

<http://holleran.conncoll.edu>



Upcoming Events!

2.21: Class of 2009 Holleran Center Banquet, 5pm, Crozier Williams, College Center

4/9: Rap Sessions: Gender and Hip Hop, 4:30pm, Olin 014

4.25: Walk for the Homeless, 9am, Jay Street, New London



RAP SESSIONS: GENDER AND HIP HOP

At Conn, it is well known that I am a feminist as well as a "hip-hop head" and I am often questioned as to how it is possible to be both. This is a question I struggle with constantly, but one that I engaged with through an independent study last fall, and presently with a thesis on the subjects of hip-hop, media literacy, and social change. Furthermore, I am excited to bring the *Rap Sessions: Community Dialogue on Gender and Hip-Hop* panel to campus this April and involve the college and local communities in a collective effort to tackle this and related questions. Many Conn students know that hip-hop is problematic, may think its fun to dance to, but have been hesitant to engage in further critique. This panel, featuring leading hip-hop scholars and community activists, will provide a forum for further critical engagement. The panel will explore topics such as:

- Places in popular culture where gender and hip-hop intersect (from recurring date rapes involving athletes to the television programs like the Dave Chappelle Show and The Boondocks)
- How the popular images and representations associated with hip-hop affect the culture's per-



PICA Scholar
Heather Day '09

ception in the larger society and world

- How degrading images of women affect women, girls, men and boys
- Homophobia and misogyny in hip-hop as well as the misogynistic and homophobic behavior in our national culture that predates hip-hop's emergence
- What hip-hop artists and activists are presenting as alternatives to dominant representations

Rap Sessions is designed as a town hall style meeting; a large part of the event will be a Q & A session with the panelists. The goals of Rap Sessions are to help the audience think through the range of issues associated with this dilemma; place on the table the tensions and animosities between young men and women that some hip-hop music exacerbates; and finally, present young people with viable strategies they can implement in their personal lives and organizations.

Please join us on April 9th 2009 at 4:30 pm for this exciting program!

The featured panelists are: Hip-Hop Journalist Joan Morgan, author of the groundbreaking *When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost: My Life as a Hip-Hop Feminist*, Filmmaker Byron Hurt, Director of *Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes*, a film about misogyny and hip-hop, Professor Tracy Sharpley-Whiting, Director of African American and Diaspora Studies at Vanderbilt University and author of *Pimps Up, Hos Down: Hip Hop and the*

New Gender Politics, and Professor Raquel Z. Rivera, Sociology professor at Tufts University and author of *New York Ricans from the Hip Hop Zone*. The panel will be moderated by Bakari Kitwana, a journalist, activist and political analyst whose commentary on politics and youth culture have been seen on CNN, FOX News, C-Span, PBS, and heard on NPR. His 2002 book *The Hip-Hop Generation: Young Blacks and the Crisis in African American Culture*, has been adopted as a course book in classrooms at over 100 colleges and universities.

Sponsors: Student Life, CCSRE, the Holleran Center, Dean of the College Community, Unity House and Affiliated Student Clubs, Dean of Multicultural Affairs, Gender and Women's Studies, American Studies, History, English, Human Development and Sociology.

For more info, visit:

www.rapsessionsorg/featured



Deena Kimmel '10 Organizes Local Conference to Promote Peace in Israel and Palestine



As a PICA student, I have had the ability to be a part of some amazing and important experiences. This semester, as part of the PICA Junior Seminar, we had to find an organization or group that we wanted to volunteer with each week. Since I am interested in working to promote peace between Israelis and Palestinians, I went in search of an organization or group that did just that. Through my search, I came across a group from the First Congregational Church of Old Lyme that was planning the Tree of Life Conference on Israel and Palestine. Thus began the start of another amazing and important experience.

After weeks of planning and publicizing, the Conference finally arrived. Even though I had sat in on all of the meetings and had been a part of the preparation for the Conference, I really had no idea what to expect. I must admit that I was nervous. The Tree of Life Conference was meant to bring together NGO representatives, religious leaders, and academics from all three of the Abrahamic faiths to discuss their hopes for the future of Israel and Palestine. There was no doubt in my mind that this situation would create some tension. However, I was pleasantly surprised. Over the course of the Conference, I realized that the majority of the speakers, no matter what background they came from, wanted the same things for Israel and Palestine. In most cases, they even called for the same solution: a two-state solution. I do not want to completely sugarcoat the Conference, however. There were speakers that did disagree on some of the fundamental issues. However, these disagreements were actually most valuable to me because I was able to learn the different sides of the argument and

Tree of Life Conference Continued...

better understand where the speakers, and those that agree with them, were coming from.

I was also extremely inspired by the members of the Conference that provided “parables of hope” for the future. So much of what we hear about the situation in Israel and Palestine is depressing and discouraging. But, as this Conference confirmed, there are many organizations and individuals that are providing hope for the situation and some potentially workable solutions. From the presentations of “Hand in Hand: Center for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel” and “Tent of Nations” to the duets of an Israeli classical pianist and a Palestinian operatic soprano, it became clear that there are agents of change that are working to improve the crisis between Israel and Palestine. The Tree of Life Conference was an eye-opening experience for me and has made me want to continue to work for peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

NEW PICA SCHOLARS BEGIN COMMUNITY PROJECTS

The new PICA scholars have begun their unique educational pathway in the program. This semester the scholars are participating in the Holleran Center’s gateway class: Public Policy and Social Ethics and the Community Learning Practicum. The course is taught by the Holleran Center’s Postdoctoral Fellow, Jessica Mulligan, and the Community Learning Instructor Rebecca McCue. The Community Learning Practicum is designed to complement the gateway course. Together, the two courses provide students with mutually reinforcing classroom and community action experiences. The course provides practical

opportunities to engage in community-based public policy and social ethics work. Students learn how community-based organizations work, acquire active citizenship skills, and contribute to advancing the New London community.

This semester students had the choice to participate in one of three community projects. Two student groups are working with the Community Health Center of New London. One group is conducting a survey with patients on access to health care. The second group is creating a film for the Community Health Center that will inform and educate patients about the services and resources available to them. While contributing their time and talents, students will be gaining a critical understanding of complex social issues related to healthcare.

The third group is working with the Homeless Hospitality Center in New London to plan the second annual Walk for the Homeless. Students are planning a three mile walk that follows the path of many of the homeless in New London. The route will pass by the Homeless Hospitality day center on Jay Street, the night shelter at the St. James Church on Huntington Avenue and the New London Community Meals Center on Montauk Avenue. These are some of the sites where homeless members of our community receive meals and services. Students are spending time volunteering at these sites to gain a better understanding of the daily issues facing the homeless. The goal of the walk is to raise money for the Center and raise awareness about homelessness. The walk has been scheduled for April 25, 2009.

NEWEST HOLLERAN CENTER PICA SCHOLARS

Nineteen members of the Connecticut College Class of 2011 have been accepted and enrolled into the Holleran Center’s certificate Program in Community Action and Public Policy. The newest PICA Scholars represent majors from thirteen departments and programs across the College, and will engage in a correspondingly wide range of policy studies. Congratulations Class of 2011!

- Jordan Banks
- Asia Bento
- Molly Bierman
- Annie Bigwood
- Trisha Bogar
- Briana Borenstein
- Emma Bruggeman
- Pamela Charpie
- Carra Cheslin
- Eliana Fischel
- Feliz-Aurora Gonzales
- Nicole LaConte
- Sarah Murphy
- Margaret Rogers
- Julie Sizer
- Hayley Sullivan
- Kristen Tamburro
- Natalie Theys
- Felipe Valencia

Holleran Center Staff

- Sunil Bhatia, Director
- Tracee Reiser
- Rebecca McCue
- Jessica Mulligan
- Kiesha Henry

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVE GRANT WINNERS



Funding innovative solutions to campus and community challenges

The Holleran Center awarded four \$500 grants to students who submitted proposals for the 4th annual Social Entrepreneurship Initiative. The program, initially established by a generous gift from alumna Trish May '75, inspires students to creatively pursue lasting social change on campus and in the broader community. Heather Day '09 received funding to support the implementation of a town hall dialogue on campus about gender and hip hop. Herbert Bennett Jr. '09 received funding to implement poetry and creative writing workshops and poetry slams with community adolescents. Gabrielle Kaminsky '09 received funding for the creation of a photography exhibit documenting the experiences of Connecticut College student volunteers working and learning in New London. Stefanie Hinman '10 received funding for an international alter-

native break and medical project in Kabermaido, Uganda. Connecticut College students, many of whom are EMT certified and pre-med, will bring much needed medical supplies donated by local hospitals and healthcare organizations and engage in volunteer work in an orphanage.

TWO HOLLERAN CENTER MEMBERS RECEIVE MLK SERVICE AWARDS

Connecticut College presented its 2nd annual Dr. Martin Luther King Service awards at the Commemoration ceremony in Evans Hall on January 23. The awards are given to a faculty, staff, student and student from the community for upholding the legacy of King’s work with a commitment to social justice and service to underrepresented communities. Two of this year’s awardees are members of the Holleran Center: Faculty Director, Sunil Bhatia and PICA Scholar Heather Day, Class of 2009. In addition, The Holleran Center’s Administrative Assistant, Kiesha Henry sang at the event.