



The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center Annual Report 2016-17

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 hosted a discussion on identity and social innovation with Professor of Psychology Jen Borton and Assistant Professor of Sociology Jaime Kucinkas

Levitt Center History

From the Director of the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center

This was my first year as the director of the Levitt Center, and though I had a good sense of how many areas of the campus the Center affected before this year, serving as director gave me a completely different view of Hamilton's students, our faculty, our student organizations, and our off-campus work. Discussions about the College's strategic plan, which kicked off this spring, have focused on the value of cross-disciplinary discussions, the need to think about the ways in which information and evidence circulate in the digital landscape, the difficulty of respectful disagreement, the value of student-led research and projects, the need for socially engaged scholarship and work that extends beyond our Hill. As you will see from this report of the Center's activities this year, the Levitt Center has been carrying on work that supports all these goals, and the staff, faculty, and students who are brought together under the umbrella of the Center come from all over campus — from Government and Economics, which is the audience many people think of as the “natural” audience for Levitt programs, but also from Philosophy, History, Biology, Religious Studies, Psychology, Neuroscience, the Languages, Anthropology, Chemistry, Creative Writing, Biochemistry, Literature, Mathematics, and the Arts. Our staff members and students also work with people in ITS and the Library, with the Chaplain's office, with Deans of Students, and with organizations like On Point for College, the Office for New Americans, and with schools in Utica.

It is easy to be depressed about the state of public discourse if one focuses on the national level. But at the level of the Levitt Center, I see signs of hopefulness—students and faculty who can engage with each other about controversial issues in a way that does not end with screaming or shutting down; who are doing the unsexy work of improving their communities by volunteering, by working with community gardens or with Ethiopian women who live with epilepsy; by working with new Americans on citizenship skills, helping them learn English, or prepare their taxes. It does not inoculate them—or us—from controversy. It is difficult, delicate work, and the students, staff and faculty who do it regularly face frustration and challenges. I see all this first hand now, as the Director. And I'd like to take this time to thank our staff, our students and faculty, and all the generous people who give their time and their money to support this fragile mission. They give me hope.

Marianne Janack

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

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Social Innovation

Social Innovation 2016 Post-Graduate Fellowships

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 are scalable and sustainable.

Tecnosafi

Andy Chen '16, Leonard Kilekwang '16

Andy Chen '16 and Leonard Kilekwang '16 used their Post-Graduate Fellowship to start Tecnosafi, a mobile phone-based population health education service. Progress on their project officially started in late December of 2016, with the Lokone Cup Finals. This was the second iteration of Leonard's community-run sports event that initially was started to empower and engage the youth during their long academic break. Over the month of December, around 5,000 students became involved in this event. This time around, the sports tournament also served as a tool to raise awareness about waterborne disease in West Pokot county, Kenya. Additionally, Leonard was able to use the tournament as a marketing event for Tecnosafi, since the company was officially sponsoring the event. In fact, the teams in the finals received Lokone Cup/Tecnosafi jerseys, which was the first time that many of them had been able to play under team apparel.

In the months that followed, Leonard and Andy designed and executed a survey inquiring about demographics, academic knowledge of waterborne disease, community perceptions of waterborne disease, and individual actions against waterborne disease throughout Chepareria ward, the specific region where Tecnosafi is piloting. Chepareria, Leonard's home region, is a semi-rural ward in West Pokot county and is assumed to be one of the most marginalized regions in Kenya. Chepareria ward includes six locations and 18 sub-locations, where they surveyed around 180 individuals about their personal views on the questionnaire. To view on YouTube, go to: <https://goo.gl/ZD9x1j>.

Andy Chen '16 and Leonard Kilekwang '16 plan to finish developing their IT infrastructure and begin sending out public health best-practices texts, as informed by the results of their survey in time with the arrival of the wet season. Before the end of this year, they hope to have developed a strong brand-name and goodwill in Chepareria with a listserv of at least 2,000 people. It will be very easy for even more individuals to join using only their cell phones' text capabilities.



Andy Chen '16. Photo by Nancy Ford.

Social Innovation

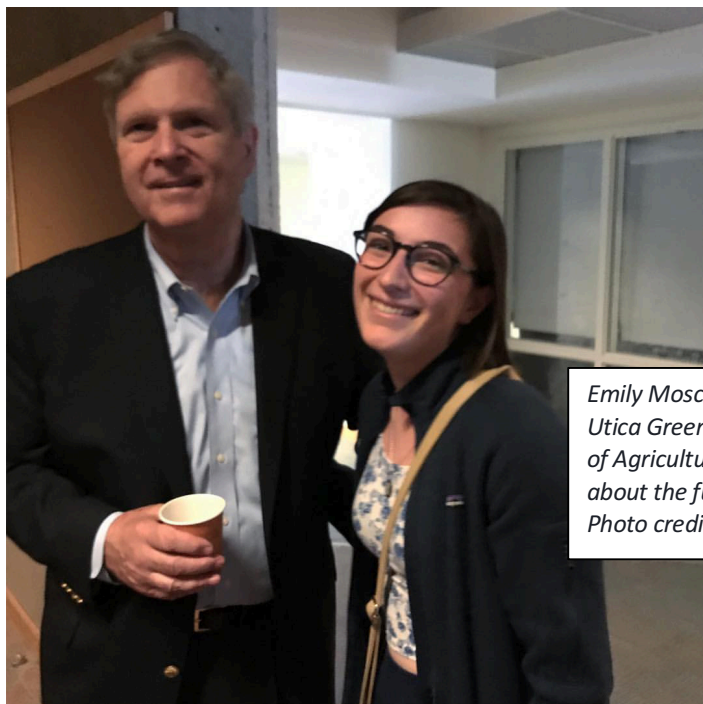
Social Innovation 2016 Post-Graduate Fellowships *(continued)*

Utica Greens

Emily Moschowitz '16

Emily Moschowitz used her Post-Grad Fellowship to start Utica Greens, a new nonprofit that is working to cultivate community and local food through urban agriculture. Her organization hopes to achieve this by focusing on three main outcomes: improving urban garden sustainability both financially and environmentally, organizing educational classes to teach the community about important food topics (nutrition, composting, canning, etc.), and promoting food justice through a variety of activities. Additionally, the organization strives to help the community by becoming a repository of resources for the area. Emily plans to reach these goals through careful coordination of the nonprofit's 5 main committees: Infrastructure, Gardens, Education, Volunteers, and Communications. Utica Greens is an entirely board-run and volunteer-driven organization. Emily and the dedicated board are working hard to organize each of these committees and volunteers are helping to execute the many ideas and projects. Since she started the organization in August 2016, Emily is now working with around 13 gardens and is planning to add more this coming year. She currently holds the most complete list of gardens in the area, and is discovering more as she continues her work.

Utica Greens has hosted around 10 free nutritional cooking classes geared toward SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) eligible participants and has helped coordinate the rebuilding on garden beds of two gardens. They recently co-hosted two Earth Day events: a garden meet-and-greet and garden clean up. The first aimed to connect various players of the local food system (garden leaders, food pantry representative, community education resources, etc.) in order to increase food security and decrease food waste by pairing pantries with gardens to glean extra produce. Their second event, in conjunction with a seed bombing event run by the kids in the Youth FEAST program through Cornell Cooperative Extension, was a city-wide garden clean up. Emily and the team at Utica Greens worked with the City of Utica, Oneida County Waste, and the Great American CleanUp to gather almost 40 volunteers to prepare 7 gardens for the growing season.



Emily Moschowitz '16, founder and executive director of Utica Greens, talking with Tom Vilsack '72, former Secretary of Agriculture. After the talk, she got a chance to ask him about the future of food and food policy in America. Photo credit Jon Hysell '72.

Social Innovation

Project CareCraft

Addis Ababa, Ethiopi, and Tsion Tesfaye '16

Tsion Tesfaye used her Social Innovation Post-Grad Fellowship to develop a program called CareCraft, dedicated to helping people with epilepsy in Ethiopia. Fatima, a 22-year-old from Ethiopia, says, "I like myself but people don't like me. I like people who like me. No one wants to touch or kiss me, not even my family." According to the Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Health, nearly 1 million Ethiopians like Fatima suffer from epilepsy and the stigma associated with it. Epilepsy is estimated to be one of the most prevalent non-communicable diseases, affecting low income countries twice as much as high income countries. Despite the pervasiveness, due to the burden of other diseases, epilepsy receives little attention and minimal funding from the Ethiopian government, resulting in inadequate treatment and limited medication. It is estimated that less than 13% of the patients are treated with anti-epileptic drugs that cost \$5.00 per patient annually. Due to social stigma associated with epilepsy as the "devil's disease," patients struggle to stay healthy and find acceptance. Although stigma excludes both men and women from employment and communal activities, women like Fatima suffer more.

CareCraft is a project designed to empower women with epilepsy. CareCraft worked with various hospitals and stakeholders in Addis Ababa to identify candidates for the project. After a thorough interview process, six women were recruited to participate in the pilot program. Over the course of four months, the women received trainings in crafts, financial literacy and wellbeing. Their craft products are judged to be of high quality by experts and the trainees have exhibited tangible physiological improvements (such as reduced incidents of seizure) throughout the training. "I now feel that I can work" and "I am now confident enough to leave my home to earn my own income" are few of the comments from the graduates indicating their transformation as a result of CareCraft.



*Mats of Resilience, made by Ethiopian women involved in the CareCraft program.
Photo by Tsion Tesfaye '16.*

This success did not come about without challenges. The deep-rooted stigma against epilepsy impeded the efforts to reach more women. Shortage of trained epilepsy specialists in hospitals, lack of a full-time psychologist working with the project, unrealistic expectations from the patients and the culture were also among the hurdles. Despite these setbacks, the project achieved its mission and proved to be a success. CareCraft brought an invaluable experience and satisfaction to Tsion, while leaving a mark on Ethiopia's endeavor to tackle epilepsy.

Social Innovation

Social Innovation 2017 Post-Graduate Fellowship

TRUtailored

Sadiq Abubaker '15

Sadiq Abubaker received a fellowship to develop and implement TRUtailored, a company designed to facilitate communication and efficiency between Nigerian tailors and customers. In addition to providing an avenue for tailors to sell their products and services, TRUtailored supplies tailoring and financial literacy training to existing and aspiring tailors to empower them to run lucrative businesses of their own. Within the past few years, Nigeria has gone through major positive changes including the diversification of its economy and the strengthening of industries such as fashion. Even though the country is experiencing economic growth, there is still a severe problem with poverty, as it is estimated that more than 70% live below the poverty line. Abubaker intends to capitalize on the economic growth and create opportunities for Nigerians, ultimately addressing the issue of poverty in Nigeria.

Bab El-Donia

Hady Hewidy '17

Hady Hewidy will be using a Post-Graduate Fellowship to fund a development project called Bab El-Donia in the high mountains region of South Sinai, Egypt. In the region, widowed or divorced women are often unable to support themselves financially, and as a result, become reliant on their extended family or charitable donations from local tribesmen. The project aims to provide job opportunities for women in the St. Catherine community, revive and preserve the tradition of Bedouin handicrafts of Sinai, and provide needed educational and health services to the community. In the town of St. Catherine, women from the local Jebaliya tribe will be trained and employed making handmade clothing and rugs. The profit from the sales of the products will eventually go toward a non-profit organization that channels the money back into the community. This project continues Hady's commitment to the Jebaliya tribe, which he has worked with in the past in launching safety initiatives for hiking in the area and facilitating first aid services.



*Hady Hewidy '17,
post-graduate
fellow, developed
Bab El-Donia in
Egypt.*

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 disruptive 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. The participants in this year's workshop were:

Ruiwen (Astor) Chen, Risper Kirui, Benjamin Stoloff, Gerard Pozzi, Branden Miles, Bryce Murdick, Brenda Narvaez, Olivia Plimpton, Florence (Flo) Turiaf, Edgar Otero, Lyla Connolly, Helen Park, Curtis (Curt) Lyon, Binh Nguyen, Michael (Mike) Holliday, and Christina Florakis

Risper Kirui '19 launched her project called SmartStart in July 2017, a hub for children in Kenya from K-3rd grade aimed at providing quality foundational academic skills such as reading, writing, and arithmetic. Initially expecting 20 students, Kirui has had to make onsite adjustments to accommodate the 40 students they provide for now, reaching maximum capacity. With help from the Levitt Center and her community at home, Kirui has purchased storybooks written in both Kiswahili and English for the kids, provided play materials, hired a cook and a teaching assistant, and obtained a safe space for the students. As she continues to do her best for these kids, she has considered the possibility of expanding the program in the future to cater to 4th-8th grade students as well.

Binh Nguyen '17 is advancing her social innovation project, YANA. YANA stands for "You Are Not Alone" and is a mental health social initiative which aims to improve the mental health landscape in Binh's home country of Vietnam. YANA's goals include supporting individuals living with mental health issues, helping allies understand mental health experiences, and working to erase the stigma associated with mental health in the Vietnamese community. YANA hopes to achieve these goals by providing original content on its website, www.yanavn.org, that educates the community about mental health and provides resources for those who need help.



Risper Kirui's project, SmartStart, is a children's hub that targets K-3rd grade children, providing reading, writing, and arithmetic skills necessary in later academic years.

Edgar Otero '20 is progressing in his social innovation project, the Peer Empowerment Project (PEP). PEP aims to equip high school students from disadvantaged communities with the skills needed to excel academically and grow as leaders during high school and beyond. The ultimate goal is to develop college-ready students who are

Social Innovation

Social Innovation Fellows (continued)

well-equipped to succeed in higher education and make an impact in their world. To achieve this, Otero is working to implement a peer mentoring program at the high school level, where upper-class students serve as mentors to their younger peers. The aim is to foster a community of support and guidance within the student body. In addition, PEP seeks to provide free workshops led by local college students that cultivate academic and leadership skills in the high school students. Otero looks to continue working with leaders in education to gain valuable knowledge and insight as well as develop a peer mentoring curriculum with their assistance. He hopes to implement PEP in under-resourced public high schools in Miami during the next academic year.

Gerard Pozzi '18's organization, EduHarvest, aims to address two problems that link food loss with institutional dining halls. In New York State alone, over 100 million pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables are left unharvested annually due to cosmetic imperfections and market fluctuations. This perfectly edible produce is left to rot in the field, tilled into the next season. Meanwhile, institutional dining facility budgets are incredibly low and as a result, food options are often processed, limited, and of poor quality. Especially in children and recovering patients, having high-quality, nutritious food available is of absolute necessity. EduHarvest will bring second harvest, cosmetically imperfect produce from farms to institutional dining facilities, using an educational vehicle to show that damaged produce is indeed nutritious. By ensuring farmers receive compensation for the energy and labor they invest in growing their produce, EduHarvest envisions a just food system where farmers earn, everyone eats, and no veggie goes to waste. He hopes to perfect the model in New York State so that the organization can be blueprinted and act throughout the United States as a long-term goal. As an accepted participant of the Clinton Global Initiative University, Gerard will continue his project throughout the year.

Flo Turiaf '17 crafted the CariBeyond movement to create a collaborative space for Caribbean entrepreneurs in various industries who are making a positive impact on the region through their business. Through a networking event, attendees will help each other succeed individually and create a collective vision to continue to uplift the Caribbean region as a group. The goal for this event is to lead to the creation of more innovative collective spaces for leaders in the Caribbean, inspire a positive change in people's mentality, and spark some new hope in the power of togetherness and mutual support.



*Flo Turiaf '17
created the
CariBeyond
movement.
Photo by
Nancy Ford.*

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.

Cyrus Boga '90 is the founder of Novamaya. After working for many years in investment banking and in corporate finance, he spent the better part of a decade establishing and running a multimillion-dollar social entrepreneurial venture that had over 40 employees at its peak. He is grateful for having had the opportunity to straddle many different worlds, and his broad professional and academic experiences have informed his philosophy and passion for relevant, transdisciplinary education. Boga has an M.A. from the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, a B.A. from Hamilton College, and undertook coursework and research towards his Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering at Yale University. He is a member of several professional and civic organizations.

Melinda Little is an entrepreneur by background, perhaps most widely recognized regionally for leading the successful effort to establish The Community Store in Saranac Lake, the first community-owned department store in New York State. In 1996 she co-founded Independent Means, the leading provider of family-centered financial education programs and products in the United States, and in the late 1980's she founded The Company of Women, a national mail order catalog company that was a for-profit subsidiary of a non-profit domestic violence shelter. She is currently focusing her entrepreneurial skills on establishing and coordinating Point Positive, an angel investor group committed to investing in and nurturing promising and scalable start-up and early stage companies within the Adirondacks. Little lives in Saranac Lake. She is a member of the board of ROOST and is president of the Tri-Lakes Humane Society. Little has an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management and a BA from Wellesley College.



Melinda Little, Innovator-in-Residence, hosting a "Taking Ideas to Reality" workshop.

Social Innovation

Innovation Workshops

Innovation Workshop

Jonathan Bloom, Author of *American Wasteland: How America Throws Away Nearly Half of Its Food*

America wastes 40 percent of its food supply. On March 8, 2017, at 3 pm, students convened in the Levitt Center Conference Room for an innovation workshop guided by food waste thought leader Jonathan Bloom. The workshop led students to collaborate in small groups, encouraging them to generate innovative solutions to the country's food waste problem. Bloom started off the workshop with a few brief notes on the extent of the United State's food waste problem, especially on the college campus setting. Students then broke up into three groups: Salvage, Student Action, and Bon Appétit. Each section aimed to dissect the source of food waste and what is done with scraps down the line. With Bloom floating around the room and guiding the brainstorming process, students thought up some impressive ways to minimize waste on campus. Out of this workshop emerged a group of passionate students who plan to create a Food Waste Task Force. That evening Jonathan Bloom gave a talk titled, "What a Waste: The Impact and Opportunity of Wasted Food" in the Red Pit, sponsored by Slow Food, the Environmental Studies Program, HEAG, and the Levitt Center.

Innovation Workshops

Cyrus Boga '90, CEO of Novamaya and Campus Properties

Why Social Entrepreneurship? Opportunities and Challenges

Social entrepreneurship offers some of the best opportunities for personal financial, emotional and intellectual fulfillment in the new economic landscape. In this workshop, Boga dispelled some common myths about social entrepreneurship, and explained how the future looks bright for those looking to do well by doing good.

Developing Your Business Plan

Boga led students as they learned how to take an idea for a great product or service and grow it into a social enterprise or sustainable business, using the methodology of the Lean Canvas.

The Entrepreneurial Mindset

Developing an entrepreneurial mindset is one of the most useful skills for today's fast-changing economic landscape, one that is becoming increasingly essential as we progress to new paradigms of living and working. Students learned how to develop a toolbox of skills that are applicable in all work environments, big and small, from Fortune 100 companies to startups.



Hamilton students and community members brainstorm during an innovation workshops. Photo by Sharon Liu '17.

Social Innovation

Innovation Workshops

Melinda Little, Entrepreneur and Innovator-in-Residence

Taking Ideas to Reality

Little hosted a “Taking Ideas to Reality” workshop to give the Hamilton College community the opportunity to brainstorm innovative ideas and practice developing an implementation plan. In small groups, participants worked together to construct products out of everyday items, create a plan for the organization, and present a pitch. This was an engaging and informative exercise that was appropriate for anyone who was interested in pursuing business or social entrepreneurship ventures.

Structuring an Organization

During her “Structuring an Organization” workshop, Melinda Little discussed the different ways to structure an organization with participants who have expressed an interest in potentially implementing their own business ideas in the future. She then provided an overview of the possible structures, such as LLC's or B corps, and explained financial terminology and concepts in entrepreneurship. This workshop was especially helpful for participants to learn how to get their business ideas off the ground, attract investors, and choose team members.

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.

This year’s Month of Innovation was a three-part series centered around the theme of “Identity and Difference.” The purpose of the series was to provide students with a space to have productive conversation about current and pressing issues pertaining to this central theme, and to empower them to approach these issues in an effective manner through the process of social innovation. The first part of the series was a workshop conducted by Professor Okazawa-Rey of the Women’s Studies Department, in which participants were taken through exercises which helped them realize both the explicit and the subtle ways that identity influences our daily lives. The second session was a lunch discussion with Professor of Sociology Jaime Kucinkas and Professor of Psychology Jennifer Borton to discuss the questions: “Where do our identities come from?”; “How do our identities inform how we communicate?”; and “How do our group identities influence how we interact with others?”. The final meeting was a workshop in which members of the Social Innovation Team introduced the Business Model Canvas and led brainstorming exercises to demonstrate how tools used by social innovators can be effective in solving issues pertaining to identity and difference.

This year, the Social Innovation Team incorporated a new program for aspiring social entrepreneurs. Under the mentorship of one or two leaders, these students met in cohorts to develop their social innovation projects. Cohort leaders were students with previous social innovation experience attained through the Social Innovation Fellows program or from starting their own projects. As a group, the innovators helped each other develop their project ideas, answer critical questions, and consider new perspectives. Several of the groups have remained in contact over the summer to continue working together to improve each other’s projects.

Social Innovation

Hamilton Microfinance

The Levitt Center provides logistical and advisory support to Hamilton Microfinance (HMF), a student-run group that makes microloans to business owners in the surrounding community. Along with the Levitt Center, the group works closely with Access Federal Credit Union. By providing loans rather than grants, HMF helps local entrepreneurs establish credit histories and borrowing power. It also provides student members with hands-on finance experience.

Throughout this year, the organization continued its commitment to the local community. In December, the group visited Kelly's Closet, which is a thrift store in Utica. HMF has worked with this business in the past and has continued to build a strong relationship. Kelly's Closet celebrated its second anniversary this spring.

Additionally, in February HMF hosted its fourth Annual Valentine's Date Auction on campus. All the proceeds from this year's fundraiser went toward providing small business loans to local entrepreneurs. More than \$800 was raised during this fundraiser.

Information taken from articles on the Hamilton website written by Lisa Yang '17 and Holly Foster



The Hamilton Microfinance student-run group at Kelly's Closet, a thrift store in Utica.

Transformational Leadership

Levitt Leadership Institute

The Levitt Leadership Institute (LLI) provides students with an opportunity to develop and practice personal leadership skills in the context of their individual career interests with a focus on developing a global mindset, ethical behaviors, and regard for the public good.

LLI is a two-week program that takes place on Hamilton's campus for the first week and in Washington, D.C., the second week, during spring break. Participants learn about their own skills and attitudes as they listen to and work with others in a succession of group challenges, practice active listening, and engage in difficult conversations. The hands-on, practical training culminates with a large group challenge to design two days of activities in Washington, D.C., with leadership practitioners who will put week one's learning into context in areas of interest to the participants. The Institute culminates with the chance to make a real and positive difference through a long-term Commitment to Action project that transfers LLI skills and knowledge into real-life situations.

For this year's class of LLI students, each week of the program presented new opportunities to explore leadership skills outside of the traditional classroom setting. The program included interviews and networking with local leaders to emphasize the importance of immersive community-based learning. In particular, they learned how to be resilient during periods of major change.

In their visit to Washington, D.C., they met with leaders across different public sectors deeply affected by the Trump Administration. At the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), students had the chance to meet Matthew Marks '05 and Allison Hoop, who have worked on Environmental and Federal Indian Legislation, respectively. With Save the Children, they heard from Vice President of Global Health Robert Clay, who has worked in Zambia and India helping improve development and public health in these countries.



Levitt Leadership students visit the F.D.R. memorial in Washington, D.C. Photo by Katherine O'Malley '19.

Transformational Leadership

Levitt Leadership Institute (continued)

At Vox.com students met with the co-founder Matt Yglesias and Sarah Schultz, the communications director at Young Invincibles, a nonprofit that focuses on getting millennials' voices heard on Capitol Hill. They stressed that communication and teamwork within any organization is crucial in bringing everyone together to remember their purpose. They also met with Antwan Wilson, the new chancellor of the D.C. public schools, who provided an inspiring message to conclude the students' trip: "You are the only person who can set limits for yourself."

Throughout the course of the program, Levitt Leaders developed Commitment-to-Action projects. Every individual designed a project around an issue most relevant to that student for implementation after the program. This encouraged students to think in new and innovative ways, while giving them an opportunity to test out the valuable skills and lessons they learned both at the Levitt Center and in Washington, D.C. Thus, LLI was successful in its mission to forge change-seeking community leaders.



Hamilton students participating in the Levitt Leadership Institute in Washington, D.C. Photo by Katherine O'Malley '19.

Levitt Leadership Institute 2017 Participants

Caroline Ames '17, Acacia Bowden '20, Annie Canning '19, Maddie Carlman '19, Claire Chang '20, Noelle Connors '19, Julia Gorlovetsky, Emily Han '19, Phinix Knight-Jacks '19, Annie Iosebidze '20, Terri Moise '17, Katherine O'Malley '19, David Rayudu '20, Sandra Saldana '19, Tori Stapleton '18, Adrian Summers '19, Nicole Taylor '19, Vincent Tran '18, Rebecca Werrell '18, Anjanae Williams '18, Jack Wright '19, Choiving Yeung '19, Emily Yong '19, Justin Zhu '19, and Danielle Moni Zo'obo '19

Transformational Leadership

Commitment Projects

Students who participate in the Levitt Leadership Institute commit to undertaking a project that will make a measurable and positive difference to their community. This year's leaders are in the process of planning and implementing a diverse and ambitious set of projects. Below is a sampling of a few of their leadership projects:

Acacia Bowden '20 is working to create a space on campus that showcases the diversity of international students at Hamilton College, called "Hall of Flags." Taking inspiration from Colgate University's movement a few years ago to hang flags in their dining hall reflecting the student body's diversity, Bowden's project aims to research, curate, and display flags from each of the countries that international students represent. Bowden is currently meeting with administrators to plan an appropriate space for the flags, while also planning for the budget of the project, and how to sustain it after she has graduated from Hamilton.

Katherine O'Malley '19 is starting a "Humans of Hamilton" Facebook and Instagram page on campus as her commitment project, in the style of the popular series "Humans of New York." In doing this project, she hopes to make students at Hamilton feel more connected to each other. In doing so, O'Malley hopes that students will feel less judgement towards their peers, and be more aware of each other's differences. The project will begin in the coming fall, with help of other student photographers.

Nicole Taylor '19 is focusing her commitment project on working with various organizations to increase student civic engagement on campus. She sought to get involved with Young Invincibles, an organization founded in 2009 that works to engage young people in conversations about politics and civic engagement. She hopes to extend this project in the upcoming year by enrolling in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, which anonymously takes polling data from students on campus and provides an evaluation of student engagement. She hopes to use the information that the evaluation provides in addressing which groups on campus perform well with civic engagement, and which groups perform less than others. Eventually, Taylor hopes to enroll in the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge.

Jack Wright '19 developed and started a new group on campus called the Hamilton Sustainability Board (HSB). The group is a coalition of campus organizations that focus on environment impact, including HEAG, Hamilton Sustainability Coordinators, Opus, Food Salvage, Hamilton College Arboretum, Club Ento, and Student Assembly. The goal of bringing these groups into the same space is to encourage dialogue between organizations and discuss how each club can coordinate efforts to accomplish meaningful environmental change on campus. For the upcoming year, Jack has many goals for the group. He hopes to begin the club approval process, which will allow access to a Hamilton email and funding for the group. Additionally, Wright hopes that the organization will in some way get involved with Student Assembly; however, that will be decided as the group further develops and realizes what it needs. For the upcoming year, Kai Scarangella '20 will be leading the meetings.

Transformational Leadership

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 and a course based program. In all its forms, student leaders also serve as mentors for participating first-year students.

The fourth iteration of the LEAP course was successfully run this past year. In the Fall the program was led by co-directors Heather Tomkowicz '18 and Matthew Bleich '18, with the guidance of Professor Werner. The 16 students were enrolled in Professor Werner's Pursuit of Happiness class, and then met with the student co-directors for required sessions outside of the classroom. In the spring, co-directors Madeline Carlman '19 and Niles Nair '19, with the guidance of Professor Susan Mason, led the course, structured as a six-week quarter-credit class. Seventeen first-year students participated in the course where each week a different guest speaker would join the class to discuss different facets of leadership

Leadership Workshop

Levitt Center leadership workshops provide students with the knowledge and training they need to become effective leaders with the capacity to make a positive difference in the world.

Emergent Change Workshop

Martha Freymann Miser, Kirkland College Alumna, Founder and President of Aduro Consulting, LLC

In this two-day workshop, Miser argued that organizations have a tendency to jump into action without being able to correctly diagnose reasons why changes occur. In the first session, Miser mapped out a history of leadership styles explained by metaphors. She explained that knowing the strengths and weaknesses within differing leadership styles is important because every type emerges in organizations. Following the theme of diagnosing change, Miser focused on listening skills. She differentiated between Level one listening, which occurs when people listen to their own reactions to what is being said, versus level two listening, which shifts from judgement to curiosity. Attendees then applied these skills to one-on-one conversations. The following session, Miser introduced the concept of containers, or areas where changes and conversations are able to occur. Then, Miser allowed the larger group to act as consultants for a student. They put to work the skills they had learned throughout the workshop by asking powerful questions and listening. Miser emphasized that the attendees' job was not to solve the problem, but to provide more ideas to consider.



Martha Freymann Miser, K'75, president of Aduro Consulting, Inc.

Public Scholarship

The Hamilton College 2016 Election Series

Whether 2016 was your first time voting or your fourteenth, the presidential election is one of our most important civic rites. Whether despite or because of the easy availability of political information, being a knowledgeable citizen is more difficult than ever. And whether Republican or Democrat, the candidates themselves overshadowed the issues and challenges of the country's future. On the positive side, the spectacle of the election made a topic of great interest. In order to satisfy this demand, the Levitt Center sponsored the Election Series 2016 as a container for campus conversation.

More important, given the unusual rhetoric of the campaign, the Election Series filled the need for civil and reasonable discourse around the campaign. Conversations were focused on particular issues, moderated by faculty members, and took place in the Levitt Center Conference Room. Holding the conversations over lunch, and at the table, encouraged a sense of community and created a real conversation. By focusing on issues, we were able to ground the conversation in the deeper interests at stake. The series achieved its goal of civility by hosting an ideologically diverse set of speakers, including David Frisk from the Alexander Hamilton Institute, on a panel on the relationship between the populist candidates and the ideological establishment.

These events helped to create a feeling of engaged citizenship on the Hamilton campus. For many students, 2016 was their first presidential election as voters. The issue-based focus of the Election Series helped students identify and think about issues that mattered most to them, and to learn more about how they might continue to engage with those issues as citizens. For faculty, it also provided an opportunity to discuss the public dimension of their scholarship. For example, Professors Steve Ellingson and Quincy Newell gave a great talk about American religions and the 2016 election, collaborating to bring their expertise to bear on an important public issue. Likewise, over 40 young women were energized by the historic nomination of Hillary Clinton, and wanted to know more about how to become more politically involved at our "Gender, Misogyny, and Sexuality in Election 2016" panel with our Women's and Gender Studies professors Anne Lacsamana and Joyce Barry.

Over the course of four months, the series engaged more than 150 in panel discussions and lunchtime conversations. Participants came from all academic divisions: faculty, staff, and students from all class years. Presenters came from seven different departments, including the math department. Consequently, the series had a positive impact on the campus intellectual climate. Faculty, in particular, commented that participation was an energizing experience. Students reported satisfaction in seeing concepts and ideas from the classroom brought to bear on a specific, concrete situation. In short, the series met its goal of providing a container for civil discourse about an important political event, thereby elevating the intellectual climate on campus.



More than 150 Hamilton community members participated in the Election Series 2016.

Public Scholarship

Scholar-in-Residence

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 also interact directly with students. This year, our scholar-in-residence held a four-part lecture series, a faculty seminar, a student workshop, and a lunch meeting with students.

Janet Halley

Rethinking Campus Sexual Assault

January 24 – February 3, 2017

As a Levitt Center Scholar-in-Residence, Janet Halley discussed issues of sexual assault, rape, and Title IX with students and faculty. She presented three lectures, led a seminar, and met with students to discuss these issues. Having been an Assistant Professor of English at Hamilton College in the mid-1980s, Halley made her return to campus for this lecture series. She is currently the Royall Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, and has published several books including *Split Decisions: How and Why to Take a Break from Feminism*; *Left Legalism/Left Critique*; and *Seeking the Woman in Late Medieval and Renaissance Literature: Essays in Feminist Contextual Criticism*.



To start off the series, Halley presented lectures to the campus titled “Taking Stock of Obama-Era Reforms” and “Rethinking the Sexual Violence Framework.” Following these lectures, Halley engaged with faculty in a seminar titled “Feminism and Political Economy: The Example of Child Support Enforcement.”

In her third lecture, “Against Affirmative Consent,” Halley argued that the Affirmative Consent model for colleges is flawed. Throughout her talk, she considered work by the

scholar Catherine MacKinnon as well as various court cases from colleges in California, explaining how she believes that the legal definition of sexual assault on college campuses is faulty because of its over-inclusiveness. Although she believes that affirmative consent should be a social norm, she argued that affirmative consent is dangerous in that it has the potential to victimize innocent men when they are accused of assault. In her last few days on campus, she met with students individually to discuss these controversial issues.

Halley also led both a student and a faculty seminar on the topic of “Feminism and Political Economy: The Example of Child Support Enforcement.” The participants read and discussed an article by Halley and Libby Adler entitled, “You Play, You Pay: Feminists and Child Support Enforcement in the U.S.”

Public Scholarship

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 25-30 page research paper and a poster presentation over Parents' Weekend, when they publically share the results of their research. 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.



Kateri Boucher '17 and Professor Katheryn Doran
More than Agriculture: An Exploration of Urban Farms as Sites of Holistic Community Development

Kateri Boucher visited two non-profit urban farms this summer to examine programs used at each farm that can be used to model and benefit urban farming practices aimed at community development. The two farms are located in Portland, Oregon, and

Detroit, Michigan. Boucher spent time volunteering at each farm in addition to conducting interviews and participant observation. She explained that her work at both farms allowed her to explore one of her strongest passions and inspired her in terms of what she intends to do post-graduation. She stated, "I knew that I had been passionate about urban farms before this summer, but it really opened my eyes to both the challenges and potentials that really come with educational, non-profit urban farms. Although I'm still not sure what I'll do in the future, I know that urban farm work is some of the closest I've had to feeling like a calling."

Anna Do '18 and Director of Counseling David Walden

Stories of Survivors: Exploring the Lives of Sex Trafficking Victims in Central New York

This summer, the Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities in Syracuse asked junior Anna Do if she wanted to spend the summer raising local awareness for the issue of sex trafficking. Eager to help, Do saw the chance as an opportunity to engage with a community while conducting valuable research. As part of her research, Do spent much of her time this summer working in Central New York, gathering local data and information on how sex trafficking is being handled. She noted that efforts to help survivors are, "very undeveloped because not many people are aware that this is happening." Through sharing stories of survivors and highlighting flaws in the existing system, Do hopes to incite a drive for activism and positive change. Do's research also took her to Courtney's House, an organization based in Washington, D.C., that works to find and help young survivors of sex trafficking. Using the safe house as a model, Do hopes to bring what she learned and experienced in Washington back to Syracuse, where she hopes to set the groundwork for a similar cause.

Public Scholarship

Levitt Summer Research Fellows (continued)

Linh Do '18 and Professor Erol Balkan ***Vietnam's Economy in Transition***

Linh Do spent the summer analyzing the effects of the Renovation Policy on Vietnamese rice production. She focused on two major agricultural economic reforms: the output-contracting regime from 1981 to 1987 and the market liberalization from 1988 to the present. She explained that this project allowed her to learn about rice farming and rice exports on a deeper level, and to explore what kind of policies might help farmers to increase their productivity.



Linh Do '18

Katherine Glusac '17 and Professor Marianne Janack

Intentional Communities: Sustainable Practices Countering Individualistic Mainstream Society

KT spent the summer visiting 11 different communities, including a Quaker village, a Summer Socialist colony, an artist's colony, an intergenerational eldercare community, chapters of the Twelve Tribes spiritual community, a student Co-Op, and a farm cooperative, staying with each for between four and 10 days. KT's project focused on ways in which alternative living can contribute beneficially to people's lives. To aid her study, KT was given access to Burke Library's Special Collection, which includes the Communal Societies Collection of more than 14,000 printed items, and many thousands more manuscripts, photographs, ephemera, and audio/visual materials. The Collection is curated by Christian Goodwillie, who was an invaluable resource to the project. Glusac and Goodwillie's connection is a testament to both the unprecedentedly rich resources Hamilton can provide to students, and to different interests students can cultivate and explore during their time on the Hill.



Gabriela Foster '18

Gabriela Foster '18 and Professor Peter Cannavo

Perceptions of Place: Understanding the Higgins Lake Water Level Debate

Gabriela Foster spent her summer researching environmental and political interest groups that are influencing policy on Higgins Lake in Roscommon, Michigan. She analyzed legal documents, scientific studies, interviews, blogs, news articles, and books to determine the different stances of interest groups on the removal of the Cut River Dam and the effects of corresponding policy. Foster particularly enjoyed working at the lake because it is "an important part of [her] family history," and felt rewarded to help the people of Roscommon better understand the issues surrounding the dam.

Public Scholarship

Paul Green '17 and Professor Herman Lehman

The Economics of Oral Health in Appalachia

Paul Green wondered if “improved oral health infrastructure and programs [could] serve as a point of intervention to stimulate local economies in Appalachia.” To approach this question, he composed a cross-sectional study using economic metrics and oral health data, and modeled the relationship between them. Though collecting data wasn’t always easy, he enjoyed the challenge. Green commented “in the classroom, data is tidy and neat; but in the real world it is gritty and dirty, requiring creative approaches to see through the noise and busyness.” After writing a program to merge patient data, he consulted an extensive literature review to prepare himself for data analysis. Green has always been interested in public health, and thoroughly enjoyed exploring this pertinent social issue.

Alexandru Hirsu '17 and Professor Alan Cafruny

The Time Romania's Corruption Started Fading: An Analysis of the Post-2010 Fight Against Corruption

Alexandru Hirsu spent the summer researching the impact of various changes in legislation and of corruption prevention campaigns on anti-corruption efforts. To inform his findings, he worked with Transparency International Romania, the mayor’s office in his hometown, the Institute for Public Policy, and the Pro-Democracy Association. He also conducted a literature review including reports from Freedom House, Transparency International, Romanian agencies such as the National Anti-corruption Directorate and the National Integrity Agency, and the civil and criminal codes.



Abigail Leitschuh '17 and Professor Zhuoyi Wang

How Have Disparate Political and Economic Systems Within the U.S. and China Come to Produce Similarly Unequal Education Systems?

Abigail Leitschuh spent the summer researching post-high school opportunity disparities and the achievement gap between socioeconomic classes in the Chinese education system. Through her research, she was able to combine her Chinese and Public Policy concentrations and her interest in sociology. Leitschuh explained that her research has inspired her career interests in the intersections between the Chinese tech industry and education, and has raised further questions she would like to investigate; she explained, “as the Chinese tech industry continues to outpace that of America, I would really like to examine what aspects of the educational structure have provided such a springboard for China's tech leaders.”

Irina Rojas '18 and Professor Cara Jones

Reproductive Health Experiences Among High-Risk Women from a Disabilities Discourse

This summer, Irina Rojas volunteered as a translator in the Labor and Delivery Unit at Tufts Medical Center. While volunteering, she took the opportunity to research the personal reproductive health experiences of women with high-risk pregnancies. She said the most interesting discovery she made was identifying a common thread found among all the women she has interviewed. Rojas said, “They all mention experiencing ‘mother blame’ with regard to the pregnancy (blaming themselves and their individual actions and choices of the past for the complications of the pregnancy, even though it may be entirely out of their hands).” After Hamilton, Rojas aspires to become a nurse practitioner and also to follow her interest in women’s healthcare policy, both of which were greatly reinforced in her current research.

Public Scholarship

Levitt Summer Research Fellows (continued)

Margaret Smith '17 and Professor Janelle Schwartz **Long Lake School and Community Garden Project**

Maggie Smith spent her summer expanding a community garden project at Long Lake Central School under the advising of Professor Janelle Schwartz, the General Director of Hamilton Adirondack Program. With the goal of fostering a community space for the area, she needed to complete a variety of tasks ranging from excavating garden bed sites to helping install a water hydrant for irrigation, all the while working with community members and local educators to plan for the future. Smith concluded the project by holding a community meeting to discuss the next steps of the Long Lake Grows Community Garden. Through her experiences at the garden and in thinking about the ethics of human consumption of the natural world, Smith devised some words to live by: "If you can grow your own food, do. If you can't grow your own food, buy it locally and cook it yourself."



Long Lake Grows artwork appeared in the Long Lake Design-A-Bear Contest

Case Tatro '18 and Professor Emily Conover

The Impact of a College's Board of Trustees on Student and Faculty Diversity

Case Tatro's research aimed to elucidate the decision making exchange between a college's Board of Trustees and its administrators, and specifically how that affects diversity on campuses. To do so, he sent confidential online surveys to more than 100 institutions for each of their trustees to complete, with the intention of finding who is involved in setting diversity goals for the student body and faculty, and what role the board of trustees plays in setting those goals. After he graduates from Hamilton, Tatro plans to pursue a graduate degree in economics, then hopes to find a future in international economic policy advising.

Levitt Summer Research Groups

Levitt Research Group Grants support groups of Hamilton students completing summer research projects in collaboration with at least once 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 Group projects during the summer of 2016.

Public Scholarship

Explaining the Sources of Foreign Borrowing by Russian Elites

James Bryan '16 , Emma Raynor '18, and Hunter Sobczak '17, with Professor Sharon Rivera

Hunter Sobczak, James Bryan, and Emma Raynor spent the summer working on a groundbreaking Levitt Center poll based on 243 face-to-face interviews conducted in February and March 2016 with high-ranking individuals working in Russia's federal bureaucracy, parliament, military and security agencies, private businesses, state-owned enterprises, academic research institutes, and media outlets. The poll asked questions about elites' perceptions of the U.S. and support for Putin's foreign policies, among other things.



The group's research asked whether Russian policymakers are willing to incorporate models of political and economic development from other countries and what might influence those decisions. The group noted that although there has been a rise in anti-Western sentiment among Russian elites recently, approximately two-thirds of Russians still appear receptive to borrowing foreign models, particularly from Germany and other European countries. Not only is the group shedding light on a little-studied issue, they are producing some of the most current research on the views of Russian elites in the world.

Refugee Engagements with Institutional Structures

Victoria Bullivant '18, Rachel Dawson '19, and Reed Johnson '18, with Professor Chaise LaDousa

Over the summer Victoria Bullivant, Reed Johnson, and Rachel Dawson had the opportunity to conduct ethnographic, community-integrated research with the refugee populations of Utica, N.Y., through a grant awarded by the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center. They worked with Professor of Anthropology Chaise LaDousa, who has been working on this project with different groups of students for the past five summers. They worked specifically with the Midtown Utica Community Center. While teaching, tutoring, and playing with the local children and teens who utilized the center, Rachel, Victoria, and Reed observed and recorded how the children reported adjusting to life in Utica. As a continuing project, Hamilton maintains a relationship with our local community and seeks to better understand the experience of the refugee population that composes a large portion of that community.

Refugee Engagements with Institutional Structures

Erica Chen '19 , Audrey Nadler '18, and Sofia Rachad '18, with Professor Erol Balkan

Audrey Nadler, Sofia Rachad, and Erica Chen spent the summer trying to better understand the cultures of refugee communities and the factors that make some more successful than others. They were particularly interested in how refugees have experienced American culture, and looked at the ways in which refugees have accepted and resisted adaptation. Further, the team learned about the challenges that refugees face when dealing with government institutions, like language barriers and a lack of cultural awareness. In order to do this, they interviewed refugees who have come to Utica from Bosnia and Myanmar and collaborated with community organizations like the Bosnian Islamic Association of Utica and the Midtown Utica Community Center. At times, their work took on personal importance. Rachad commented, "What we're looking to get out of it is not just research, but lasting friendships."

Public Scholarship

Levitt Summer Research Groups *(continued)*

Refugee Engagements with Institutional Structures

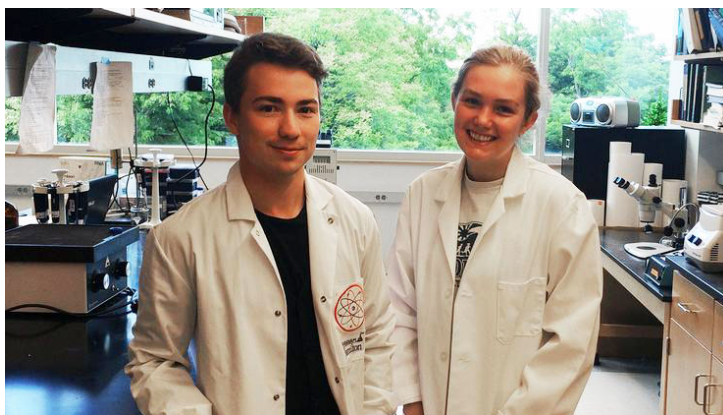
Alexander Hollister '17, Hersheena Rajaram '19, and Patrick McConnell '19, with Professor Paul Hagstrom

Over the summer, Alexander Hollister, Patrick McConnell, and Hersheena Rajaram developed a survey for refugee youth in the Utica-Rome Metropolitan Statistical Area. They aimed to find the retention rate of refugee youth in the area and determine the factors that motivate refugees to stay or leave. In order to better prepare their study, they analyzed previous research, studied news articles, and attended community events. In addition to their research, they worked to create stronger connections with local organizations such as the Midtown Utica Community Center, On Point for College, and the Bosnian Cultural Center.

Honeybee Fitness: Local Bees vs. Bees Imported from the South

Andre Burnham '18 and Fiona McLaughlin '19, with Professor Herman Lehman

Over the summer, Andre Burnham and Fiona McLaughlin contributed their own research to the increasingly dire question of what causes risk and harm to the life of bees. Burnham and McLaughlin compared the fitness of locally raised queen bees and queen bees imported from California. They hope their research will produce some answers about the best way to raise healthy queen bees, and therefore healthy bee colonies. The two hypothesized that local queen bees and their offspring would be more productive and less



susceptible to common bee problems. Some studies have suggested that bees raised in a cold climate, rather than imported from a warmer one, fare better in cold weather such as New York's. This climate advantage and familiarity with local flowers may make locally raised bees more productive at gathering pollen. The research team also believes that a locally raised queen and her offspring may be more resistant to disease because they don't undergo the stress of travel. Burnham will continue his research this coming summer.

The Ebbing of the Pink Tide

Ryan Franquiz '18, Sebastian Lissarrague '18, and Nicolas Yardas '18, with Professor Alan Cafruny

Over the summer, Nicolas Yardas, Ryan Franquiz, and Sebastian Lissarrague studied the phenomenon of the Pink Tide, a political movement of the late 1990s that saw many Latin American countries turn away from the democratization and free market economies promoted by the United States. While they were looking at the whole region of Latin America, their analysis focused largely on four key players: Chile, Brazil, Venezuela, and Argentina. In order to complete a detailed analysis, they used a wide range of sources, reading academic articles and popular publications spanning the past 20 years. To uniquely inform their inquiry, the group took up a holistic approach in their analysis that considered domestic policies, culture, and political and economic organizations. Now, the Levitt group is wondering what will happen to these regional groups, as well as to the larger social movements and accompanying cultural values.

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 2016-17

Erol Balkan, Professor of Economics

Professor Balkan is developing a new course in Economics titled Development and Social Change. In this class, Balkan plans to take an interdisciplinary approach toward teaching about social change, or “the transformation of social structure, patterns of culture, and social behavior which involves the complex interaction of political and economic processes, the environment, technology, culture, and personality.” His plan centers on critically considering how this topic crosses disciplinary boundaries. The beginning of the course will overview social change theory and its application in the world. The course will then move toward specific debates and examples drawn from literature of sociocultural, political, and economic change. Balkan hopes to challenge students during the course with a diverse set of questions, ranging from specific issues about how the agricultural sector influences the development process, to considerations of the long term causes of social change. With the grant, he developed the course during the 2016-2017 academic year, and will be offering it as an elective in the 2017-2018 academic year.



Ashley Bohrer, Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy

With her grant, Professor Bohrer is developing a new Philosophy course titled Philosophy and Social Movements. The goal of the course is to “revive the vital tradition of multi-media philosophy.” In doing so, the course will challenge the effectiveness of a research paper as a means of disseminating information in contemporary academic discourse. The class will include philosophical writing in non-traditional formats, all the while interrogating those multi-media philosophical engagements throughout the semester. Students will engage with the content by creating various mediums of disseminating information, both physical and virtual, with zines and oral assignments, as well as blogs and Wikipedia sites. She plans to make use of the campus letterpress with Professor Andrew Rippeon, training and enabling students to produce their own work. Additionally, with the grant, Bohrer plans on inviting local activists from around the region into the classroom “in order to discuss their work in social movements and its relationship to philosophical theorizing.” By the completion of the course and research, Bohrer intends to relay what she has learned to other professors who may be interested in forms of communication other than a research paper.



Public Scholarship

Faculty Awards for 2016-17 (continued)

Luisa Briones-Manzano, Visiting Assistant Professor of Hispanic Studies

Professor Briones-Manzano used her grant to enhance the existing Hispanic Studies course titled Spanish for the Professions. Since the course had previously focused on vocabulary, she saw an opportunity to enrich the material by incorporating a more experiential learning component through community involvement. She also connected the material, which was initially set in the areas of business, law, medicine, and social services, to issues in social and environmental justice. To develop the theme of social justice in the curriculum, Professor Briones-Manzano required students to complete a creative project which included their work with community organizations. She reported that “the objective is to utilize the course as an effective and innovative tool for social change, preparing students with academic and analytic knowledge of practical focuses arising during the 21st century in the areas of medicine, business, and law.” Her purpose was to encourage students to reflect on social problems and approach them with innovative perspectives in order to promote social change throughout the college.



Cynthia Downs, Assistant Professor of Biology

Professor Downs developed a new course in Biology titled Physiological Ecology. The course focuses on how animals respond to their environments through physiological adaptations. Within the course, theory and practice of social change are addressed through two major activities: outreach by teaching and grant simulation. For the outreach component, she takes her students to the Junior Frontiers of Mohawk Valley, a program based in Utica that helps prepare students from underrepresented groups for college. There, Downs’s students develop and teach lessons to the students at the Junior Frontiers. “Teaching through outreach will help Hamilton students think about how best to convey information, about how to explain complicated concepts to different audiences, and how to pick salient points from complex material” writes Downs. “Furthermore, and potentially more importantly, the skills that Hamilton students develop through these activities will help them tackle problems associated with social change. Specifically, by working with participants from the Junior Frontiers program, Hamilton students will gain first-hand experience with a program that has a successful track record for actively correcting problems of disproportionate access that arise from structural hierarchies.” The second component of the course tasks students with working in small groups to write an NSF-style grant to describe an experiment of their own design. Next, students convene as an NSF-style panel to review the grant proposals and vote on which they will complete. The class then conducts research and completes the chosen project. The grant simulation gives students experience with the creative scientific process all the way through completing a written manuscript.



Public Scholarship

Jamie Kucinkas, Assistant Professor of Sociology

Professor Kucinkas used her grant to adapt her sociology course called Globalization and Its Discontents to include material on social innovation. The course has a focus on the historical and continuing inequality in global economic and political structures, and more specifically, on how global supply chains disproportionately benefit certain people based on their positions by nationality, race, gender, and class. Previously, students were required to conduct a brief final project on a particular global issue, but for Professor Kucinkas, the project did not allow them to aptly apply what they had learned in a thoughtful, sustained manner. By empowering students with the knowledge of social innovation, she aimed to transform attitudes of cynicism towards the world's daunting problems to attitudes of optimism. Similarly, she aimed to transform students from consumers and critics of scholarly information to global citizens capable of analyzing a complex, deep social problem and coming up with thoughtful solutions.



Andrea K. Townsend, Assistant Professor of Biology

Professor Townsend is using her grant to further develop the current biology course Animal Behaviors into a new course titled Animal Cognition and Behavior. The course will primarily be an exploration of social intelligence and the “theory of the mind,” providing students a novel opportunity “to better understand the evolutionary underpinnings of human (and non-human) behavior.” Students will be engaged with three primary questions: *Do animals recognize that other individuals have desires and intentions?*; *Does cooperation among individuals require specialized cognition?*; and *What is the role of empathy in social relationships and social learning?* Investigating these questions, Townsend writes, “can help us to understand phenomena that we observe in humans and other social organisms, such as alliances, agonistic interactions, altruistic acts, and dominance hierarchies.” Through an in-depth study of literature related to the material and through necessary experimental design, students will be able to choose to study the occurrence of self-regard, empathy, and fairness in a suite of birds from the Hamilton aviary.



Public Scholarship

Public Philosophy Program

Academic year 2016-17 was the first year for a new program to increase public engagement on the part of faculty. It is motivated by the belief that, as higher education becomes more diverse, student demand for public engagement will increase. Moreover, as the faculty becomes more diverse, we believe that faculty will demand opportunities to engage and support communities from which they gain meaning. The program supports faculty-led initiatives that seek to address value-laden questions from an interdisciplinary perspective and with methods that require some degree of community engagement.

Our first program was a community engagement workshop with Steve Yank, a community-development consultant who works with clients around the world. Yank's workshop was part of a multi-year initiative to increase the capacity of students across campus to engage with community partners. The workshop was oriented around a model of asset-based community development, which emphasizes partnerships that amplify a community's existing strengths. Staff from a variety of offices, including the chaplaincy, the athletics program, off-campus study, and the Dean of Faculty's office met for a collaborative session on how to support students whose community engagement activities pass between our offices.

The program in public philosophy also supports two faculty-led seminars. The goal of the program is to increase the capacity of faculty to engage in the world beyond the classroom. The design of the program explicitly acknowledges that scholarship and teaching are not immediately transferable skills, and that successful public engagement requires a different set of skills.

The program awarded support for two such seminars in the coming academic year. Heidi Ravven, the Bates and Benjamin Professor of Classical and Religious Studies, is leading a seminar on religious conflict and citizen diplomacy. The group will read the work of Marc Gopin, a professor at George Mason University, who also engages in conflict resolution in the Middle East. Gopin will visit the group, give a public lecture, and a workshop on his concept of "citizen diplomacy." The second seminar, led by Heather Sullivan, Assistant Professor in the Government Department, builds relationships in the area of criminal justice reform. Sullivan's seminar has

gathered a group of community organizations who work on criminal justice reform and with incarcerated youth. Her seminar will invite Professor Ann Lin from the University of Michigan and Alex Frank, a program officer at the Vera Institute of Justice to give public lectures at Hamilton, and meet with Sullivan's seminar. The goal of the seminar is to circulate academic and professional knowledge to a local group to assist with the development of a proposal for less punitive mode of managing the youth population in Onondaga county jails.



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, in invaluable asset in helping students make connections between the classroom and policies enacted in the real world. Students and other Hamilton community members have the opportunity to 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 conjunctions with academic departments and co-curricular centers on campus.

Inequality and Equity Program

The program on Inequality and Equity investigates the factors that affect the distribution of income, distribution of health outcomes, impact of policy on intergenerational equity, welfare analysis, discrimination, access to the legal system, and the role of incentives, race, gender, and immigration. John Bartle, Associate Professor of Russian Language and Literature, 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; and the fairness of market exchange, law enforcement, and financial regulation, among other public and private concerns. Frank Anechiarico, Maynard-Knox Professor of Government and Law, 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. Steve Ellingson, Associate Professor of Sociology, 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. Herm Lehman, Professor of Biology, is the Director of the Public Health and Well-Being Program.

Public Scholarship

2016-17 Speakers (continued)

Riada Asimovic Akyol '07, Mustafa Akyol, and Prof. Erol Balkan ***Turkey at a Crossroads: After the Referendum and Muslim Women and Perceptions in the East and West***

Riada Asimovic Akyol '07, along with Mustafa Akyol and Professor of Economics Erol Balkan, considered political polarization and recent global events in their talk "Turkey at a Crossroads: After the Referendum." Riada and Mustafa are contributing writers for *Al-Monitor*, an online news source that reports on and in the Middle East. Mustafa is also a contributing opinion writer for *The New York Times*, and Professor Balkan teaches economic development, international finance and political economy of the Middle East at Hamilton. The three speakers led the panel and considered the questions "How should we understand the political polarization in contemporary Turkey?" and "How do recent events affect the politics of the European Union and those of the Middle East?" Riada Asimovic Akyol, who is also a PhD candidate at Galatasaray University in Istanbul, finished the week with a lunch discussion centered on the topic "Muslim Women and Perceptions in the East and West". The lunch brought together students, faculty, staff, and community members to hear and talk with Riada.

Jon Betz and Taggart Siegel

***SEED: The Untold Story* Film Screening**

Members of the Hamilton Community congregated to watch, "SEED: The Untold Story" sponsored by the Levitt Center's Sustainability Program. The documentary uncovers the story of humanity's most vital component of survival: seeds. It tells the stories of passionate collectors who are ambitiously persevering their seeds in spite of the expansion of industrial agriculture. The documentary highlights the dangers of allowing the loss of our food's biodiversity and makes a call to action to rekindle our connection with food.

Steph Ching and Ellen Martinez

***After Spring* Film Screening**

About 40 people attended the screening of "After Spring," produced by John Stewart, which was hosted by React to Film, the Global Health Organization, and Project SHINE. The film details the experiences of two families and the director of Zaatari Refugee Camp in Jordan. With inside looks at medical facilities, food stores, and the martial arts school, the audience witnesses both the struggle and hope of refugees in the camp. After the film, Professor of Government Alan Cafruny led a brief discussion with students. In response to students' initial questions and reactions to the film, Professors Jumet and Hysell commented on the political situation in Jordan, which greatly affects conditions of the camp and refugee resettlement. There was also productive conversation at the end of the discussion about what students can do to help. To close the event, Professor Hysell spoke about the refugee center and social media campaigns, and students were informed about an upcoming clothing drive to benefit refugees in Utica.

THE LEVITT CENTER *presents*

TURKEY AT A CROSSROADS

AFTER THE REFERENDUM

a panel discussion featuring

RIADA ASIMOVIC AKYOL '07 is a PhD candidate at Galatasaray University in Istanbul and a contributing writer for *Al-Monitor*. She double-majored in World Politics and French at Hamilton.

MUSTAFA AKYOL is a Turkish journalist and author. A columnist for *Al-Monitor*, and a monthly contributing opinion writer for *The New York Times*, Mustafa is also a Senior Fellow at Wellesley College's Freedom Project.

EROL BALKAN is the author of multiple books on politics and economics and teaches economic development, international finance and political economy of the Middle East at Hamilton. Professor Balkan is currently working on a research project focused on refugees funded by the Mellon Foundation.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26
7:30pm | KJ 127 (RED PIT)

LEVITT CENTER
check us out @levittcenter

Public Scholarship

Margaret Gray, Clare Hinrichs, and Evan Weissman

Envisioning the Future of Food

The Levitt Center’s Sustainability Program hosted a panel on “Envisioning the Future of Food”. Clare Hinrichs, a Professor of Rural Sociology at Pennsylvania State, centered her presentation on sustainability transitions, considering new models to study and work with agrifood. She hopes that people will recognize that agriculture and food do not “exist in silos,” and a transformative future requires working multiple pathways. Evan Weissman, assistant Professor of Food Studies at Syracuse University, presented his research “Collaborative and Diverse Stakeholder Participation in Food Planning and Policy Development: A Case Study from Central NY.” His research focuses on taking multiple approaches for coordinating food system efforts, through an inclusive process. He wants students to consider ways in which food system assessments and food planning programs can better engage complexity. Margaret Gray, Associate Professor of Political Science at Adelphi College, who presented on labor and the local food industry, focused on issues relating to farm workers. The three speakers encouraged the audience to interrogate “what seems obvious.” Before the panel, Maggie Gray and Clare Hinrichs met with students for lunch to discuss the topic of food and its growing importance. The panelists were curious about student-driven initiatives on the Hill, and gave valuable insight on how students can take an active grasp on issues facing our food system. As a prelude to the discussion, the lunch was an informal and productive space for students and speakers to combine interests and discuss our food system in a holistic manner.

Ernesto Dominguez Lopez

A Cuban Perspective on US-Cuba Relations

Dr. Ernesto Dominquez Lopez is a professor and researcher at the Center for Hemispheric and United States Studies at the University of Havana. In his talk, he addressed both the deep connections and conflicts between the United States and Cuban governments. He explained that Cuba has been a relatively prominent global power due to its open economy and important geographical location, and further, has had a complex 200-300 year history with the United States. For example, each nation has a different perception of Cuban society: the U.S. views Cuba as a “communist state” whereas Cuba claims to take part in a “socialist system.” Lopez further discussed how President Obama’s statement on Cuba policy changes normalized US-Cuba relations, serving as an important milestone in both Cuban and United States history. The discussion ended with an optimistic tone, hopeful of a better and more fruitful relationship between the two nations.



Public Scholarship

2016-17 Speakers (continued)

Janis Shinwari and Matt Zeller

No One Left Behind: Founding and Operations

Matt Zeller '04 and Janis Shinwari, co-founders of No One Left Behind, discussed the founding and operation of their national non-profit, which helps support resettlement and asylum for translators and interpreters who have served with US military in combat zones. In 2008, Shinwari, an Afghan interpreter for the US military, killed two Taliban fighters who were about to shoot Zeller, and saved Zeller's life. During the lecture at Hamilton titled "No One Left Behind: Founding and Operations," Zeller and Shinwari recounted their relationship and unbreakable bond that



Matt Zeller '04 talking with Hamilton students about No One Left Behind, a national non-profit group which helps with resettlement and asylum for Afghan translators and interpreters

has developed since that formative moment. Their story is similar to many connections between US soldiers and Afghan and Iraqi interpreters, yet interpreters are not given the protections they deserve. No One Left Behind aims to ensure America treats our interpreters as the heroes and veterans they are.

Lester Spence

Knocking the Hustle

In his talk "Knocking the Hustle," Lester Spence spoke about the need to revitalize the black political imagination by reconsidering what it means to ask black men and women to "hustle harder." Spence is an Associate Professor of Political Science and Africana Studies at Johns Hopkins University, and is the author of *Knocking the Hustle: Against the Neoliberal Turn in Black Politics*. During his talk and in his book, Spence considered the growing class divide and how a neoliberal turn can cause this. Ultimately, he argued that people should understand the act of hustling itself as a tactic used to demobilize and disempower communities most in need of empowerment. The talk was co-sponsored by the Days-Massolo Center, the History Department, and the Government Department.

Public Scholarship

Alvin B Tillery, Jr.

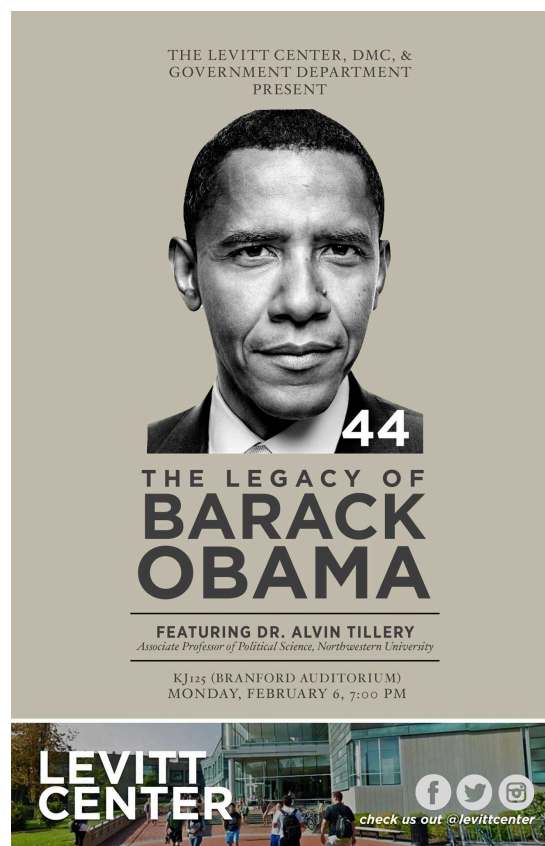
The Legacy of Barack Obama

Alvin B Tillery, Jr., Associate Professor of Political Science at Northwestern, spoke to the Hamilton community about the Obama legacy and the resulting state of race relations in the United States in a talk entitled “The Legacy of Barack Obama.” Professor Tillery dedicated the first part of his talk to discussing Obama’s use of appointed powers, his policy activism in field of criminal justice reform, his legacy as the first person of color among all forty five of the United States’ presidents, and the “positive Obama effect” produced by Obama’s use of rhetoric. Professor Tillery also examined Obama’s legacy for race relations by speaking about his own work. His own study investigates the complexities of the fact that while Obama reduced unemployment rates for all demographics in the nation, he did not narrow the gap between black and white unemployment, yet his average approval rating among African Americans and among Latinos has been extremely high. Professor Tillery and his colleague Walton developed a system for ranking presidents based on their work on race relations and civil rights. They analyzed 10,000 editorials on presidential leadership in black press and found that Obama ranks seventh out of nineteen modern presidents. Their study deduced that three factors allowed Obama to shoot up in these rankings: his symbolic appeals to minority communities, his activism on criminal justice reform, and his employment of the most diverse cabinet in US history. The issue, according to Tillery, is that we continue to think of Obama in terms of the expectations that existed when his presidency started. There were expectations for him to magically change race relations and create a post-racial age. Tillery left his audience with the question: why do we allow our politicians to set such a low bar regarding what it actually means to promote racial equality?

Benjamin Joelson

The Homeland Security Paradox and Community Resilience

Benjamin Joelson, a Senior Associate at The Chertoff Group and a Homeland security expert, addressed the threats of terrorism in his talk “The Homeland Security Paradox and Community Resilience.” This was the second time that Joelson has spoken to the Hamilton community, the first being in 2010 with his talk “Sovereignty, Service, and the Procurement of Military Service” and his panel discussion “Are There Limits to Government Outsourcing?”. A graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, Mr. Joelson served in the U.S. Air Force and Security Forces as an Antiterrorism Officer and nuclear convoy commander.



Posters for the 2016-17 Speaker Series were designed by Bryce Fan '20.

Engaged Citizenship

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, non-profit, or non-governmental organization.

Molly April '17 hopes “to ensure all families are respected, loved, and celebrated — especially those with parents who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer,” April spent her summer with the Family Equality Council. During her internship, she enjoyed special opportunities to work at Boston Pride, Providence Pride, NH Pride, and hear a Massachusetts transgender rights bill pass on the house floor. In the office, April was in charge of organizing and briefing speakers for their participation in a Family Week event, in addition to securing donations and sponsorships. She concluded that the “internship has solidified [her] resolve to advocate for and celebrate the diverse LGBTQ+ community.” Further, she says that “seeing the joy and gratitude from the families really made [her] feel so lucky to have been a part of this organization and this opportunity.”

Edom Bekele '17 spent her summer with CareEpilepsy learning about how Epilepsy is treated in Ethiopia and figuring out ways to better support Epilepsy patients. In accordance with the organization’s mission of “saving lives of people with epilepsy through prevention, medical care, wellbeing and advocacy,” Bekele put much of her effort into organizing support groups for patients. Further, she recruited and raised funds for the organization. Through her work, she has come to realize that there is a great shortage of medical professionals in Ethiopia, making it clear that her intentions to “pursue a medical career [will be] valuable for [her] country.”

Charlotte Bennett '17 spent her summer with SurvJustice, where she has been able to combine her passions for research, writing, and activism. SurvJustice is a “D.C.-based national not-for-profit organization that increases the prospect of justice for all survivors through effective legal assistance that enforces victim rights and holds both perpetrators and enablers of sexual violence accountable in campus, criminal and civil systems.” At SurvJustice, Bennett had experiences as an activist, spent time learning policy and legislation, and gained a glimpse into the life of a non-profit lawyer. As an intern, she evaluated policies to determine if they met Title IX standards, influenced policy makers to reform certain legislation, provided research for grant applications, and helped SurvJustice develop various agendas.

Antonia Burdick '18 spent her summer in Washington, D.C., interning at The National Network for Youth. In going to Capitol Hill and attending panels, Burdick was exposed to different strategies to end student homelessness on the local, state, and federal level. She witnessed youth and family service providers, foster care agencies, congressmen, and senators discuss how homeless youth can best receive support and how our country can move towards ending homelessness. She found her work to be very meaningful, and enjoyed learning about the inner workings of nonprofits while experiencing life in D.C.

Amy Elinski '17 completed an internship with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS), where she assisted case agents present findings for cases of fraud. She also had the opportunity to watch several witness and victim interviews for domestic violence cases. Elinski says “the internship has furthered [her] desire to work for NCIS” and is hoping to return to the agency once she graduates.

Engaged Citizenship

Sarah Hogoboom '17 worked at Save the Children, an organization that aims to give kids around the world “a healthy start, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm.” There, she attended staff meetings, company-wide events, and discussions led by both international and domestic staff. These discussions focused on topics ranging from contraceptive practices in Somalia to assisting refugees in Greece. Hogoboom also helped the organization with an international campaign, called “Every Last Child.”

Caroline Kreidberg '17 tracked harm reduction legislation for the Drug Policy Alliance (DPA) and researched racial demographics of arrests and incarceration for drug violations. In addition, she helped the DPA consider state representatives for co-sponsorship of reform bills. Through her work, Kreidberg has learned about the “inherent ways racism is structured into many aspects of our criminal justice system.” Her internship has better prepared her for a future career in drug policy and incarceration reform.

James Mesiti '17 learned a lot about the field of public health at Double H Ranch, a camp which provides “specialized programs and year-round support for children and their families dealing with life-threatening illnesses.” Through his experiences there, he gained valuable insight into how to run a sustainable nonprofit in the field. Mesiti comments, “the internship has given me knowledge and insight that simply is not available solely in the classroom,” and expressed gratitude for having the opportunity to work with “staff that are as dedicated to the organization’s mission as [he was].”

Yuwen Michelson '17 interned over the summer at Quill.org, an organization that “provides free online tools to help low-income students become sharp writers.” She considers “literacy [...] to be one of the most important and critical skills that a person can possess,” and has been grateful to help kids become literate both with Quill and in Laos, where she taught English for two months during the summer of 2014. At Quill, in addition to her day to day intern responsibilities, Michelson devised a general intern onboarding guide and eventually earned the responsibility of managing other interns. Michelson has recently been awarded a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship to Laos, and is excited to continue working with teachers and students.

Philip Parkes '17 spent his summer with the Hiscock Legal Aid Society, an organization dedicated to promoting “the fundamental right of every person to equal justice under the law.” Parkes worked to make the organization more efficient by initiating a document digitization project and assisting the Family Court Program staff. By the end of his internship he became the primary Family Court Screener, qualifying clientele for legal services. Through these experiences, along with in-court and in-house shadowing opportunities, he has been able to affirm his passions for reading, writing, arguing, and helping others.

Silvia Radulescu '17 interned at the New York City Campaign Finance Board (NYCCFB), a nonpartisan agency dedicated to reducing corruption in political campaign processes. She worked to create an internal guidance document that provides synopses of answers to infrequently asked campaign questions. As an active citizen-student, Radulescu “[aims] to be as involved in the empowerment of citizens as [she] can,” which she was able to do at the NYCCFB and will continue to do after graduation.

Engaged Citizenship

VITA

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, 14 students participated in VITA.



Claire Han '19 works with Theo Haden as he prepares his tax return. Photo by Nancy Ford.

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)
- Hispanic Studies 229: Spanish for the Professions with Professor of Hispanic Studies Luisa Briones (spring)
- Religious Studies 133: American Freedom and Religious Thought with Hamilton College Chaplain Jeff McArn (spring)

This year, SHINE volunteers worked with adult refugees at the BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) site in Utica. Thirteen students participated in SHINE in the fall, and 31 volunteered in the spring. Together, they completed over 530 hours of volunteer time.



Project SHINE volunteer Matt Kastilahn '18 tutors Dominican Republic native Cesar Hernandez. Photo by Nancy Ford

Engaged Citizenship

Empathy Initiative

This year, the Levitt Center worked with The American Prison Writing Archive (APWA), a Digital Humanities Initiative (DHI) project directed by the Wolcott-Bartlett Professor of Literature and Creative Writing Doran Larson. APWA is the first fully searchable digital archive of non-fiction essays written by incarcerated people about their experience inside. Larson led the empathy initiative workshop in February.

The APWA provides a platform for incarcerated people to “bear witness to the conditions in which they live, to what is working and what is not inside American prisons, and where they can contribute to public debate about the American prison crisis.” The project seeks to enable Hamilton College to raise awareness and to serve as a host for public conversations with all citizens – prisoners, students, scholars, and the general public – surrounding America’s criminal justice and incarceration systems.



Professor Doran Larson meeting with Hamilton students.

During the session, those who attended helped transcribe incarcerated people’s hand-written essays into Word documents so that they could eventually be uploaded onto the archive. Prior to the transcriptions, Professor Larson facilitated discussion about the purpose and importance of the project. Afterwards he encouraged participants to reflect on their impressions of the essays and the transcription process.

The Levitt Center

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

Writing and Publicity Team: Sabrina Boutselis '19, Rylee Carrillo-Waggoner '19, Nathaniel Colburn '18, Ella Dean '17, Kara Pintye-Everett '17, Bryce Fan '20, and Amy Song '17,

Social Innovation Team: Aleksandra Bogoevska '17, Sam Carletta '17, Mary Langworthy '17, Sharon Liu '17, Emily Moschowits '16, Gerard Pozzi '18, Chidera Onyeoziri '18, Sharif Shrestha '17, Tyler Spector '19, Lisa Yang '17, and Sofia Wang '19

Leadership Team: Matt Bleich '18, Sarah Hogoboom '17, Ella Dean '17, Kara Pintye-Everett '17, James Mesiti '17, Matt Albino '19, Acacia Bowden '20, Vincent Tran '18, Daniel Horgan '18, and Gillian Mak '18

Drivers and Dispatchers: Jeremy Acosta, Kwasi Amoako, Cam Blair, Olivia Box, Mia Caterisano, Rachel Dawson, Ella Dean, Samantha Gorgon, Sarah Hogoboom, Dawit Kassa, Matthew Kastilahn, Carolyn Kossow, Hannah Lasher, Anna Maglio, Gillian Mak, Geoffrey Ravenhall Meinke, Alexander Miltenberg, Nick Pace, Ellie Pinto, Jessica Shields, Chris Wallace, and Rachel Williams

Levitt Center

Levitt Council Members and Levitt Center Staff

- **Frank Anechiarico** is the Director of the Justice and Security Program and the Maynard-Knox Professor of Government and Law.
- **John Bartle** is the Director of the Inequality and Equity Program and Associate Professor of Russian Languages and Literatures.
- **Ashley Bohrer** is the Truax Post-Doctoral Fellow in Philosophy
- **Steve Ellingson** is the Director of the Sustainability Program and Professor of Sociology.
- **Tina Hall** is an Associate Professor of Literature and Creative Writing
- **Betty House** is a Levitt Center office assistant.
- **Marianne Janack** is the Director of the Levitt Center, and the John Stewart Kennedy Chair of Philosophy.
- **Robert Knight** is an Assistant Professor of Art
- **Chaise LaDousa** is a Professor of Anthropology
- **Herm Lehman** is the Director of the Public Health and Well-Being Program and Professor of Biology.
- **Ruth Lessman** is a Levitt Center office assistant.
- **Celeste Day Moore** is an Assistant Professor of History
- **Sharon Topi** is the Coordinator of Leadership Programming.
- **Wenlu Weng** is the Community Service Intern.
- **Chris Willemssen** is the Associate Director of the Levitt Center.
- **Joel Winkelman** is the Community Based Learning Coordinator.
- **Steve Wu** is a 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
- Chris Powers, facilitator of the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Isabelle Van Hook '11, facilitator for the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Susan Mason, facilitator for the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Anke Wessels, facilitator of the Social Innovation Fellows Workshop
- Martha Freymann Miser K'75, designer and facilitator of the Institutional Change Workshop
- Steve Yank, facilitator of the Community Engagement Workshops
- Emily Moschowits '16, facilitator for the Social Innovation Fellows Program



The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center Annual Report 2016-17

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.***

*Pictured above:
Kateri Boucher '17, a Levitt Summer Research Fellow.*

