



## 2025 Abstracts

Presented by seniors in  
Pathways, Centers and  
Certificate Programs at the  
All College Symposium,  
November 6, 2025

# **AMMERMAN CENTER FOR ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

## **Phoebe Drohan**

Come Jam With Us: A Sonic Exchange

Sound, as an exchange between music and individuals, is at tension with the expanding digital world that challenges a physical sense of community. My SIP will explore this tension through the creation of an immersive sound installation/instrument that will rely on collaboration, fostering a sense of community while capturing the effects of a shared sound experience using analogue and digital elements. What effect does collaboration have on the individual experience? How can we utilize our individual experiences to find connection?

Global/Local Engagement: Summer Classes at Bristol Recording Studios in Boston, MA

## **Joseph Gendron**

Au-nimation: An Animated Story of My Autistic Development

This project will be a presentation of my work for my senior integrative project at the Ammerman Centre. I will be making an animated short documenting my struggle with autism and how much I have overcome. I will be using software such as Adobe Animate to make the animation possible and along the way, experiment with animation techniques, color designs, sound effects, and voiceover. For some of my scenes, I plan to have activity in my brain, interaction with others, noise sensitivity, and a scene where I fidget.

Global/Local Engagement: Intern at the Rhode Island Film and Television Office, Summer 2025

## **Maria Girgis**

Path to Entrepreneurship: Attempting to Use AI as an Assistant for Creation

Artists and Software engineers are some of the first jobs that are brought up in the dialogue of AI stealing our jobs. Follow a computer science and arts student with a drive for entrepreneurship try and use AI as a tool to assist creation, in an attempt to evolve with AI instead of being left behind!

Global/Local Engagement: AIT Budapest - Study abroad in Budapest Hungary

## **Jonah Hane**

The Human Baseline: A Performance Exploring Identity in a Digital Age

"The Human Baseline" is an immersive performance incorporating live acting with audio-visual media projection. This experience features a physical actor and a digital double sharing a single space, using collaged text to explore themes of identity, AI, and digital communication. Through the lens of Queer Theory, the piece explores digital identity as both a means of liberating queer individuals and marginalizing and dehumanizing populations. "The Human Baseline" works to both speak to the creator's personal story and experiences, and predict where we are heading.

Global/Local Engagement: Intern at Shakespeare and Company as a Board Technician for their Summer Season of 2025, from July to August.

## **Willow Lopez**

Our Stolen Futures

“Stolen Futures” refers to promises of the future for marginalized communities being sacrificed for the sake of technological advancement with its roots in creating a more “Western” future. In pursuing the documentation of my identity as a Chicano with a deep history intertwined with the US’s involvement with Mexico, this solo storytelling experience acts as a call to action to dream of a future made for us. Using technology such as projectors, Arduino, and motors to fill in this solo performance of personal stories and lessons, this project exists to envision what these “Stolen Future” could be.

Global/Local Engagement: University of New Mexico Mellon Mays Summer Research Program, 3 week research program over Summer 2025

## **Isaac Merwin**

DALI: Dependent and Lonely Intelligence

These days you can come across a rover delivering food, digital profiling while shopping, or even a small bipedal robot. Public spaces have increasingly become not just the realm of humans. How do we react to integrations of artificial intelligence and intelligent space in our everyday lives: Do we embrace it? Do we hate it? I am complicating these questions with an interactive installation that uses D.A.L.I. a visually personified chatbot that users can interact with today, raising even more questions when people are confronted with intelligence that doesn’t help them, but needs them.

Global/Local Engagement: In Houston Texas I interned at an Architecture Startup MADAPS where I created renderings and helped with daily responsibilities

# **CCSRE (Center for the Critical Study of Race and Ethnicity)**

## **SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

### **Priscilla Ameyaw**

Reflections in Black: An Intercontinental Exploration of Racialization, Blackness, Resistance, and Identity

This study investigates the racial designation of "Black" under Jim Crow and apartheid, where Blackness symbolized inferiority, marginalization, and subordination. It examines how these regimes defined, controlled, and militarized Black identity, exploring physical, psychological, and societal impacts, and their lasting influence on modern racial realities in the U.S. and South Africa. Using a comparative, multidisciplinary approach, historical study, oral interviews, and autoethnographic reflection, it highlights how Blackness remains a target of dehumanization while also revealing resilience. By linking history and lived experience, the project contributes to conversations on racial identity, memory, solidarity, and strategies for liberatory futures.

Global/Local Engagement: Stellenbosch University study abroad, Health Equity Fellow and Democracy Fellow internships, Summer 25.

### **Nina Bakum**

Built-Environment and Maternal Mortality: An Exploration of Reproductive Healthcare in Massachusetts

Severe maternal morbidity (SMM) is the rate of labor/deliveries that result in short term or long term health consequences for birthing persons, while severe maternal mortality refers to the rate of labors that result in death for birthing persons. Massachusetts has one of the lowest rates of severe maternal mortality but one of the highest rates of morbidity. This presentation will outline my honor's thesis, and explore what SMM is, how segregation and systemic racial bias from slavery to modern day healthcare has created major disparities in maternal healthcare, and SMM for Black and Brown people in Massachusetts.

Global/Local Engagement: Fall 2025/26 - an exploration of what SMM looks like globally in comparison to the local/how to address it

### **Westley Cardani**

Toward a Future-Oriented Present: Afrofuturist & Queer-Futurist YA Literature in Classrooms

This project, as part of my English thesis, examines Afrofuturism, queer futurity, YA literature, and liberatory pedagogy – and how they come together to create new possibilities for being/becoming in classroom spaces. In my thesis, I engage with Young Adult literature that qualifies as Afrofuturist, queer-futurist, or both, and perform close readings in conversation with theory from various disciplines. For the symposium, I will discuss Afrofuturism and queer futurity, provide an overview of certain pedagogies, and then emphasize the importance of Black, queer, and/or trans\* children being able to dream liberatory futures for themselves and the world.

Global/Local Engagement: Summer 2024: study abroad in South Africa at University of Stellenbosch. Summer 2025: internship with Forest Foundation and City Sprouts.

## **Gaby Henao**

Colorism and Ethnic Pride: How Historic Biases Shape Modern Latinas' Lives

Colorism is the process that privileges lighter-skinned people of color over darker-skinned people of color in areas such as income, education, housing, jobs, and the marriage market. This form of discrimination especially affects adolescent females, given that this age emphasizes physical appearance, causing girls to feel insecure about their phenotype. This presentation is a qualitative narrative study on how colorism impacts adolescent Colombian Latinas, specifically in three areas: Internalized racial attitudes and body image, bicultural identity and ethnic pride, and educational attainment and disparities.

Global/Local Engagement: Living between Colombia and Florida, I learned firsthand how colorism divides Latino communities, changing how I view my identity.

## **Caroline LaMantia**

Race as a Risk Marker: Spanish Interpretation Services Evaluation at L+M

Racial, ethnic, and language biases in healthcare are well documented but remain difficult to address in practice. In partnership with Lawrence + Memorial Hospital (L+M) in New London, I developed a survey for Spanish-speaking inpatients to evaluate access to interpretation services and overall patient satisfaction with their care. This project examines how ethnic and language biases may shape patient care at L+M and proposes sustainable strategies to reduce such disparities. My presentation highlights survey findings and explores solutions for promoting equitable healthcare practices.

Global/Local Engagement: Limited English Proficiency Patient Volunteer at Lawrence + Memorial Hospital in New London, rounding on Spanish-speaking patients since September 2024

## **Lucy Morrison**

Eugenics in Genetics: The Living Movement

A comparative study of eugenicist rhetoric in genetics-based publications over time that aims to define how eugenics persists in scientific academia. The discussion will begin with a quick background of the origins of eugenics and eugenicist publications. Then, I will cover the first part of my research methodology: analyzing the content of popular genetics academic publications from 1960, 1980, 2000, and 2020. The second part of my methodology is a discussion of modern day (2025) scientific publications/news and analyzing them alongside contemporary issues. I will end drawing conclusions about the legacy of eugenics in modern scientific spaces.

Global/Local Engagement: Interning with a botany lab 2025 & Volunteering opportunities on campus (like the Office of Sustainability and local New London opportunities)

# **CISLA**

## **(Toor Cummings Center for International Studies and Liberal Arts)**

### **SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

#### **Jenifer Alvarado**

Civil Disillusionment: Citizens' Perceptions of Governance in Guayaquil, Ecuador

My project investigates the relationship between rights awareness and citizens' perceptions of the Ecuadorian government. Building on two internships with civil rights attorneys in Guayaquil, where I observed disparities between citizens' trust of legal structures and their trust in government; I analyzed this gap through survey data collection. The survey assessed demographic factors, civic knowledge, and perceptions of both federal and local government. Combining qualitative and quantitative data with Ecuador's historical and constitutional context, this interdisciplinary study seeks to illustrate how education, access and civic literacy shape democratic trust.

Global/Local Engagement: 1.5-month legal internship in Guayaquil, Ecuador (2024); 3-month paralegal apprenticeship in Guayaquil, Ecuador (Summer 2025)

#### **Delaney Brenner**

Decolonizing Health in Madagascar: A Francophone Perspective

Madagascar, now an independent country for 65 years, was a French colony from the late 1800s until 1960. During this period, many aspects of Malagasy culture were devalued and replaced with Western practices. The impact of French colonization and the legacies that remain will be explored within the context of healthcare. This project includes an exposition of traditional medicinal practices, major changes during colonization, and commentary on the current situation (informed by first-hand experiences in the capital). The issue is treated through historical, scientific, and political lenses derived from various French-language sources, with both French and Malagasy origins.

Global/Local Engagement: Avotra ONG, Antananarivo, Madagascar: May-August 2025

#### **Caleb Butler**

A True Story, An Untrue Story: Mythologizing National History in Augustan Rome

Virgil's Aeneid posits Rome as a nation built upon migrants and indigenous Italian communities, while also centering around the idea that the establishment of a new "Roman" people necessitates immense social unrest and violent conflict – a near direct echo of recent Roman history witnessed by Virgil. I am studying how the literary characterization of the different groups of Italian peoples shapes the presentation of Roman history and identity, of what it truly means to be Roman in the moment in which the Aeneid was written, focusing on the Aeneid's hand in creating a new historical mythology for Rome.

Global/Local Engagement: Study abroad at The Centro, Rome: Fall 2024; 6-week independent faculty-directed research internship in numerous Italian towns/cities: Summer 2025

## **Catie Clarke**

Proxy Warfare and the Cost of Nuclear Deterrence Strategy

Nuclear deterrence has been the dominant international strategy since the beginning of US-Soviet nuclear stockpiling post-WWII. While in France, I interned with a disarmament organization concerned about the implications of this policy. This project explores how nuclear deterrence, while reducing the likelihood of direct conflict between major powers, encourages them to engage in 'proxy wars.' These conflicts allow nuclear states to avoid the costs of confrontation while shifting the burden onto weaker 'proxy' states. By examining two cases of deterrence-driven proxy wars, this project highlights how deterrence strategy creates instability and suffering for weaker states.

Global/Local Engagement: French immersion Study Abroad, Fall 2024; Internship with IDN in France, Summer 2025

## **Eli Craddock**

The Collapse of Coffee: How the International Coffee Agreement Affected Global Trade

The first iteration of the International Coffee Agreement (ICA) was established to stabilize coffee prices, create export quotas, and ensure equitable pricing between both coffee-producing and coffee-consuming countries. Following the end of the ICA's regulatory period, there was a newfound free market trade period in the coffee production and consumption world. This project explores the role— or lackthereof— of domestic institutions in Colombia and Perú in mitigating or exacerbating the consequences of trade liberalization policies.

Global/Local Engagement: Spanish Immersion: study abroad (Spring 2025), internship in Granada, Spain (Summer 2025), internship in Cochabamba, Bolivia (Summer 2024)

## **Dixie Dayton**

Nonverbal Communication in Language Acquisition: Analyzing Mandarin-Russian Speakers' English Online

This project will use the open-ended source of visual media platforms to analyze the nonverbal communication of native Mandarin Chinese and Russian speakers when creating content in English, including their eye contact, hand gestures, and social distancing. My goal is to explore how native language influences nonverbal communication when speaking a foreign language. In the current political state of the world, this analysis also can help to inform the fields of cross-cultural communication, second-language acquisition, and international relations.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away CET Beijing Spring 2025; SPICE Hong Kong Internship Summer 2025

## **Kahron Gaul-Blakley**

Identity and Inclusion: Black Experiences in Post-War Germany

My presentation focuses on the transatlantic cultural and social exchange between Europe and the United States, and specifically the experiences of black minorities in the post-war period of Germany. Striving for inclusion, minority groups are able to have their thoughts voiced which allows other groups to understand them better. This summer, through my CISLA internship, I began researching this topic by analyzing historical contexts and contemporary issues through documentaries and scholarly works. Ultimately, I aim to show how black individuals in Germany have initiated a sense of belonging in a society where they were rarely embraced or acknowledged.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away: Freie Universität Berlin (Feb - May 2025) and Internship: Freiburg and Berlin Germany

## **Kai Gee**

Subsiding Sustainability: Japan's Gamble on Market Based Energy Reform

Continued reliance on conventional fossil fuel sources, while neglecting social costs has created vulnerabilities in Japan's energy system. Addressing vulnerability, whilst reducing the social costs associated with energy use remains a major challenge for policymakers in Tokyo. After the 2011 Fukushima nuclear accident, Feed-in-tariffs came into place, later becoming Feed-in-premiums in 2022. Based on my internship at the Renewable Energy Institute in Tokyo, I plan to research this transition, focusing on its societal impact. In spring, I hope to have answered: to what extent has the change from FIT to FiP generated negative externalities?

Global/Local Engagement: Tokyo, Japan, Institute of Sustainable Energy Policies (ISEP), [May 6- July 31] 2025

## **Eisha Giran**

Invisible Shipwrecks & Neurological Endangerment: The Trade-Off in Seeking Asylum

Every year, thousands of asylum seekers risk their lives crossing the Atlantic to reach Spain, often in small, overcrowded boats. The journey entails undocumented shipwrecks and disappearances, yet the neurological toll remains largely unexamined. Following a summer at a neuroimaging center in Barcelona specializing in psychiatric and neurological disorders, this project investigates how migration-related trauma manifests in neural systems. By bridging neuropsychological methods with culturally informed, human-centered frameworks of care, I aim to uncover hidden neurological consequences of forced migration. Ultimately, this work seeks interventions and policies that recognize both biological realities and cultural dimensions of human healing.

Global/Local Engagement: FIDMAG Hermanas Hospitalarias in Barcelona advances mental health, integrating neuroscience, genetics, and psychology to improve diagnosis and treatment. 8 weeks.

## **Clare Hummer**

Third Spaces in the Chinese Context

My project explores three main places acting as Third Spaces (places of community) in China: museums, temples, and malls. Looking at these three places, I will use raw data (videos, pictures, sketches, and



audio) gathered from my faculty-guided research abroad during the summer of 2025. I plan to use the data gathered from my research to convey how third spaces are important in Chinese culture and what we could learn from it in a multimedia work.

Global/Local Engagement: Taiwan Mandarin Institute Chu-Kuo Fellowship, National Taiwan University Study Away, China CISLA Summer Abroad

## **Tandin Johnson Ward**

Public Spaces as Sites of Protest in Kreuzberg, Berlin

My study will investigate the use of public spaces in the Kreuzberg neighborhood of Berlin as sites of protest. I will focus on protests surrounding issues of political discourse, development, immigration, and neighborhood control. I will study locations such as Görlitzer Park, Oranienplatz, and Kottbusser Tor, as representations of the demonstrations and changes that the neighborhood has seen since Germany's reunification in 1991. This study will examine how expressions of dissent have evolved, how these spaces have developed in response to or despite protests, and which populations use or are controlled in these spaces.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away Fall 2025 - Internship Give Something Back to Berlin Summer 2025

## **Hope Kisakye**

Bridging Tradition and Innovation: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Vernacular Architecture

Growing climate challenges and concerns over the sustainability of current building practices have increased research into vernacular architecture. This research has generated divided responses: on one hand, we find a strong advocacy for the adoption of vernacular principles, and on the other, a more critical approach that challenges idealised assumptions about its benefits. Drawing upon three case studies from Latin America, this study aims to establish a middle ground, distinguishing the verified truths of vernacular architecture from common assumptions. The overarching goal is to define an interdisciplinary approach towards the study and integration of vernacular architecture into contemporary architectural solutions.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away (UAM/CIEE), Mérida, México (Fall '24); Architectural Intern with El Terreno, Guaranda, Ecuador (Summer '25)

## **Sabrina Malec**

Taiwan as a Queer Utopia: Discussing Queerness Across the Sinophone World

In 2019, Taiwan became the first country in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage, news that spread like wildfire throughout the international media sphere. As a result, Taiwan has become known as a beacon of equality in Asia. Queer activism and expression in Taiwan are allowed and often encouraged, which I observed during my internship. In contrast, China exhibits itself as less open to the queer community. As recently as 2023, the Chinese government forced LGBT organizations to close, and censored media depicting same-sex relationships. In what ways do our impressions reflect the experiences of queers in these countries?

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away & Internship; Taipei, Taiwan -- Internship: Taiwan Equality Campaign (LGBT Civil Service Organization) Spring/Summer 2025

## **Leah Mayerhauser**

Trading Futures: Georgia's Economic Path to the European Union

Georgia stands at a crossroads, navigating a future oriented towards the European Union, yet still existing in Russia's shadow. Through my research, I will examine Georgia's post-Soviet economic relationships with the EU and Russia, focusing on EU accession efforts, trade agreements, and the impact of regional conflicts. Particular emphasis is given to SME development and expanded trade as mechanisms for alignment, with case studies illustrating opportunities and obstacles. By exploring the benefits and challenges of aligning with the EU versus Russia, I highlight the role of economic integration in shaping Georgia's future amid renewed regional aggression.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away in Tbilisi, Georgia (Spring 2025) and internship at TBSC Consulting (Summer 2025) in Tbilisi.

## **Eliza McCoole**

Zoning and Public Transportation in Chinese and Taiwanese Cities

China and Taiwan have accommodated population booms, mitigated poverty, and maintained community accessibility through its city planning and massive investment in public transportation as well as roads, while the United States becomes increasingly car dependent. My research project will analyze the contemporary city- and public transportation planning practices in major cities in these countries, informed by historical background, and observe how they have affected communities. This research will be informed by my semester in Shanghai, China, and internship in Taipei, Taiwan, and will culminate in a literature review.

Global/Local Engagement: Spring 2025 study away in Shanghai, China, Summer 2025 Internship at Community Services Center for International Community in Taipei, Taiwan

## **Anna Olivia Nielsen**

Comparing the Integration of Ukrainian and Other Single Refugee Women in Germany

During the so-called Summer of Migration in 2015, Germany's Willkommenskultur or "culture of welcome" represented a call for accepting refugees and encouraging support of civil society in their integration. Despite the legal differences and perpetual discrimination faced by persons outside the largely white, Christian common denominator of Europe in Germany, research on the racialization of Eastern Europeans is scarce. This inconspicuous racism serves as the foundation of my research. This past summer I worked with Migration Attorney Jenny Fleischer and my CISLA SIP compares the integration experiences of Ukrainian and other single refugee women in Germany.

Global/Local Engagement: Spring 2025 Study Away at Freie Universität Berlin and CISLA Summer Internship at Fleischer Law Office in Berlin

## **Sebastian Parilov**

Beyond Borders: Comparing Personality, Depression, and Self-Defining Memories Across Russian Students

In this project, I want to examine how cultural context influences personality, depression, and self-defining memories among Russian college students living in Russia, Serbia, and the United States. By comparing these groups, I aim to understand how different sociocultural environments shape individual differences and identity development. Participants will complete personality and depression assessments and provide a self-defining memory, offering both quantitative and qualitative insights.

Global/Local Engagement: Two months in Belgrade Serbia, assisting a psychology professor with a perception experiment

## **Roman Perrotto**

Trauma, Memory, and Narrative Identity: Intergenerational Effects in Atomic Bomb Survivor Families

This thesis examines the intergenerational effects of trauma, memory, and narrative identity within atomic bomb survivor (hibakusha) families. Drawing on qualitative interviews, independently conducted during my internship with NPO ANT-Hiroshima from May to June 2025, with survivors, their children, and grandchildren, the study explores how experiences of catastrophic violence are communicated, silenced, or reinterpreted across generations. Using thematic analysis, it investigates emotional inheritance, family dynamics, and the role of narrative in shaping selfhood. By situating personal testimonies within historical and cultural contexts, the research contributes to psychological and trauma studies while underscoring the enduring human legacy of nuclear devastation.

Study Away (Kyoto, Japan), Spring 2025; Internship at ANT-Hiroshima, Summer 2025; Funded Sophomore Research Program, Summer 2024

## **Stephanie Reyes Bravo**

Más que madres: Maternal Health and the Invisible Struggles of Motherhood

Mothers are often defined solely by their children, yet maternal health is deeply shaped by social, cultural, and structural challenges. This study examines Hispanic mothers' experiences with housing insecurity, displacement, and limited community support, drawing on observations from Hogar de María in Barcelona. It explores how these stressors intersect with maternal malnutrition, a critical factor influencing neonatal biochemical markers, microbiome development, and infant outcomes. By linking sociocultural struggles to biological consequences, this research highlights the overlooked dimensions of maternal and newborn health and underscores the need for holistic, community-based approaches to maternal care.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship - Hogar de Maria: Barcelona, Spain, Summer 2025

## **Sylvia Richards-Peranich**

The Relationship Between Art and Politics through Public Art in Milan

I believe art and politics are similar in how they interact with the surrounding space and people. In this project, I examine the relationship between art and politics through many works of public art in Milan, Italy. To create this project I have interned at an art collective in Milan and have documented many forms of public art. I will turn my findings into a book that shows photos of the public art and descriptions of the art in regards to Italy's politics.

Global/Local Engagement: In Milan, I studied abroad at IES this spring and had an internship at Viafarini (an art collective) this summer.

## **Gray Ruffer**

Reflections of a Queer Latvia: How the Past has Shaped Contemporary Activism

In this project, I explore the history of past Latvian occupations and different governmental regimes by tracing the role they have played into the ephemerality and openness of queerness, paying particular attention to legal standing and the mediascape. I then look from the past to reflect on the traditional authenticity of modern queer activism in the wake of the 20th anniversary of Riga Pride by utilizing informal and formal interviews, as well as personal experience from interning with Active Rainbow during the summer of 2025, one of the longest standing queer focused international NGOs in Latvia.

Global/Local Engagement: Riga, Latvia. Study away and Internship Spring and Summer 2025. Russian (Spring) and Queer Studies (Summer).

## **Matthew Sharretts**

Sovereign CAT Bonds: Disaster Risk Financing in the Era of Climate Change

Climate change is intensifying the frequency and severity of natural disasters, exposing governments to escalating fiscal shocks and demonstrating the inadequacy of traditional disaster financing. Sovereign catastrophe (CAT) bonds offer an innovative solution to this problem, providing a rapid post-disaster response and recovery. This paper will utilize existing literature and case studies to evaluate the effectiveness, structural features, and institutional support propping up sovereign catastrophe bond issuance. This financial instrument provides a new method of disaster financing, while current barriers still prevent its issuance from occurring on a widespread scale.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship in Luxembourg City, Luxembourg at Convex Insurance, May - July 2025

## **Caelan Stewart**

Morocco's Three-Pillar Counterterrorism Strategy

My senior integrative project examines Morocco's strategy to combat violent extremism, with a specific focus on the country's three-pillar approach, which emphasizes security, socio-economic development,

and religious dialogue. Morocco has a unique role as a close U.S. counterterrorism ally while navigating the politically volatile North Africa region and bordering the Sahel, known as the global epicenter of violent extremism. The country's counterterrorism strategy has largely been successful in deterring and preventing attacks. However, it is not without criticism, particularly concerning human rights abuses and the significant number of Moroccan citizens involved in global terrorism.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away: Middlebury CV Starr Schools Abroad Rabat, Morocco (Spring 2025) Internship: High Atlas Foundation Marrakech, Morocco (Summer 2025)

# **CREATIVITY PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

## **Ava Mary Aloia**

An Actor's Training and the Empowering of a Human Being

When we learn the fundamentals of acting for the stage, we begin to gain tools that strengthen our humanity and quality of life. We learn how to understand our bodies and minds. We learn how to overcome obstacles and we learn how to break through barriers. We learn empathy and we embrace all facets of the human experience. Through my own experience aboard and here at Connecticut College, I've seen how the performing arts can set us free. My presentation will examine how the training of an actor coincides with the empowering of a human being.

Global/Local Engagement: At the British American Drama Academy, London, I studied theater during the spring semester of junior year.

## **Gideon Bernstein**

What is Equitable Education Policy?

This presentation is a summary of my 3.5 years at Conn studying Education and Psychology and how my journey has been shaped by experiences.

Global/Local Engagement: Education Policy Intern at American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC, Summer 2025

## **Allison Bull**

Community in Nature: Art as an Act of Care for Our Planet

A reflection of living in Earth House and advocating for its preservation, my integrative project focuses on how creativity impacts notions of home. Through reflecting on Earth House, I will explore how my lived experiences have intersected with my inquiry into creativity to inform how I view "home", both as a physical space and an emotion. As an ode to the incredible art found inside Earth House, I will draw upon specific pieces that have been especially influential to me.

Global/Local Engagement: Connecticut College, Spring '24- '25, efforts to preserve Earth House through archival process

## **Aoife Butler**

Everyone Joins a Band: Collaborative Art in a Disconnected World

In an era defined by hyperconnectivity, individuals often feel isolated despite constant stimulation. My presentation explores how shared artistic practices can restore connection, agency, and a collective purpose. Drawing from experiences in musical ensembles, artistic activism, and community projects, I

explore how creativity functions not only as a product but as a shared practice that counters alienation and sensory overload. Collaborative art offers a way out of social, emotional, and political paralysis, promoting shared responsibility, transforming isolated participants into engaged, empowered, and active contributors in society.

Global/Local Engagement: Studying abroad in Copenhagen introduced me to *hygge*, where intentional community, slow living, and a shared purpose offer an antidote to the constant overload of modern society.

## **Julia Conner**

Storytelling as a Medium of Communication Between Healthcare Providers and Patients

In this presentation, I explore how storytelling can be used for more effective communication between healthcare providers and their patients. Along with discussing both my experiences as a provider in the mental healthcare field and as a patient for a chronic pain condition, I review how my coursework and research at Conn have informed my Animating Question and my insights.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship at Lifeline for ME, Livermore Falls, ME. June-August 2025. Mental health case management and group work.

## **Ainsley Cornwall**

Exploring Modern Misconceptions of History & Translating Them to Today

This presentation explores the idea of how perspectives of history can change over time. I will reveal how my study away experiences helped give me a more globalized perspective, while indicating misconceptions that may be had about Ancient history and how that has connected to my studies at Connecticut College. This will specifically be seen through different Art projects that I have produced to counteract the ideas of misinterpretation and show cross cultural representations that have been my creative outlet to translate this subject matter to others.

Global/Local Engagement: Williamstown Theater Festival internship - Summer 2025, Williamstown, MA. working as production staff and in the costume shop, supporting the shows.

## **Elyse D'Amato**

Preserving Humanity Within Art

How do creatives preserve and pass on our artistic legacies? I have been thinking about how I do my part to pass forward what I have learned from those before me to the next generation. In dance, we often speak about being part of a whole and being part of a community which spans back decades. Every dancer comes from a family tree of their teachers and their teachers' teachers. It preserves the past in an embodied and human way, a time when art is at a point of jeopardy due to technological advances and encroachment into artistic spaces.

Global/Local Engagement: Working at Dance Studio in Old Saybrook since September 2025

## **Kathleen Edison**

Is Everyone Creative? Exploring Curiosity, Flow, and Questioning Within the Human Brain

Rather than locating creativity in a single brain region, my work frames creativity as a universal human capacity, accessible through curiosity, questioning, and flow states. Building on my research from Copenhagen, Rubin's concept of "tuning in", and Berger's framework of "Why-What if-How", my study emphasizes creativity as a mindset rather than a measurable trait. By reframing curiosity as an everyday practice and problem solving as inherently creative, I highlight how creativity sustains engagement, prevents stagnation, and drives innovation throughout all settings. Ultimately, fostering creativity is less about the physical product, and more about exercising our brain.

Global/Local Engagement: Research assistantship under Mette Frandsen at DIS in Copenhagen, DK during my semester abroad (Fall '24).

## **Allison Flemington**

How does Art Function as an Act of Care for our Planet?

There lies something similar in the act of running a brush across a canvas and in the act of moving earth, shovel and hands working to plant a seed in the soil. Art is a tool we use to understand the world through what we create, to fill our heads and worlds with what we love. We can use it to create a personal relationship with the world around us. I will discuss the links between nature and art, why this is so important, and how this can be used to foster community and create a sense of place.

Global/Local Engagement: New London Trees Urban Forestry Internship: May-August 2025. In New London, advocated and cared for urban trees.

## **Devon Galizio**

Humans Evolved Survival Instincts and Perception of the Built Environment

Human perception of our built environment comes from our evolved survival instincts and environmental preferences. Our behavioral responses to external stimuli, such as light, color, and spatial layout, are a result of our ancestral drive to survive. As a result, we seek environments that support our needs via safety, resources, and comfort.

Global/Local Engagement: I went on a trip through Conn in the summer of 2024 called the Archaeological Conservation Institute.

## **Maisie Higgins**

Cultivating Creativity Alongside The Internet

Creativity can be used as a tool for dealing with mental fatigue caused by the internet. My anthropology classes taught me the importance of narrative and economic oppression, pathway class taught me what creativity is. My internships showed me arts education in both non-profit and educational settings. Creativity is a mindset that encourages community and complex thinking directly countering effects of the internet.



Global/Local Engagement: June-August: office intern at CSArts SGV, Duarte CA and intern at The Soraya, Northridge CA

## **Kate Jeffrey**

Artists Don't Need to Starve

Let's release the trope of artists as baristas and trust fund babies, and talk about the ways in which the average creative capitalizes on their talents. With a focus on fiction writers (because I am one), I explore the rift between passion and practicality most artists face throughout their careers.

Global/Local Engagement: Minor Myers Fellowship: Interviewed working fiction writers across the U.S., Summer 2025

## **Emma Linder**

Creativity as a Catalyst for Connection, Well-being, and Authenticity

This poster explores how creativity shapes connection, identity, and belonging. Through dance and performance, it becomes a language for self-expression and community. In language learning, creative strategies foster authenticity and bridge cultural gaps, turning vulnerability into connection. Drawing on psychology, dance, and cross-cultural experiences, this project shows how creative practices generate spaces where people feel seen, supported, and empowered to express their fullest selves.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Abroad in Seville, Fall 2024: Tutored English, took Flamenco dance, and studied Psychology of Second Language Learning.

## **Remy Lombardi**

Is Education an End in Itself?

Does education have to be for something? Public education and higher ed have been a hot topic both socially and politically in the last few years. My question strives to reinterpret the ways we think about and define education and our personal pursuits of knowledge. I will attempt to assert that education is a type of striving that is instrumental in creating a more harmonious understanding of the self, and is a good that continues to promote itself. I aim to spend time teaching in order to continue examining how education shapes our world, and how our world shapes education.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Abroad. Athens, Greece in Spring 2025. Examined how education differs across cultures, and how cultures shape views of education.

## **Elora Maxwell**

Legacy: The Life of Art Beyond Its Medium

Art does not exist in a vacuum. It lives through the artists who make it, and the audience who receives it. This presentation examines a study of the lasting effects the creation of art has on a community and individual level, specifically works of theater. I will explore how artists hold the power to create change,

build community, and foster healing through their work— both for themselves, and those who get to experience it.

Global/Local Engagement: Guest performer and artistic collaborator with the One Year Lease theater company in Papingo, Greece, over the summer of 2025.

## **Palmer Okai**

The Death of Human Thought? What AI Could Mean for Human Creativity

Is human creativity under threat by the rise of generative AI? It's no question that AI is shaping the way humans practice everyday creativity. While it can be a tool to aid humans to increase efficiency, developing a dependency on an AI tool for any kind of problem solving or thought poses a great risk to human cognition. In industries related to the arts, the introduction of AI poses many more questions. Can AI replicate human creativity? Can AI produce original art? This talk will explore the relationship between human thought and AI, and what it means for humankind.

Global/Local Engagement: Data Operations internship w/ Precisely (remote, Summer 2025). Worked with data governance team to maintain consistent organization of customer data.

## **Grace Schmidt**

Putting Art in Context: For Individuals, For Society

My animating question is "what can art tell us about ourselves?" In my presentation, I will explore the ways in which my experience at Connecticut College taught me about this question.

Global/Local Engagement: I had an internship at the New London County Historical Society from June to August 2024.

## **Alek Sinon**

Learning the Language of How We Feel: Emotional Literacy in Childhood

What does it mean for children to feel heard and understood emotionally? Guided by interdisciplinary study in Psychology and English, I considered how language not only frames feelings but also provides children with the tools to express and shape their inner lives. Through supportive guidance and space to make sense of their emotional experiences, children can begin to connect words with feelings that resonate with them, cultivating both self-awareness and empathy for others.

Global/Local Engagement: Interning at BCA therapy along with my role as a preschool teacher in Wayne, PA throughout Summer 2025.

# **DATA, INFORMATION AND SOCIETY PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

## **Sana Bhat**

Can Ethics & Profit Coexist in Data-Driven Decision Making?

My question explores how ethical and profitable decision-making can coexist in data-driven business environments. Drawing on my internship experiences at Lenskart and Flowcode, I examined how transparency, empathy, and accountability in data use can build consumer trust while supporting long-term growth. By analyzing customer engagement and contributing to inclusive marketing strategies, I found that ethical data practices serve as both moral responsibilities and strategic assets. Through responsible data collection, companies can innovate sustainably, enhance user experiences, and foster loyalty.

Global/Local Engagement: Interned at Lenskart (India) and Flowcode (NYC), focusing on data-driven marketing

## **Nikhil Deshpande**

Artificial Intelligence in Digital Pathology

My project was a continuation of the work that I did over the summer at BI in Boston. I was working in the upcoming field of digital pathology attempting to build an AI algorithm in order to detect cancer in whole-slide images (WSIs). My project attempts to look at how data is actually used in digital pathology? How is AI used to predict patient outcomes and therefore lead to better treatment? And also, if AI lessons learned in pathology can be applied to other fields with the goal of improving those.

Global/Local Engagement: Worked at BIDMC hospital in Boston during the summer of '25. Worked in pathology building an algorithm for cancer detection

## **Matt Fuentes**

Data-Driven Research on Energy Transition Markets

Throughout my sophomore year and on, I used my experiences researching different energy transition and renewables assets to hone in on the legal aspect, which were the underpinnings of those markets. Studying a variety of markets, domestic and international, with assets like solar, storage, and more, I aimed to utilize research on policy and legislation and translate it into relevant financial data.

Global/Local Engagement: Greenwich, CT: Private Equity Investing Energy Transition (Jr. Summer), Remote: Divert Inc. Market Research (Sophomore Yr)

## **Martha Garcia Palma**

How do Non-Profits organizations use data for social good?

AI and data collection tools are rapidly expanding, helping many organizations operate more efficiently. Yet, these developments often overlook or even worsen existing social disparities, with data frequently misused for profit at the expense of vulnerable communities. While capitalist systems tend to exploit these tools, nonprofits are beginning to harness them to promote equity and social justice.

In my presentation, I will use two examples: Roots of Success in Berkeley, California, and Imaginary by Reability in Milan, Italy. Together, they show contrasting nonprofit and for-profit approaches to using data and technology to address or ignore social inequities.

Global/Local Engagement: Roots of Success in Berkeley, California 06/20/2025-08/15/2025,

## **Jillian Wexler**

Analyzing the NHL's Use of Data and its Impact on Hockey

This poster explores the evolving role of data in the National Hockey League (NHL) and its impact on the game, business operations, and fan experience. Drawing from my coursework in economics and statistics at Connecticut College, as well as my internship in the NHL's Digital and Strategic Planning department, I examine how data is leveraged both on and off the ice. My work in product development and production operations provided direct experience with data cleaning, visualization, website and app analytics, and the integration of advanced NHL EDGE statistics into digital platforms.

Global/Local Engagement: Product Development and Production Operations Intern at the NHL in New York City, Summer 2025

# ENTREPRENEURSHIP PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS

## **Kareem Alazem**

DMV3's Hockey Activities Inspire Growth, Teamwork, And Passion For The Game

DMV3's started as a way for me to skate with all of my friends and it was a spot where all the best players could train together. This all started 3 years ago. We actually lost money the first year. From there, we have built everything around the league. We have added the Youth 3v3, Youth Camps, and Tournament Teams. Now, we are building a bigger name with something called Threes Hockey. Threes Hockey will own leagues all over the country. The current project we are working on is Chicago 3's.

Global/Local Engagement: Wrecked at Healthy Baller gym connects players with mentors as a resource that extends beyond the rink.

## **Simra Aziz**

Importance of Financial Literacy for Women in Developing Countries

My animating question has shifted since freshman year, although it is still centered on women. Back then, I focused on full-length doors at Connecticut College to ensure women's safety. Coming from a developing country, I know women often lack financial freedom, placing them at a disadvantage. This summer, my internship in Tanzania with the Sasamani Foundation showed me these struggles are global. Sasamani empowers women by providing free education and scholarships. Inspired, I now want to focus on financial empowerment, exploring programs like WIFE (Women's Institute for Financial Education) that promote financial literacy.

Global/Local Engagement: Sasamani Foundation, Tanzania. Main goal was to enhance gender equity in East Africa and Tanzania.

## **Toluwalase Bamigboye**

Sustaining Campus Life: Technology and Innovation Shaping My Educational Pathway Journey

How can sustainable innovation address everyday accessibility challenges on campus? By studying peer-to-peer deliveries and autonomous, solar-powered robots, I learnt how creativity, sustainability, and technology can improve community life. This perspective reveals how Pathway taught me to seek fair and inventive long-term solutions rather than fast fixes. I learned to see challenges from all perspectives by applying classroom knowledge to real-world situations. Logistics, sustainability, and user experience had to be considered simultaneously. My path shows how cross-disciplinary thinking yields significant solutions that increase individual and group well-being.

Global/Local Engagement: Connecting tech, sustainability, and entrepreneurship through eco-campus delivery innovation in California

## **James Brennan**

Building the Backbone: Powering U.S. Data Centers throughout the AI Boom

The rapid development of AI is fueling broad expansion into data centers across the U.S., creating an urgent demand for reliable, secure, cost-effective, and scalable telecom solutions. With three major carriers controlling a majority of the market share today, questions are arising around cost, redundancy, and innovation. My project examines how telecom and its infrastructure will power the upcoming AI boom, while also highlighting the importance of creating greater competition amongst carriers. Given the current scale of AI infrastructure investments and my internship experience to date, I feel this would be a great topic to explore.

Global/Local Engagement: Granite Telecommunications, Quincy MA, Sales Associate, June 2024-Present

## **Sam Brockelman**

How can Students and Entrepreneurs Collaborate to Strengthen Communities and Career Development?

My project focuses on the integration of college students with their local towns to strengthen their communities and empower meaningful career development through partnerships with local entrepreneurs and businesses. Coming from a small town where the high school students are closely tied to local businesses and entrepreneurs, my goal is to bring that same connection to college towns and college students around the country.

Global/Local Engagement: Madrid. Interacted with businesses and students to further my research. Spring semester 2025, Funded Sophomore Research award focused on NL/CC student opportunities, , New London, CT, Summer 2024.

## **Calvin Brooks**

Inequality in Financial Literacy

According to the World Economic Forum, only around 50% of adults in the United States have a fundamental understanding of Financial Literacy. According to the P-Fin, a survey that assesses 8 areas of personal finance, we see that African Americans got 38% of the questions right vs 55% for white individuals. This project tackles the question of why there is inequity in financial literacy and what are some potential solutions to help people understand personal finance and become financially literate.

Global/Local Engagement: Landscaping: Seeing the financial divide in the United States.

## **Nate Buckley**

Refuel Station: Improving Nutrition and Convenience for Students and Spectators

While traveling with the Connecticut College Men's Soccer Team, we observed that many peer institutions offer snack and beverage stations within their athletic centers, a feature notably absent at Conn. To address this gap, we propose the creation of a "refuel station" that would provide students with convenient access to nutritious options such as protein bars and electrolyte beverages. On competition days, this station could expand into a concession stand serving items like popcorn and coffee for spectators. Beyond enhancing student life and supporting athletic performance, this initiative also presents valuable on-campus employment opportunities for students.

Global/Local Engagement: I worked at True Citrus as a finance & accounting intern. This helped me learn about the food and beverage industry.

## **Casey Chesner**

Improving Equity in South Africa's Healthcare with Cost-Effective Approaches

South Africa's healthcare system reflects deep inequalities between the under-resourced public sector and the high-quality private sector. These differences limit access to care for the majority of the population. This poster explores cost-effective approaches to help these disparities, such as more telehealth systems available, free education to nurses to relieve doctors' stress and burnout, and more preventative approaches. This can help improve quality for both healthcare workers and patients while maximizing the limited resources. Ultimately, cost-effective models can help play a critical role in reducing systematic disparities and advancing healthcare equity in South Africa.

Global/Local Engagement: Public Health Course, South Africa, Summer 2024

## **Benjamin Chin**

Can Entrepreneurship Actually be Taught?

Can entrepreneurship be taught? From my experience, the answer is both yes and no. I started a residential asphalt sealcoating business before taking most of my core courses. Running the business forced me to make decisions, adapt, and take full responsibility. Courses like Mathematics of Money and Macroeconomics gave me tools to understand financial systems, while Writing the Short Story improved my communication. These skills can be taught. What cannot be taught are real-time negotiations, mistakes, and pressure. Classrooms support entrepreneurs, but the essence of entrepreneurship is learned through direct experience and action.

Global/Local Engagement: Boston, Summer 2025. Valuation Intern at Kroll. Performed financial analysis, led PPA case study, and presented findings to senior leadership.

## **Jacob Esposito**

How a Fueling Station Benefits More than Just Athletics at Connecticut College?

I aim to address the current gap and the need for improved food offerings at the Athletic Center. When we polled sophomore year, athletes and gym goers, whether they would want/they pay for access to a fueling station, and our findings. I would discuss the opportunity to work with Chartwell and small businesses to stock and students to maintain the space. And finally, I would finish it off by looking at other small colleges that have spent money to increase athletic facilities and how it has benefited them in more ways than just recruiting and athletic performance.

Global/Local Engagement: Interned as a Business Development Associate in Cleveland, Ohio, where I facilitated client engagements and events.

## **João Ferreira**

## Can US Colleges Better Support International Students in Securing Employment after Graduation?

International students face multiple challenges when trying to remain in the United States after graduation. Due to the current administration's decisions, it has been increasingly difficult for international students to transition from their student visa (F-1) to a work visa. Students often lack any guidance on looking for employers that are open to sponsoring work visas. This project aims to expand career resources at Connecticut College for international students. By integrating already existing paid platforms and making them available to students, the college can better support work opportunities beyond graduation for international students.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away in Australia and Internship at CCC in Boston. Both seeing experience in F1 visas.

## Noah Fish

### Can Squash be Successful in Japan's Countryside?

This project focuses on the steps that it would take to convert an old barn into a squash facility. The inspiration for this project is that my grandmother is growing older, so the use of the farm has significantly declined. I wanted my project to focus on two of my passions, squash and Japan. This seemed like a natural middle ground. Through research done with Professor Noel Garrett during my junior year, we analyzed how to make this project feasible and what I would need to do to accomplish this.

Global/Local Engagement: Visited farm to analyze condition of barn. Wakayama Japan two weeks/time prior

## Olivia Franco

### Bridging Business Consulting Skills with Liberal Arts Education

My project explores how we can integrate business strategy and consulting skills into the liberal arts to benefit both business-focused and non-business students. Through my economics and finance coursework and participation in the Beacon Fellowship, I've developed a strong interest in connecting analytical frameworks with creative problem-solving. Working on an international consulting project with diverse teammates showed me how strategic thinking can be applied across disciplines and I hope to be able to share some of those takeaways in the context of a consulting club and online resource hub.

Global/Local Engagement: Work alongside pre-business club

Global/Local Engagement: Beacon Fellowship abroad consulting fellowship. Work under MBB project lead on project for Airbus.

## Sydney Frank

### How Does the Gut Microbiome Shape Both Physical and Mental Well-Being?

How can we improve students' wellness while supporting sustainable, local food practices? This project explores how nutrition and gut health can enhance both physical and mental well-being for college students. By using produce from Sprout, the campus garden, and neighboring local farms, along with



providing wellness education, students gain access to nutrient-dense foods and learn how what they eat affects how they feel.

Global/Local Engagement: Nutrition, sustainability, and community impact explored through summer 2024/25 employment at Bare Blends and Gil's Garage.

## **Kyaira Hall**

Sustainable Connectivity: Designing Digital Dune for Reliable, Eco-Friendly Wifi Across Campus

Digital Dune is a student-driven initiative designed to address unreliable campus wifi while advancing ecological sustainability. This project explores how innovative, small-scale hotspot solutions can provide consistent and accessible internet connectivity for students, faculty, and staff. By integrating sustainable energy practices with digital infrastructure, Digital Dune reimagines campus connectivity as both a technological and environmental opportunity. The project includes assessing current wifi challenges, prototyping eco-friendly hotspots, and developing a marketing strategy to encourage adoption. Ultimately, Digital Dune aims to establish reliable, sustainable connectivity that enhances academic and social life while modeling innovation for future campus infrastructure.

Global/Local Engagement: While abroad in Copenhagen (Fall 2025), courses in Digital Marketing and Design Thinking deepened my understanding of my target audience.

## **Ella Ifrah**

How Did Outsourcing Make the Connecticut College Dining Experience More Accessible?

Connecticut College Dining has been criticized for struggling to accommodate students with dietary restrictions, due to unclear labeling, cross-contamination, and limited allergy-friendly options. Most students rely on the required All-Access Meal Plan, making it challenging and expensive for students with dietary restrictions to find safe food that is safe for them at the dining halls. Since outsourcing via Chartwells, some of these concerns have been addressed, including more allergy-friendly options, increased transparency, and clearer allergen labeling. Outsourcing demonstrated how entrepreneurship can drive institutional change by bringing in resources and expertise to enhance the dining experience.

Global/Local Engagement: Hillel Board Member: Fall 2022-Present

## **Sarah Johnson**

The Future of AI in Fashion

Starting sophomore year, I planned to merge Sociology, Computer Science, and Art History while exploring the fashion industry, aiming to address consumer waste from fast fashion. My project examined whether AI could reduce overproduction by improving trend forecasting. Initially, I viewed AI as a promising solution, but by junior year I recognized its environmental costs, including significant water consumption. This realization highlighted that AI cannot singlehandedly combat climate change. Instead, AI should be used alongside broader strategies to minimize garment waste. While no single solution exists for such a complex issue, AI remains a valuable tool for sustainable fashion practices.

Global/Local Engagement: Studied abroad in Milan, Italy and did a fashion marketing internship.

## **Will Johnstone**

Cultivating Community in the Newly Renovated Crozier-Williams

Connecticut College recently renovated Crozier-Williams, giving new areas for students to socialize with a new Oasis snack bar and Humphreys. My animated question is: How can Conn better use the newly renovated Cro to cultivate community? My project is based on giving students the best opportunities to connect with different clubs, organizations, and other groups on campus. Whether it be by having trivia nights and concerts in Humphreys, or social and educational events such as guest lectures in Oasis. This could even be pushed into the local communities by having restaurants and businesses come in and engage with students.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Abroad in Australia, Short-term study abroad in Peru

## **Mimi Katz**

From Waste to Worth: The CamelMarketplace Model

CamelMarketplace is designed to be a student-centered platform for buying, selling, and trading goods on campus which in turn reduces waste. This project explores the question: How might we make CamelMarketplace more accessible and widely used by students as a go-to platform? By examining current barriers to engagement, such as visibility, ease of use, and trust between users, the project suggests strategies to increase adoption. Through targeted marketing, streamlined design, and community incentives, CamelMarketplace can be a sustainable, convenient, and widely used resource that makes students' college experience more sustainable.

Global/Local Engagement: Summer 2025 Amazon internship, Washington, DC, learned about marketing and accessibility, which I have applied to this project

## **TJ Krongard**

CamelCuts Barbershop

My project, CamelCuts Barbershop solves a common problem for Connecticut College students: getting a haircut without a car. Many students spend \$30 or more on transportation downtown. CamelCuts brings licensed barbers directly to campus, so students only need to walk as far as a classroom. Booking is easy through a Google Form with prepayment and instant confirmation. This service helps students save time and money while making it easier to look and feel their best.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away Semester, Lima, Peru, Spring 2025

## **Allie McClafferty**

Changing the Narrative on Secondhand Clothing

My entrepreneurship pathway explores the animating question: What business strategies can help change the narrative on secondhand clothing? Drawing from coursework in marketing, microeconomics, and sociology research methods, I examine consumer behavior, economic forces, and cultural

perceptions shaping the fashion industry. Hands-on experience at Haberdashery Resale Clothing Co. strengthened my skills in marketing, branding, and customer engagement, while deepening my understanding of sustainability in practice. Combining academic insight with real-world application, my project investigates how storytelling, market strategy, and accessibility can reframe secondhand clothing as both fashionable and socially responsible.

Global/Local Engagement: Seasonal retail job at Haberdashery Clothing Co. in Freeport, Maine from 2023-2025

## **Emma McDonnell**

Streamlining the College Recruiting Process Through AI

Lacrosse is the fastest-growing NCAA sport, yet the recruiting platforms used by college coaches are not evolving at the same rate. The lacrosse recruiting process is fragmented, leaving student-athletes to manage highlight reels, stats, emails to coaches, and tournament exposure while finding a school that is an academic fit. Coaches are inundated with prospects but lack an efficient way to identify athletes who match their program needs. The introduction of an AI-powered recruiting platform will reduce bias and simplify the recruiting process, making it more equitable and productive while maximizing ideal outcomes for both coaches and players.

Global/Local Engagement: Tuck Business Bridge Program, Hanover, NH, Summer 2024, Entrepreneurship seminar/think tank

## **William McEvoy**

The Power of Generative AI in Finance and Consulting

Generative AI is rapidly reshaping the landscape of finance and consulting by enhancing efficiency, creativity, and decision-making. In finance, AI models streamline data analysis, automate reporting, and generate insights that improve investment strategies and risk management. In consulting, generative AI transforms how firms deliver value by accelerating research, creating client-ready materials, and offering innovative solutions tailored to complex problems. While these technologies promise significant benefits, they also raise important questions about transparency, ethics, and workforce adaptation. This project explores both the opportunities and challenges of generative AI as it continues to redefine professional services.

Global/Local Engagement: Strategy Consulting Internship with Monitor Deloitte in Ottawa, Canada from May to August 2025.

## **Bridget McGann**

The Importance of Providing Healthy Fueling Options at the Athletic Center

Nutrition is essential for everyone, especially active individuals. Our project explores the potential of offering healthy fueling options at the Athletic Center for students, athletes, parents, coaches, and visitors. These options not only support physical performance and well-being but also foster a stronger sense of community. By making nutritious food accessible on-site, students can stay longer at the AC and are more likely to support athletic events—boosting school spirit.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Abroad, South Africa, Summer '24; Product Management Development Program Intern, Travelers Insurance, Hartford CT, Summer '25

## **Miranda Medina**

Structured Fitness Planning as a Tool for Campus Well-Being

Every year, research has shown there has been a gradual decrease in physical activity, especially in college students. Therefore, my animating question focuses on assisting students in having an opportunity to find balance and structure through physical activity. Specifically, the target is to develop a fitness plan that will guide students on improving both their physical and mental well-being. Though the gym is a place catered to athletes, it is open-access to everyone. With the use of this fitness plan, I aim to encourage more non-athletes to use the gym space.

Global/Local Engagement: Working at a country club and seeing all the ideas for my project

## **Lilly Moore**

Fuel Station

The Fuel Station provides nutritious, accessible, and quick food options at Connecticut College's Athletic Center. With smoothies, açai bowls, salads, and other grab-and-go items, it supports athletic performance, wellness, and academic success. Students can conveniently refuel where they train and compete, eliminating the need to cross campus for meals. More than food, the Fuel Station creates a welcoming hub that builds community, strengthens Camel spirit, and enhances recruitment. By promoting sustainability, offering student employment, and generating long-term revenue, it represents a lasting investment in student engagement, campus life, and the overall Conn experience

Global/Local Engagement: Niantic retail position & biotech internship – Gained business, sales, and marketing experience across local commerce and global healthcare.

## **Maurice Pigola**

Refuel Station: Improving Nutrition and Convenience for Students and Spectators

While traveling with the Connecticut College Men's Soccer Team, we observed that many peer institutions offer snack and beverage stations within their athletic centers, a feature notably absent at Conn. To address this gap, we propose the creation of a "refuel station" that would provide students with convenient access to nutritious options such as protein bars and electrolyte beverages. On competition days, this station could expand into a concession stand serving items like popcorn and coffee for spectators. Beyond enhancing student life and supporting athletic performance, this initiative also presents valuable on-campus employment opportunities for students.

Global/Local Engagement: Deutsche Bank (Frankfurt, Germany) - Risk Return Engineering (Summer 2025); BMW (Munich, Germany) - Financial Risk Management (Spring 2025)

## **Colby Scanlon**

## How to Help Kids with Financial Boundaries Receive Equal Opportunities

Most have tried some sort of sport in their life. Some stick with it, while others don't. Part of this is because of boredom, a lack of time, or even lack of funds. Many kids around the world struggle to get the development they need because they cannot afford private lessons, or AAU teams, and this can stunt the growth of many. Especially those who aspire to play at the highest level cannot do so because of this boundary. Using community and proper coaching, this boundary can be reduced to try and allow all young athletes the same opportunities.

Global/Local Engagement: Youth Sports coach for kids within my community for about 7 years or so.

## Alexander Stevens

Closing The Gap Between Pain and Performance

My animating question examines how sports performance staff can better bridge the gap between pain and performance for student-athletes. My journey began as a college tennis player and continued through a summer internship with EXOS, where I observed how structured training improved speed, strength, and power, yet often failed to address pain or movement dysfunction. At Advanced Therapy & Performance, I saw how the Selective Functional Movement Assessment (SFMA) provides a systematic process to identify faulty patterns and prescribe correctives. During my internship, I observed the SFMA help athletes relieve pain and restore quality movement in as little as 15 minutes.

Global/Local Engagement: Integrative Performance Intern at Advanced Therapy and Performance in Stamford, CT. Time frame August 1st-current.

## Skylor Sweet

Breaking Market Monopolies: Creating Affordable Alternative Outlets for Essential Boat Parts

I want to create a marketplace for used sailing parts to address the monopolized market where only a few distributors charge premium prices. Quality sailing parts last 30+ years, creating opportunities for affordable used options. This would help yacht clubs with tight budgets, recent college grads who love sailing but lack funds, and cost-conscious sailors. By tapping into boats with unused parts and people wanting to donate or sell, I can make sailing more accessible to younger generations and prevent it from becoming an ultra-rich-only sport. The model could eventually expand to other expensive niche sports.

Global/Local Engagement: Conducted equity research at FBB Capital in Bethesda Maryland, summer 2025.

## Rocco Testa-Basi

Financial Freedom with Real Estate: Supporting People through Purpose Driven Career Exploration

The pathway explores my evolving animating question, which began with a broad interest in Finance and grew into a passion for using real estate to support others and promote financial freedom. A summer internship clarified that my true interest lies in combining financial analysis with real estate investing. Ultimately, this led to co-founding a commercial real estate club focused on skill-building, networking, and interview preparation. Through this journey, I discovered a purposeful career path that aligns my personal

goals with helping others — both by creating community and through future real estate pursuits that provide housing and economic growth.

Global/Local Engagement: General Dynamics - Electric Boat Summer Analyst (Groton,CT) May-August 2025

## **Cole Watson**

The Power of Generative AI in Finance and Consulting

Generative AI is rapidly reshaping the landscape of finance and consulting by enhancing efficiency, creativity, and decision-making. In finance, AI models streamline data analysis, automate reporting, and generate insights that improve investment strategies and risk management. In consulting, generative AI transforms how firms deliver value by accelerating research, creating client-ready materials, and offering innovative solutions tailored to complex problems. While these technologies promise significant benefits, they also raise important questions about transparency, ethics, and workforce adaptation. This project explores both the opportunities and challenges of generative AI as it continues to redefine professional services.

Global/Local Engagement: Investment Banking Analyst in NYC, Summer 2025

## **Patryk Zezula**

Balancing Sport and Self: Student Athletes Under Pressure

The entrepreneurship pathway made me ask: how can student ideas create lasting value for Conn? In exploring tuition-grant projects, I saw the financial planning such work demands—fueling my interest in finance. After time in New York and abroad, I faced the anxiety of losing my identity after soccer, leading to my new question: What programs best support student-athletes facing burnout or retirement?

Global/Local Engagement: Global Engagement Study Abroad, London, United Kingdom Local New York, New York

## **FOOD PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

### **Sophie Colbert**

Price of Nutrition: Improving Nutritional and Culturally Relevant Food In New London

Food deserts are defined as “an urban area in which it is difficult to buy affordable or good-quality fresh food”. Barriers, including distance, nutritional quality, city planning, prices, and systemic racism prevent lower-income communities of New London from accessing food that is both healthy and culturally relevant. Non-profit organizations like FRESH New London are working to promote change and plant gardens in historically redlined communities, fostering a new food system. The next steps involve opening more grocery stores in central New London, adding more nutritional affordable food choices instead of fast food, and changing zoning laws.

Global/Local Engagement: I worked as a community agriculture intern at the Connecticut College Sprout Garden for the summer of 2024.

### **David Garcia Moreno**

A Cooperative Solution for Farmers and Food Access Infrastructure in NL County

This project aims to reopen the conversation around food hub development in New London County. It surveys the current landscape and highlights the need for renewed attention. Drawing on a feasibility study, local food economy data, lessons from successful food hubs, and the New London County Food Policy Council, it identifies opportunities for cooperative governance to support shared services and community-driven planning by connecting community, farmers, and local stakeholders. The project encourages investment and collaboration to strengthen a local and sustainable food system through economic and social development.

Global/Local Engagement: Tuft's New Entry Sustainable Farm Project, Boston, MA. Food Hub/Farm Incubator internship Summer 2025

### **Rachael Grant**

Hunger Pangs and Neural Bangs: Brain Circuits Behind Anorexia Nervosa

Eating disorders are not only shaped by social and psychological influences, but by changes in the brain as well. So, what happens in the brain when the body refuses food? Neural pathways that govern reward and self-control have been found to function differently in those diagnosed with anorexia nervosa. This presentation will explore how the brain itself can drive the behaviors and experiences patients with anorexia nervosa face.

Global/Local Engagement: Spring 2025 study abroad in Copenhagen; Summer 2025 internship shadowing a dietitian in Richmond, VA

### **Luke Johnson**

## Understanding the Potential of Nutritional Psychiatry

The emerging field of nutritional psychiatry has revealed the gut-brain axis as a significant influence on mental health. This presentation explores the superhighway of information shared between the gut and the brain, and considers how this connection may open new pathways for therapeutic approaches to mental health. Through the lens of the gut-brain axis, it examines how diet and neurobiology interact to shape emotional well-being and invites a broader understanding of care and mental health.

Global/Local Engagement: Walter Commons trip to Cusco, Peru, 1 week March 2025; learned about indigenous food systems, sustainability.

## Sydney Yankee

“Happy Hormones”, Food, and Travel; A Recipe for Improving Mental Health

Food is more than just sustenance; it can be used as a way to experience and share joy, and even benefit our mental health. During a shared meal, we release a variety of the four “happy hormones”; serotonin, dopamine, endorphins, and oxytocin. These hormones are triggered by things like laughter, cooking, connecting with others, and even spicy foods. During my time traveling (and eating!) abroad, I began to realize that the combination of food and travel can be a path to positive mental health and “happy hormone” release.

Global/Local Engagement: Lisbon, Portugal, FSRP on Culinary Tourism, Summer 2024. Bocas del Toro, Panama, study abroad, Spring semester 2025.

## Kendall Ziady

Daily Bread, Daily Life: The Significance of Parisian Boulangeries

My presentation will focus on how boulangeries are integral to Parisian culture, not only for their role in providing fresh bread daily, but also for their unique communal and social functions. Drawing on my academic research, French major, and time studying abroad in Paris, I explored boulangeries as a “third place,” while highlighting their social and cultural significance in Paris.

Global/Local Engagement: Study away in Spring 2025 in Paris, France. Program: IES Abroad (French Studies).



# **GLOBAL CAPITALISM PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

## **Rosemary Bonadies**

How does Mass Incarceration in the U.S. Affect our Democracy?

Mass incarceration in the United States poses challenges to our democracy, by eroding political equity and civic participation. Marginalized communities, particularly people of color and lower class individuals, are disproportionately represented in prisons, where felony convictions strip them of voting rights, silencing their voices. This system intertwines with civil rights, economic inequality, and systematic oppression, perpetuating inequities instead of fairness. By excluding large demographics from voting, mass incarceration protects the politically affluent benefitting from unchecked power. Since democracy only thrives when everyone's voices are heard, democracy is weakened when entire communities are denied their constitutional rights.

Global/Local Engagement: At the New London Homeless Hospitality Center, I was able to engage with homeless individuals of New London, many of whom have been incarcerated.

## **Nola Ciavola**

How Has Global Capitalism Impacted Women in the Workforce in China?

This presentation explores the effects of capitalism on women in the Chinese workforce. Women's participation in global supply chains creates both opportunities for independence and conditions of extreme exploitation. They are constrained by systemic inequalities while evolving with the rise of global capitalism. My animating question addresses women's labor within the context of global production networks and China's rapid integration into the global economy. I will examine how the impact of global capitalism on Chinese women is multifaceted, as it reshapes the conditions of work, alters family and social relationships, and defines the possibilities for collective action.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away, Internship. I interned at private wealth management firms over the past two summers and studied abroad during my junior year.

## **Zoe Davin**

Why is Poverty so Persistent in Some Regions of the United States?

This presentation explores the prevalence of cyclical poverty in distinct regions of the United States, with a specific focus on Appalachia. Reflecting on my academic journey both at and outside of the college, I analyze the specific role of industrial influence over the region as a whole, especially in regards to the widespread image of Appalachia. Drawing upon the knowledge I have acquired at Connecticut College, I will explore why poverty has been unshakable in many Appalachian communities, drawing upon multidisciplinary analytical lenses.

Global/Local Engagement: During the Summer of 2025, I worked on archival research in Huntington, WV under the guidance of Professor Queen.

## **Lexi Downing**

How do Socioeconomic Disparities Affect Youth Participation in Sports and their Health?

The high costs and time constraints affecting youth sports in a capitalistic society create substantial barriers to children of lower socioeconomic status. Their consequent lack of participation prevents them from reaping the benefits of adolescent sports, such as physical activity, socialization, and team building. By studying sports management at the American College of Greece and working with the Sanford Mainers, I have both learned and witnessed first hand the positive effects of sports, and also how these can be restricted for some.

Global/Local Engagement: American College of Greece in Athens, Greece Fall 24 and interned with Sanford Mainers in Sanford, Maine Summer 24

## **Rachel Letts**

How does Ethnicity Impact Hispanic Communities in our Global Capitalist System?

International and domestic hierarchies of power have exploited Hispanic communities throughout history, creating systems of power that perpetuate inequities. devaluation of Hispanic laborers and communities domestically, as well as colonization and extractivism abroad, has made economic mobility for these groups increasingly difficult. Through colonial legacies, outsourced production, and xenophobic ideals and policies, Capitalism has generated a hierarchy of power built in part on the basis of ethnicity that disenfranchises Hispanic communities.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship, Community Partnership. I lived in Bolivia for 6 weeks farming in rural communities. I also volunteer weekly at the New London Homeless Hospitality Center.

## **Peter Russell**

How has the Rise of Global Conflict Affected Global Maritime Shipping?

Global trade is undergoing a profound transformation as war, political instability, and shifting alliances have disrupted the flow of goods across key shipping routes. Rising prices for everything from oil to medicine, even food and consumer products, are at the forefront of this issue. From the Red Sea to the South China Sea, conflicts and strategic rivalries are making maritime chokepoints more costly and dangerous to navigate. These pressures forced companies to reroute supply chains, raising transportation costs and fueling inflation worldwide.

Global/Local Engagement: AI Voice Diagnostic startup, Philadelphia PA, spring-summer-fall 2025

## **Madeleine Sampson**

What Socioeconomic Dimensions of Tourism Create Long Term Risks for Local Communities?

Tourism around the world reinforces power imbalances among the ultra wealthy and service workers who keep resort destinations functioning. Transnational corporations manufacture manicured environments to appeal to affluent individuals. The construction of environment and culture actively works against the local

communities creating housing disparities and stereotypical roles that are expected to be filled. Local governments appeal to the corporations controlling these luxury destinations and this is reflected in zoning and planning regulations. Service sector workers are being priced out of their homes. Eventually, no one will be able to maintain these areas that are loved by so many.

Global/Local Engagement: I frequented my towns planning/zoning and historical preservation committee meetings to understand the barriers regarding constructing affordable housing.

## **Sofia Stefanopoulos**

How do Asset Management Firms Impact Global Economic Power?

Asset management firms are significant figures in global finance, controlling trillions of dollars worldwide. They have the ability to shape markets and direct corporate strategy through foreign investment. These firms are growing in influence and capital. This presentation explores how such firms can create an imbalance in the global capitalist system, and asks how much corporate power is too much.

Global/Local Engagement: 2025 Private Client Group Summer Analyst internship at Janney Montgomery Scott LLC.

# **GOODWIN-NIERING CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENT SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

## **Paloma Doyle**

Urban Forestry in New London: Exploring Community Partnerships in Grassroots Organizations

Urban forestry is rooted in community. Trees shade, beautify and benefit our public urban spaces. Urban forestry extends traditional forestry, by centering community needs, priorities and capacities. Grassroots organizations play a unique role in the implementation of urban forestry as they offer ground level insight and implementation. This is observed in New London Trees, a non-profit with a mission of increasing the city's tree canopy through community planting and care, education and advocacy. Growing and sustaining an urban forest relies heavily on cross-sector partnerships, including municipalities, state agencies, large environmental non profits, academic institutions, and individual citizens.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship/Community Partners - New London Trees. Urban Forestry Intern, Board Member, and Internship Coordinator. Summer 2024-Present, New London, CT.

## **Reece Haft-Abromovitch**

Natural Hazards and Their Impact on Environmental Research

Plans and inspiration for creating a Report on Natural Hazards and how they inhibit environmental research. Potential tools and techniques will be explained, as well as how potential results could hold meaningful implications about why NGOs and other international organizations choose to distribute resources for conservation and research on a global scale.

Global/Local Engagement: 4 week long Snorkel-based Coastal Research Internship in the Seychelles Islands

## **Charlotte Houghton**

Exploited Roots: Farmworker Injustice in a Failing Food System

Conventional agriculture has reached its tipping point; the “looming collapse” of American farming is no longer a possibility but a reality. Although environmental degradation driven by industrialized agriculture is increasingly visible, the ongoing cycles of oppression against its workforce remain overlooked. Using the H-2A farmworker program as a case study of systemic injustice, this work will cast a critical eye on the policies and government actors that continue to suppress farmworkers and threaten the future of American agriculture. Transparency will finally be given to those who grow our food and why the system that exploits them must be dismantled.

Global/Local Engagement: United Farm Workers Foundation. Headquarters in Los Angeles, CA. Interned for Development and Fundraising and Government Affairs teams. May- August.

## **Gabriela Miotto Leal**

Bringing the Outdoors Indoors for Environmental Harmony Through Biophilic Design

This project explores how alliesthesia, the shifting perception of pleasure or discomfort, can be applied in architecture through biophilic design. Modern buildings often isolate occupants from nature, yet humans spend nearly 87% of their time indoors. By integrating natural light, vegetation, organic materials, acoustics, and responsive technologies, architecture can adapt to sensory needs and promote well-being. This study examines how design strategies enhance health, productivity, and sustainability. The goal is to reconnect people with their ecological context, reinforcing that humans are not separate from nature but integral to it.

Global/Local Engagement: Interior Design Internship in Norwalk CT summer 2025

## **Samantha Olstein**

Mountaineering in Teton County: An Investigation of Sustainability

In this paper, I will investigate the sustainability of mountaineering guide services in Teton County, WY, looking specifically at how small companies can minimize their impact on the environment while maximizing their impact on people. My research will explore the negative environmental impacts of mountaineering, the positive impacts that climbing, hiking, and skiing have on humans, and the accessibility of these sports. I hope to draw conclusions on how this industry can become more sustainable as well as looking into the barriers faced by small companies.

Global/Local Engagement: Sustainability Intern at Rendezvous River Sports in Jackson, Wyoming, Summer 2025

## **Caitlyn Rodeo**

Investigating PFAS Contamination and the Effects of PFOA Alternative GenX on Neurobehavior

Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are ubiquitous and have significant detrimental effects on physiology, behavior, health, and the environment. PFAS can be found in cosmetics, personal care products, to-go containers, stain remover, and more. The chemical GenX was developed to replace PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid), a toxic and carcinogenic PFAS compound. Recent studies indicate that GenX exhibits toxicity comparable to, or potentially greater than, that of PFOA, and could pose a greater risk of bioaccumulation. The environmental contaminant GenX, previously studied in rodents and zebrafish, will be investigated in the aquatic flatworm planaria for the first time.

Global/Local Engagement: I was a research assistant for nonprofit Global Reef at Koh Tao, Thailand. I collected underwater data collection via scuba.

## **Pluto Shea**

Connecting People to Plants Through Music and Place

Throughout history, artists have used nature as an integral stepping stone for their art. Monet, van Gogh, Cézanne, and more have incorporated the outdoors in their paintings. The sounds and feelings of nature have even been brought to music. Stevie Wonder created an experimental album, "Journey Through the Secret Life of Plants." Music as a cultural practice has been used globally to bring communities together.

For my SIP, I plan on hosting and managing three local events to build community through both music and horticulture. I will study the dynamics of connection and group thought in throughout this process.

Global/Local Engagement: This summer, I worked at Sprout Garden where I focused on building community over food and plants.

## **Caelon Shugrue**

Evaluating Landscapes with Environmental Aesthetics: Making Connecticut College More Ecologically Harmonious

How we manage landscapes is governed by our biases towards clean lines, forms, and shapes. The study of environmental aesthetics evaluates the aesthetic appreciation of nature and the environment. Thus, in evaluating how or why we perceive certain landscaped features as more or less aesthetically pleasing we can illuminate biases in our perception of nature. My Curatorial Internship with the Connecticut College Arboretum provided me with hands-on experience managing landscapes, and has led me to question how we can maintain a well-managed landscape like a college campus to be aesthetically pleasing and environmentally holistic?

Global/Local Engagement: Curatorial Internship at the Connecticut College Arboretum in New London Connecticut, from May to August. I conducted a plant inventory

## **Annie Thoms**

Managing Invasive Species and Restoring Native Species to Bates Woods

For my SIP, I am working with Bates Friends Forever, a local community organization, to create a plan to restore the park following the removal of invasive species. I curated a list of native plants that could be planted where these invasive species were removed. To curate this list, I found species that had similar habitat types to these invasives, created a cost assessment to planting native species, and created a timeline to plant for the reintroduction of these native species. The goal of this project is to develop a feasible plan to restore this cleared land.

Global/Local Engagement: Intern Ecology Teacher at St. Paul's School in Concord, NH, during summer 2025.

# **HOLLERAN CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ACTION SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

## **Mikayla Aquino**

Engaging BIPOC, MLL, and Special Education Students: Investigating Educator Perspectives

This study investigates strategies educators use to engage historically marginalized student populations, specifically BIPOC, Multilingual Learners (MLLs), and students receiving Special Education services. Using an autoethnographic design, the project employs interviews with education practitioners to explore how they conceptualize engagement, implement inclusive practices, and reflect on the role of professional training. Thematic analysis will identify patterns, challenges, and effective strategies within participants' experiences. Through centering practitioner voices, this research aims to contribute to the development of culturally responsive, equity-driven approaches that inform professional development and inclusive pedagogy in diverse schools.

Global/Local Engagement: Northwestern University CTD, Summer '24, '25; Special Education Classrooms, New London High School (Fall 2024)

## **Rita D'Agostino**

All Roads Lead to Family Court: Power, Inequality, and the Courts

Through interviews conducted with legal professionals this thesis asserts that the United States must place family court at the epicenter of the larger justice system. I examine misperceptions of family court in the media and the subsequent effects on law and policy. I also assess generational cycles of family court litigants, considering the communities that are within and that surround the family court system. For a just judicial system and society, Americans must prioritize family court.

Global/Local Engagement: Internships with Monroe County Hall of Justice (2023-2025)

## **Sarah Duffy**

New London, It's Happening: Mapping Community Cultural Resources

This project is an exploration of all things New London. Through cataloging community organizations, schools, institutions, and other resources throughout the city, I will create an asset map. This will exist as a living digital document as well as a rendered paper map. This guide will be available to be shared and updated with Connecticut College students, community organizations, teachers, and New Londoners at large.

Global/Local Engagement: Team Leader, Enrich Mentor Program (4 years); Teaching for Change Internship, DC (Summer '25)

## **Abbie Giles**

Public Image versus Patient Experience: A Comparative Study of Children's Hospitals

Social media has become the new word of mouth, enabling medical institutions to market their services and patients to share their personal experiences at hospitals. This study analyzes social media content to explore how children's hospitals with differing resources vary in their public image. Results of thematic content analyses performed on posts by patients and posts by hospitals will be compared to discover possible disparities between children's hospitals' institutional branding and the realities of patient care. Findings will offer insight into ways that children's hospitals can improve patient experiences and fill gaps in pediatric patient experience research.

Global/Local Engagement: BDJ Middle School Social Worker (Fall '24/'25), Bar Harbor Bank & Trust Customer Service Rep, NH/Vermont (Summer 2025) **NO MENTION OF FSRP?**

## **Dina Isakov**

Building ACCESStem: Expanding Pathways to a Higher Education in STEM

What kind of experience turns curiosity into a decision to major in a STEM discipline? My project explores college-high school partnerships that create STEM pathways for underrepresented students. The program, ACCESStem, offers hands-on laboratory experiences across the College's STEM departments. It aims to highlight opportunities beyond traditional career paths to broaden students' understanding of options before applying to college. The program's effectiveness is evaluated through thematic analysis of exit slips and observation during workshops. This research seeks to foreground student voices to guide program development and demonstrate the model's potential for replication at other institutions.

Global/Local Engagement: Create mentored hands-on workshops with ACCESStem at New London High School, Academic Years 2023-2025.

## **Lucy Koester**

Ethical Participation in an Unethical System: Partnering with the NLHHC

How can volunteers engage meaningfully and ethically within a system that doesn't center the voices of the people it serves? My project will explore the College's long-term partnership with the New London Homeless Hospitality Center (NLHHC). Drawing on my experience volunteering and developing collaborative projects at the NLHHC, I will reflect on the challenges and possibilities for improving the guests' experiences. Using a sociological approach to analyze social services like the NLHHC, I will be emphasizing the importance of centering community voices.

Global/Local Engagement: Weekly volunteering New London Homeless Hospitality Center (Spring '25, Fall '25)

## **Olivia McDonald**

Beyond Eminent Domain: Housing Insecurity in America

This paper explores how viewing housing as a commodity versus a human right in America has fueled a housing crisis. Focusing on housing policy, *Kelo v. City of New London* (2005) will be framed as a minor threat to the housing crisis in America. The public reaction to eminent domain will be analyzed, and how identity shapes the idea of home as an emotional anchor. The goal of this analysis is to explore how



communities can place trust in the government through the concept of engaged optimism. Interviews will be conducted with various groups to further understand effective policy intervention.

Global/Local Engagement: Rome, Italy (Fall '25 study abroad), various PICA placements. Housing nonprofit and legal local engagements in Connecticut

## **Hannah Merritt**

Colonial Debt and Divergent Paths: Hispaniola 1804-2000

Despite sharing the island of Hispaniola, and therefore having similar factor endowments and extractive colonial regimes, Haiti and the Dominican Republic have had vastly different economic outcomes. Current Development Economics literature attributes differential development to the strength of institutions, neglecting the role of balance of payments asymmetry amplified by post-colonial debt. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis, by controlling for different contributors to economic growth/degrowth and examining differences in protections against expropriation, the role of French-imposed post-independence debt on Haiti will likely explain the current divergent economic state of the two nations of Hispaniola.

Global/Local Engagement: Zoning reform with CHEO Eastern CT (semester), Alleviating child poverty with Community Foundation Southeast CT (semester)

## **Florianny Norman Reyes**

Empowering Students Through Language: Spanish Interventions and Academic Self-Concept in MLLs

This project explores how Spanish language interventions can empower Multilingual Learner (MLL) elementary students by strengthening their academic self-concept. Based on my experiences as a former MLL and my placement at Winthrop STEM Elementary, I observed how language barriers create frustration, disengagement, and low confidence in students. Research shows English-only instruction reinforces inequities, while native language use validates students' knowledge and fosters engagement. My proposed intervention, parallel teaching in English and Spanish, uses a mixed-methods design with questionnaires, interviews, and teacher observations to demonstrate how native language interventions can support students' social-emotional growth.

Global/Local Engagement: I volunteer at Winthrop elementary school inside their classrooms where I translate and aid MLL students

## **Emma Puntin**

The Use of AI in Expert Testimony: Expanding the Attorney Perspective

Artificial intelligence is becoming increasingly prevalent in the legal field and the criminal justice system. This project will focus on the integration of generative artificial intelligence programs into expert testimony. I aim to explore how AI fits within the pre-existing standards for experts—both federal and state-by-state standards—with a focus on how different types of AI could apply to the same standards. This study will interview attorneys and present them with hypothetical scenarios to examine how they view and evaluate the intersection of AI and expert testimony.

Global/Local Engagement: IES Abroad Rome: Fall 2024; Intern at SECTCLT New London: Spring 2024; Community Engagement Intern, Berkshire DA, Pittsfield, MA: Summer 2025

## **Sophia Williams**

Historical Policy Analysis on Midwifery and Current Implications

Black women face maternal mortality rates double those of white women, a crisis worsened by the overturning of Roe v. Wade and reduced access to reproductive healthcare. Negative pregnancy outcomes for Black women continue to rise. Historically, U.S. birthing shifted from community-based midwifery to physician-led care, driven by policy changes and the rise of the AMA. This systematic sidelining of midwives has shaped modern maternal care. To address disparities, we will examine the history, confront structural inequities, and explore policies that restore midwives to a central role in improving outcomes for birthing people across the United States.

Global/Local Engagement: Summer 25: Interned for PPSNE, Education and Outreach Intern, curriculum development, and working with Students Teaching about Responsible Sexuality program

# **MEDIA, RHETORIC AND COMMUNICATION PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

## **Hannah DelGrego**

Can You Beat the Social Media Algorithm?

We are in a new era of media consumption, where social media dominates how we learn about world events. Platforms, driven by algorithms, often promote panic, outrage, and bias, making access to clear, factual information increasingly rare. This algorithm-driven environment is reshaping public understanding and political discourse. As media illiteracy grows, it's crucial to examine how these systems affect our thoughts and behaviors without our awareness. This presentation explores the impact of algorithm-based media on public consciousness and emphasizes the need for media literacy and critical thinking to combat uninformed consumption in the digital age.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship at Old Mystic History Center, working with archives, Mystic CT, summer 2025

## **Lauren Fitzharris**

Selling The Truth: Balancing Story in Public Relations

From micro-targeted advertising to manufactured narratives, contemporary marketing and PR blur the line between authenticity and manipulation. What was once transparent communication now relies on personalized tactics and metric-driven strategies, leaving audiences uncertain about whom to trust. This erosion reshapes how media is consumed and how people engage with brands, politics, and culture. Pulling from experiences in in-house social media, at a communications firm, and in higher education marketing, I will examine how authenticity persists—or falters—in today's media landscape, how its decline impacts informed engagement, and how individuals can better recognize trustworthy news.

Global/Local Engagement: NYC In-House Social Media Internship 2024 + Nashville Full-Service Communication Firm Internship 2025

## **Galen Kilfeather**

Lights, Camera, Executive Action: The Evolution of Presidential Rhetoric

From Franklin D. Roosevelt's iconic Fireside Chats on the radio, to John F. Kennedy's mastery of his televised image, arriving at Donald Trump's and Joe Biden's presence on social media platforms, this presentation highlights how shifting media landscapes have intensified presidential messaging, imaging, and rhetorical impact. By analyzing speeches, media appearances, and more, it is clear how presidents have adapted—or have failed to adapt—to the continuously expanding scope of media. Drawing on my experience working with government representatives, I reflect on how advancing media environments have redefined political leadership in the 21st century.

Global/Local Engagement: I completed an internship with Senator Chris Murphy's Hartford Office and did a Legislative Fellowship at Pennsylvania's Capitol.

## **Kevin Lieue**

Searching for Truth: The Importance of Local News & Dangers of News Deserts

During my introductory MRC 201 class, I learned about the rise of news deserts, communities in the United States with limited or no access to credible news. With a lack of access to credible news, community members lack information on events such as local elections. Interested in finding solutions to this issue, I conducted qualitative and quantitative research through the Sharis '86 & Thorn '88 Pozen Endowed Fund for Excellence in Journalism, Writing, and Media. I hope to convey the urgency of this issue to bring attention to the loss of interest in the media and encourage solutions to this problem.

Global/Local Engagement: Awarded the Sharis '86 & Thorn '88 Pozen Endowed Fund for Excellence in Journalism, Writing, and Media in Summer 2024.

## **Peyton Lusk**

Intimidation, Harassment, and Detention: U.S. Immigration Discourses in 2025

This civil rights presentation discusses my paralegal experience at an immigration defense law firm. As ICE polices hospitals and schools in 2025, this presentation explains how nowhere is safe for migrants. It analyzes speeches from Tom Homan and Todd Lyons. It weighs personal discourses about ICE detention centers, where migrants may encounter hypothermia, sleep on floors, and not receive medical care. The presentation underscores the need to reconsider our public sensibility. ICE detention centers should close.

Global/Local Engagement: Intern at an immigration law firm in White Plains, NY. May 2023-August 2025.

## **Caroline Snyder**

Life Without Warning: Weather Education and Preparedness in Trump-Era America

Weather forecasts highlighting critical safety information before and during weather events have long been lifesaving staples in the United States. In the Trump era, though, budget and staffing cuts to the National Weather Service (NWS) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have led to significantly less accurate forecasts. Examining past forecast data and records of weather events, emergency alert timing, and response to disasters, this project aims to explore successes and failures of forecasting and response in the United States and how the future of meteorology and weather education may look in a climate-denialist administration and beyond.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship teaching natural history to children ages 5-12 at the New London County Historical Society, Summer 2025.

## **Elizabeth York**

Rhetoric of Relatability: Local Government, Rhetoric, and Public Opinion

Local governments use rhetoric in communication with the public. This presentation examines the relationship between the rhetoric of local government agencies, the media, and the public. The Sheriff's office, like other government agencies, employs rhetoric to influence public opinion in favor of the agency

and its leader, the Sheriff. My internship at the Hampden County Sheriff's Office is related to rhetoric and crisis public relations. I will present a case study to demonstrate the use of rhetoric, in actions and in words, to redeem the public's perception of the Sheriff after his own encounter with the law.

Global/Local Engagement: Communications and policy intern at Hampden County Sheriff's Office, Summer 2025.

# **MUSEUM STUDIES CERTIFICATE PROGRAM SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

## **Samantha Chapin**

Iconoclasm: Historical Uses and Modern Legacies

Iconoclasm is a topic that many have never heard of, but many have also been killed over throughout previous centuries to the modern day. In its most simple definition, iconoclasm is the destruction of icons. Usually, this is in the form of destruction of art depicting deities, saints, or images otherwise believed to be worshiped. It can be an internal process of changing doctrine within a religion, but can also be used as a political, financial, and imperial tool. I will explore these different factors using a variety of historical examples to explain iconoclasm's lasting legacies in the world.

Global/Local Engagement: Spring 2025 I was an Archival Intern at the Linda Lear Center, mostly working with the Eastern Pequot documents.

## **Sage Cohen-Rider**

Teaching Non-Artists

Opportunities for visitors to engage in hands-on art activities are an important part of Museum Education. Many visitors, however, are not usually artists in their everyday lives. Through this project I aim to learn about, and execute, the process of making an artistic experience based on an existing exhibit for audiences that don't already view themselves as creative.

Global/Local Engagement: Linda Lear Center Spring 2026

## **Alexa Estes**

The Things We Carry: Material Culture of the Everyday

Material culture is the study of materials made and used by humans. The things that we carry around every day in our bags expose a lot about us. Looking at the items in one's bag through the lens of individuality, identity, community, and the human condition, I plan to explore meaning in the items that mean the most to us. This study will consist of anonymous volunteers emptying their bags so the contents may be photographed. These photos will be uploaded to an online page to be used as part of an online exhibition.

Global/Local Engagement: Studied at Archeological Conservation Institute for one month in Italy and Greece. Worked at the Yale Peabody and with NIAHD at William & Mary.

## **Madelyn Fisher**

Polychromy in Antiquity: Repainting Classical Sculpture Through Museums

Classical galleries in museums are commonly a sea of white. It is a common misconception that ancient sculpture was pure, unpainted marble. In actuality, the art of Greece and Rome was polychrome, decorated with shades of ochre and Egyptian Blue. In this project, I explore the role of the museum

educator and how they can provide a more visually accurate representation of Classical sculpture through educational programs. I examine how current galleries perpetuate white supremacist propaganda based on 19th-century scholarship, and how updating galleries can better support recent scholarly developments.

Global/Local Engagement: Semester at College Year in Athens, 2024; Archeological Conservation Institute participant, 2024; Icon Museum and Study Center educational intern, 2025.

## **Ana Maria Gomez**

Experiencing Layout

My goal for this project is to combine my Museum Studies pathway with my Architecture Major. I believed the best way to do this was to redesign the floor plan of a current exhibit at the Lyman Allen Art Museum. With the help from their curator, Tanya Pohrt and Director of Exhibitions, Jane LeGrow, I chose to redesign the Louis Comfort Tiffany exhibit which has been up since 2018. This redesign is to highlight the importance of curation by presenting a new interpretation of the exhibit and how changing the layout will change the audience's experience.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Abroad: Wellington, New Zealand, Fall 2024 Internships: New London Historical Society, A Right to Housing: Case Study

## **Skylar Gould**

Make Your Mark: Community Made Art and Exhibitions

Throughout the 21st Century, programming at art museums has become increasingly community oriented. This project explores how community art programming can be implemented in non-traditional spaces, outside of the museum world. In partnership with Telegraph Autonomous Zone in downtown New London, Make Your Mark was a free Gelli-printing workshop focused on promoting sustainability, community, and creativity. The Telegraph is already a vital community hub within New London, so the aim of this project is to expand its programming into visual arts and continue to build connections between Connecticut College students and the greater New London community.

Global/Local Engagement: Gallery internships at WaterFire Arts Center (Summer, 2024) and Concord Art (Summer, 2025)

## **Hope Johnston**

Cretaceous Crunchers: Paleontology on Campus

What did the world's oceans look like 100 million years ago and how does this compare to today? With climate change rapidly altering our marine environments, it is especially interesting to look back and see what the world was like long before we arrived. In my senior project, I curated an on-campus exhibit of an aquatic Cretaceous environment, bringing the college's fossil collection out of a closet and into the public eye. I have researched and worked with each element to create an informative and entertaining display examining the diet and dentition of these Cretaceous marine predators.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship at the Yale Peabody Museum (Summer 2024) and an internship at the Mohegan Tribal Historic Preservation Office (Fall 2024)

## **Isabella Welch**

"Yo no me olvido de ti": Puerto Rican Diasporic Identity in Connecticut

According to census data of 2023, 46.3% of Connecticut's Hispanic population is of Puerto Rican heritage. This is a statistic that reflects a history of immigration that began in the early 20th century and continues to grow in the present day. This project is a virtual exhibition that explores the often-overlooked history of Puerto Ricans in Connecticut over the last century. Through the use of contemporary artworks, music, video, and archival objects sourced from Connecticut libraries, the exhibition engages in issues of Puerto Rican diasporic identity with a concentrated focus on the state of Connecticut.

Global/Local Engagement: Yale Peabody Museum - Summer 2024, Florence Griswold Museum - Fall 2024, Alfa Art Gallery - Fall 2025

## **Evan Young**

What Makes a Good Collections Database?

This project explores various museum and library digital collections repositories through the testimonials of professionals with the goal of weighing their ups and downs in order to ascertain which facets can make up an effective database system. Digital database systems are crucial for the documentation and cataloguing of a museum or library's physical collections, and so efficiency and ease of use are of benefit not only to the institutions using them, but to the professionals that interact with them as part of their duties.

Global/Local Engagement: Summer 2025, I interned with the Guilford Keeping Society where I helped to operate two of their house museums.



# **PEACE AND CONFLICT PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

## **Emily Brankman**

How Do Masculine Perceptions of Leadership Shape the Behavior of Female Politicians?

This presentation explores how ideas of masculinity dictate expectations of women in politics. The association of traditionally male traits with power shapes how government and leaders operate, and these ideologies both discourage women from participating and dictate the expectations of their behavior when they do achieve positions of power. By examining the language and presentation of female politicians, I show that masculine performance is necessary to be taken seriously in office. In recognizing these trends, I aim to continue the research necessary to challenge the expectations that continue to restrict women from political power.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away, Univ. of Edinburgh, Fall 2024, participating in their School of History, Classics, and Archaeology.

## **Constança Ferreira Cabral**

Exploring the Economic Integration of Migrant Muslim Women in France

Anti-immigrant rhetoric and islamophobia in France undermine the nation's professed ideals of equality and secularism. For Muslim migrant women, the visibility of their religious identity, particularly through the hijab, makes them targets of discrimination in public and professional spaces. Social prejudice, combined with the structural barriers migrant women face such as language barriers and childcare responsibilities, continue to restrict their access to the labor market. Civil Society works to fill the gaps left by the state.. The lack of political support and the social stigma towards Muslim migrant women in France ultimately limits their economic participation.

Global/Local Engagement: Study away semester in Paris, France, January to May 2025, where I took classes that influenced my AQ.

## **Andrew Harding**

Can Understanding and Addressing the Roots of Conflict Produce a Lasting Peace?

Using Russia-Ukraine as a case study, this presentation examines the importance of understanding the roots of a conflict in order to come to a peace resolution which lasts. This is a viable strategy both in terms of predicting and preventing future conflicts as well as resolving reignited current conflicts. Being able to resolve conflicts completely could prevent years of war, and decades of post-war recovery, especially important as our world contains more conflicts.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship at Policy Institute in Boston, Summer 25. Wrote blogs on pertinent political issues including education and foreign policy

## **Charlotte Head**

What Determines the Success of an International Organization?

Examining the successes and the internal and external conflicts that have challenged the World Health Organization's effectiveness. This presentation will analyze what makes organizations successful. This includes insights from my summer internship in a corporate setting, where I observed strategies that drove success, as well as my experience on the Connecticut College basketball team, where teamwork and leadership shaped outcomes. By comparing these different environments, I aim to understand how success can be defined, achieved, and interpreted across global, professional, and personal context.

Global/Local Engagement: Summer Government Contracts Internship Granite telecommunications  
Summer 2025

## **Tara Kamen**

The Ethics of Intervention: U.S. and Iran Relations Between 1953-1979

This project began with a personal question shaped by family history: the United States helped orchestrate a coup in Iran in 1953, setting the stage for the 1979 revolution that reshaped my family's world. What does it mean to call that intervention "ethical"? Through government and sociology, I traced how power, sovereignty, and cultural narratives justified U.S. action while reshaping Iranian society. International relation seminars abroad in London added global perspectives, revealing echoes of empire and contested moral duties. What emerged is a story about power and responsibility and how ethical judgments of intervention are never simple.

Global/Local Engagement: I studied abroad in the spring of 2025 at City, University of London, where I participated in international relations seminars.

## **Riley Madden**

How Can We Implement an Expanded Conception of Human Rights Internationally?

According to the Enlightenment ideas that inspired international human rights law, economic, social, and cultural rights are essential ingredients for human flourishing. Still, most liberal democracies have not embraced them as equal companions to civil and political rights. We must work to eliminate this discrepancy, by reaffirming the universality of the entire scope of human rights, and avoiding using moral relativism as a free pass for abuses of power. I argue that the international community ought to adopt a richer and more expansive conception of human rights that the great democratic powers can implement peacefully through a soft power approach.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship at The Advance Group, a political consulting and lobbying firm in New York City, Summer 2024.

## **Sophia Rey**

Is Granting Refugees "Temporary Protection" a Viable Solution to Refugee Crises?

It has been proven that refugees who are socially and economically self-reliant are more likely to contribute meaningfully to the economy of their host country, along with a higher likelihood of a successful return process. Temporary Protection is a government-granted status that allots eligible individuals protection who are unable to return to their home country safely due to armed conflict. Along with the

promotion of self-sufficiency for refugees, temporary protected status is a viable step towards solving the global refugee crisis. If done right, this method of integration could prevent the alternative: protracted refugee situations.

Global/Local Engagement: In Madrid, I researched Spain's immigration crisis under Professor Jason Xidias, Ph.D, an expert in European refugee policy.

## **Ben Sachs**

How Does Asymmetric Media Coverage of Conflicts Contribute to Human Rights Abuses?

The media aims to inform the public as a check on government power. Yet Western media is also beholden to the perverse incentives of market forces. While the foundational mission of the press is to be an essential pillar in a democratic society, the media can develop blind spots towards regions of the world that Western audiences are unfamiliar with or indifferent to. Using the Sudan War as a case study, I argue that extensive media coverage of human rights abuses is necessary to compel leaders to prioritize the crisis and to direct resources towards solving the problem.

Global/Local Engagement: Summer 2024, I worked as a clerk and tenant advocate in the Brooklyn Housing Court

## **Anna Taylor**

How Have Political Extremists Weaponized Classical History, and Why Does It Matter?

The veneration and weaponization of Classical history and symbols by political extremists poisons modern study of the Classics and lends false weight to hateful ideologies. Many on the modern left have dismissed Classics as being lost to the right or not worth reclaiming, due to centuries of associations with oppression and elitism. Classical civilizations and cultures still have much to offer us today, but in order to study them objectively and challenge centuries of elitism, Classicists must reject their weaponization by political extremists.

Global/Local Engagement: I studied abroad at the Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome, Italy (August - December 2025)

# **PUBLIC HEALTH PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

## **Gavin Anderson**

Activity Barriers For Older Adults in Assisted Living: Recreation, Resources, and Rehabilitation

This project examines barriers to physical and recreational activity for older adults in assisted living. Studies show positive health benefits of activity, yet many older adults do not get enough. My research expands on this by drawing from coursework in Sociology, Human Development, Psychology, Statistics, and Biology. Local engagements in assisted living and healthcare spaces inform findings and provide real-world insight. Considering both the circular itinerary and global-local engagements, resources available to facilities were found to play a major role in determining how much activity older adults complete in daily life.

Global/Local Engagement: HMD Partnership - Beechwood Post Acute, Transitional Care & Long Term Care, Recreation Volunteer

## **Rebecca Bachenheimer**

How Health Literacy Improves Long-Term Outcomes of Pediatric Atopic Dermatitis

Atopic dermatitis (AD) affects approximately 34 million Americans and yet is widely misunderstood. Topical corticosteroids (TCS) have been the main treatment for the past 60 years, despite known problems with efficacy and misuse. Patients are not educated on AD causes or management. TCS overprescription and misuse frequently results in TCS resistance and withdrawal in the second decade of life and onwards. Meanwhile, educating patients and caregivers about the condition, treatment, and proper management, can lead to improved outcomes and quality of life. Education requires that healthcare providers utilize communication methods based on an understanding of how children learn and communicate.

Global/Local Engagement: Summer teacher at Bright Horizons daycare in Connecticut in 2024, worked with children 6 months to 6 years

## **Caitlin Bird**

Genetic Birth Screenings Across Countries: Access and Implications

At birth, babies get screened for various different genetic diseases. The location where someone is born will determine what they are screened for. Those who have access to higher quality healthcare in more developed areas, have more resources available to them. Through my animating question, I explore how each of these countries are similar and different from each other. Along with what steps can be taken to improve the screening, treatment and quality of life in each of these locations. More specifically, the quality of life for people who are affected both directly and indirectly from these rare genetic diseases.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away at University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, Cusco, Peru-spring break short term engagement; UMass Chan Medical School Intern

## **Alana Burm**

Fostering Exercise Access for Children with Intellectual Disabilities: Reducing Obesity Levels.

The relationship between obesity rates in children with intellectual disabilities and access to exercise is complex. Obesity is a major public health issue, especially for those who lack access to physical activities. Many children with disabilities are at risk for high levels of obesity due to lack of inclusion in sports and exercise. Studying public health, specifically obesity, in South Africa combined with local experience skating with individuals with intellectual disabilities, formed my studies. I found that lack of accessibility is a main factor in high obesity rates; thus, I examine how everyone, specifically children with intellectual disabilities, access exercise.

Global/Local Engagement: Conn College Dayton Arena, Winters 2022-2024; skating with people with intellectual disabilities

## **Olivia Colden**

Reducing Risk, Building Resilience: A Public Health Perspective on Eating Disorder Prevention

Eating disorders are one of the most deadly psychological disorders, and although there are various treatment options, stronger prevention strategies are needed to address this major public health crisis. During my time working at an inpatient eating disorder treatment center, I saw firsthand how pervasive and life-altering eating disorders can be. This experience inspired me to explore prevention strategies and ways to build resilience among at-risk adolescents. Media literacy training, coping skills practice, and psychoeducation for family members can help adolescents maintain healthy eating habits and improve their body image despite unrealistic beauty standards.

Global/Local Engagement: I worked at a local inpatient eating disorder treatment center

## **Catherine Cole**

Building the Bench: Promoting Youth Athletics to Improve Minority Health Outcomes

This paper examines how promoting access to athletics in predominantly Black, low socioeconomic status (SES) school systems can enhance the overall health and well-being of minority youth. Regular participation in sports and structured physical activity is strongly linked to reduced rates of obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure—chronic conditions that disproportionately affect low-income and minority populations. Drawing from current public health data collected by the CDC, as well as personal experience in a strength and conditioning internship, I examined both the physical and psychosocial benefits of athletic involvement, including improved mental health, academic performance, and social development.

Global/Local Engagement: During my strength and conditioning internship this past summer, I assisted with athlete training sessions, managed equipment, and provided support.

## **Olivia Cook**

Caring for Caregivers: Impact of Nursing Demands on Health and Patient Outcomes

The physical, emotional, and social demands of nursing significantly affect the well-being of caregivers and, in turn, the quality of patient care. Drawing on interdisciplinary coursework, as well as firsthand experience as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), the presentation examines how stress, fatigue, relational challenges, and workplace conditions shape caregiver resilience and performance. It highlights the importance of evidence-based support systems to promote resilience, reduce burnout, and improve healthcare outcomes. Understanding and addressing these factors is essential for creating sustainable healthcare environments that support both nurses and patients.

Global/Local Engagement: Completed CNA course/clinicals, Salem MA (May-June 2024); currently work per diem as a CNA

## **Maddy Dombal**

The Power of Social Trust: How Advocacy Shapes Global Health

How do different levels of social trust affect the success of public health interventions like vaccinations? Health behaviors are shaped by social compacts and government policies, which vary across cultural and healthcare contexts. My thinking derives from coursework spanning seven semesters; international case studies; an internship with the UN Foundation Global Health Advocacy team; and community engagement with local food security initiatives. I found that advocacy, community involvement, and trust in institutions intersect determining effectiveness of health interventions. Looking at vaccination rates as a primary example, I examine how social strategies strengthen public health systems.

Global/Local Engagement: Study away in Copenhagen; Internship with United Nations Foundation; Research Assistant in Food Security Lab; Volunteer at Food Pantry

## **Romaissae El Gamani**

Bridging Barriers to Pediatric Healthcare: Examining Access Interventions

This presentation explores ways to improve pediatric healthcare in underrepresented communities, shaped by two formative experiences: witnessing a child drown in Morocco due to the absence of trained personnel, and seeing a senior resident bleed unattended in an understaffed New London senior home. These moments exposed the human cost of neglect, under-resourcing, and systemic failure. Furthermore, through global engagement in London and Jamaica, I saw how poverty, geography, and infrastructure can shape health outcomes. To combat this, we need evidence-based interventions that are community-driven and rooted in the lived realities of the families they aim to serve.

Global/Local Engagement: In spring 2025, I studied abroad in London and Jamaica, where I saw the lived realities of many marginalized communities.

## **Sophia Ethington**

The Importance of Women's Health Education on an Institutional and Communal Level

In this presentation, I examine how the lack of institutional inclusion of women's health leads to ineffective resources and poor health outcomes. This gap disserves women once they leave the education system and face real-life experiences. I will highlight differences in sexual education curricula across communities and argue that community engagement must be prioritized to improve outcomes. Drawing on my experiences in the Office of Health and Wellbeing and as an intern at NYU's Family Care Unit, I connect

how rejection of women's health education in institutions contributes to disparities in knowledge and care in hospital settings.

Global/Local Engagement: Intern at the CC Office of Health and Wellbeing and at a NYU family care unit

## **Abby Fernald**

Adverse Childhood Experiences: Screenings for Identification and Intervention to Optimize Health Outcomes

Childhood experiences have profound impacts on development and health. To comprehend and combat long-term negative health impacts associated with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), a systematic process for identifying and subsequently intervening in these events is necessary. My passion for investigating this issue is driven by my work with the One Love organization and at the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, where I assisted on the National Healthy Start Association AIM CCI IPV Bundle project, aimed to identify best practices for handling interpersonal violence cases in the maternal population. This inspired my exploration of the best practices for addressing ACEs.

Global/Local Engagement: Summer of 2024, I served as a Health Profession Outreach Intern at the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

## **Veronica Fernandez Martinez**

Culturally Adapted CBT: Cultural and Generational Dynamics Among Black and Latinx Youth

Many existing mental health interventions and psychological models have shortcomings that fail to align with the experiences and values of today's BIPOC youth. Mental health concerns among children and adolescents are a growing public health issue demanding interventions tailored to the cultural and individual needs of this population. This poster presentation will evaluate whether traditional therapeutic frameworks, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, have evolved to address complex sociocultural realities faced by Black and Latinx youth, including gendered racism, acculturation challenges, digital racial trauma, high suicide rates among Latinas, and marginalization of Afro-Latinx and first-generation youth.

Global/Local Engagement: Camp counselor at Courage Quest Summer Camp for Children with Anxiety, University of Rhode Island, June–August 2025

## **Abigail Haan**

Understanding the History of Deinstitutionalization and Reimagining the Future of Community Care

How do we create communities in which all people receive care that is both adequate and dignified? I tackle this question from both a historical and contemporary perspective. First, I explore the history of deinstitutionalization, which was the process of closing down state-run institutions that warehoused people identified as having developmental, intellectual, and psychiatric disabilities. I then evaluate current systems of care, drawing from academic coursework and experiential learning in an emergency shelter environment. Finally, I pose Disability Justice as an essential framework for continuing to strengthen community-based care that is equitable and just.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship at an emergency shelter for unhoused families and individuals.

## **Eva Kohn**

Health/Sexual Education as a Tool for Preventing and Confronting Domestic Violence.

Creating interventions for domestic violence early on in schools or in healthcare settings can help to mitigate domestic violence and prevent future instances. Domestic violence is the leading cause of femicide and creates over a thousand deaths every year. It is paramount to intervene and stop these deaths that are entirely preventable and prevent trauma that leads to future violence. Through the Public Health Pathway I have researched this topic through core classes and global and local engagement and found that education is the most important tool for preventing the public health crisis of domestic violence and femicide.

Global/Local Engagement: Volunteer internship at the domestic violence prevention organization, Sanctuary for Families' transitional shelter.

## **Giselle Korn**

Exploring Seizure Prevention Methods in Drug-Resistant Temporal Lobe Epilepsy

Temporal lobe epilepsy (TLE) is the most common form of epilepsy. It is associated with the highest rate of drug-resistant epilepsy, often requiring invasive methods such as surgery to become seizure-free. Frequent untreatable seizures occurring in drug-refractory epilepsy lead to difficulties in working and participating in daily activities such as driving. Due to drug resistance, researching the underlying mechanisms of seizure generation in TLE is crucial to finding a treatment. This research investigated the role of biomedically engineered receptors in increasing inhibitory signaling in the hippocampus and potentially preventing seizure initiation and propagation.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship in the Hai Sun Lab at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School Department of Neurosurgery in New Jersey, Summer 2025

## **Caroline Lee**

Improving Rural Healthcare: Access, Quality, and Education

This project examines the unique challenges rural populations face in accessing prompt, reliable, and safe healthcare, with attention to the environmental and structural contexts in which these challenges occur. Drawing on a public-health framework, the study emphasizes preventative approaches to healthcare delivery and equity. A cross-cultural perspective is incorporated through statistical analysis of rural healthcare access in South Korea, supplemented by observational research conducted in a hanok-style village in rural Busan. By comparing findings from these two distinct geographical contexts, the project highlights barriers to care, proposes strategies for improvement, and identifies areas for further research.

Global/Local Engagement: Study abroad at Ewha Women's University in Seoul, South Korea. Fall semester (August-December) of 2024

## **Rachel Lee**



## Coping with Cancer: Patients and Families

Cancer takes a deep mental toll on both patients and their families. Many face anxiety, depression, fear, grief, and isolation. Chemotherapy can also cause “chemo brain,” leading to memory and focus issues. Self-esteem and body image struggles are common, adding to the emotional burden. Families must adjust their routines and cope with constant uncertainty. Having personally supported a loved one through cancer, I’ve seen how the mental and emotional effects are just as real as the physical ones though often less visible. Raising awareness can help others feel less alone in their journey and encourage understanding and support.

Global/Local Engagement: SSRI, Chemistry Department under Dr. Ching

## Emma Luna

Integrating Indigenous Knowledge: Incorporating Traditional Hawaiian Medicine into Western Health Systems

This project examines how traditional Hawaiian medicine can be integrated into Western healthcare. Rooted in land, spirituality, and community, Hawaiian healing emphasizes holistic well-being, addressing physical, emotional, social, and spiritual health. Unlike Western biomedicine’s focus on disease, Indigenous practices highlight balance and interconnectedness. Collaborative efforts in Hawai’i demonstrate how combining approaches enriches patient care and fosters cultural representation. Integration not only preserves traditional knowledge but also creates more inclusive healthcare models that meet modern needs while respecting culture. Ultimately, bridging these systems offers a pathway to more comprehensive, culturally grounded, and respectful approaches to health and healing.

Global/Local Engagement: Interned at the University of Hawaii Cancer Center

## Rebecca Manna

Interacting Systems: Access and Disparities in Healthcare

Growing up with a father requiring constant medical care and an immigrant mother gave me an early awareness of the barriers to healthcare access. My experiences- ranging from navigating Bolivia’s fragmented health system after a medical emergency to studying global structures through coursework- have deepened my interest in how political, cultural, social, etc systems shape health disparities. I have seen that while every system has strengths, no model is universally applicable. What succeeds in one context may fail in another. My interest lies in determining how interacting systems influence equitable access to care locally and globally.

Global/Local Engagement: Cochabamba, Bolivia (6 weeks): Supported NGO Alerta Verde in combating food insecurity by building and maintaining community food gardens.

## Grace McDonough

The Superpower of Talking: Using Human Connection to Enhance Wellbeing

People communicate in a myriad of ways—nonverbally and verbally, with strangers, friends, and even themselves. Examining these interactions reveals the powerful effect talking has on wellbeing. Factors

such as eye contact, mode of communication, and emotional intelligence influence the quality of connection. The encouraging reality? The individual has the power to make a difference. It was the simple, “little” moments during my courses and global-local experiences that inspired my research and shaped my animating question. Now, my goal is to share my experiences to identify ways individuals can make a difference by doing something as simple as talking.

Global/Local Engagement:

2024 and 2025 summers, I worked as a child life volunteer at the Elliot Hospital in Manchester, NH.

## **Cecilia Roe**

Examining Strategies to Educate Youth on Long Island Sound Conservation

The Long Island Sound (LIS), a vital estuary near New York City, supports activities such as kayaking, fishing, and sailing. Among its most frequent users are children and teens ages 7–18 who sail in programs organized by the Junior Sailing Association of the LIS, representing over 65 clubs each summer. Because these sailors rely on the Sound for recreation, it is essential to foster their understanding of waterfront health and conservation. Drawing on experience managing a junior sailing program, this project develops lesson plans and daily activities that integrate environmental stewardship, cultivating a generation of informed, responsible sailors.

Global/Local Engagement: Served as Program Director for the Larchmont Shore Club Sailing Program in Larchmont New York for two summers.

## **Serena Seiple**

Emergency Medical Systems: Impact of Accessibility, Culture, and Need Across Borders

Emergency medical services (EMS) play a vital role worldwide, though systems differ across regions. In the United States, EMS is highly structured, with trained emergency medical technicians (EMTs) authorized to administer medications such as glucose, nitroglycerine, and epinephrine in the field. In Cusco, Peru, mountainous terrain, limited access, and strong cultural traditions shape EMS, with natural remedies often used for minor conditions and EMS reserved for severe cases. This work compares EMS in Peru and the United States, examining how accessibility, cultural values, and population needs influence their approaches to emergency medicine.

Global/Local Engagement: Pathway trip to Peru (Spring break 2025) to explore public health and medicinal herbs + EMT certification/practice (summer 2025, CT)

## **Aleena Seyedzadeh**

Identifying the Epigenetic Effects of Generational Trauma in Youth and Medicine

The relationship between trauma and mental health disorders is important to discuss in order to understand issues regarding public health. Generational trauma involves the physical and psychological impact of trauma on offspring and generations to come. This presentation will dive into how generational trauma affects mental health in the youth, from a biological and an environmental standpoint. We will also be investigating how our understanding of this impact influences the way mental health is treated in the

medical field. Necessary resources and knowledge of how to address generational trauma will aid in improving both mental health and treatment in youth.

Global/Local Engagement: Student volunteer, L&M Hospital, New London, CT, sophomore year to present.

## **Sophie Sperry**

Environmental Health and Political Inequality: How Disparities Shape Voting Across Socioeconomic Classes

This project explores the intersection of environmental health and politics, focusing on how disparities in public health shape political behavior across socioeconomic classes. My animating question was developed through coursework in biology, statistics, government, and environmental studies. My global/local engagement experiences deepened this inquiry: at the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters, I witnessed how advocacy organizations translate environmental health into political campaigns and voter education, while at Docs for Health, I researched how energy insecurity affects families' health and access to assistance. Together, these experiences demonstrate that environmental health is a central force shaping political inequality and democratic participation.

Global/Local Engagement: Connecticut League of Conservation Voters, I witnessed how advocacy organizations translate environmental health into political campaigns and voter education.

## **Sophia Stevens**

Prioritizing Women Centered Care to Address Infectious Disease Within Families

Healthcare is frequently not designed for or with women in mind. The fact that a majority of research is done on men means that less is known about the female body and how different medications and treatments may impact it. Mothers are also a key population that are frequently not given the appropriate attention. Mothers are a key touch point for family health, as issues that affect mothers will also likely impact their children. If a mother doesn't have the resources to keep herself safe from infectious disease, then her whole family is at risk.

Global/Local Engagement: 5 week Public Health Focused Program at Stellenbosch University in South Africa

## **Kristin Valentin**

Skin Cancer Prevention: Detecting the Unseen and Connecting with the Unreached.

Preventable conditions like skin cancer often go unnoticed until urgent, emphasizing the need for early detection. This presentation explores how innovation and community outreach can improve early identification and prevention, reducing skin cancer's public health burden. Clinical exposure reveals the consequences of preventable health issues, highlighting the importance of empathy, patient-centered care, and effective communication. Coursework in psychology, sociology, public health, social justice, and pathophysiology provides a broad understanding of behavior, social determinants, and disease mechanisms. These insights underscore the critical need for equitable, accessible public health initiatives focused on education, prevention, and protection.

Global/Local Engagement: Working as an EMT providing emergency care locally, and supporting hospitalized children through Children's Tumor Foundation since childhood.

## **Sigmund Winiecki**

Disease Prediction and Prevention: Analysis of Vaccination Factors

In this project, I explore how vaccines and vaccination data can be used to prevent and control the spread of disease. Despite advancements in medicine and vaccines, there are areas of the world that still struggle with preventable diseases. Here, I will explore different reasons for this, and introduce possible solutions to these problems. I will incorporate some of my own knowledge, and use real world data and examples that illustrate these issues. I will also discuss some personal experiences like pertinent courses and my study abroad trip that have informed how I have come to think about this topic.

Global/Local Engagement: Summer study away trip to Stellenbosch, South Africa. Public health courses

# **SOCIAL JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABILITY PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2025 ABSTRACTS**

## **Eve Geissmann**

Immigration in France: Laïcité, History, and Local Struggles for Justice.

This project examines how France's principles of laïcité (secularism), colonial legacies, and cultural values shape immigration policy, and how left-right political divides reflect competing visions of national belonging. Drawing on my position as both French and American, I analyze how immigration is experienced on the ground and contested at the political level, particularly in relation to the French Muslim population. Ultimately, I ask how France can pursue grassroots initiatives towards socially just and sustainable policies that balance economic integration with national identity.

Global/Local Engagement: Community Partnership in Manhattan, Summer 2025 (WITNESS) - Elevating voices of system-impacted people and engaging with elected officials and media to influence policy.

## **Declan Hunter**

Avoiding "Day Zero": Water Conservation Education for a Brighter Future

"Day Zero" is a term used to describe when a city, town, or region runs out of clean drinking water to distribute to its citizens. As climate change and environmental degradation advance around the globe, many communities are nearing their own Day Zero. In my presentation, I will explore the ways in which effective and equitable water conservation education can have a positive impact on the future of the environment and people around the world. I will examine Ipswich, Massachusetts; Monterey, California; and Cape Town, South Africa, as case studies.

Global/Local Engagement: I interned at the Ipswich River Watershed Association in the Summer of 2025, working in environmental education.

## **Diane Kim**

Economic Strategies for Climate Action

This project explored economic pathways for addressing climate change while promoting human well-being. I focused on Green Growth, Degrowth, and A-Growth, which emphasize continuing, downscaling, or remaining neutral toward economic growth, respectively. Drawing on a range of sources, I examined how these strategies relate to social, environmental, and economic systems.

Global/Local Engagement: Studied abroad at Heidelberg University in Heidelberg, Germany for five months during Spring and Summer 2025.

## **Charles McLean**

Indigenous Lifeways in Support of Sustainable Development and Environmental Stewardship

This Presentation charts my academic journey throughout my time at Connecticut College, examining indigenous societies around the world and their lifeways, philosophies, and systems of knowledge. I explore how traditional indigenous ecological knowledge can be adapted to larger contexts to inform notions of sustainability and environmental stewardship, and how we as a collective can integrate them into our own systems of being and knowing.

Global/Local Engagement: Summer Civic Leaders placement with New London Land Trust, Summer 2024; Study Away in Scotland Spring 2025.

## **Kian Miranda-Rodriguez**

Sustainability & Awareness: Food Security in Peru

I explore how sustainability, climate change, and Indigenous resilience intersect through Peru's food systems and sociopolitical structures. I will reflect on my one-week Pathway trip, where I witnessed how food insecurity disproportionately affects Indigenous communities due to colonial legacies and policy inequalities. I compare this with agricultural excess and waste in the U.S., and examine how climate change threatens crop viability, especially potatoes. Finally, I highlight Asociación Andes as a model for equitable, biodiversity-driven solutions.

Global/Local Engagement: Cusco, Peru-spring break short term study abroad, 1 week

## **Julieta Moreira Reyes**

Seeds of Knowledge

Peoples across the Americas assert their sovereignty, preserve their cultural heritage, and sustain diverse cosmovisions of well-being. Highlighting lived experiences and locally rooted examples, two initiatives are examined: community-facilitated archaeological projects in Belize and the planting of Three Sisters at Sprout Farm. Both connect local “seeds of knowledge” as expressions of communal resilience and epistemic agency, sharing local expertise through hands-on practice and community engagement that challenges dominant colonial systems and expands recognition of local knowledge holders.

Global/Local Engagement: Archaeological Field School in Belize (2024); Internship: Sprout Farm (2025); Partnership: Fresh New London, Tribal Nations; Citizen Science in Peru (2025)

## **Ella Schaab**

Reframing Environmental Education: Paths of Equity and Accessibility based in Indigenous Knowledge

Explorations of the pathway experience in shaping questions of social justice and knowledge production in environmental education. It reflects on a non-linear journey of inspiration, leading to critical inquiry into how we teach children about the environment and where environmental knowledge originates. Through the lens of global-local engagement, the pathway experience has challenged traditional approaches and opened space for centering Indigenous funds of knowledge and alternative ways of learning and understanding. Particularly examining how indigenous funds of knowledge should be integrated into environmental education to equitably inspire and teach all children, despite social class, race, and geographic location.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Abroad in Brisbane, Australia, Spring 2024. Global perspectives on sustainability and environmental knowledge.

## **Adeleine Wilson**

Climate Action and Resilience: How Environmental Nonprofits Foster Healthy, Eco-conscious Communities

The US federal government has repeatedly framed climate change as a “con-job”, which has resulted in rolling back significant climate initiatives in addition to pulling out of major international treaties such as the Paris Agreement. When we can’t rely on the federal government to combat climate change, can we turn to non-profits? I will answer this question by reflecting on and analyzing my experiences with three different organizations: Change the World Kids, the Monteverde Institute, and the Intervale Center. This reflection will also offer an examination of the impact of non-profits on their local communities.

Global/Local Engagement: Volunteer at Non-profit, Intervale Center, Burlington, VT, Summer 2025. Farming, CSA packing, and gleaning.