intellectually challenging speakers. The Series features many speakers with substantial academic and policy experience, an invaluable asset in helping students make connections between the classroom and policies enacted in the real world. Students and other Hamilton community members can engage speakers in thoughtful discussions following each lecture. Our four program areas (Inequality and Equity, Justice and Security, Sustainability, and Public Health and Well-Being), as well as our Transformational Leadership and Social Innovation initiatives, provide a focus for our yearlong lecture series. The Levitt Center also co-sponsors talks in conjunction with academic departments and co-curricular centers on campus.

Inequality and Equity Program

The Program on Inequality and Equity investigates the factors underlying the distribution of income and health outcomes; the impact of policy on intergenerational equity; welfare analysis; discrimination; access to the legal system; and the roles of incentive, race, gender, and immigration. Professor John Bartle is the Director of the Inequality and Equity Program.

Justice and Security Program

The Program on Justice and Security centers on both domestic and international issues, encompassing the safety and protection of persons and property; the fairness of market exchange, law-enforcement, and financial regulation; and other public and private concerns. Professor Frank Anechiarico is the Director of the Justice and Security Program.

Sustainability Program

The Sustainability Program is an interdisciplinary program that supports research and programs that complement and enrich classroom learning. This broad-based, multi-faceted initiative promotes both academic research on sustainable practices and policies to achieve them, as well as hands-on learning experiences for Hamilton students. Professor Todd Rayne is the Director of the Sustainability Program.

Public Health and Well-Being Program

The Public Health and Well-Being Program is a broad-based interdisciplinary program that supports research on all dimensions of public health and well-being, as well as programs that complement and enrich classroom learning. Professor Herm Lehman is the Director of the Public Health and Well-Being Program.

Public Scholarship

2017-2018 Speakers

Dmitry Suslov, Deputy Director for Research at the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy

US-Russia Relations Under Trump and Beyond

October 2, 2017

Following a brief introduction by Professor of Government Alan Cafruny, Dmitry Suslov, the Deputy Director of the Center for Comprehensive European and International Studies at the National Research University Higher School of Economics in Moscow, presented a lecture on US-Russia relations in the era of the Trump presidency. The event lasted for about an hour and a half, including the after-lecture Q&A session. After he provided the Russian perspective on the deterioration of the relationship between Russia and the US, using the term “the New Cold War,” students attending the event asked a wide range of questions ranging from the role of Russian meddling in the 2016 US Presidential Election to Russian interests in Syria. Many students found his Russo-centric narrative thought-provoking.

Dmitry Suslov, Deputy Director for Research at the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy

The US Presidential Election: Russian Perspectives

October 3, 2017

The lunch discussion with Dmitry Suslov on the same topic, US-Russian relations, was more informal and question-oriented. He gave a brief overview of the deterioration of US-Russian relations and the fundamental disagreement between Russia and the US regarding the international order. The annexation of Crimea and Russia’s involvement with the 2016 U.S. presidential election were discussed with the audience. Among them, one person from the audience raised questions about Suslov’s description of the impact of the “Deep State” in the decision-making of US foreign policy and exchanged relevant ideas with Suslov. He reiterated his lecture’s points about the worsening relations between US and Russia, again using the concept of “the New Cold War” to describe Russo-American relations. Suslov’s largest concern was security in this increasing competition for control of the international order between the two great nuclear powers. Suslov pointed to US anti-ballistic systems in the Middle East and accused the US of using Iran’s attempts at nuclear armament as an excuse when their actual strategy has always been to contain Russia’s second-strike ability. He alluded to the security dilemma and saw the United States’ provocations as the fundamental cause of the crises in Ukraine and Syria. He argued that US foreign policy is driven by the Deep State, not the national interests of the US or its people, because the US in fact suffers in antagonizing Russia. Some audience members challenged his Russian narrative and questioned the existence of the Deep State. Suslov responded by going back to the beginning of each crisis and examining the actions of the US. After all, the discussion was open-minded, and the audience was glad to hear Suslov’s Russian perspective.

Lyle Goldstein, Associate Professor at the China Maritime Studies Institute (CMSI) at the US Naval War College

New Developments in Russia-China Relations: Reappraising the Grand Strategic Triangle during the Trump Era

October 4, 2017

As an associate professor at the China Maritime Studies Institute at the US Naval War College, Lyle Goldstein is an expert on naval relations in the South China Sea; the emergence of North Korea as a nuclear power; and many other political, economic and military relationships in the East Asia region. He gave a talk about his perspective on Sino-Russian relations, and how these two neighbors have many commonalities in their military and trade goals. Goldstein also touched on the military relationship between Russia and China and the exchange of training practices and military resources in this region. He also discussed North Korea, its emergence as a nuclear power, and the effect of its nuclear program on the relationship between Russia and China. Entangled in this relationship is the United States, and Goldstein explained the ways in which the US stance on North Korea’s nuclearization has implications for these complex relationships. Goldstein quoted translations of various Chinese and Russian sources to reach outside of the American perspective when evaluating the way these world powers interact. This also gave the audience a better idea of how Russia and China view the United States and how this shared perspective unites these two world powers.

Public Scholarship

Sam Lebovic, Assistant Professor of History at George Mason University and historian of American politics and culture
Journalism & Free Speech

October 16, 2017

Sam Lebovic, Assistant Professor at George Mason University, came to Hamilton to discuss his book *Free Speech and Unfree News: The Paradox of Press Freedom in America* over lunch in the Levitt Center Conference Room. Before opening the floor to questions, Lebovic gave a summary of his book. His book discusses that while we understand the concepts of the right to free speech and the protection thereof, the information we have on the limits on expression of that speech is very limited. It also makes the distinctions that freedom of the press is not the same as freedom of speech and that the right to free speech does not address the 20th and 21st centuries' problems of state secrecy and corporate news. Lebovic mentioned that the timing of his book does not coincide with current events. His book went to the publisher in March of 2015 and came out in 2016, before the last Presidential election and the eruption of "fake news:" while those events are hot topics today, there is no mention of them in the book since they had not happened yet. He did state that the last line in his book, something along the lines of "the act of expression alone seems to be all that American politics is about," is oddly relevant to the political scene today.

Robin Kimmerer, Professor of Environmental and Forest Biology at SUNY College of Environmental Science
"What does the Earth Ask of Us?"

February 23, 2018

Professor Robin Kimmerer, plant ecologist, botanist and author of *Braiding Sweetgrass* and *Gathering Moss* has a unique view on sustainability. When Professor Kimmerer took the podium in the Kennedy Auditorium in March, she posed a question: "What Does the Earth Ask of Us?" Kimmerer focused on the core meaning of sustainability and the ways in which this has very much to do with the continuation of humanity "taking" from the earth. She asked the audience to think of the Earth in a radically different way: as the bearer of "gifts." Kimmerer used the Iroquois origin story to provide a background for this worldview, and throughout her talk she referred to Native American traditions as examples of stewardship of the Earth. Kimmerer highlighted the ideological issues that arise with our current approach to sustainability and offered potential solutions to these problems. Kimmerer's approach starts with changing the current outlook on sustainability and increasing education on the natural world. Kimmerer suggested solutions that included guardians for rivers, referring to plants and animals with the pronouns "ki" and "kin" so as not to objectify them, and learning the proper names of these "kin" in the natural world. Professor Kimmerer explained the ways in which these small steps can have a large impact on the way that we view our Earth, and the ways that we can give back to our environment.

Professor Ann Lin
Arab and Muslim in the Age of Trump
November 3, 2017

Professor Ann Lin, Associate Professor of Public Policy at the University of Michigan, gave a presentation entitled "Arab and Muslim in the Age of Trump." Her presentation focused on the effects of the 9/11 attacks on the treatment and perception of Arabs and Muslims in the United States, as well as the shift in these attitudes since the beginning of Trump's candidacy for US President. Professor Lin backed up her propositions with quantitative data, including a chart depicting changes in assault towards Arabs in America. She highlighted the increase in assaults after 9/11, decrease in the following years and the recent spike in 2015 and presented testimony from American Arabs and Muslims focused on the perception of differences in their recent treatment. From the testimony, it appears that the general response many targeted people have had towards this hostility is to avoid unwelcoming situations. If they feel like they are not accepted in a certain place, many simply find a different community that will accept them. She concluded her presentation by clarifying the issue her talk raises: for some people, sacrificing some part of one's own identity might be taken as a necessity for belonging in America.

Public Scholarship

Sam Quinones

Dreamland: America's Opiate Epidemic and How We Got Here

October 26, 2017

Sam Quinones, a journalist and an author, gave a lecture at Hamilton about his research and book *Dreamland: The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic* and began by contextualizing his work, citing over 60,000 opioid abuse-related deaths in the United States in 2016 alone. Quinones has researched this crisis for nearly a decade, first by tracing black tar heroin in Huntington, West Virginia back to a cartel in the small Mexican city of Xalisco. He described how Colombian suppliers came to dominate the market by providing a cheaper and more potent product than Asian suppliers and moving heroin through South and Central America to the US west coast. However, the spread of the heroin epidemic truly began with the propagation of opioid painkillers, particularly OxyContin. Quinones discussed the interplay of pharmaceutical marketing with a cultural shift demanding solutions to pain. First synthesized in 1996, pharmaceutical companies branded OxyContin with low addictive potential and—though some were skeptical—encouraged doctors to prescribe OxyContin in large quantities. It is now quite clear that medications like OxyContin are highly addictive and that over-prescription of opioids created addicts across the entire country. The high price of painkillers subsequently generated a new market for heroin, a demand met by Central and South American distributors. Along with a steady supply and new population of addicts, Quinones considers a less tangible factor: how the epidemic is aggravated by a culture of isolation as public and community spaces are closed or privatized. Quinones concluded with the story of his book's namesake Dreamland, once a thriving public pool in Portsmouth, Ohio. Shut down to build a strip mall, Dreamland became one fewer place that could help the people of Portsmouth alleviate their suffering and isolation as the opioid epidemic swept through the town. However, Quinones left the crowd with a hopeful message: Portsmouth has created a culture of healing by protecting local business, supporting local NA and AA groups and restoring a sense of community in their town.



Rose Gill Hearn

Keeping Government Honest: The Power of Transparency

November 15, 2017

Rose Gill Hearn, Principal of Municipal Integrity at Bloomberg Associates, visited Hamilton College to discuss political scandals, corruption, and the need for neutral investigation. Hearn emphasized that her successes as the longest-serving Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI) (2002-2013) depended on corruption prevention strategies. Under Hearn, the DOI raised its profile by routinizing prevention campaigns whereby Inspectors General visited NYC departments to remind public servants of anti-corruption laws; increasing public reports and press releases made available to the public; and addressing vulnerabilities to corruption by providing preventative procedure recommendations and formalizing operational policies. The DOI's proactivity under Hearn led a City employee to submit a tip, following a DOI corruption prevention lecture, that resulted in NY State Assemblywoman Diane Gordon's conviction on charges of bribery solicitation. Further, in response to a system that allowed city council members to allocate discretionary funds to nonprofits, Hearn established a specialized Nonprofit Unit to expose weak controls. Finding that several public officials abused the process, the City Council Speaker—based on DOI recommendations—created a public database that detailed which organizations received funds, listed Council Members' sponsors, and outlined the prescribed use of funds. Hearn employs this wealth of experience in her capacity as a Principal at Bloomberg Associates, a

Public Scholarship

philanthropic international consulting firm advising city governments, where she works directly with Mayors and Deputy Mayors around the world to address corruption vulnerabilities in major cities. In Mexico City, Hearn's team helped set up the first-ever independently-operated corruption hotline. Professor Alexia Chan followed Hearn, presenting China as a comparative case to New York.

Vladimir Kara-Murza

Nemtsov Screening and Discussion

January 30, 2018

On January 30, 2018 a screening of the documentary film *Nemtsov*, featuring a post-screening discussion and Q&A session with the film's director Vladimir Kara-Murza, was held at Bradford Auditorium. The film's subject, Boris Nemtsov, was a close friend of Kara-Murza as well as a vocal critic and political rival of the Putin regime. He was gunned down in 2015 on a bridge within sight of the Kremlin. Nemtsov, after achieving notoriety for his prolific work as a young physicist at Lobachevsky State University of Nizhny Novgorod, began his engagement in Russian politics following the Chernobyl disaster by protesting the installation of a nuclear power-plant near his hometown, Gorky. After the fall of the USSR, Nemtsov was elected to the Russian parliament and worked closely with President Boris Yeltsin, who even introduced him as the next President of Russia on a trip to the US. Nemtsov championed legislation facilitating transparency to help bring corruption to light—the counter-attacks by oligarchs this elicited and an economic crisis in Russia ultimately conspired to prevent Nemtsov from winning the presidential election, and Putin was elected. Although his party was subsequently banned from fielding candidates for office and he was imprisoned multiple times, Nemtsov continued protesting electoral fraud, the war in Ukraine, and corruption—he even convinced Congress to pass the Magnitsky Act, which imposes economic sanctions on Russia for human rights abuses.

Kara-Murza, Vice-Chairman of Open Russia, an NGO that organizes Russian citizens to work for a more democratic society, discussed the difficulties he faced making the film—the emotional toll of documenting the life of his late friend as well as the challenges he faced from the regime, including two attempts made on his life—and fielded questions from students and community members. He stated his belief that Nemtsov—while perhaps unable to fully solve the economic problems of Russia—would have made a significant ideological impact on the country, establishing a democratic tradition and the peaceful transition of power, rather than clinging to power as the Putin regime has. Asked when Putin's power might collapse, Kara-Murza highlighted the historical and contemporary uncertainty in Russia but assured the audience that opposition parties are preparing themselves for any future changes by spreading awareness and developing policies to ensure free and fair elections. He concluded by expressing his hope for the future, saying that the Russian people, whenever given a chance, have always chosen the side of democracy.



Public Scholarship

Prof. Jarvis Givens

Black Education in Three Acts: Carter G. Woodson and Scenes of the American School from Below

March 5, 2018

Jarvis Givens, Postdoctoral Fellow in Education at Harvard, gave a lecture about his work on a new book about Carter G. Woodson and his reflections on early 20th Century black schooling. Taking his cue from Woodson (often credited as the “father of black history”), Givens’ research has been into historical alternative educational programs and their capacity to make up for the lasting effects of slavery and the state violence deployed against black communities. More broadly, his research approaches schools as technologies of power, then analyzes how marginalized people work within these technologies and use them to rise above systems set up to keep them down.

Prof. Mariam Durrani, Prof. Todd Franklin, and Prof. Robert Martin

Freedom of Expression Lunch Discussion

March 30, 2018

Professors Durrani, Franklin, and Martin facilitated a discussion among community members to help Hamilton take stock of the national debate around freedom of expression and free speech on college campuses. The lunch prompted attendees to critically consider both the benefits and limits of free expression and their own attitudes around the issue, tackling the issues of hate speech and harassment and the dangerous implications a zealous policing of speech has for freedom of the press and intellectual discourse. It also raised the question of whether Hamilton’s Statement on Freedom of Expression should be reexamined and what could be changed in it, something that Prof. Franklin is examining in more detail this summer with a group of student researchers. The discussion provided a space for students, administrators, and faculty to openly and constructively analyze an issue on everyone’s minds and both listen to and challenge each other’s concerns and preconceptions.

Vesla Weaver, Bloomberg Distinguished Associate Professor of Political Science and Sociology

Portals in Politics

April 12, 2018

Associate Professor of Political Science and Sociology at Johns Hopkins University Vesla Weaver was invited to campus through the Levitt Center to discuss her latest research initiative, which explores a possible way to positively address the systemic shortcomings of American liberal democracy her previous research has been focused on elucidating. Since graduate school, Prof. Weaver has been exploring the role of institutions and strategies of punishment and repression deployed by liberal states against marginalized segments of their populations, especially in America. Essentially, the shifts in policies of incarceration and policing have profoundly affected and disrupted the civic and political life and consciousness of the communities in which their effects are most concentrated, creating a parallel legal sphere in which civil rights legislation is all but negated in poor communities. After years studying the structures and practices of this deployment, Prof. Weaver’s latest project helps install and then explores people’s interactions with “Portals,” repurposed shipping containers outfitted with air conditioning and teleconferencing equipment with screens that fill an entire wall of the container, allowing those on either side of this virtual wormhole to see each other fully. For Weaver’s project, called *Faces of American Democracy*, the Portals have been installed in neighborhoods with high incarceration and poverty rates in Baltimore, Newark, Chicago, LA, and Milwaukee—in fact, the Amani neighborhood of Milwaukee is in the zip code with the highest incarceration rate in the country. Participants are prompted to talk to each other about their experiences in the justice system, in the hope of helping both the researchers and community members to solidify their understanding of it through conversation—an understanding that those in the community already implicitly have, but Weaver hopes will be used to bolster new policies through their input, which is not fully captured in a traditional study. She has been heartened by the program’s success so far, especially since the Portals—far from being perceived as an alien imposition or disruption—have by and large been adopted by the communities they are in as their own and made into public gathering spaces.

Public Scholarship

The Hamilton College 2018 Election Series

Professor Courtney Gibbons

Gerrymandering: The Math Behind the Madness

April 10, 2018

Hamilton Professor of Mathematics Courtney Gibbons spoke to students, staff, faculty, and local community members at the Levitt Center over lunch about the mathematics of gerrymandering, focusing on partisan gerrymandering and the algorithms used to facilitate it. Turning to possible solutions, Professor Gibbons discussed criteria and metrics based on mathematical concepts including proportionality, convexity and compactness, efficiency, and symmetry that can be used to test district plans for partisan fairness. She also explained another type of fairness test, sampling, that is becoming popular among statisticians and mathematicians; sampling creates a sample space of possible district plans, then runs various pieces of data through these hypothetical plans to identify statistical outliers. Gibbons directed attendees to an interactive section of Nate Silver's FiveThirtyEight website that features a nationwide district map which allows the user to set different parameters (favoring Democrats, favoring the GOP, promoting highly competitive elections, etc.) and see the phenomenon of gerrymandering in action. The mathematical frameworks Gibbons explained provide a way to both assess the (un)fairness of particular district maps and more clearly appreciate the power of gerrymandering on a broader scale.

Richard Hanna in Conversation

April 19, 2018

Richard Hanna—three-term (from 2011 to 2017) Republican Congressman for New York's 24th and 22nd congressional districts—participated in a lunch discussion with students, faculty, and staff at the Levitt Center and reflected on his time in office and the present political climate. The discussion touched on a broad variety of topics: money in politics, the morality of capitalism, international trade policy, and the general ethos of democracy—"in a democracy, everyone has skin in the game," as Hanna put it. While he said he saw serving in the House as a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," Hanna ultimately summarized his view of Washington's problems: "There isn't a balance of free enterprise and compassion anymore. It's becoming Darwinian."

Professor Sam Rosenfeld

When Polarization Was the Solution: Advocates and Architects of Our Partisan Era

April 24, 2018

Sam Rosenfeld, an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Colgate University, summarized some of the research and insights of his latest book *The Polarizers: Postwar Architects of Our Partisan Era* at the Levitt Center. He has been primarily studying the origins and history of the US government's current hyper-partisan climate. Surprisingly, he has found that this climate did not (as most usually assume) spontaneously develop out of nebulous structural changes, but has a clear and intentional origin. When the Cold War began, Democrats and Republicans became worried that they were in fact too similar; they believed a lukewarm and continuous bipartisan agreement would put their agendas in danger and perhaps even open American democracy up to threats from competing systems like the USSR's. Rosenfeld points out this motivation and investigates the institutions, movements, and individuals who contributed to this beginning of the ideological divide.

Public Scholarship

Future of Work Series

The Future of Work Series encourages Hamilton students to critically engage with questions surrounding the ever-changing nature of working in an increasingly globalized and post-industrial economy. How do we typically think about different kinds of work? What role do new technologies and their growing ubiquity play in shaping policy and education? How do structural disadvantages prevent people from fully engaging in and reaping the rewards of old and new economic systems? What should our relationship to work be? The Future of Work Series asks these questions and encourages students to reevaluate preconceived notions they may have about work and economics more generally.

Professor Alexsia Chan (Hamilton College)

Will China's Economy Crash? The End of the Miracle

September 20, 2017

Professor Alexsia Chan, Assistant Professor of Government at Hamilton College, facilitated a discussion entitled “Will China’s Economy Crash? The End of the Miracle” over lunch in the Levitt Center Conference Room. To answer a series of guiding questions about China’s rapid economic growth and future sustainability, Professor Chan began with a brief introduction to the current state of the Chinese economy, explaining the “Miracle” labor boom and describing the growing class of migrant industrial workers. Expanding on the questions at hand, Professor Chan outlined some of the common misconceptions that surround the Chinese economy, focusing on the myth of unlimited Chinese labor and the newly enlightened worker; the argument that economic growth is leading China’s authoritarian regime toward an imminent collapse; and the misguided fear that China’s rise is a threat to world order. Moreover, Professor Chan explained the truth behind the myths, describing the difficulties associated with sustaining the Chinese labor force; alternative domestic threats to Xie Jinping’s regime; and the Chinese cultural and political preference for self-preservation over becoming a world hegemon.

Megan Bates, Mia Caterisano, Morgan Walsh, and Professor of Anthropology Chaise LaDousa

Levitt Center Future of Work Series: "High School Equivalency, ESL, and the New Economy"

October 25, 2017

Chaise LaDousa, Professor of Anthropology, and students Megan Bates and Mia Caterisano facilitated a lunch conversation entitled “High School Equivalency, ESL, and the New Economy” in the Levitt Center Conference Room to share their experiences conducting summer research at a literacy center in Utica, New York. The group’s current research is part of a seven-year-long project examining adult higher education. This summer’s research focused on examining how adult education and high school equivalency certifications like the GED exam contribute to students’ economic prospects. Professor LaDousa discussed common rhetoric around the topic, explaining that while the GED is often seen as a tool to alleviate poverty, past studies and the group’s current work do not necessarily support this claim. Additionally, the group discussed the privatization of the GED and the related push to use more technology in the classroom, including moving to online testing and incorporating a relatively ineffective computer training module in the curriculum. For both GED and ESL classes at the center, the group found that certain teaching methods were more effective than others, particularly classroom structures that allowed students to have more agency over their own work. As most students are adults who attend classes voluntarily, the group found that most students had their own goals and were particularly motivated once they could understand how they were progressing by reviewing their assessment scores with teachers.

Public Scholarship

Professor Scott Macdonald

Whither Work?: Labor on Film

November 13, 2017

On November 13, 2017, Art History/Cinema and Media Studies Professor Scott MacDonald led a lunch discussion on the representation of labor in film, entitled “Whither Work?: Labor on Film,” as part of the Levitt Center Future of Work series. Students, faculty, and other members of the community joined the roundtable discussion in the Levitt Center Conference room with MacDonald at the head of the table showing film clips and prompting discussion with guiding questions after each clip. MacDonald decided to focus on work as physical, rather than intellectual, labor. Before presenting the film, MacDonald claimed that he has observed depictions of manual labor to be scarce in film—especially in Hollywood films, where we rarely even see actors sweat. The film clips MacDonald presented included excerpts from Dziga Vertov’s groundbreaking *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), an experimental silent film depicting urban life in Soviet Russia, which F.I.L.M. screened this semester with an original score performed by the Alloy Orchestra; Janet Biggs’ *A Step on the Sun* (2012), which explores the work of sulfur miners in the Ijen volcano of Indonesia; and Godfrey Reggio’s *Powaqqatsi* (1998). A common theme while discussing these film clips was the aestheticization of labor; for example, in *Powaqqatsi*, Reggio uses slow motion and puts the workers’ movements to music in a way that stylizes their actions. These techniques bring the film into the ambiguous territory between exploitation of the workers—putting forth as a spectacle their difficult and dehumanizing labor—and eliciting a sense of respect for labor and glorifying workers. Similarly, in *A Step on the Sun*, there is marked tension between the appeal of the vibrant colors and beauty of the volcano and the visual signs of the egregious health and safety dangers faced by the miners. Our interest in the depiction of labor in film as well as the filmmakers’ stylistic choices in documenting these scenes raise questions about how we, as outsiders, view manual labor.

Michelle Fine

Just Research: Widening the Methodological Imagination for Contentious Times

November 30, 2017

On November 30, 2017, distinguished Professor of Critical Psychology, Women’s Studies, American Studies and Urban Education at the Graduate Center of City University New York Michelle Fine hosted a lecture entitled “Just Research: Widening the Methodological Imagination for Contentious Times.” During her lecture, she discussed a commonly used research approach in South America that is increasingly popular in North America: critical participatory action research. This method emphasizes participation and action in the communities that are being researched. Professor Fine described three projects she has worked on in the past using this approach. The first project involved helping women in prison bring back Pell Grants after Bill Clinton passed a bill to ban them for prisoners in 1994. In the second project, Fine collaborated with mothers in the South Bronx who wanted to prevent aggressive policing. The 44th precinct, where these women lived, is known to have the roughest stop and frisk incidents and these mothers wanted to build a safe community that was appropriately policed. Professor Fine’s most recent project is a national participatory project by and for LGBTQ youth with a special focus on queer youth of color. This project surveys dreams, activism, policy issues, and many other interests in the queer youth of color community.

Social Innovation

Social Innovation 2018 Post-Graduate Fellowship

The Levitt Social Innovation Post-Graduate Fellowship provides funding to graduating seniors or recent graduates (Hamilton alumni who have graduated within three years) to develop and implement social innovation ventures that address persistent problems in disadvantaged communities. The projects may be implemented as a nonprofit, a socially directed for-profit enterprise, a new program connected with an existing organization, or some other appropriate model. We consider both national and international projects but give preference to projects implemented in Oneida or Herkimer counties. We also look for proposals that use novel approaches and that are scalable and sustainable.

FreshLife

Arthur Williams '16

Arthur Williams '16 was awarded this year's Levitt Post-Graduate Social Innovation Fellowship, a \$25,000 grant to help him address the socioeconomic and ecological issues surrounding his native Jamaica's agricultural sector. Noticing a marked disparity in the agricultural sector's large labor force and much smaller share of GDP, as well as the difficulty faced by working-class Jamaicans seeking access to locally-farmed and healthy produce; Williams is working to establish FreshLife, a socially-conscious enterprise that will confront many factors contributing to these problems. Williams hopes FreshLife will more directly connect small farmers to the communities they serve by allowing customers to conveniently order fresh produce via the FreshLife mobile app or website, facilitating both a steady demand for farmers and consistent access to healthy dietary options for consumers.

Further addressing the institutional problems facing small farms, FreshLife will invest 40% of profits in its "FarmLife Fund" for collateralizing loans, thus helping small farmers (who often have poor financial records and credit history due to the instability of their industry) become more attractive to lending institutions and receive the capital needed to start or expand their farms. Finally, FreshLife's Farmer Resources Section and partnerships with local agencies will increase farmers' access to information on adapting to climate change and practicing techniques to increase yields and avoid diseases in their crops.



Social Innovation

Social Innovation 2017 Post-Graduate Fellowships

Arabesque Fair Trade

Hady Hewidy '17

After first visiting the St. Catherine region of his native Egypt over 10 years ago, Hady Hewidy '17 has returned repeatedly and worked with the region's Jabaliya tribe on several initiatives. With his Levitt Social Innovation Fellowship, Hewidy established Arabesque, "a sustainable for-profit initiative to employ the women and girls of the community in a workshop specializing in traditional handicrafts." Arabesque will provide a much-needed opportunity for employment to women in St. Catherine who often have very limited avenues for work apart from working with livestock, and—if left widowed or divorced—often must rely on their extended families or charity to support themselves and their children. In addition to this goal of providing financial stability and independence for the most vulnerable population of the region, Hewidy hopes Arabesque will counter the flood of cheap imported manufactured goods and help revive and support the millennia-old Bedouin artisan tradition of weaving clothing and rugs. He also hopes to bring tutors and monthly mobile medical clinics to the community and set up a nonprofit organization through which the money made through Arabesque can be put back into the St. Catherine community. This summer, Olivia Northrup '19 and Christina Plakas '19 will be interning for Hewidy at Arabesque, helping to establish connections with American boutiques and gift shops who may have an interest in Arabesque's products.



An Arabesque worker using a silk loom.

Customtru

Sadiq Abubakar '15

Last year Sadiq Abubakar '15 developed and incorporated—through funding provided by The Levitt Post-Graduate Social Innovation Fellowships—TRUtailored, a company for assisting communication and efficiency between Nigerian tailors and their customers. In addition to helping grow this market, TRUtailored provides tailoring and financial literacy training to both established and aspiring tailors. This year, Abubakar has taken new steps and used his experience with TRUtailored to better understand the fashion industry in Nigeria (one of the country's largest sectors) by establishing Customtru. His new company's goals are to expand the TRUtailored network of tailors to include fabric vendors; examine the feasibility of serving the Nigerian diaspora communities of New York; and conduct an ongoing research project to explore the solutions his platform can offer users to address issues of accountability, transparency, and efficiency in the Nigerian fashion industry. Abubakar, in all his endeavors, remains committed to helping alleviate the poverty and rising inequality (with the country's recent economic boom) among the Nigerian people; not only through the economic opportunities his companies create directly, but also through seeking out partnerships with fledgling local businesses in other sectors.

Social Innovation

Social Innovation Fellows

The Social Innovation Fellows Program is a Levitt Center program designed to prepare and support students who aim to use innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to address persistent social problems. These innovations can be implemented in a variety of ways: through a for-profit business, a non-profit or student-run organization, an improvement to an existing institutional process, a new network of existing organizations, or some other method. Whatever the approach, these innovations aim to bring a creative, entrepreneurial, and groundbreaking approach to solving social problems. The program includes a weeklong workshop with Anke Wessels, who teaches an award-winning course on social innovation at Cornell University. This year's Social Innovation Fellows were: Jack Anderson '18, Aaron Beguelin '18, Michelle Chung '20, Emily De Jong '19, Kennard Fung '21, Hyein Kim '20, Sebastian Lissarrague '18, Kimberly Ly '20, Tiffany Ly '20, Ishan Mainali '21, Ngoc Ngo '20, Serena Persaud '20, Julia Reynolds '19, Tori Stapleton '19, Nicole Taylor '19, Nico Yargas '18, and Zixin Zhu '18.

Aaron Beguelin '18, Sebastian Lissarrague '18, Nico Yargas '18

The Beguelin, Lissarrague, and Yargas group developed a plan to create a collaborative space in Utica for graduates of area colleges and other community members, which would provide them a place to gather together and promote the invention and discussion of future socially conscious and sustainable economic development projects.

Michelle Chung '20, Kimberly Ly '18, Tiffany Ly '20, Hyein Kim '20, Ngoc Ngo '20

The Chung, Ly, Kim, Ly, and Ngo group is working on a program to increase the opportunities for women to access reproductive health education in Vietnam.

Emily De Jong '19

Emily De Jong's project, further detailed below, involves working with a non-profit to hire local nurses in Haiti to educate and raise awareness among rural villagers about their healthcare options, disease prevention methods, and other proactive/preventative methods of maintaining their health.

Ken Fung '21

Ken Fung developed a plan to offer financial literacy classes to Hamilton students which would cover practices like building credit, smart stock market strategies, and budgeting.

Ishan Mainali '21

Ishan Mainali will be researching for a future project to address the issue of Nepal's "brain drain" by volunteering in the schools of rural communities and gain some experience with their way of life. His plan for next summer is to build off this research and establish a program for high school students from Nepalese cities to have the opportunity to live in a rural community and be exposed to their country's rural lifestyle before going abroad to pursue their higher education, broadening their conception of their homeland.

Serena Persaud '20

Serena Persaud plans to partner with the Kelberman Center, a Central New York organization that provides services for people with Autism Spectrum Disorders and their families at all stages of life. Her idea is to connect Hamilton students with the Center so they can volunteer to participate in its social skills programs, which help reinforce the meanings of social cues for autistic youth through group activities.

Social Innovation

Julia Reynolds '19

Julia Reynolds has been developing a plan to start a new 4 to 6-week summer learning camp with scholarships for low-income children in Oneida County by contacting the staff of and researching existing camps and reaching out to potential partner organizations.

Tori Stapleton '19

Tori Stapleton predominately used her time to pinpoint an area she could be passionate about, and decided on planning a program tentatively called ManEnough, which will connect men on campus with each other and campus resources that will help them address the emotional self-repression and censorship that society holds up as the male ideal and provide them with avenues and techniques for productively dealing with their emotions.

Nicole Taylor '19

Nicole Taylor clarified some of the logistical problems and solutions to her proposed initiative, HamVote, which would organize student and Hamilton community volunteers to provide voter registration drives, give interested students voter education presentations, and conduct get-out-the-vote campaigns. She plans to reach out to all student-run clubs and organizations on campus to connect them with her program supporting students voting and becoming more aware of the electoral process in the United States.



Ishan Mainali discusses his project with Tsion Tesafye '16, returning Social Innovation Team alumnus and Post-Graduate Social Innovation Fellow.

Social Innovation

Hamilton Students Present Commitment Projects at 10th CGI U

The 10th annual Clinton Global Initiative University (CGI U)—held at Northeastern University on October 13-15, 2017—included among the 1,100 students chosen to attend this past year several Hamilton students: Risper Kirui '19, Emily DeJong '19, Gerard Pozzi '18, and KT Glusac '17. Previous attendees from Hamilton Sharif Shrestha '17, Emily Moschowits '16, and Andy Chen '16 returned to give updates and connect with potential partners regarding their own “Commitments to Action:” projects students develop, propose, and implement on their own initiative.

KT Glusac’s project focuses on alleviating poverty, primarily through increased access to affordable housing. Working with Bread & Roses Collective House of Syracuse and reaching out to the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative in Boston, Glusac is helping connect organizations and communities in Upstate New York to share information and resources aiding residential cooperatives to achieve low-income housing nonprofit status. Included in this information will be ideas for starting community-building events and implementing financial sustainability measures such as determining rent according to income and incorporating food lawns in housing co-ops. Overall, her project aims to raise awareness and explore the feasibility of cooperatives as viable sites for low-income housing, which have the potential to better center housing concerns and projects on the marginalized populations most in need of them, increasing their ability to participate in how housing works for them and is run.

Emily DeJong plans to partner with Touch of Hope, which employs Haitian nurses, to try and curb the public health crises of tuberculosis, HIV, and cholera arising from the 2010 earthquake in Haiti that left many with inadequate and unsanitary living conditions—a situation that is still far from being remedied. DeJong’s project aims to spread knowledge of these illnesses and preventative steps Haitians can take against them, while providing assistance to those already living with chronic conditions, in the small and isolated coastal town of Simonette. Due to high rates of illiteracy, DeJong and her local nurse partners will hold weekly oral presentations covering information about diseases, when and why to take medications, symptoms and effects, how and where to receive treatment, and self-care techniques.

Risper Kirui’s SmartStart aims to address educational issues in rural Londiani, Kenya, where children often lack the resources to make smooth transitions to advanced grades, causing them to fall behind in necessary academic skills. To alleviate this problem, Kirui proposed a plan which will establish a centralized space equipped for the needs of early learners (primarily in grades K-3), who can attend after-school or weekend programs at the center. This space fosters academic engagement and curiosity, allowing children to explore their interests, have access to materials they cannot find at school or in the home, and work collaboratively with their peers. The central idea is to both allow students access to material that promote academic success and strengthen skills, and also to engage their minds in activities outside of a traditional classroom to promote a mindset wherein they are always looking to learn from the world around them. Kirui’s program has proven to be very popular and successive, and she is looking to expand her locations after her flagship facility reached its capacity.

Gerard Pozzi’s commitment project seeks to raise awareness of and introduce a localized program to address the problem of the produce wasted when it is rejected at harvest for purely cosmetic reasons. Called “second harvest” or “imperfect” produce, harvested fruits and



Social Innovation

vegetables that are deemed to be not aesthetically suited for purchase by consumers in supermarkets are frequently just left to rot in the field. Pozzi's EduHarvest, partnering with organizations to help transport farmers' "second harvest" crops, will bring this cosmetically imperfect food to institutional dining facilities like cafeterias in schools and hospitals who may not have generous enough budgets to afford the more expensive (but not any less nutritious) "perfect" produce usually made available on the market. Pozzi hopes to lift the stigma against second harvest produce: this will help institutions realize they can afford quality produce and simultaneously compensating farmers for their perfectly good, but not traditionally marketable, crops. EduHarvest will be the first organization linking farmers and institutional dining facilities in this way.

Andy Chen '16, after spending a semester studying biotechnology at National Tsing Hua University (NTHU), launched a cell-phone based health and education service based in West Pokot, Kenya with co-founder Leonard Kilekwang '16, with support from CGI U and the Levitt Center. Called Tecnosafi, this service will provide public health information via SMS texts. After Kilekwang and another student influenced Chen to study abroad in Tanzania, he noticed both the burgeoning technological innovation and extensive telecommunications infrastructure and the disconnect between this technological development and the social issues still afflicting the East African region, like water-borne diseases such as typhoid and cholera. They have partnered with local organizations to raise awareness of their service under Kilekwang's other project, a community-run sports event gathering around 5,000 local students in the Lonoke Cup Finals. They have conducted studies on demographics, academic knowledge and community perceptions of waterborne disease, as well as steps individuals have already been taking to protect themselves from these diseases. They have continued to develop their IT infrastructure and begun testing their mass text capabilities, as well as continued to develop and expand a base in the community to which they can offer their service.

Emily Moschowits '16, with funding from her Post-Grad Social Innovation Fellowship and the CGI U, is the founder and executive director of Utica Greens (named after the beloved local dish), a nonprofit organization working to promote community and local food through urban farming. Utica Greens pursues this mission through three main directions: improving the financial and environmental sustainability of urban gardens, organizing classes for community members to learn about important food topics (nutrition, composting, canning and preserving, etc.), and promoting food justice through other organizing activities. Connected with over a dozen community gardens in the Utica area and partnering with both city and county departments as well as with other area nonprofits, Utica Greens' entirely board-run and volunteer-driven operations continue to strive to address food justice and food waste issues through organizing gardens and community-building events, teaching cooking and gardening classes, and building up their presence in Utica.



Sharif Shrestha '17 returned to update conference attendees on his commitment project Herbs for Change, an initiative to address both poverty and gender inequality in two rural Nepalese villages. Herbs for Change established a cooperative farm with nurseries for growing the medicinal herb *Swertia*, a common treatment in Himalayan folk medicine. Shrestha's cooperative farm employs 23 people—thirteen of whom are women—and its help in establishing a more stable market around *Swertia* has increased villagers' average income by over 75 percent. A native of Nepal, Shrestha's

commitment project keeps the good of community members its central focus, and invests part of the farm's harvest revenue in local schools built by United World Schools. At CGI U this past year, Shrestha worked on connecting to like-minded initiatives to expand the project and ensure Herbs for Change's economic sustainability and independence.

Social Innovation

Hamilton Represented at HELIO 2017

Chidera Onyeoziri '18 and Gillian Mak '18 were Hamilton's participants in the Human Ecology Lab in Osakikamijima (HELIO) last year. HELIO is an intensive two-week program that brings together more than 20 students, faculty, activists, and organizers to work towards a new era in Japanese higher education by building a new experimental Japanese "college" in and, crucially, aiming to include and consider fully the surrounding community of Osakikamijima, Hiroshima. Facilitated by the Ashoka University network, HELIO immerses students in the local community; offers innovative workshops and seminars; and connects them to leaders in government, peace activism, and social entrepreneurship. At the program's conclusion, they present their insights and vision for the future of higher education to town officials and community members.

Mak spent her first week conducting fieldwork to prepare for presentations to Osakikamijima's mayor focused on what an education system based on human ecology would look like. Human ecology—a vast interdisciplinary field drawing on epidemiology, zoology, economics, sociology, and more—concerns itself with examining the often fraught and precarious relationship between humans, their communities, and the earth's built and natural environments. Mak traveled to the remote island of Teshima, the site of a large environmental movement in the 1990s, where she met with the movement's leaders to discuss grassroots organizing; visited an industrial waste cleanup site; and interviewed artists, students, and community elders about their hopes and anxieties about the future.

Onyeoziri's work at HELIO explored the importance of "old wisdom" in agriculture and manufacturing around Osakikamijima, and how a balance is struck between transformation and tradition. Noticing that "innovation is conceptualized [in Japan] as personal and communal transformation," Onyeoziri set out to study two specific businesses, then broaden her scope to considerations of how the businesses in Osakikamijima form a symbiotic ecosystem wherein they all fill different needs in the community. The Shoyu Clan of the Shoyu Soy Sauce Factory employ old family customs that patiently use natural bacteria to create the ideal soy sauce flavor for a globalizing market, while Nakahara

Blueberry Farm's owner returned home to maintain his family's 800-year-old farm and has expanded it to include crops like citrus and rice that can be harvested year-round. In studying these two most successful industries on the island, Onyeoziri noticed the interconnections between all parts of the island's local economy: Oyster Farm Suzuki provides employment opportunities for students at the Maritime School, the Shoyu Factory supplies fertilizer to the Simple-en Organic Farm, and Miura Coffee gives a space for local youth to gather and socialize. The mutual interdependence of industries on Osakikamijima underscored the importance of community in social change for Onyeoziri, especially in negotiating between the insights and knowledge of tradition and proposing new ideas to address what "old wisdom" may be missing.



*Onyeoziri (left) and Mak (right)
at HELIO last summer.*

Social Innovation

Innovator-in-Residence Program

Through our Innovator-in-Residence program, we bring entrepreneurs and innovators to campus to share their expertise through lectures, workshops, and meetings with students. Innovators-in-Residence hold office hours in the Levitt Center Social Innovation Lab and usually remain on campus for 2-4 days. During that time, they typically lead several lectures/workshops, hold individual consultations with student innovators, and meet informally with groups of students over meals. We have been lucky enough to work with returning alumni and community partners who are enthusiastic about sharing their expertise with Hamilton students. This provides students with a great opportunity to receive expert advice and develop their own ideas.

Innovation Workshops

This year, the Levitt Center continued working with our two Innovators-in-Residence Cyrus Boga and Melinda Little, who led workshops and discussions and met with students individually to clarify the logistical steps taken to implement social innovation initiatives.

Cyrus Boga '90 is the CEO of Novamaya, an education startup serving college students who have a desire to create programs and businesses that promote social change; he is also the CEO of Blue Campus and its affiliate Campus Properties LLC, ventures with a unique approach to off-campus student housing that connects them to internships and community partners.

Melinda Little is a social entrepreneur: she founded the Community Store—the first community-owned department store in New York; was the co-founder of Independent Means—the leading provider of family-centered financial education programs and products in the US; and coordinates Point Positive—an investor group focused on investing in and supporting promising and scalable startups in the Adirondack region.

Innovation Workshops

Cyrus Boga

Creating a Viable and Sustainable Social Venture

In his first workshop for the fall semester, Cyrus Boga presented a broad introduction to setting up a social innovation venture that will be able to provide a valuable service to communities and continue to provide those services and grow to support as many people as possible.

How Social Entrepreneurship Prepares You for a Career in Almost Everything

Looking beyond social innovation in and of itself, Cyrus Boga explained the valuable skills and perspectives that social innovators gain by pursuing a social entrepreneur direction, and how they can be applied beyond that initiative itself.

How the World Really Works: The Importance of Finance for Social Innovators, Changemakers, and Everyone Else

In his final fall semester workshop, Cyrus Boga emphasized the nuances and importance of securing initial and continuing financing for socially innovative initiatives.

Social Innovation

Innovation Workshops (continued)

Introduction to Basics of Social Innovation

In this spring workshop, Cyrus Boga provided students of all levels of interest and experience in social justice and constructing a project or organization around it an introduction to best practices and the logistics of social innovation.

Melinda Little

Creating a Roadmap for Effecting Real, Lasting & Financially Sustainable Social Change

During this workshop, participants used the work of Nell Edgington to develop a Theory of Change for a nonprofit of their choice. Accounting for the increasing competition around funding, this workshop highlighted the need for nonprofit organizations to take an honest and comprehensive accounting for how much their programs have influenced the community with which they are working.

Grant Writing

In this informal lunch discussion, Melinda Little fielded questions from students currently working on or planning the implementation of their own socially conscious initiatives about researching and writing grants for nonprofit organizations.



Cyrus Boga with student innovators at one of this year's workshops.

Social Innovation

Social Innovation Team

The Social Innovation Team is dedicated to increasing the understanding of and opportunities for social innovation at Hamilton College and beyond. The students on the team are primarily responsible for designing, administering, and staffing the Levitt Center Social Innovation Lab, as well as creating social innovation programming. The Social Innovation Team's most recent major initiative was the organization, with Hamilton's Student Assembly, of the first all-campus and non-reactive townhall. This standing-room-only event in the College Chapel—attended by students and administrators—was intended to, and succeeded in, creating a completely open forum for students to communicate their concerns, ideas, and experiences around life on campus both to administrators and each other. Issues around race, mental health, free speech, sexual assault, and the experiences of the LGBT community, along with possible ways to address them on campus were all raised.

The members of the Social Innovation Team this past year were Kwasi Amoako '18, Jack Anderson '18, Kennard Fung '21, Hyein Kim '20, Kimberly Ly '20, Tiffany Ly '20, Ishan Mainali '21, Ngoc Ngo '20, Chidera Onyeoziri '18, Gerard Pozzi '18, Tyler Spector '19, and Sophia Wang '19.



Transformational Leadership

Levitt Leadership Institute

The Levitt Leadership Institute is a two-week intensive training program with the mission of helping students recognize, develop, and practice the leadership skills essential for creating personal and societal change. The first week of the Institute takes place on the Hamilton campus, where students participate in workshops and seminars that allow them to explore their own skills and attitudes while hearing from and working with a diverse group of experts, leaders, and others working for societal change. The skills developed in this first week include active listening, interviewing, influencing without authority, social change, and collaborative action—after this week of shared learning and practice, students can select one of two tracks which supplement for-credit classes and give them a chance to implement their new skills in the real world.

Students who pursue the Washington, D.C., track spend the first week of spring break engaging with and interviewing leaders in government, public service, NGOs, and other organizations. Paired with tours of the city and other experiences that deepen their understanding of historical views on leadership and the distinct socio-cultural contexts that inform them, students in the D.C. track are provided with a perspective amplifying the need for informed, proactive, and transformational leaders. LLI students in D.C. met with senators and representatives, as well as activists in the area, who stressed the amount of critical and creative thinking required to navigate, strategize, and promote change within the structure of the US government and the broader democratic process.

Students pursuing the Highlander track spend this week at The Highlander Research and Education Center in New Market, Tennessee, an organization with a long history of grassroots organizing and movement building. Working side-by-side with organizers and activists in Appalachia, students at The Highlander Center can see people fighting for justice, equality, and sustainability with an emphasis on supporting communities' collective action so they can take control of their own futures. The workshops presented by the Highlander staff focused on the methodologies of activist organizing including popular education, participatory action research, and intergenerational learning. The Highlander Center also encourages students to teach and learn from each other to make difficult conversations about race and how one's position in society requires a self-critical reflection on one's actions and preconceptions.

LLI 2018 Washington, D.C., Participants

Maggie DeNoon '20, Luke Eckels '20, Craig Engert '21, Niamh Fitzpatrick '20, Elizabeth Foot '20, Jiin Jeong '21, Savannah Kelly '21, Amar Kassim '20, Julia McGuire '20, Missy Mouritsen '20, Syon Powell '19, Lukas Puris '20, Ashley Ramcharan '20, Eliza Renn '20, Jack Scacco '21, Kayla Self '21, Lindsey Song '20, Kirubel Tesfaye '21, Ashley Thayaparan '21, and Elaine Yip '21.

LLI 2018 Highlander Participants

Caroline Fjermedal '20, Amari Leigh '21, Emily Liu '19, Aoife Thomas '20, and Lilly Yangchen '20.



LLI participants on the steps of the US Capitol.

Transformational Leadership

Leadership Workshops

Professor Susan Mason

Empathy and Leadership Workshop

September 9, 2017

During this four-hour workshop, Prof. Mason stressed the importance of being an empathetic leader. Opening the session, she divided the group of 13 students into three groups and asked them to discuss the characteristics and behaviors that make an effective leader in comparison to those that make one a less effective leader. A short discussion of instances in which the workshop participants experienced themselves in positions of leadership followed. Mason went on to focus on the ways in which empathy can be used in transformational leadership and the importance of creating a safe environment to foster growth. She emphasized her point with a showing of “Why good leaders make you feel safe,” a TedTalk by Simon Sinek that inspired thought-provoking conversation as the workshop participants began to think about how such spaces could be created on campus. The workshop then transitioned to Mason sharing the necessity for leaders to have emotional intelligence. In this section focused on emotion and impact, she asked the group to identify emotion based on vocal and visual cues before ending with another TedTalk that grounded the ideas she discussed on a level that the students could really connect with.

Workshop participants were encouraged to stay and hear about Levitt Leadership Institute '18. Professor Mason began the information session with an overview of the program and then turned it over to the Levitt Leadership Institute '18 student leaders Vincent Tran '18 and Acacia Bowden '20 to share their experiences with the LLI. A question and answer session revealed a great amount of interest and Mason even received an email directly following the session asking for assistance with the LLI '18 application.

Margo Okazawa-Rey

From Anger and Fear to Hope and Love: Redefining Self and Community for Justice and Social Transformation

October 5, 2017

Students, faculty and staff attended Professor of Women's and Gender Studies Margo Okazawa-Rey's workshop discussing recent devastating tragedies and how one can move past them. The workshop began as participants introduced themselves, what their name means and where it originates. After this icebreaker, she asked the attendees to form groups of three and gave them a topic to discuss, including recent and still raw events like the mass shooting in Las Vegas. After the discussion, she had the participants draw their emotions and display their work on the wall, after which, everyone explained their drawing and what it meant/what they were feeling. She finished the workshop by opening a dialogue about how someone can move past the feelings of fear and anger featured in many of the attendees' drawings to a new and deeper feeling of hope and love.

LEAP (Leadership Experience and Preparation) Program

LEAP is a leadership program for first-year students that began as a Commitment Project developed by a group of LLI students in 2013. LEAP participants aim to develop six key skills: self-awareness, organization, negotiation, active listening, public speaking, and networking. Over the past three years, LEAP has taken different forms as a residential learning program or a more traditional course-based program, and has confirmed its place as a valuable addition to Hamilton's curriculum. In all its forms, student leaders also serve as mentors for participating first-year students. This year, the quarter-credit LEAP course took place in the spring and was led by four sophomores: Lindsay Foster, Julia McGuire, Lukas Puris, and Lindsey Song.

Engaged Citizenship

Summer 2018 Electoral Internship Group

GOVT 200 with Phil Klinkner: “Electoral Politics”

Samantha Gordon '19, Benjamin Rhind '19, Edward Shvets '21, Elizabeth Brautigam '19, Gabrielle Colchete '21, Jonathan Gerstein '21, Joyce Lee '20, Kimberly Ly '20, Phillip Tran '20, and Savannah Kelly '21 will participate in Professor of Government Philip Klinkner's hybrid summer course GOVT 200, which combines a more traditional political science class with student internships for local congressional campaigns. As a supplement to a course exploring the dynamics of congressional elections and their relations to national political trends, along with a fascinating look into how campaigns themselves influence or create voting behavior itself, students have the opportunity to see the relation of political theory to this year's races for the local congressional district seat. The course requires students to participate in internships at either Claudia Tenney's or Anthony Brindisi's campaign for New York's 22nd Congressional District.

Levitt Public Service Interns

Levitt Public Service Internship Awards provide funding for students who have secured an unpaid summer internship that focuses on some aspect of public service. Thanks to this program, students explored careers in public service by working with a government agency, nonprofit, or non-governmental organization. During the summer of 2017, the Levitt Center funded 11 students' public service internships.

Molly Clark '19

OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates in Washington, D.C.

Molly Clark '19 spent her summer working as a policy intern at OCA's National Center. In this capacity, she planned events related to OCA's upcoming National Convention, conducted policy research related to Associate Director of Policy and Advocacy Kham Moua's issue portfolios and attended meetings on Kham's behalf. Each Friday, Clark's intern cohort met at the OCA office for Sama Sama—a four-hour block for discussing Asian American issues, professional development, and leadership skills. She also attended a series of networking and professional development events, including a Congressional Reception with members of CAPAC (the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus), a Facebook Marketing Training session, and The Color of Surveillance: Government Monitoring of American Immigrants—a summit held at Georgetown Law's Center on Privacy and Technology. Finally, she helped organize OCA's National Convention in Sacramento, which brings together representatives of OCA chapters across the country. Clark told the Levitt Center that “[this] internship has helped validate my decision to declare a Public Policy concentration, as well as helped me to realize that after graduation I would ideally like to move to Washington, D.C., and work for a nonprofit like OCA or on Capitol Hill.”

Anna Do '18

Inkululeko, Grahamstown, South Africa

Anna Do '18 spent her summer interning at Inkululeko in Grahamstown, South Africa. Inkululeko is a non-profit organization that serves high school students in Grahamstown by helping them to succeed academically and seize opportunities in the future. She was responsible for tutoring students, working in the kitchen to serve lunch to students and community members, and keeping Inkululeko's social media platforms updated. Do also collaborated with the leaders of the organization to plan ways for Inkululeko to grow and flourish in the future.

Dan Horgan '18

National Parks Conservation Association, Washington, D.C.

Dan Horgan '18 spent his summer in Washington, D.C., working for the National Parks Conservation Association, a citizen action non-profit publicly defending and legislatively supporting American National Parks. At NPCA, Horgan worked with Hamilton alumnus Nicholas Lund '05 and a variety of other team members within the Government Affairs unit. He served

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as a policy researcher, a legal brief writer, and a lobbyist throughout the course of his internship at NPCA. Horgan is a graduating senior and plans to pursue a career in counseling psychology.

Emma Karsten '18

Sunvestment and Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation

Emma Karsten '18 spent the first month of her summer interning with Sunvestment Group and exploring the possibility of implementing community solar power for low-income housing units in New York cities. She spent most of her time reaching out to low-income housing groups, developers, and organizations in various cities and assessing their interest in Sunvestment's Community Solar plan. Karsten's second month of her summer was spent interning with the Projects Team for the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation. On the Projects Team, she put together a packet to educate donors about the Foundation's Marine Protected Area projects, and helped set up events and edit the Foundation's other English-language publications. Karsten is interested in pursuing science communication, and her time at both Sunvestment and PAII gave her useful insight and experience into the intricacies of educating about and initiating environmental projects.

Anna McCloskey '18

U.S. Embassy in Bern, Switzerland

Anna McCloskey '18 worked during the summer of 2017 as an intern at the US Embassy in Bern, Switzerland. She served as a staff assistant for the Executive and Political Economy sections, working directly under the Chargé d'Affaires (head of the embassy) and worked on a series of papers that were later used to prepare the nominee for Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein. The papers required extensive reading of Swiss law and policy, and covered topics such as migration and sanctions policy, US-Swiss relations, and Swiss-EU relations. She also coordinated security, scheduling, and protocol for the Chargé d'Affaires. McCloskey is interested in pursuing a career in public service, perhaps by joining the Foreign Service. Her experience at Embassy Bern was immensely fulfilling and formative.

Conor O'Shea '18

Office of the Public Defender, New Haven CT Superior Court

Conor O'Shea '18 spent his summer working as an Investigative Intern for the Public Defender's Office of the New Haven, CT Superior Court. The Public Defender's Office provides zealous legal defenses for individuals charged with serious crimes in the New Haven area and unable to afford a private attorney. Working with the on-staff investigator, O'Shea was responsible for conducting public records and social media searches, preparing case files for trial, and interviewing witnesses he tracked down online. For the on-staff social worker, he prepared memos and case summaries regarding a client's post-conviction appeal and juvenile parole hearing. For the attorneys, he vetted expert witnesses, performed legal research, and wrote memos presenting mitigating factors for sentencing and Constitutional arguments against certain conditions of probation. After Hamilton, O'Shea plans to attend law school, begin his career in public service as a Public Defender, and then pursue large-scale civil rights litigation to advance and protect the rights and dignity of all people who encounter the American criminal justice system.

Frankie Outlaw '18

The Public Theater, New York City

Frankie Outlaw '18 spent her summer in New York City working for The Public Theater, a nonprofit venue that seeks to create an inclusive environment for the performing arts in New York City. Over the course of her internship she had the opportunity to meet Broadway professionals, tour Broadway shows, and receive career advice from some of the biggest names in the field of theatre. She worked on—among other Public Theatre projects—the summer production of Julius Caesar, whose timely political themes garnered significant attention. As a student with career goals in professional theater, Outlaw gained relevant career experience while being exposed to the world of nonprofit theater.

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Levitt Public Service Interns (continued)

Christina Plakas '19

District Attorney's Office, Brooklyn

Christina Plakas '19 interned at the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office as a Victim Services Unit Intern throughout the Summer of 2017. She conducted forensic interviews and intakes with domestic violence victims and made physical and mental health referrals. She also helped with safety planning and conducted intake interviews (in Spanish and English) with victims of assault, arson, burglary, and other crimes at Grand Jury. Part of her position required assisting victims in filing for financial and medical bill reimbursement through the NYS OVS, helping victims to apply for shelters and assisting in coordinating emergency housing transfers. By gathering relevant information on cyberbullying in New York City, Plakas also participated in the anti-cyberbullying task force initiative. She used information from her research to create posters and palm cards for Brooklyn parents to inform them of the warning signs and dangers of cyberbullying.

Gerard Pozzi '18

Forterra, Seattle, WA

Gerard Pozzi '18 spent his summer interning at Forterra in Seattle, WA working on the Innovation and Riparian Restoration Teams. Forterra is Washington's largest land conservation organization. Pozzi was responsible for brainstorming new strategies for Forterra to set in place, researching global transfer of development rights (TDRs), updating Forterra's TDR database, and accompanying the Riparian Restoration Team on several trips into the field to monitor tree growth and contain knotweed. Pozzi's experience interning at Forterra over the summer fostered valuable, lifelong connections there. He graduates in May as an Environmental Studies major with a focus in food sustainability, hoping to get involved in the startup space and eventually go to business school or earn a Master's in Sustainability. Pozzi notes that "having the opportunity to intern at Forterra was invaluable to my growth and has been an incredible asset in teaching me valuable skills necessary in the workforce."

Alex Scheuer '18

No Labels, Washington, D.C.

Alex Scheuer '18 spent the summer of 2017 working as a Research Fellow at No Labels, a bipartisan advocacy group that inspired the 40-plus-members of the Congressional Problem Solvers Caucus. As a Research Fellow, he analyzed national policy issues such as health care, antitrust policy, and innovation to craft official platform proposals for No Labels. Scheuer wrote four published blog posts regarding health care, bipartisan legislation, and labor. He also examined data from the Federal Election Commission to facilitate organizing donor statistics for the Caucus members. Scheuer told the Levitt Center that "It was an eye-opening summer for me, and reaffirmed my desire to go into public-interest work. I couldn't have done it without Levitt Public Service funding, since it was very minimally paid. Thank you so much for the opportunity."

Henry Shuldiner '19

The Writer's Center, Bethesda, MD

Henry Shuldiner '19 spent his summer interning at The Writer's Center, a nonprofit in Bethesda, Maryland. At TWC, he worked as the Marketing and Communications Intern. He copyedited and wrote numerous articles for the Workshop and Events Guide Summer edition, conducted interviews with authors for highlight pieces, and assisted the development of various social media marketing campaigns on Facebook, Twitter, and other industry-related sites. The Writer's Center provides writing workshops—both on-location and online—and hosts more than 50 outstanding literary events each year, featuring authors of local, national, and international renown. Shuldiner is interested in continuing to work for a literary or educational nonprofit organization after his time at Hamilton.

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VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)

VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) is a service-learning program that offers free tax help to low- and middle-income families. VITA is a joint project of the Levitt Center, the Hamilton College Economics Department, and the Mohawk Valley Asset-Building Coalition, a group of over 30 community agencies in the local area.

Students who wish to participate in VITA must take Policy, Poverty, and Practice, a quarter-credit economics course taught by Lecturer in Economics Margaret Morgan-Davie. This course addresses topics including income inequality, tax policy, and government policies to alleviate poverty. Student volunteers also complete IRS TaxWise training to become certified tax preparers and complete cultural competency training. This framework provides students with the practical and theoretical knowledge they need to prepare tax returns and understand the significance of the service they are performing.

Volunteers commit to a minimum of 15 hours of volunteer time at the Resource Center for Independent Living, a tax preparation site in Utica. Students work one-on-one with tax filers with the support of the site staff. Through their efforts, these Hamilton students are becoming more aware of their civic duties and increasingly proficient in the language of tax returns. They are also able to make a positive impact on families within the local community. This year, 22 students participated in VITA.



VITA participant Sam Gordon '19 helping a community member with his taxes.

Empathy Initiative

This year, part of the student leadership team researched, designed, and led four "empathy dinners." Molly Clark '19, Gianni Hill '21, Gillian Mak '18, and Ishan Mainali '21 started formulating this project after coming across a survey of almost 28,000 undergraduate students at dozens of campuses that found more than 60 percent of students reported that they had "felt very lonely" in the previous year, with nearly 30 percent reporting having the same feeling within the last two weeks. One factor they could see playing a part in this social isolation was students' busy schedules (between classes, clubs, social engagements, etc.) preventing them from having the time and ability to have deep, meaningful, and extended conversations. Using a model meant to take student input into account, the group put out an "Invitation to a Brave Space," hosting a series of dinners for eight students and structuring these gatherings not only to bring students together, but to give them the best atmosphere in which to honestly voice their opinions, share their stories, and challenge each other's ideas.

Engaged Citizenship

Project SHINE

Project SHINE is a service-learning program through which students act as English coaches to refugees and immigrants in the Utica area. Through this program, students provide a valuable service to the community's newest residents and gain an understanding of the needs and circumstances of others through working directly in the community. Each year students come back with stories of their broadened horizons and of people with different experiences, as well as an appreciation of a person's ability and commitment to learn without the numerous resources that many of their peers have had.

Students must participate in Project SHINE through an academic course. This requirement provides students with an academic framework through which to understand their volunteer experience, and it enables faculty to develop courses that foster ethical, informed, and engaged citizenship. Over the past 5 years, students have participated in SHINE through courses in the Anthropology, Arabic, Chinese Language, Communications, Education, English and Creative Writing, Government, Religious Studies, Sociology, Women's Studies, and Writing departments.

This year, students participated in Project SHINE through the following six courses:

- An independent study on TESOL curriculum design with Director of the English for Speakers of Other Languages Program Barbara Britt-Hysell (spring)
- Literature 129: Truth and Justice, the American Way with Professor of Literature and Creative Writing Doran Larson
- Literature 342: Written on the Wall: 20th-Century American Prison Writing with Professor of Literature and Creative Writing Doran Larson (fall)
- Education 201: Methods in Tutoring ESOL Students with Director of the English for Speakers of Other Languages Program Barbara Britt-Hysell (fall) and Associate Professor of Russian Languages and Literatures John Bartle (spring)
- Literature 328: Immigrants and Comics Nhora Serrano (spring)
- Religious Studies 133: American Freedom and Religious Thought with Hamilton College Chaplain Jeff McArn (spring)

SHINE volunteers worked with adult refugees at the BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) site in Utica. 22 students participated in SHINE in the fall, and 29 volunteered in the spring.

The Levitt Center is fortunate to have a large staff of dedicated and talented student workers:

Writing and Publicity Team: Sabrina Boutselis '19, Samantha Gordon '19, Lynn Kim '21, Michael LaPorte '21, Kimberly Ly '20, Hudson Smith '21, Kirubel Tesfaye '21, Muhammad Huzefah Umer '21

Social Innovation Team: Kwasi Amoako '18, Jack Anderson '18, Talea Shakun-Berkelhammer '20, Molly Clark '19, Kenneth Fung '20, Mariani German '19, Hyein Kim '20, Kimberly Ly '20, Tiffany Ly '20, Ishan Mainali '21, Ngoc Ngo '20, Chidera Onyeoziri '18, Tyler Spector '19, Sophia Wang '19

Leadership Team and LEAP directors: Matthew Albino '19, Matthew Bleich '18, Acacia Bowden '20, Lindsey Foster '20, Lukas Puris '20, Julia McGuire '20, Nicole Simpson '19, Lindsey Song '20, Vincent Tran '18

Drivers and Dispatchers: Kwasi Amoako '18, Emma Belanger '20, Emily Bigwood '18, Matt Casadei '19, Mia Caterisano '19, Mariaelena Hiller Chacin '18, Ysabel Coss '18, Rachel Dawson '19, Iona Forrester '21, Amar Kassim '20, Hana Lindsey '20, Margaret Luddy '20, Anna Maglio '18, Gillian Mak '18, Julia McGuire '20, Alex Miltenberg '18, Geoffrey Ravenhall Meinke '20, Nick Pace '19, Abigail Rosovsky '20, Skyler Simson '20, Ellie Williams '20

Special Projects: Gianni Hill '21, Daniel Horgan '18, Matthew C. Kastilahn '18

Levitt Center

Levitt Center Council Members and Levitt Center Staff

- **Frank Anechiarico**, Director of the Justice and Security Program and Maynard-Knox Professor of Government
- **John Bartle**, Director of the Inequality and Equity Program and Associate Professor of Russian Studies
- **Ashley Bohrer**, Truax Post-Doctoral Fellow in Philosophy
- **Steve Ellingson**, Director of the Sustainability Program and Professor of Sociology
- **KT Glusac**, Community Service Intern
- **Tina Hall**, Associate Professor of Literature and Creative Writing
- **Marianne Janack**, Director of the Levitt Center and John Stewart Kennedy Chair of Philosophy
- **Robert Knight**, Assistant Professor of Art
- **Chaise LaDousa**, Professor of Anthropology
- **Herm Lehman**, Director of the Public Health and Well-Being Program and Professor of Biology
- **Ruth Lessman**, Levitt Center office assistant
- **Celeste Day Moore**, Assistant Professor of History
- **Simon Stanco**, Levitt Center Media Fellow
- **Sharon Topi**, Coordinator of Leadership Programming
- **Chris Willemssen**, Associate Director of the Levitt Center
- **Joel Winkelman**, Community Based Learning Coordinator
- **Steve Wu**, Professor of Economics

Guest Mentors

A special thanks to our guest mentors who make their knowledge and expertise on transformational leadership and social innovation available to Hamilton students.

- Ambassador Prudence Bushnell (Rtd.), designer and facilitator of the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Susan Mason, facilitator for the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Martha Freymann Miser K'75, designer and facilitator of the Institutional Change Workshop
- Emily Moschowits '16, facilitator for the Social Innovation Fellows Program
- Margo Okazawa-Rey, facilitator for the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Zach Schuman, facilitator for the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Tsion Tesafye '16, facilitator for the Social Innovation Fellows Program
- Isabelle Van Hook '11, facilitator for the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Anke Wessels, facilitator of the Social Innovation Fellows Workshop



The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center Annual Report 2017-18

The mission of the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center is to strengthen and support the study of public affairs at Hamilton College.

The goals of the Center are:

- *To enable students to engage in public affairs through research, service-learning, lectures, discussion, and practice.*
- *To foster creative, ethical, and informed responses to public issues by providing opportunities for students to engage with the local community, develop leadership skills, and explore careers in public service.*
- *To support interdisciplinary collaboration and discussion; and to encourage faculty to address public affairs in their own research and in collaborative research with Hamilton students.*

*Liam Prum '20, Sydney Kim '21 and Katie McKillop '19 participating in "Food Harvest," an ongoing initiative to reduce hunger and food waste spurred by Social Innovation Fellow Sam Carletta '17's work.
Photo by Nancy L. Ford*

