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Upstate Institute at Colgate University

2007: Number One

Student Philanthropy Council awards \$10,000 to local nonprofits

This spring, a team of sophomores and juniors worked on the inaugural Upstate Institute Student Philanthropy Council. Under the guidance of director Ellen Kraly and staff member Kate Lucey, the group distributed \$10,000 in grants to area nonprofits. On May 2, they gathered with faculty, friends, and community leaders in the Colgate Bookstore's Class of 2003 Events Room to present four checks:

- \$5,000 to the Utica-based Thea Bowman House Kids with Promise project, providing after-school programs and support for junior high and high school students who do not qualify for county Department of Social Services child care subsidies



Carrie Wagner, '09, awards Mickey Smith of the Adult Learning Center in Utica, New York, with a check for \$1,800 to support the Center's application for assistance through the Student Philanthropy Council.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Upstate Institute is to create linkages between Colgate University and the regional community to engage students, faculty, staff and residents in research and a reciprocal transfer of knowledge that will enhance the economic, social and cultural capacity of the area and sustain the environment. These projects provide a model of community collaboration and civic engagement for our students and within higher education. The Institute values scholarly collaboration as a way to support the region.

- \$2,200 to the Hamilton Food Cupboard, which will work with an area farm to bring fresh fruits and vegetables to more than 100 families
- \$1,800 to Utica's Adult Learning Center, which will use photography to tell the story of refugees settling in central New York
- \$1,000 to the Sherburne-Earlville School Community/School Connections for Literacy Success project, funding a traveling tutor and creating literacy bags with books, puppets, puzzles, crayons, clay, scissors, and paper for incoming kindergarten students

Many thanks went to Jay Brennan '81 and the Brennan Family Foundation for investing \$50,000 in the project — enough for five seminars through 2011. "One of the most rewarding aspects of serving on the council has been the opportunity to discover the great impact local organizations are making in our



John Douchinsky, principal of Sherburne Earlville Elementary School, meets with student participants of the SPC and Upstate Institute staff member Kate Lucey.

community,” said council member Emily Katz ‘09 during the awards presentation. “For many of us, the time has been a valuable first step toward careers in philanthropy.” Students were accepted to the council only after an application process, coordinated by Deans Raj Bellani and Kim Taylor of the Sophomore-Year Experience program. Cassandra Galante ‘09, Widad Echahly ‘09, Emily Katz ‘09, Ali Wolter ‘09, Erika Scudroni ‘08, Carrie Wagner ‘09, and Lisa Henty ‘08 were among the first students selected to join the council.

The students sat in on a series of discussions throughout the fall semester arranged by Annual Fund Associate Director Sarah Gonzalez Bocinski and the Upstate Institute. Experts in the field of philanthropy covered topics from the history of philanthropy to best practices of nonprofit administration. “We sought to develop a hands-on curriculum on principles of philanthropy in relationship to the needs and characteristics of the Upstate region,” Kraly stated.

The Student Philanthropy Council is one of only a few field-based seminars around the country that educate undergraduate students in the nuances and implications of the grant-making process. The council sought proposals from non-profit organizations in the central Upstate New York region for strategic initiatives that

enhance the health, welfare and capacity of families and communities.

In February, Yee-Ann Cho, Colgate Class of ‘90, Senior Program Officer for Education at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, traveled to campus to lead an intensive workshop with the council on grant evaluation. She also spoke about the exceptional work she is doing at the Gates Foundation— leading the foundation's efforts to replicate successful school models across the country.

Though the seminar is a non-credit course, the students received plenty of credit for their devotion to the process and their attention to detail. “After Yee-Ann Cho’s productive visit, the council was ready to become autonomous. The level of professionalism as they carried out their work was absolutely inspiring to see,” said Kate Lucey. Members of the group organized their own site visits and held several meetings at which members haggled over deserving nonprofit organizations.

The program was recently featured in an article of *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*. Future classes at the university may be proposed as fractional for-credit, adding an additional component: a review of outcomes based on past class awards.

Fellows assist with development plan in Adirondack Park

In January, the Upstate Institute successfully expanded its scope into the North Country. During the winter break, four Upstate Institute student fellows (Don Boyajian, ‘07, Jane Phelan, ‘07, Erika Colaiacomo, ‘07 and Meg Reed, ‘07) contributed to the development of a Comprehensive Master Plan for the Town of Horicon in the Adirondack Park. The project resulted in community engagement, partnership between the Town of Horicon and the Upstate

Institute, and a widening of experience for the Upstate Institute students.

Director Ellen Kraly met with members of the Town of Horicon's planning board to discuss the plan for research in August 2006. While Horicon's planning board drafted a list of concepts for the focus groups to consider in the realms of the environment, housing, recreation and economic development, the Upstate Institute students were trained in focus group facilitation under the direction of Ellen Kraly.



Students departing Point O'Pines camp to conduct focus group discussions with Town of Horicon residents.

The Upstate Institute students spent three weeks living in Horicon thanks to the great hospitality of Jim Himoff '65. The students conducted a total of fourteen focus groups throughout the three weeks and became further acquainted with the town and the surrounding Adirondack Park. Throughout the spring term in an independent study project, Jane Phelan and Meg Reed completed the analysis of the focus group transcriptions and produced a final report

for subsequent presentation to the town's planning board.

The project has highlighted great potential for the Upstate Institute in partnering with local municipalities to encourage and promote economic development in Upstate New York.

Upstate Institute funds faculty research on upstate region

The Upstate Institute continued to encourage faculty scholarship on or pertaining to the upstate region of New York by providing support for several faculty research projects this year. By funding and cataloging projects that relate to the region's social, economic, and cultural assets, the Upstate Institute fulfills a mission to serve as a repository of information and data on Upstate New York. Upstate Institute projects such as these — which involve not just research but hands-on activity as well — promote community collaboration and civic engagement.

- Charles Pete Banner-Haley, associate professor of history and African American Studies, sought to provide an overview of the networks that African Americans created in upstate New York in the last century in an effort to advance and nurture pride and increase opportunities for educational advancement and professional employment.
- Frank Frey, assistant professor of biology, and Tim McCay, associate professor of biology, initiated a first phase to redefine the university's biological collections as the Natural History Museum of the Chenango Valley. The goals of the project are to assess and increase the university's current holdings and to generate detailed distribution maps for particular species of interest to the community, which will be available via web.

- Meika Loe, assistant professor of sociology and anthropology, considered how community-based institutions and individuals in the region create support around aging.
- William B. Meyer, visiting lecturer in geography, has collected a comprehensive history of the salt industry in Syracuse, which is a major part of the heritage of central New York.
- William H. Peck, associate professor of geology, is examining a unique long-term health record of sugar bushes in order to provide useful data on the decade-scale health of sugar maples in New York and to understand the possible cumulative effects of pollution, disease, and climate change on the maple syrup industry.

Upstate Institute supports Service Learning



Associate Professor of Romance Languages & Literatures John Gallucci speaks about his experience with engaging students in service learning on a video shown as part of the Upstate Institute's Celebration of Service Learning. The Celebration introduced faculty to the resources the Upstate Institute is working to organize that will help faculty engage in service learning at Colgate. This video and others are also available on the Upstate Institute website at <http://upstate.colgate.edu>.

Conference on renewable energy includes workshop, site visits

On Friday April 27, a group of 29 Colgate faculty, staff, and students and local community members visited three sites that represent innovations in renewable energy production in



Upstate New York. At Maple Ridge Wind Farm, located on the Tug Hill in Lewis County, the group met with an engineer and saw the inner workings of one of the windmills. At Fortis Energy Hydroelectric Plant and Moose River Conservation Easement in Lyons Falls, they toured a run-of-river dam, which represents an opportunity to generate hydroelectric power while maintaining the ecosystem services of a free-flowing river. In Lyonsdale, the group visited the Catalyst Renewables Biomass facility, which uses wood fuel and is poised to develop and construct a new facility that produces cellulosic ethanol.

The next day, the Upstate Institute co-sponsored a workshop on Environmental Communication and Government Relations with the Harvey Picker Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies in the Sciences and Mathematics. The goal of the workshop was to provide a forum for an exchange of ideas between scholars, government officials, community members, and students about environment and development in Upstate New York. Three guest speakers— J. Robert Cox, University of North Carolina; Sylvia Tesh, University of Arizona; and Peter Smith, president of New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)— gave overviews and then led break out discussions regarding their perspectives on environmental politics, social movements, environmental communication, and how to promote decision-making that fosters sustainable development.

Upstate Institute Field School project updates

The Upstate Institute Field School matches students with regional community, government or non-profit organizations to develop and implement projects that bolster organizational capacity. Field School fellows work with a community partner to create and complete projects that will have a positive social, economic, cultural or environmental impact on the Upstate region.

The Exhibition Alliance

Sarah Hilzinger, '09, and Steph Tanguay, '08, continued fellowships at The Exhibition Alliance (TEA) this spring. Hilzinger compiled a marketing packet for the Frans Lanting exhibit, which is one of TEA's largest traveling exhibits. Tanguay worked as a design intern under the supervision of TEA Art Director Ted Anderson on four projects: The Memorial Art Gallery's Ancient Gallery, the Adirondack Museum's 50th Anniversary Exhibition, the development of graphics for the Cazenovia Museum's collection of artifacts, and the Civil War Museum in Saratoga Springs.

Brookfield Central School

Erin O'Keefe, '08, worked as a Madison County 4-H Organizational Leader to establish and lead a 4-H after school Club in the Brookfield Central School District. The goal of the club is to foster a lifelong love of reading. The club will meet weekly during the school year and will focus on a storybook and will consist of various nutrition and scientific activities based on the story.

Hamilton Central School Film Project

Joe Bliss, '08, and Sam Obenhaus, '08, worked with groups of high school students at Hamilton Central School to help them shoot and edit a film they will create in collaboration with a visiting filmmaker. Obenhaus provided technical expertise to the students and critical frameworks for them to apply to both film materials they studied together and to the film they constructed. Bliss worked with Assistant Professor of Music Mark Volker and music students to create a soundtrack for the film.

Department of Social Services

Jesse Quinn, '07, created an online searchable database of the employment positions at the Madison County Department of Social Services. The database, which also included specific training modalities unique to individual positions, will allow DSS supervisors to train new employees more efficiently and provide them with the necessary training more immediately than has been done in the past.

Greene Central School District

Nate Johnson, '07, created a database of resources available through the Greene School District's Arts in Education collection. He worked with school administrators to connect the database to the school's information system and make the resources available through their library.

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