

December 2018
Volume 12, Issue 4

Individual Highlights

APO, Cortland Fire Dept. Partnership	3
Cupboard Update	3
Climate Change Events	4
Homelessness Project Update	5
Cortland Votes: Mapping	6
Reflection Workshop: Invitation	8

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



Carnegie Foundation Elective Classification in Community Engagement



AED 315's Community Action Project: Preparing preservice teachers to teach civics by "learn-by-doing."

A senior History major and a junior dual major are using an AED 315 project to learn – and to learn how to teach – civics.

Professors Gigi Peterson and Jim Miller designed the Community Action Project for their fall 2018 *Foundations of Secondary Social Studies* courses

Peterson notes that "current expectations for our field re-emphasize a time-honored element of social studies education: preparing students to be informed, problem-solving participants in civic life."

For this project, two of Peterson's students, Thomas Carusillo and Antonio Incardona, drafted a call to action that addresses their concern with the City of Cortland's drinking water: levels of sodium chloride might be harmful for residents who are pregnant or diabetic.

Carusillo and Incardona shared their proposal with President Bitterbaum, who called their work "very exciting," so he suggested that they work with faculty to develop the proposal further.

One faculty member who worked with them is Chemistry Chair Greg Phelan.



Phelan praised "these kinds of projects where our students take the theories they are learning about in our classrooms, apply them to a real world situation and then come up with ideas of how to get involved in working towards a resolution of these issues."

Continued on page 2

SUNY Cortland Applied Learning Professional Development Activities

During November and early December, SUNY Cortland staff participated in two applied learning professional development activities.

SUNY Applied Learning Conference.

On November 1st and 2nd, Lauren Christiansen, Internship and Student Employment Coordinator; Dr. Bruce Mattingly, Dean of Arts and Sciences, and John Suarez, Director, Institute for Civic Engagement, attended this conference in Tarrytown, NY.

Mattingly and his co-presenters described the four-campus "Common Problem Project: A New Pedagogy Developed by a Consortium of SUNY Colleges."

In common problem projects, students in courses from different disciplines collaborate as they define and present solutions to real-life challenges.

Continued on page 8



Action Team interns Julianna Santamaria and Ryann Hudson discuss applied learning projects with visitors at the October Open House.

Coming Events

Free and open to the public

Student interest in current events and in politics is growing.

Witness the articles in the Dragon Chronicle, the Bulletin, and the Institute's Newsletter that describe students' issues-oriented projects in the spring and fall 2018 semesters.

The spring 2019 collaborations announced below and on page 3 reinforce that observation.

Immigration: A Debate,

Monday, February 18, 7:00 to 8:30 in Old Main's Colloquium (#220). College Republicans debate Young Democrats on a specific issue (tba) within the topic of immigration. Connor Vick (President, Political Science Association) will moderate.

NYPIRG's Higher Education

Action Day, Thursday, February 21. Students, faculty, and staff are invited to lobby legislators in Albany. In preparation for this event, NYPIRG provides valuable training in lobbying methods. For additional information and to register, contact NYPIRG Project Coordinator Ethan Gormley at egormley@nypirg.org

AED 315, continued from page 1.

Phelan discussed the proposal with Chemistry faculty, then met with Carusillo and with the Institute for Civic Engagement's John Suarez to provide guidance regarding scientific context and other considerations.

Phelan, a faculty mentor in the Institute's *Cortland Applied Learning Practitioners* professional development program, demonstrated the importance of understanding the multi-disciplinary complexity of such issues by

- Noting project-relevant differences between sodium- and potassium-chloride.
- Promoting the ability to communicate between fields, such as Community Health and Water Management, which use different measures, values, and language in discussing the same topics.
- Encouraging awareness of issues' emotional content, such as putting fluoride in water – a move which people in Cortland County have blocked, in spite of research that shows the value of that move.

how your experience can shape your future teaching," Peterson and Miller are tackling a concern that is mirrored in a November 28 *NYTimes.com* article.

In "Are Civics Lessons a Constitutional Right?," author Dana Goldstein reports that a group of Rhode Island high school students and their parents "are filing a federal lawsuit against the state [...] arguing that failing to prepare children for citizenship violates their rights under the United States Constitution."

The suit claims that, because Rhode Island lets school districts decide "whether and how to teach civics," some districts do not give their students "the skills to 'function productively as civic participants'" in our democratic republic.

This suit might have national implications, "potentially prompt[ing] the Supreme Court to reconsider its 45-year-old ruling that equal access to a quality education is not a constitutionally guaranteed right."

The project that Peterson and Miller

"Once you identify an issue, are you morally obligated to address that issue?"

Professor Phelan asked Carusillo to consider the role that he and Incardona have as social entrepreneurs, asking, "What is your goal? What can you and/or the campus do to address the issue? What is the issue's economic opportunity?"

Phelan brought philosophy into the discussion when he asked, "Once you identify an issue, are you morally obligated to address that issue?"

By instructing their students to "engage in a project to address a community challenge or need, and [to] reflect on

assigned can help future social studies teachers – and teachers in other disciplines – learn how to develop civic participation skills in their own students through applied learning projects such as this one.

Carusillo and Incardona are working with Professor Phelan, Professor Ben Wodi (Health), and with Suarez to continue their project into the spring and fall 2019 semesters.

To discuss participation in developing this work, contact Suarez at john.suarez@cortland.edu or at 753-4391.

Coming Events

Continued

Climate Change-Enhanced Extreme Weather Event Simulation

Thursday, February 28, 4:30 to 6:00 pm in Old Main's Colloquium (#220). The event has a capacity of 40 people. *Registration is required.* Contact John Suarez at john.suarez@cortland.edu or at 753-4391.

Barriers to Election Success

[specific date in March tba]. A panel of local elected officials from both major political parties will describe challenges that they have faced in conducting campaigns for office.

Whistle-Blowers and Social Media: An Interview

Tuesday, April 9, 4:30 to 6:00 in Corey Union's Fireplace Lounge. Action Team interns will interview Julia Ganson, an anthropologist and a researcher with a nonpartisan not-for-profit that promotes government accountability and transparency: The *Government Accountability Project* (<https://www.whistleblower.org/>).

APO and the Cortland Fire Department Install Smoke Detectors

Over the past month and a half, seven Alpha Phi Omega brothers have participated in the City of Cortland Fire Department's *Town/Gown Fire Safety Community Service Project* by installing 50 smoke detectors and 12 carbon monoxide detectors in at-risk houses in the city.

The City of Cortland Fire Department is one of 25 departments nationwide in a program supported by *Campus Firewatch*, *the Michael H. Minger Foundation*, and *First Alert*, which donated the detectors.

Fire Chief Charles Glover authorized the purchase of 24 additional CO detectors so that the department could further improve fire safety in the city.

APO brothers worked with city firefighters to conduct home safety visits and, as necessary, to install detectors

One brother commented that, "It was surprising to see how badly the houses in Cortland were in need of new smoke detectors. It was nice to receive thanks



APO members install smoke detectors.

from the residents for helping them have a safe household."

Another said that this program "taught me the benefits of community service, it makes me feel like a productive American citizen, and it was also incredibly educational in the aspect of fire safety."

The brothers who participated in the project were Sarah Barbolini, Abby Bressack, Devon Corman, Molly Donovan, Tara Faraone, Amanda Pearson, and APO's Vice President, Erica Stoeckl.

Fire Captain David Jensen supervises the program, which has another 50 detectors to install. He thanks APO for good work, writing, "Great Job APO!!!!"

SUNY Cortland Cupboard Update

The Cupboard continues to refine its operation.

President Bitterbaum's Cabinet approved the Cupboard's Board of Directors' request that the Cupboard join the Food Bank of CNY. The request now goes to SUNY's Legal Office.

Thanks to the good work of Risk Management Intern Ellen Sioris, the SUNY Cortland Cupboard now has a

clear, concise, and focused *Policies and Procedures Manual*.

As of mid-November this semester, food-insecure students visited the Cupboard 37 times, with 20 students visiting for the first time.

Beginning December 10, the Cupboard will be open from 11:00 a.m. to noon on December 13 and 20, and January 3, 10, 17, and 24.

Contact Information

John Suarez, Director
(607) 753-4391 or
john.suarez@cortland.edu

Cynthia Guy, Community Outreach
Coordinator.
Cynthia.guy@cortland.edu

Julianna Santamaria, Marketing
Coordinator and Reporter
Julianna.santamaria@cortland.edu

Sara Coyle, Reporter.
Sara.coyle@cortland.edu

Matthew Dorazio, Reporter
Matthew.dorazio@cortland.edu

Rachel Gillman, Reporter
Rachel.gillman@cortland.edu

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Climate Change Events: *Dialogue Review, Role-Play Preview*

On October 25, Action Team interns met with people from on- and off-campus to examine three options for *Addressing Climate Change-Enhanced Extreme Weather Events*.

The 18 participants included six students, six community partners (including an 8th-grader), NYPIRG's Ethan Gormley, and six faculty/staff.

The dialogue began with a *NY Times* video, "Billion-dollar Storms: Is this the New Normal?" The video explained that climate change is making extreme weather more extreme and, therefore, more expensive and dangerous.

Discussion also drew on information in the event's information handout ("placemat"), which included a *National Geographic* explanation that a flood's silt, mud, sharp debris, and untreated sewerage threaten people's health.

Participants focused on flooding as a key extreme weather concern for Cortland County.

One option described in the placemat, "Constructive Technologies," involves methods for battling Nature.

Those methods included raising homes in flood-prone areas, building walls along rivers, and making buildings and potable water supplies "water-proof."

One participant, Assistant Professor Christopher Badurek (Geography), noted that LIDAR can help decision-makers create detailed topographical maps to predict flooding for risk-assessments.

LIDAR (Light Detection And Ranging) is a kind of radar that uses light instead of radio waves.



Dialogue on Climate Change.

Participants identifying drawbacks to constructive technologies said that those technologies can be expensive, that insurance costs are rising, and that FEMA funds are low.

In addition, these steps, while useful, are "Band-Aids" because they treat symptoms, not a key contributor to the problem, climate change.

Unlike Constructive Technologies, the meeting's second option, Green infrastructure, works *with* Nature.

The placemat explained that cities could become "sponge cities": They can reduce water run-off by making spaces that absorb water. For example, Cortland could maintain rooftop gardens and raise walkways so that water has soil (under the walkways) to sink into.

Permeable pavement, another green technology, provides improved drainage, though its maintenance costs are high.

In the event's Call to Action section, participants identified steps that a task force could take:

- Learn what other similar cities have done.
- Educate students by
 - Recruiting Residence Life's Green Reps to participate in climate awareness activities
 - Designing a flood simulation as a way of generating climate awareness.

Continued on page 5

Climate Change, continued.



This event's 8th-grader suggested the simulation. A few days later, she and her mentor, Kathie Arnold, found a simulation that was developed by a collaboration of the National Academy of Sciences' *Lab X* and the Resilient America Roundtable.

The link to the simulation is at <https://labx.org/extreme-event/about-the-extreme-event-game/>

Members of a seven-member taskforce met twice in November to review and schedule Extreme Event simulations. They plan to conduct them for students from junior high school through college, and for legislators and other people in who work in the community.

The first Extreme Event Simulation is scheduled for Thursday, February 28, from 4:30 to 6:00 in Old Main's Colloquium.

The event has a capacity of 48 participants.

To register for the event, contact John Suarez at john.suarez@cortland.edu or at 607-753-4391.

Seven students joined the discussion, as did a retired wild-life biologist; an anthropologist, and two dairy farmers, including Kathie Arnold, who was a county legislator for 6 years.

Also participating were Alexis Abramo, Special Programs Manager; Chris Badurek and Todd Miller, both Geography; Matt Brubaker, Sustainability and Facilities Operations; Beth Klein, Sustainability and Childhood Education; Mecke Nagel, Philosophy, and John Suarez.

The team that designed the dialogue included students Ryann Hudson, Julianna Santamaria, Julia Sweeney, and Saynyenoh Warner.

Faculty and staff who helped plan the dialogue were Alexis Abramo; Bruce Adams, the City of Cortland's superintendent of Waste Water; Christopher Badurek, Geography; Matt Brubaker, Sustainability and Facilities Operations; Frank Cullen, UPD; Ethan Gormley, NYPIRG; Beth Klein Sustainability and Childhood Education; Glenn Wright, director, Environmental Health and Safety, and John Suarez.

Homelessness Project: Update

The November newsletter described the October 23 *Homelessness* deliberative dialogue. Since then, Homelessness Project Coordinator and Business Economics major Callan Klasek has been developing the two projects that grew out of the dialogue.

One is a Donations Drive. Klasek worked with representatives of the YWCA, Catholic Charities, and the Southern Tier Homeless Coalition to learn the kinds of items that people who are homeless usually need.

Examples range from shampoo to insulated socks to ponchos to sleeping bags.

Stay alert to donations drive announcements that Klasek and her Action Team colleagues will conduct at the start of the spring semester.

The second Homelessness project is a Point-in-Time Count recruitment drive.

The Southern Tier Homelessness Consortium conducts this Count during the last week of January so that the Consortium can estimate the number of people who are homeless in our six-county region.

Even though the Count has only three days remaining when the spring semester begins, Klasek will invite the SUNY Cortland community to volunteer for it.

Three Action Team interns and a staff member have volunteered.

Interested individuals should contact john.suarez@cortland.edu.

In mid-December, watch for an emailed invitation to nominate someone for a Leadership in Civic Engagement Award.

These non-monetary recognitions are open to individuals and groups, on- and off-campus

The Cortland Votes Project: Mapping Early Election Results

Chris Badurek, Department of Geography

College students report limited interest in voting, frequently citing that “my vote doesn’t matter.” The Institute’s Cortland Votes Project challenged this idea by tabling to register SUNY Cortland students as well as inviting candidates for NY State’s 22nd Congressional District to campus.

NYPIRG’s Ethan Gormley reported that SUNY Cortland students registered over 1,360 students before November’s election.

Results by individual voting precinct are still not available as of December, therefore the accompanying map (page 7) illustrates voting margin by county, either wholly or partially part of Congressional District 22.

The main goal of the *Cortland Votes* project is to increase student interest in voting, elections, and civic engagement in college and after. A coalition of student groups, including the Institute’s Action Team, conduct this project.

Out of 234,569 total votes cast,
Only 1,293 votes separated the two leading candidates.

In addition, Cortland Votes hosted candidate Anthony Brindisi for an open forum with the campus and community on election eve. Did any of these student efforts make an impact on the race for the 22nd Congressional District?

Although difficult to make firm conclusions about impacts on the race, early results from the NYS Board of Elections show an incredibly close race between candidates Brindisi (D) and Claudia Tenney (R).

Brindisi has been declared the winner of this race with a total vote count of 117,931 to 116,638, a margin of just 1,293 votes.

In Cortland County, Brindisi tallied 8,597 votes to Tenney’s 6,970, another narrow margin of just 1,627.

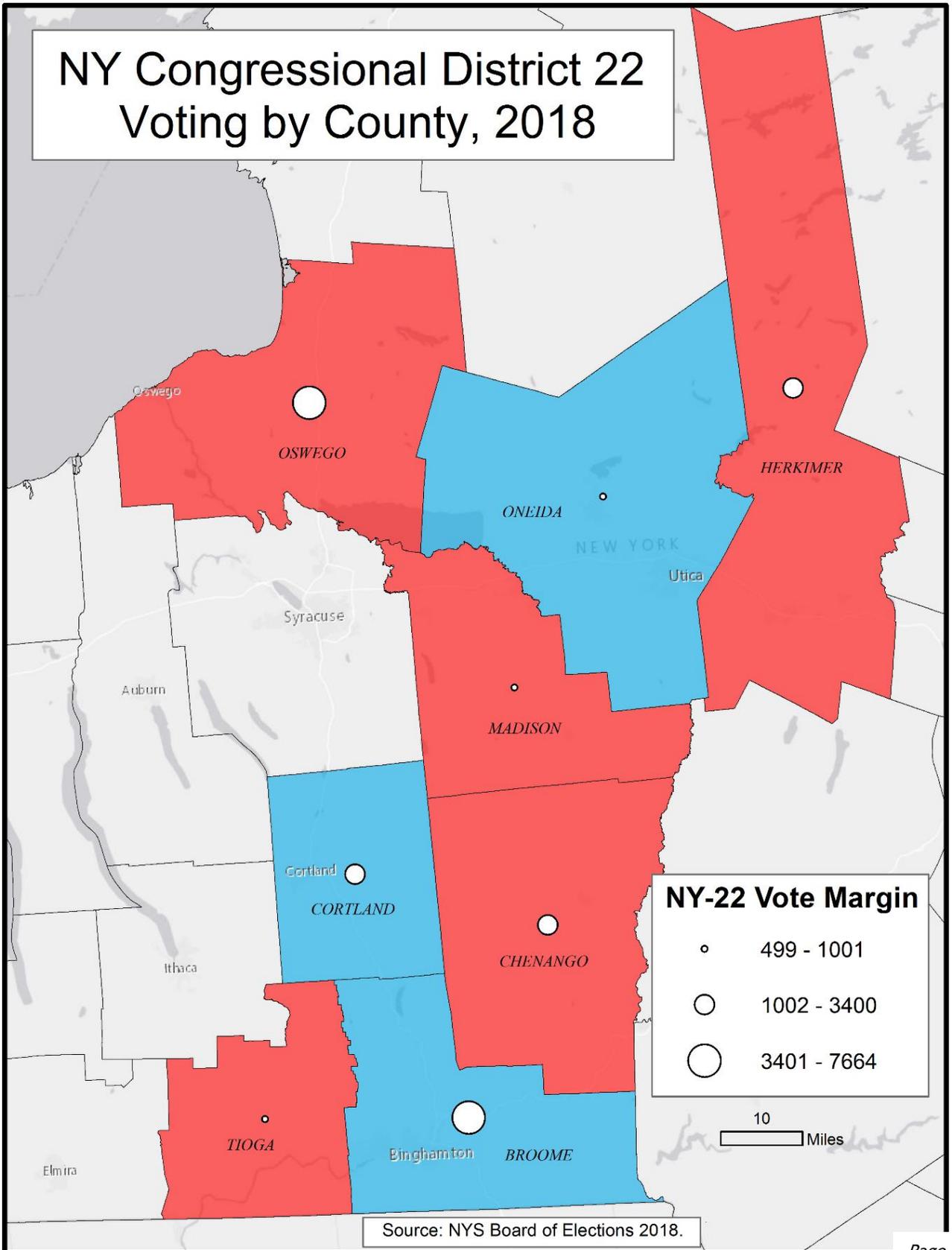
Brindisi’s margin of victory was over 10% in Cortland County just behind his Broome County margin of over 11%.

Closing the loop on voting registration drives with information on how student voting can make an impact on close elections is an important step in addressing the “my vote doesn’t matter” perspective.

Assistant Professor Badurek is Co-Director of the SUNY Cortland Regional GIS Laboratory. He collaborates with the Institute’s Action Team interns on Cortland Votes projects, and he serves as a faculty mentor in the Institute for Civic Engagement’s *Cortland Applied Learning Practitioners* professional development Program.

The circles in the map to the right represent three ranges of vote margins in the 2016 election for the 22nd Congressional District.

NY Congressional District 22 Voting by County, 2018



Source: NYS Board of Elections 2018.

Professional Development, continued from page 1.

His co-presenters were

Dr. James Liszka, Director, Center for Interdisciplinary and Area Studies and Professor of Philosophy, SUNY Plattsburgh.

Dr. Kjersti Van Slyke-Briggs, Professor of Secondary Education, SUNY Oneonta.

Leigh Wilson, Director of Creative Writing, Director of the Interdisciplinary Programs and Activities Center, SUNY Oswego.

To learn how you can participate in this NSF-funded program, contact Mary McGuire, Assistant Dean of Arts and Sciences, at mary.mcguire@cortland.edu.

At that conference, Suarez conducted his *Inverted Triangle Workshop* in which 39 participants role-played vignettes that helped them feel the ambiguity that can come from giving interns responsibility and authority for the creation, design, and conduct of projects.

This leader-as-servant approach provides interns with the resources they need to innovate, initiate, and incorporate ideas that further an organization’s mission. Suarez uses this approach with the Institute’s Action Team interns.

The Associate Director of SUNY’s SAIL Institute for Academic and Innovative Leadership is using this workshop’s materials as guides in designing a workshop for department chairs.

Developing Reflection Assignments Webinar. On December 4, Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences, Vincent DeTuri, and John Suarez moderated this interactive webinar.

Christopher Price, Ph.D., Academic Programs Manager at the SUNY Center for Professional Development, hosted the event.

Eighteen participants asked questions and shared their expertise in designing reflection assignments – a key element in applied learning.

Participants raised questions such as

- *What is a guideline for getting started on designing a reflection assignment?* One answer: Begin at the end: First determine your assignment’s purpose.
- *How might reflection motivate students to do their reading assignments?* A participant suggested assigning reflections that prompt students to address a “disconnect” between their pre-conceptions (regarding the reading assignment’s content) and situations that they observed at their applied learning site.
- *Should faculty share students’ reflections with the rest of the class?* Some participants said, yes: Instructors help their students appreciate the importance of reflection by sharing their own reflections with their students.
- *How should I grade students’ reflections?* AAC&U has rubrics at https://www.usna.edu/Academics/Academic-Dean/Assessment/All_Rubrics.pdf
The University of Iowa has rubrics at <https://teach.its.uiowa.edu/resources/collectio ns/rubrics>

For a recording of the webinar and a copy of its handout (*Exploring the Reflection-Design Process*): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A462YhmFzRk&feature=youtu.be>

Join a SUNY Workplace group to continue exploring reflection by contacting Chris Price at chris.price@suny.edu.

Invitation to the *Developing Reflection Assignments Workshop*

The Institute for Civic Engagement invites faculty and staff to register for its Developing Reflection Assignments Workshop, Thursday, March 7, from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. in Corey Union’s Exhibition Lounge.



Dr. Joseph A. Cope, Associate Provost for Student Success, and Professor of History at SUNY Geneseo, tailored his workshop for novice applied learning faculty and for “seasoned” applied learning faculty and staff who would like new ideas for designing reflection assignments. We have a capacity of 40 seats.

To register for this workshop, contact John Suarez at john.suarez@cortland.edu or at 753-4391