

14th Annual Leadership in Civic Engagement Awards and Scholarships Reception

May 2018

Volume 11, Issue 8

Study Abroad in India
Proves Life-Changing 3

Deliberative Dialogs 4

Year in Review (Insert)

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



Carnegie Foundation
Elective Classification in
Community Engagement



Lambda Phi Delta Scholarship Winners
President Bitterbaum and Peter Perkins pose with Katilyn Perlongo, Francesca Recino, Breanna Washington, and Reanna Zappavigna.



Donald M. Wilcox Award for fighting against poverty, hunger, and homelessness
President Bitterbaum, Lauren Herman, and Alexandra Cicero.

Institute for Civic Engagement Director John Suarez opened the 14th annual Leadership in Civic Engagement Awards reception by announcing that as of this event, 587 people will have been honored at the awards since 2004. The reception was held in Jacobus Lounge of Brockway Hall at 4:30 on April 26th.

These awards recognize exemplary service in support of community agencies, social change, and civic engagement. Following Suarez's opening remarks, President Erik Bitterbaum, Mayor Brian Tobin, and Director of Institutional Advancement, Peter Perkins, reflected on the value of civic engagement to the audience of about 100 people.

This year, twenty-eight SUNY Cortland students, four community members, one community group, and two faculty/staff members received Leadership in Civic Engagement Awards. Also awarded were nine community service scholarships, two Donald M. Wilcox awards, and one Cortland Area Chapter of the Alumni Association's Community Service Award.

Nine Institute for Civic Engagement *Action Team* interns were recognized for their work in the spring semester.

Leadership in Civic Engagement Award Recipients:

Students

Casey Amato, Ismet Cavusoglu, Lizbel Chavez, Carissa Conti, Shannon Cunningham, Emma Cyphert, Patrick Egan, Jessica Goon, Caitlin Kukura, Ursula Mates, Kristie Morris, Ryan O'Neil, Jordan Pedroza, Kayla Perrone, Amanda Polito, Nathaniel Rose, Zachery Saltsman, Matthew Schindler, Kiley Stoj, and Lauren Whitehead.



President Bitterbaum presents a Leadership in Civic Engagement Award certificate to Jessica Goon.

Leadership in Civic Awards, continued from page 1

AWARDS EXCERPTS

The YWCA's Meryl Fish and Laurie Green have, for more than 20 years, planned & implemented wellness activities for seniors.

CAPCO's Brandy Strauf advocates for low-income families in ways that include managing an elementary school snack-pack program and working on CAPCO's literacy program.

SUNY Cortland Field Placement Coordinator Caitie Sidebottom started and maintains a mentor program for area youth.

Ismet Cavusoglu (student) founded the Turkish Culture Association.

Nathaniel Rose, President of the Physics and Engineering Club, brought the Navy's *SeaPerch* underwater robotics Program to local schools.

Matthew Schindler (student) is a volunteer coach at the Homer Boys' Soccer Team.

Eta Sigma Gamma Sorority collaborated with the Cortland Expanded School District Superintendent to secure a NY Department of Transportation survey of the crosswalk at Terrace and Tompkins Streets. DOT is now working to improve safety at that intersection.

Eta Sigma Gamma Sorority received an award for securing a crosswalk between Prospect Terrace and Tompkins Street.

Faculty and Staff

Lauren Herman, Health Educator, and Caitie Sidebottom, Coordinator, School of Education.

Community Members

Meryl Fish, Laurie Greene, and Dottie Kelly received awards for their volunteer work with Cortland YWCA, and Brandy Strauf, with CAPCO, was honored for her work on behalf of marginalized members of the community.



Peter Perkins, Mayor Tobin, Institute for Civic Engagement Award recipient Jordan Pedrozza, President Bitterbaum, and John Suarez.



President Bitterbaum presents YWCA volunteer Dottie Kelly with an LCE award.

Nine students won scholarships that acknowledge outstanding commitment to community and exceptional academic achievement: **Sunail Luthra** won the BorgWarner Morse TEC Scholarship; **Alexandra Cicero, Sara Reardon and Colten Salsburg** won Judson Taylor Community Service Scholarships; **Kaitlyn Perlongo, Francesca Recino, Breanna Washington and Reanna Zappavigna** received Lambda Phi Delta Scholarships, and **Matthew Norris** received the James H. and Dorothy A. Sarvag Scholarship.

Health educator Lauren Herman and student Alexandra Cicero received the Donald M. Wilcox Award, which recognizes outstanding participation in the fight against poverty and hunger.

Mariah Asencio, Kaley Decker, Lindsay Dieumegard, Kayleen Driscoll, Shannon Hanmer, Ryann Hudson, Austen Johnson, Nicole Powers, and Patrick Schetter were recognized for their contributions as Institute for Civic Engagement *Action Team* interns. Refer to this issue's *Year in Review* insert for details.

The Leadership in Civic Engagement Awards and Scholarships Reception was sponsored by the Institute for Civic Engagement, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Institutional Advancement, the Cortland Foundation, and the Cortland Fund.

Alumni Association member Maxine Cleveland presented the Cortland Area Chapter of the Alumni Association's Community Service Award to Shannon Cunningham. (Photo at right.)



Humans of Engagement

“While conducting this work in India was difficult, it was also life-changing.”

Study Abroad in India Proves Life-Changing

By Nicole Powers

On Thursday, April 5th, I met with Kristen Kircher, a senior Biochemistry major (and Psychology minor) at SUNY Cortland. Kircher has participated in applied learning experiences that have helped her gain practical knowledge in her area of study.

I asked her about her experiences and about how the knowledge gained through those experiences has helped in her career path and areas of study.

While Kircher has been involved in many applied learning experiences, she said that her most memorable one was while studying abroad in India during the summer of 2017.

She traveled through towns of India for one month, touring hospitals while researching public health. Kircher explained that when deciding to study abroad, she wanted to find a program that would challenge her and give her real experience in what she was studying. “While conducting this work in India was difficult, it was also life-changing and worth it,” Kircher stated.

During her travels, Kircher visited the Olivinahalli Convent in Mangalore, India, where she spoke with nuns who have dedicated their lives to taking care of patients for no profit.

Kircher and the other students studying abroad provided patients with medical supplies. Kircher was able to sit down with patients at the hospital and talk with them, trying to figure out ways to make them more comfortable and to identify the resources that they needed to feel better, since the medical resources there were very limited.



Kristin Kircher (second from right) posing with nuns of the Olivinahalli Convent in Mangalore, India.

While in India, Kircher also conducted community service for two weeks at the Kodai International School in Kodaikanal. She spent time in Mumbai and in Coimbatore during her India trip as well.

These experiences abroad gave Kircher an ideal “dream job,” working as a Doctor Without Borders, traveling around the world and visiting hospitals that are in need of more medical resources and doctors.

In the US, Kircher has experience working for SUNY Cortland’s Emergency Medical Services and for American Medical Response in her hometown of Rochester, NY.

When asked how she became interested in working in the medical field and studying Biochemistry, she explained that it was a gradual experience. From her time working at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Syracuse as a medical scribe, Kircher realized that she didn’t mind staying late and was always attentive and interested in the work that she was doing.

Along with her study abroad experience, Kircher has done independent research with the Chemistry Department here at SUNY Cortland, while also collaborating with the Environmental Engineering Department at Cornell, the goal being to find an alternative fuel source by

Deliberative Dialogs: Civil, Informed, and Productive Meetings



Students completing a survey regarding Deliberative Dialogue topics.

By Shannon Hanmer

The issue of millennials needing to participate in politics is one that should be taken most seriously because it is important for all citizens to realize how much impact they will have on the future. The Voter Education Project Interns in the Institute’s *Action Team* identified a way to address this: Deliberative Dialogs.

The goal of a Deliberative Dialogue is to discuss a contentious topic in a civil way. A facilitator guides the discussion to keep participants on topic and to be respectful and considerate of one another’s thoughts. Everyone is given opportunity to share their opinions. The idea is to find common ground with those who may usually disagree.

The first Deliberative Dialogue of the semester was held on April 16, when a dozen people discussed the topic, “Where Have All the Voters Gone”?

By the end of the event, participants (including League of Women Voters of Cortland County President, Alison King) had generated four steps that students can take to increase voter registration and participation.

Interns decided to hold a second Dialogue, so they conducted a survey to determine topics that students would want. Students chose the topic “mass shootings.” Interns scheduled the second Dialogue for April 30.

On that day, 63 people packed into the Fireplace Lounge, including President Bitterbaum and UPD Lieutenant Frank Cullen. After John Suarez explained the guidelines for discussion, people talked at their tables about three options for addressing mass shootings. The options were named and explained in a guide that everyone had.

In the wrap-up part of the meeting, people shared their thoughts, and they offered steps that we can take to deal with the issue.

Ultimately, this group was able to have an engaging and productive discussion and to make connections between members that they may not usually agree with.

The Action Team found that this is an effective method for bringing community members together to share ideas, thoughts, and opinions in a respectful, rewarding way.

Study Abroad *(continued from page 3)*

conducting lab research and reviewing other research papers on the topic. She stated that this research was the first time she felt like she was applying the things she learned in class to turn it into a higher goal for the future.

When I asked Kircher how she believes that applied learning could benefit students in their career path, she explained that learning by doing is different than the learning you do in the classroom. “The classroom learning is important,” Kircher stated, “but applied learning shows students how to apply that knowledge to their area of study.”

How can we as a campus promote applied learning for students to engage in? Kircher stated, “Spread the word by doing what you [the Institute’s interns] are doing – seminars, emails, interviews.”

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Interns' energy and creativity led to one of the Institute's most effective and influential years.

Service-Learning Corps and *Action Team* interns expanded the Institute's capacity through individual initiative and collaboration.



ICE Action Team award recipients: Nicole Powers, Ryann Hudson, Shannon Hanmer, Mariah Asencio, Austen Johnson, Kaley Decker, and Kayleen Driscoll pose with President Bitterbaum at the April 26 Leadership in Civic Engagement Awards Reception.

Interns' achievements include

Helping to launch the SUNY Cortland Cupboard. Interns participated in the creation of this pantry for food-insecure students, which opened November 6, 2017.

The President's Office and Cabinet provided generous start-up funding.

Alexandra Cicero and Laura Barnstead collaborated with faculty, staff, alumni, administrators, and other students to help design, site, stock, and staff the Cupboard.

Health Educator Lauren Herman's intern, Katie Eber, provided invaluable help in the effort, as did Risk Management Officer Bill Veit's intern, Melissa Kelly.

Kaley Decker served as spring 2018 Student Coordinator. She trained volunteers, created an inventory system, and helped secure reliable sources of food.

Decker is a member of the Cupboard's Board of Directors, which includes Lauren



Kaley Decker at the Cupboard.

Herman (the Board's President); Assistant Director of the Cortland Fund, Natasha McFadden; Interfaith Campus Minister Rachel Ditch, and John Suarez.

Herman said that "The Board of Directors has been instrumental in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the SUNY Cortland Cupboard. I would also like to specifically thank Kaitlyn Eber and Kaley Decker, who have contributed many hours to make the Cupboard successful."

The Cupboard is in the Interfaith Center; its summer hours are Thursdays, from 11:00 a.m. to noon.

Voter Education activities included...

...Promoting and participating in the Community Action Program of Cortland County's State of Poverty Simulation, which drew a record 125 people.



Figuring-out the family budget during the March 21st *State of Poverty Simulation*.

During the 2017-2018 academic year, the Institute launched:

The Humans of Engagement Interviews

The *I Learned by Doing* Sandwich Seminar series.

The Institute for Civic Engagement's *Action Team*.

The Institute's *Instagram account*

The North/South C Applied Learning Coalition's *Teleconferences*. SUNY Cortland is a co-founder of this 43-member organization that stretches from Cortland to Stony Brook.

Table at left: Department of Social Services
Table at right: Pawn Shop



Other Institute for Civic Engagement interns include:

Kelly Veit –

Volunteered at the Adapted Physical Education *Sensory Integration Sensory Motor Lab* and at a nursing home. She also presented, with Connor Vick, at *Transformations*.

Jessica Moore

completed her 3rd year participating on the SUNY Cortland Garden Advisory Committee.

Shaneya

Simmelkjae joined NYPIRG on Higher Ed Affordability, Environment, and Consumer Protection projects

Dylan Esposito and **Cameron Garguilo**

volunteered at the Cortland Volunteer Fire Department.

Elizabeth Kuehn

volunteered at The *Compass* youth mentoring program

During the “debrief” session at the end of the Simulation, participants shared their responses; many mirrored this one: “I see it differently now. I have a lot of respect for low income families because this was hard, I can’t imagine real life.”

...*Six Socioeconomic Docudramas* for Professor Joy Mosher’s EDU 340 classes. In the spring, interns Mariah Asencio and Lindsay Dieumegard updated the data sheet for this variation on the Poverty Simulation, and they each facilitated one of the events.

Professor Mosher praised Asencio and Dieumegard, writing that the issues raised in the discussions they led “shocked [her] students and surprised them at what they will surely encounter as teachers in the real world.”

... *Deliberative Dialogs*. These facilitated, informed, and civil discussions would not have taken place without the interns’ persistence.

The Provost’s Office funded a facilitator training event by Professor Lisa Strahley (SUNY Broome) for Kaley Decker, Kayleen Driscoll, Ryann Hudson, Austen Johnson, Patrick Schetter, Connor Vick, Mariah Asencio, Professor Christopher Badurek (Geography), and Alison King (President, League of Women Voters of Cortland County).

Interns then facilitated a 12-participant Dialogue, “Where have all the voters gone?” A week later, interns surveyed students for issues that interest them.

Of 237 respondents, 207 named mass shootings as their main concern.

Based on those results, interns promoted and, with Alison King, facilitated a second Dialogue with 63 people, including President Bitterbaum.

UPD Lt. Frank Cullen guided the discussion for one of the event’s six ten-person groups.



Nicole Powers (left) writing on a large *Post-It* at the Deliberative Dialogue on mass shootings.

Student participants identified aspects of the issue’s complexity, and they began to appreciate reasons for other people’s points of view.

College Republicans Club President Mike McDonough reinforced that sentiment when he wrote that “I really enjoyed the small-group talks, and everyone was polite and proper during them. I absolutely would like to be involved in them again next year.”

As with the first Dialogue, participants identified specific actions that interns will take to address this issue.

Promotion and Publicity.

Action Team interns “marketed” other campus organizations’ events by, for example, “tabling” and by making and distributing posters.

In this way, they helped to generate impressive participation in Cru’s *Hurricane Harvey Relief* Interest Meeting and in the Entrepreneurship Club’s *Rejuvenation* meeting.

Other Institute Applied Learning (AL) activities included

Data Collection –

- Launched new AL Survey for SUNY Cortland faculty.
- Developing a plan for the Institute to serve as a clearing-house for SUNY Cortland’s AL data.

Grants –

- Earned a SUNY *Community of Practice* grant
- Applied for a Corporation for National & Community Services *Community Conversations* Grant.

AL Workshops

- for an EDU 229 class, 3 different sessions.
- Risk Management and AL, with Bill Veit and his intern, Julia West, at the SUNY AL Conference in Niagara Falls, October.
- Campus Activities’ *Leadership* event.

Promoted AL

- at a Community Roundtable.
- in 6 COR 101 classes
- in 2 CPN classes.

Interns also represented the Institute and SUNY Cortland...

...On the Web: In fall 2017, intern Laura Barnstead created the *Humans of Engagement* series for the Institute’s newsletter and Facebook page. This series profiles individuals who are exceptional in their civic engagement.

The *Humans of Engagement* series raised the Institute’s online visibility by 1,750%.

In April, Shannon Hanmer and Nicole Powers created the Institute’s Instagram account, noting Instagram’s popularity.

...State-wide. Intern Alexandra Cicero, as Deputy Director of the SUNY Student Assembly’s Sustainability Committee, encouraged the SUNY System Administration’s Executive Committee to form a task force on food insecurity; in 2017, the SUNY Board of Trustees commissioned that task force.

During one of two Institute-hosted teleconferences for the North/South Central NY Applied Learning Coalition, Interns Asencio, Decker, and Johnson suggested steps for recruiting students to participate in voter-related activities.

...Locally. Ryann Hudson is the first student to be elected to the League of Women Voters of Cortland County’s Board of Directors.

Interns Asencio, Decker, Driscoll, Hanmer, and Powers participated in the April *Open House* event.



Kayleen Driscoll (center) and Kaley Decker (right) promote applied learning opportunities to potential students at the April Open House



Compass youth and staff, and the Women’s Hockey Team.

Kayleen Driscoll organized the Women Hockey Team’s skills demonstration for the *Compass* (youth mentoring) Program in April. She also helped promote, and she participated in, NYPIRG’s Earth Day “Seeds for Change” event.

Driscoll and Asencio co-conducted separate risk management presentations with Bill Veit, who commended them for their poise and professionalism.



Mariah Asencio presented at a Sandwich Seminar on risk management.

Those qualities were evident in all of the Action Team interns as they took charge of projects by forming *ad hoc* groups, scheduling their own planning sessions, and reporting on their progress during bi-weekly meetings. They are self-directed and nimble problem-solvers who tackle unexpected challenges and opportunities.

While the interns’ contributions are important, the Institute’s motto is *Do Good; Learn Well*, so the interns described their learning during their *I Learned by Doing* Sandwich Seminar on April 26.

Part of their presentation focused on realizations at “Ah-HA!” (*Eureka!*) moments. Those lessons included:

“These Institute for Civic Engagement interns have set a high standard for future interns, but if this year’s interns are any indication, the new Team will be ready for the challenge” – John Suarez

“I can get out of bed at 8:00 a.m.!”

Realizations regarding skills: “I’m applying my time management skills from this internship to my classes,” and “I can use what I’ve been learning in classes. I can get published.”

Another intern noted that, “while presenting on risk management, I realized that I don’t have to fear public speaking; I actually like it!”

Insight regarding careers. One intern sharpened her career path from “politics,” in general, to focusing on voting efforts.

Another is now focusing her interest in human resources to human resources in higher education. Yet another said that, “as a transfer, I thought that I wanted to write, but now I know that I want to volunteer in the community.”

One intern stated that “at the start of the academic year, I was wondering, ‘Do I want to be in professional writing?’ When I was in the State of Poverty Simulation, I thought, “I’m a PWR major, so why am I here?” Then I realized, ‘Oh – I have to be somewhere to write about it. Writing is not just sitting at a desk.”

Social Justice awareness: “Some college students do run out of food.”

Learning about learning: “While promoting the Entrepreneurship Club, I realized that that Club is also all about learning by doing. I saw how important and cool learning by doing is.”

Preparing for fall 2018.

Kaley Decker has met with the new Cupboard Student Coordinator, Saynyenoh Warner, to help her transition into her new role.

A new intern, Callie Klasek, is coordinating the Team’s new *Homelessness* project. She is working

with Terry Cahill (Director, College Stores) and with APO’s President, Austin Fehrman, and Vice President, Erica Stoeckl.

These four people will partner with the Hunger and Homeless Coalition, which is led by Aaron Baier, Systems Advocacy Coordinator for Access to Independence.

Hudson, Johnson, and new intern Alexandra Galus are planning voter-related projects with Connor Vick (President of the Political Science Association in fall 2018), NYPIRG, and the League of Women Voters. Those projects include

- Partnering with Professors Brice Smith (Physics), Beth Klein (Childhood Education; Sustainability Coordinator), and Matthew Brubaker (Facilities Management) on climate change activities, including a Deliberative Dialogue.
- Consulting with Professor Tim Delaune (Political Science) to design a two-part Constitution Day event (September 17) that includes a Deliberative Dialogue.
- Partnering with the Political Science Association, NYPIRG, and the League of Women Voters on National Voter Education Day activities (September 26).
- Working with the chairs of the local political parties to train students to help voters on Election Day this November.
- Creating a chapter of *Generation Vote*, which focuses on local issues.
- Collaborating with Professor Christopher Badurek (Geology) on an *Electoral Geography and Impacts on Voting* Project.
- Composing a proposal for a Poster Presentation at the November 2018 SUNY Applied Learning Conference.

We are looking forward to another engaging and engaged year in 2018-2019.