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President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll Member With Distinction



Carnegie Foundation Elective Classification in Community Engagement



Multi-disciplinary Applied Learning: It's In Our DNA



In December 2017 a student wrote, *I realized that service-learning is a part of class in which we get to experience first-hand the importance of what we research and study in the class room. ... We learn about the issues by getting involved and by making a difference.*

These comments help explain why SUNY Chancellor Zimpher made applied learning a SUNY priority.

SUNY's definition of "applied learning" includes experiential learning methods such as internships, problem-based learning, and service-learning.

Many SUNY Cortland applied learning projects are multidisciplinary, such as the one described in "Complementary Courses" on pg. 3.

Others are funded through the SUNY Innovation Grant, which supports *Common Problem Pedagogy* projects at SUNY Oneonta, Oswego, and Plattsburg (the lead).

SUNY Cortland's three projects explore migrations, local sustainability, and sustainable development.

Bruce Mattingly (Dean, School of Arts and Sciences) coordinates SUNY Cortland's grant.

"This is a mutually-beneficial way for faculty from different disciplines to partner in ways that help students and the community," says Dean Mattingly. He encourages faculty who want to participate in the grant to contact him at bruce.mattingly@cortland.edu.

Leadership in Civic Engagement Awards

The Institute for Civic Engagement invites nominations for the 2017 *Leadership in Civic Engagement Awards*. Nominate yourself, another person, or a group from the campus or from the greater Cortland community.

The awards recognize the exceptional civic engagement of students, faculty, staff, community members, and organizations. Their work shows initiative, creativity, and long-term dedication to the improvement of life in and around Cortland County.

To nominate someone, go to <http://www2.cortland.edu/civic-engagement/>

and select *Leadership in Civic Engagement Awards* from the menu on the right for the easy nomination form.

The nominations deadline is Friday, March 3. Recipients will be recognized with a certificate at our twelfth annual Awards reception on April 27 in Jacobus Lounge.



Three of the 2016 recipients.

Applied Learning: It's In Our DNA - *Continued*

Service-learning
Volunteering
Learning
Communities
Internships and
Field Experiences
Study Abroad
Multi-Cultural Life
and Diversity
Outdoor and
Environmental
Education
Undergraduate
Research
Leadership
Development
Social Advocacy

Additional applied learning projects grow out of SUNY Cortland's Economic Inequality Initiative, which helps educate students about economic inequality while helping to address local causes of economic inequality.

These goals require a multidisciplinary approach and attention to opposing viewpoints. With that in mind, the Initiative's members scheduled a September 2016 *State of Poverty Simulation* for 50 people, including community agency staff, the chairs of our local Republican and Democratic parties, the Downtown Partnership's Director, and faculty, staff, and students. The Cortland Community Action Program (CAPCO) conducts the Simulation, which helps participants understand challenges that low-income people face.

The event in September helped "prime" participants for a Deliberative Dialog in October. That Dialog identified local challenges to economic mobility, and projects to help address those challenges. Here are some projects to consider, should you wish to volunteer.

Economics. The Cortland Downtown Partnership. Students can help develop projects and materials to promote the City of Cortland's downtown businesses. Contact Jane Witty, Events Coordinator, at jane@cortlanddowntown.com.

Environment. Students can volunteer with NYPIRG to urge NY State's Attorney General to continue investigating Exxon-Mobil's alleged suppression of its climate-change research and its funding of climate-change denial activities. Addressing climate change is important for many reasons, including NY State's agricultural economy. Skylin Baestlein at sbaestlein@nypirg.org.



A "family" budgeting expenses during a recent *State of Poverty Simulation*.

Hunger and Homelessness.

- Hunger and Homelessness work group. Students can work through NYPIRG to address the causes and effects of hunger and homelessness in New York. Contact our NYPIRG Project Coordinator, Sky Baestlein, at sbaestlein@nypirg.org.
- Nationally, 1 in 5 college students are food-insecure. A campus group is creating a way to address this problem. Details are on page 4.

Education. Tutoring/Mentoring

- Access to Independence (ATI) helps people with disabilities live independent lives. To volunteer with ATI's mentoring program, contact Aaron Baier at abaier@aticortland.org.
- YWCA's *After-School Program*. Education majors can tutor and mentor children at local elementary schools. Contact Janice Meyer at SchoolAge@CortlandYWCA.org.
- Higher Education Affordability – Students learn and apply interpersonal communication and lobbying skills through NYPIRG's Lobby Day, Thursday, March 2nd.
- The better educated our youth are, the better able they are to earn a good living, and the better the chances are that they will live healthy lives.

Continued on page 3.

Applied Learning Continued from page 2

Humanities. Ty Marshall, the Director of the Center for the Arts of Homer, NY, is partnering with

- Dowd Gallery's Director, Erika Fowler-Decatur, to coordinate exhibitions, beginning in 2017-2018. Erika.Fowler-Decatur@cortland.edu.
- Assistant Professor Evan Faulkenbury (History), to conduct public history projects, beginning as early as summer 2017. Projects include archiving materials and establishing an ongoing *History* tab at the Center's website. Evan.faulkenbury@cortland.edu. Such projects foster Cortland County tourism.

Law. Students can volunteer with NYPIRG on legal projects.

- Consumer Protection
- Small-Claims Action Resource Center, to help people navigate legal processes. sbaestlein@nypirg.org.

Politics. Students can engage in civic decision-making by

- Volunteering with an existing SGA political club –
 - *Young Republicans*. Morgan.goldstein@cortland.edu
 - *Young Americans for Liberty*. MichaelMcDonough@cortland.edu
- Partner with another student (or two) to start a Conservative, Democrat, Green, or other political club. John.suarez@cortland.edu.

In 2013, SUNY Cortland formed *The President's Leadership Coalition for Student Engagement* to promote the use of applied learning across departments. Associate Professor Susan Wilson (Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Studies) chairs the coalition, whose members include administrators, staff, and faculty from all three of our college's schools. To learn more, email john.suarez@cortland.edu.

A Multidisciplinary Project Helps keep SUNY Cortland faculty and staff healthy.

A unique multidisciplinary project helps SUNY Cortland faculty and staff with cardio-vascular challenges, while also providing students with real-life work experience.

Dr. Deborah Van Langen's Exercise Prescription (EXS 432) students apply exercise science skills to help people address conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, metabolic syndrome, pulmonary disorders, or neuromuscular disease.

Students evaluate clients and prescribe individual exercise and fitness programs.

Complementing this practicum, Dr. Kate Polaseks leads Exercise Psychology (EXS 367) students in helping participants maintain a healthy lifestyle through goal-setting and development of educational materials.

Professor Janet Ochs guides Computer Applications (CAP 251) students in developing personalized websites for participants.

"Our students help our colleagues by applying valuable real-world skills in authentic settings," Van Langen says.

These three courses' students collaborate to develop websites that include information on health behaviors, such as physical activity, eating tips, exercise plans, and weekly challenges.

SUNY Cortland faculty and staff – and their adult family members – can benefit from this project by contacting Professor Deborah Van Langen at Deborah.vanlangen@cortland.edu.

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Campus Forms Food Bank Initiative for food-insecure students

Students, faculty, staff, and alumni have formed a team to tackle the issue of student food insecurity on the SUNY Cortland campus.

President Bitterbaum recently said that hundreds of SUNY Cortland students come from families whose annual income is less than \$5000/year. This concerning statistic motivated the group to explore ways of assessing the need for a campus food bank. Group members intend to raise awareness of the need, as there is a misconception on and off campus that college students come from at least middle income families.

Other area colleges and universities are also developing, or have, food banks: they too have found that there are college students experiencing hunger. For example, TC3, SUNY Oswego, Potsdam and Stony Brook and even Cornell are continuing to develop programs to respond.

The team's students are sharpening their interpersonal communication and research skills as they investigate local food sources, starting with the Food Bank of Central New York and the Food Bank of the Southern Tier, which serves 160 food agencies and has a distribution center in nearby Groton.

At the same time, Sky Baestlein, SUNY Cortland's NYPIRG Project Coordinator, has established a connection with College and University Food Bank Alliance (CUFBA) to access resources and information.

Students in Assistant Professors Alexis Blavos' and Page Dobbs' spring 2017 *Community Health* service-learning courses will strengthen their needs-analysis skills. These students and this project will benefit from these professors' expertise and



experience – both have helped create similar projects on other campuses.

Participants are exploring complexities of identifying food insecure students.

Unlike students living in residence halls, for example, students who are living off-campus are not required to have meal plans.

Those students could be living in West Campus, at College Suites, and or be renting privately-owned apartments. They could be part-time or graduate students.

The group is working to build on existing “infrastructure,” whether with on-campus, such as ASC, or with off-campus, such as food pantries in the community.

Group members include students (including SGA members), Student Affairs, NYPIRG, Health Department faculty, Alumni Board members, and staff in Alumni Engagement, Campus Ministries, the Cortland College Foundation, Financial Aid, Counseling and Student Development, Facilities Management, and the Institute for Civic Engagement.

For additional information, contact John Suarez at john.suarez@cortland.edu.