CONNECTICUT COLLEGE
ALL-COLLEGE
SYMPOSIUM

2026 Abstracts

Presented by seniors in Pathways, Centers and Certificate Programs at the All College Symposium, November 5, 2026

AMMERMAN CENTER FOR ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Sababa Ahmed

Pucca: What Concrete Erases; the Disappearing Santal Home Art in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, Santal women paint their mud homes with hand-ground clay pigments: red ochre bands and white kaolin flowers and birds, passed from mother to daughter. They repaint homes yearly for Sohrai, the harvest festival, and the monsoon washes the paint away. As brick and tin replace mud, the practice disappears as its surface is lost. Pucca is an interactive installation where visitors paint a real mud wall with a sensor glove while a machine learning system confidently “explains” each motif beside a Santal artist’s voice. How can a living tradition be preserved without freezing it?

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Product Design Intern, Develop For Good, California, Summer '26

Jaiden Alerege

Growing above with Knowing and Love

Using mycelium cultivated on agricultural and household waste such as straw, coffee grounds, and cardboard to produce sculptural artworks that interrogate the politics of food, the ethics of consumption, and the inevitability of decay. By repurposing discarded materials into biodegradable forms, the work critiques industrial food systems, the alienation from self-sufficiency, and the unsustainable cycles of overproduction and waste. Mycelium, as both medium and metaphor, embodies the interconnectedness of growth, decomposition, and regeneration, challenging viewers to confront their complicity in extractive economies while envisioning alternatives rooted in reciprocity with the natural world.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Administrative and Maintenance Intern at Crotona Park of the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation

Eli Devejian

Weather Data: The Game

With the data on climate change becoming harder to come by, how can creating interactions gamifying data can lead to deeper understanding and experiences.

Global/Local Engagement: Study Away in New Zealand Spring 2026, on campus physics research, chemistry research at UIUC

Quentin Drucker

Worlds of Imperfection: Reimagining Nature Through Procedural Generation

This project explores how procedural generation can transform still photography into immersive, explorable digital environments inspired by the Japanese philosophy of Wabi-sabi. Using Unreal Engine and custom C++ algorithms, the project translates natural irregularity, asymmetry, and imperfection into computational rules for generating organic landscapes. Image analysis will extract visual characteristics from photographs to influence terrain, vegetation, lighting, and atmosphere. Rather than recreating photographs literally, the system aims to reinterpret nature through computational world-building, exploring the relationship between artistic intention, algorithmic creativity, and our perception of natural beauty in digital environments.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Worked on the frontend of an EHR for Quilted Health Midwives.

Brian Goldsmith

Item: The Mystery of Control and Black Box Interfaces

Item is a musical “black box,” an instrument whose workings are hidden, revealed only through physical interaction. Inspired by Donald Buchla’s synthesizers and my work with Teenage Engineering’s Pocket Operator Modular 400, I am building a synthesizer whose controls are hidden: players can feel the buttons and switches, but never see them. Without labels or familiar layouts, Item can only be understood by playing it. My work combines interface design, modular synthesis, analog audio, electronics, and CAD fabrication to ask how mystery and tactile discovery can change how humans relate to instruments in a relentlessly digital age.

Global/Local Engagement
Community Partnership: STEM Education Instructor, New England Sci-Tech, Natick, MA, Summer '26

Kaley Mendoza-Pineda

Architecture of Light: Color & Shadow in Mexican Space

This project investigates how light and color operate as active architectural elements, rather than decorative features in Mexican built environments. Focusing on spaces such as Casa Luis Barragán, I ask how harsh sunlight, color bleed, and shadow lines transform architecture into an emotional experience, and whether color can define space as powerfully as physical structure. Drawing on research in architectural polychromy, Barragán, and modernist color theory, I will create a series of layered visual compositions that fragment and recombine walls, windows, and courtyards. The work emphasizes atmosphere, showing how light and pigment can shape space, mood, and perception.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: I interned at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art as a 3D Scanning Intern for 9 weeks.

CENTER FOR CRITICAL STUDY OF RACE AND ETHNICITY SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Maaz Ahmed

Manufacturing Azad Jammu and Kashmir: Nationalist Narratives, Historical Memory, and Political Identity

Azad is the Urdu word for something free of control or limitations, truly independent. Although Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is formally recognized as a semi-autonomous territory, Pakistan exerts substantial legislative and executive control over it. Constitutionally not considered part of Pakistan, AJK and its people are treated as Pakistani, but without the same rights and privileges. AJK is caught in a precarious limbo between independence and dependence. Recent political developments have led me to question not only the region's political history, but also how it is understood, represented, and contested in Pakistan and AJK.

Global/Local Engagement
Stellenbosch University, South Africa- (Summer 2025); Archival Research, Lahore, Pakistan, and London, UK.

Jenny Bui

New Epidemic: Mass Psychogenic Illness Among Low-Income BIPOC Youth in Philadelphia

There is a mass psychogenic illness among our low-income youth that seek mental health care through a myriad of unaccredited sources because of the inaccessibility of genuine real mental health care like therapy, support groups, etc. and other services. In Philadelphia, the education, healthcare, and housing system all contribute to the mental health care gaps in youth. I looked at these inequalities and did ethnographic research to find the root causes of why low-income youth in Philadelphia experience mental health masquerading and MPI--- how can we as a society make mental health resources more accessible?

Global/Local Engagement: New Zealand, Spring '26

Maya Daly

Academic Identity, Identity Integration, and Well-Being in First Generation College Students

My SIP examines the relationship between Academic Identity Salience, which refers to the extent an individual perceives being a student as a core part of the self; identity integration, how various identities are seen as conflicting or compatible; and well-being in first-generation college students. The study acknowledges academic achievement as a site of identity construction in its own right, facilitating either heightened dissonance or reconciliation of different cultural, social, and personal identities. The analysis considers the college environment as its own distinct cultural context with behavioral/linguistic norms that may influence the expression of student's unique identities.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Camp Courage Quest Summer '26 Intern; Mitchell College Health & Wellness Office Fall '26; Writing Center Tutor Fall '25-Present.

Elainnor Frisbie

Goldie Watson and the Intellectual Thought of Black Women

This project is a case study on how Black women radicals forged their own agency throughout the Civil Rights Movement, centered around Philadelphia activist Goldie Watson (1909-1994). After finding herself under government inquisition for supposed communist allegiances, Watson's identity as a Black woman and educator drives her choices to refuse the Federal Bureau of Investigation's pressure to sell out in order to secure her own future. This study seeks to connect Watson's life and choices to the choices and paths we face today as educators and activists seeking to bring change to our society.

Global/Local Engagement
Fellowship: Archive Research, Temple University, Philadelphia, Summers '24 and '25.

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND THE LIBERAL ARTS SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Nilufar Abdiraimova

Understanding the U.S. Market: Strategy for an Independent French Fashion Brand

This project examines how an independent French fashion brand can understand and respond to the U.S. market through customer research, competitive analysis, and brand strategy. During my internship at French-York, I analyzed customer demographics, purchasing behavior, foot traffic, competitor pricing and positioning, and potential retail opportunities. I also supported marketing across social media, email, influencer partnerships, and in-person events, contributing to a fourfold increase in average campaign reach. The project explores how customer and market insights can inform brand positioning, marketing decisions, and growth opportunities for an independent international fashion brand in the U.S.

Global/Local Engagement
Study away: Parsons School of Design in NYC
Internship: Marketing and Brand Strategy Intern, NYC, Spring '26

Afaf Albur

Beyond Partnership and Exploitation: Examining the China–Africa Economic Relationship

China has become one of Africa’s largest trading partners in the past fifty years through trade, infrastructure projects, development loans, and foreign investment. Some scholars argue that Chinese investment provides necessary infrastructure and economic growth, while others argue that China’s growing influence represents a new form of colonialism or neocolonialism. My research examines the nature of the economic relationship between Africa and China, investigating how the relationship is constructed, who has agency, and whether it reproduces or challenges older forms of global economic hierarchy.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Permanent Observer Mission of African Union to the United Nations in NYC, Summer 2026

Samuel Bailey

Coastal Costs: Public Health risks to Taiwan's local and indigenous communities

My research examines the intersection of environmental degradation, occupational health, and government policy within Taiwan's coastal fishing communities, with an emphasis on their disproportionate effects on Indigenous populations. Fishery workers face elevated risks of disease and mental distress, while rural communities often experience limited healthcare access. Simultaneously, industrialization, coastal development, and insufficient environmental oversight have intensified ecological pressures on fishing livelihoods. This study investigates how environmental policy and governance shape these health and socioeconomic disparities, particularly among Indigenous communities in Taiwan's rural coastal (East) regions.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Courses on Taiwanese History
Internship: Individual research

Millie Bouvin

Redefining Humans Role in Conservation: What Germany Can Show US

The intermediate disturbance hypothesis states that species richness peaks when the ecosystem has an intermediate disturbance. Both intermediate frequency and the extent of disturbance. A part of this is increasing the variability of use of land and zonation, where different zones have various disturbances. This is an important concept because often you cannot create a completely undisturbed environment, especially when humans are moving in on habitats. We can change that narrative and conserve biodiversity with alternative conservation methods. In my SIP, I would like to explore existing examples of this in Germany, including the German Green Belt and the Kaiserstühl.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: IES Freiburg Germany, Fall 2025
Internship: Department Nature conservation land-use research and monitoring, Black Forest Biosphere, Summer 26

Sylvia Brofka-Berends

Intersectionality in France: The Fear of the Other

This research examines intersectionality in France, specifically the identities of women racialized as Asian. Because of France's complicated discourse about race, being white has become tied to French citizenship. My studies and experiences have contributed to the idea of uncomfortableness when unable to determine someone's identity. Through

anthropological analysis and interviews, I will answer the question: Given the country's history of colonialism and orientalism, how and in what ways are the intersectional identities of women who are racialized as Asian in France (Vietnamese, Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, descent), confronted with a unique discriminatory experience?

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Paris, France, Winter-Spring 2026
Internship: UniR Universités et Réfugié.e.s, Summer 2026

Katherine Connor

The Urban Green Space: How Natural Spaces Materialize and Enhance Urban Fabrics

For a multitude of reasons, having access to natural space is important. This is especially true in cities, where it can be difficult for residents to access nature. For my SIP, I plan to compare the various ways that natural third spaces emerge in both the US and Europe and how these spaces contribute to the cities around them. I will explore the trends of how these parks came to be part of the city, whether through donations of estates, or plans made by the city or community itself.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: IES Vienna, Austria Spring 2026; Meunchen Architekturgalerie, Munich, Germany mid-May - end of July 2026

Dulguun Damdinbayar

Fall of the Soviet Union and its Impact on Mongolian Architecture

My project is about the impact of the fall of the Soviet Union on Mongolia through an architectural lens. This project studies the shift in Mongolia's architecture, from the Communist period to its modern-day architecture. Mongolia was a satellite state during the Communist period, but its connection to the Soviet Union is overlooked. The Soviet Union greatly influenced the Mongolian political, economic, and cultural environment; these influences persist. I am researching the extent of Communist domination on Mongolian identity and how Soviet influence has caused lasting changes to Mongolian society through Communist values implemented in architecture.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Consulate of Mongolia, Chicago, Summer'26; Mongolian Heritage Center, Chicago, Summer'26

Gracie Donabella-Pedlow

Dance Across Cultures: Perceptions of Embodiment in France and the US

My research will aim to investigate how dance as an art form and embodied practice is perceived in both the US and France. I will address the ways that dance has historically been embedded in the two cultures, and in what ways this has impacted the culture surrounding dance today. Through this research I aim to discover the factors that change the ways individuals experience dance, both as dancers and spectators.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Intern at Centre Chorégraphique National De Nantes, Nantes, France Summer '26

Molly Donovan

Outpatient Mental Health Experiences Under U.S. and Spanish Healthcare Systems

Outpatient mental health care is an essential resource for individuals receiving ongoing treatment for mental health conditions. However, structural barriers can affect the quality and accessibility of these services, contributing to variation in treatment experiences. By examining how patients access, experience, and progress through outpatient mental health services, my research aims to provide insight into the structure and delivery of outpatient mental health care under U.S. and Spanish healthcare systems. My research seeks to inform efforts to improve equitable access, adequate treatment, and continued engagement with care.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Salamanca, Spain, IES Abroad Salamanca, Summer '25
Internship: Hospital Universitario La Paz, Madrid, Spain, Summer '26

Anika Ekra

The Sicily we Inherit: A Land of Cultural Exchange, Preservation, Third Spaces

My experience in Sicily and prior interest in the topic led me to explore how the island's history of cultural exchange continues to shape its art, architecture, and community. In my Senior Integrated Project, I will explore the preservation of Islamic influence in medieval Sicilian architecture and culture alongside the real experiences, access, and belonging of contemporary Muslim communities in Sicily. Through these two perspectives, I hope to understand how Sicily's history continues to influence who and what is able to thrive within its cultural landscape.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Museum Intern, Farm Cultural Park Summer, '26

Cathal Keating

Crossing the Strait: Moroccan Migration and the Rise of Vox in Spain

This project examines how historical memory shapes contemporary Spanish responses to Moroccan migration and the rise of far-right nationalism. Tracing a history of encounter and conflict, from al-Andalus and the Reconquista to the Morisco expulsions, Spain's colonial protectorate in Morocco, and Franco's use of Moroccan troops in the Civil War, it argues that the figure of the "moro" has served as an enduring foil for Spanish national identity. Through analysis of Vox's discourse, parliamentary debates, and press coverage, the project explores how these narratives are used today to fuel tensions over migration and belonging.

Global/Local Engagement:
Study Away: Granada Spain Jan '26 - end of August '26
Internship: Granada at UIM Summer '26

Evie Lockwood Mullaney

From Patriarchy to Progressivism: Gender Equality in Spain’s Democratic Transition

This research seeks to explain apparent gaps in the literature when it comes to the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) and international pressures in the Spanish transition to democracy after the death of dictator Francisco Franco. A wide-ranging literature review will cover different scholarly explanations for variation in democratic transition outcomes, gender equality in periods of transition and consolidation, and the role of civil society in policy outcomes during transitions. My chosen methodology will be a discursive review of CSO publications, parliamentary speeches, and Spanish public media, located in federal and private archives.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: UCLM, Toledo, Spain, Spring '26
Internship: Fundación por la Justicia, Valencia, Spain, Summer '26

Nutsa Mamulaishvili

Lost in Translation, Found in Science: The Total Synthesis of Frondosin D

Natural compounds are known as potent bases for pharmaceutical development. Frondosin D, derived from the marine sponge Dysidea Frondosa, is known for inhibiting Interleukin-8, a pro-inflammatory chemokine implicated in tumor angiogenesis, cancer survival and in acute inflammation conditions. In this research, we try to utilize organic synthesis strategies to access the final, functionalized structure of Frondosin D.
This presentation is a reflection on my path through the Chemistry and French departments at Connecticut College, from coursework to the CISLA internships and honors study, and on what these experiences taught me about communicating science across languages and cultures.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: BRCH & APFA, Batumi, Georgia, Summer'26

Sean Melvin

Flooding and Federalism: Jointly Managing Water in Buenos Aires, Argentina

The government of Buenos Aires, the sprawling primate city of Argentina, is administratively split between overlapping federal, provincial and local authorities: the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires and the 40 surrounding municipalities within Buenos Aires Province. It also sits atop numerous river basins and is vulnerable to flooding, a risk that will grow as climate change worsens. However, research demonstrates that river basins are best managed by a single governing body. This SIP will explore how Buenos Aires manages water within this fragmented landscape and how coordination could be improved within the constraints of an imbalanced, multi-level governing structure.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: State and Government Intern, CIPPEC, Buenos Aires, Summer '26

Edona Nezaj

Westernized Argentina: Diet and lifestyle contribution to cancer as a US parallel

Influenced by colonization and European immigration, Argentina has increasingly adopted a Westernized lifestyle and dietary choices. Previous research links these habits to rising rates of conditions like obesity and diabetes, known to elevate cancer risks. My research will analyze data between the 1960s and 2020s to identify these

shifts and explore, from a biochemical perspective, how they drive cancer development. Additionally, this study will compare Argentina's data with similar patterns in the United States. My project aims to determine whether adopting a Westernized lifestyle consistently triggers a decline in public health and a corresponding rise in oncological diseases.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: In June and July, I completed a 120-hour CFHI clinical shadowing program in Córdoba, Argentina

Ekaterina Petrichenko

Declining Human Rights Standards in Italy: Causes and Consequences

Nowadays in Italy we see a mobilization of traditional values and anti-globalist sentiment, supported by the rising right wing. At the same time, human rights standards in Italy appear to be declining. I want to see why and what the consequences may be. For my SIP I will look at whether Italy's media portrayal of migration and political dynamics in the country have made nationalist and restrictive politics easier to accept today. Finally, I will move to address the consequences of such policies on vulnerable groups and migration dynamics.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: IES Abroad Rome, January 2026 - May 2026
Internship: Geopolitical consulting firm SpecialEurasia, Rome, Summer 2026

Angelina Pierro

Non-Gendered Language and the Women's Rights Movements in Argentina

In Buenos Aires, there is a trend in which women are using much more gender neutral vocabulary to discuss their fellow people. In place of 'amigos' it is now common to be referred to as 'amigues'. This whole movement towards gender neutral language is coming from grassroots activism movements within Buenos Aires like the feminist movement Ni Una Menos (Grandinetti 2024). Women are leading the charge as the use of gender neutral language is coming from a feminist push away from strong gendered ideas about language that are rooted in a history of patriarchy.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: IES Granada, Spain Spring '26
Internship: Democracia en Red, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Summer '26

Daea Raidhi

Securitizing States: Immigration, Identity, and the Populist Right in France and Italy

This SIP conducts a comparative analysis of the populist right in France and Italy, examining how political movements in both countries shape national identity and define state security, particularly in relation to immigration. Through an analysis of political rhetoric, party platforms, and policy approaches, this study explores how populist leaders frame immigration within broader concerns about national sovereignty, cultural identity, and social cohesion. By comparing the French and Italian cases, the project identifies similarities and differences in how historical contexts and domestic political dynamics influence the development of populist narratives and their approaches to security and belonging.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Democrats Abroad, Paris, France, Summer 2026

Aurora Schifferli

Cities and Collective Rituals: How Connection Shapes Well-Being

The way urban spaces are designed have large impacts on their inhabitants. This two-part study aims to assess the impact of connection on well-being and the role of the built environment in facilitating interactions. Drawing on economic theories of quality of life, and architectural theories of spontaneous design, I assess well-being in Paris, France through a survey. Then, I will apply sociological theories of collective effervescence to physiological data, and assess dyadic behavior for states of shared arousal. Both parts serve to explore how we can create meaningful connection in our lives.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Psychology Student, Middlebury Schools, Paris, Spring '26
Internship: Research Assistant, Université Paris Cité, Paris, Summer '26

Anthony Smith

Values versus Interests: EU Foreign Policy in the South Caucasus

Drawing on my experiences living and working an internship in Georgia, this presentation will not only cover my time there but also what I learned about Georgia, and the South Caucasus region as a whole, particularly about the role it is currently playing in global geopolitics. My research will explore how domestic and regional politics

interact with broader agendas of outside actors, particularly the EU, but also some from Türkiye and Russia, and how these shape the political trajectories of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, and how the region reflects global influences and trends.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Identity and Conflict in the Caucasus, Tbilisi, Georgia, Spring '26
Internship: PMCG International, Tbilisi, Georgia, Summer '26

Erica Smith

Le Crise du Fromage: Highlighting the Importance of Microdiversity through Cheese

Overview of my CISLA journey and teaser for my SIP spring '27 about the looming French cheese crisis and looking at it from a microbiological perspective, as well as an anthropological lens.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Student, Middlebury Schools Abroad Paris Spring '26
Internship: La Ferme Des Amies, farm hand, Vaour, France, Summer '26

Brennan Thomson

The Effects of Sovereignty and Nationalism on Contemporary Conceptions of Justice

This SIP seeks to understand the emergence and failure of Supranational partnerships like the EU and the Schengen agreement to adhere to justice. Liberalist human rights principles were established by the very countries that have perpetuated violence and domination for centuries; did these countries ever honor them? How can this structure of the EU and Schengen (a compact of treaties) improve with other agreements like USMCA, RCEP, AfCFTA; trade agreements that could turn into travel agreements? The globalized world is uniting us culturally and economically. What purpose will the state have if these “shared cultures and histories” become more homogenous?

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Research Fellow, Euro Gulf Information Center, Rome, Summer '26
Internship: Policy Research Intern, Gubernatorial Campaign, '25.

Lilla Kate Tucker

"Fuera del campo:" Media Representation and Women's Sports Participation in Spain

This study analyzes the evolution of women’s participation in sports in Spain, using the country's 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup victory as a temporal juncture. Spain offers a

rich case study of this issue, as a nation that transitioned from the rigid ideology of Franco to its modern liberal democracy. Even with these changes, the country continues to navigate significant cultural and structural barriers to gender equality in sports. This project examines the role of media representation in reinforcing and/or challenging these established gender hierarchies and its effect on the participation of women in Spanish sports.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Red Deporte, Spain, Summer '26

Daniel Wong

Tourism as Self-Autonomy for Indigenous People in Taiwan

Indigenous culture in Taiwan today is celebrated as a lens through which the small island nation can differentiate itself from China. However, Taiwan's history of settler colonialism, cultural erasure, and ongoing discrimination against its indigenous peoples complicates the idea that indigenous representation validates a national identity. Drawing on assessments of Taiwan's tourism industry, addressing the dimensions of indigenous tourism, as well as utilizing experiences interning for an indigenous tourism company in Dulan, Taiwan, this project looks at how indigenous-led tourism has emerged as a sector through which indigenous people can construct, disseminate, and define their own identity.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Abroad: CET Taipei, Taiwan, Fall '25 2.
Internship: 'Etolan Style, Taiwan, Summer '26

CREATIVITY PATHWAY
SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Abby Brown
Creativity and Emotion: A Tool for Conservation

This project explores how emotion and creativity can be used as tools for environmental conservation. Inspired by William Cronon's critique of the separation between humans and nature, this project draws on experiences working on whale watches at the New England Aquarium. Through recognizing individual humpback whales, sharing their stories, and observing naturalists communicate their interests, the importance of storytelling and personal connections becomes clear. These experiences demonstrate how conservation goes beyond sharing scientific information and involves helping people develop emotional connections with wildlife and recognize the natural world as part of their everyday lives.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: New England Aquarium Watches, Boston, Summer '26

Ava Carter
Encountering Awe: The Cycle That Moves Us to Create

What happens between awe and creation? There are moments when something moves us to create. When an encounter takes us outside of ourselves, or a brief moment of awe changes how we view the world. I'm interested in what happens next: how awe transforms into inspiration, interpretation, and creation. But creation does not end the process. What we create becomes a new encounter for someone else, sparking a creative dialogue between people, culture, and art. My presentation explores this cycle and the space between being deeply moved by the world and creating something in response.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Field-Based Engagement in Fashion and Creative Practices, Il Conventino, Florence, Italy - Spring '26

Nina Chen
Survival Of The Creative Arts

This presentation asks the question of whether we, as a society, place enough value on the creative arts. Here, I look at what role the creative arts play in mental health and what barriers are holding them back from making the greatest positive impact it can have. The goal of this presentation is to foster thoughtful conversation surrounding these topics so we can hopefully set ourselves up for a better future.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Art Academy of Garden City, New York, '26

Alex Dixon

Creative Legacies of Craft and Reuse

How can one embrace the conflicting desires to make, create, and generate with a firm dedication to reuse, sustainability, and mitigating wastefulness? I will illustrate how my education on those who came before me, through history, archaeology, and personal interviews, shapes my current creative process. I will discuss how epistemologies of reuse have also been passed down to me and continue to influence my creative work. Finally, I will describe my goals for the future: reanimating objects labeled as valueless into something new, and implementing a more sustainable canvas for my creative expression.

Global/Local Engagement
Community Partnership: Oral History Transcription Assistant with Old Mystic History Center, Spring '26

Ruth Gittleman

Can Anything Be Creative? Exploring Creativity Through Everyday Life

People assume creativity is used only in art, music, writing, etc., but that’s not the case. Creativity can show up in teaching, problem-solving, and much more. In my presentation, I aim to show that creativity doesn’t mean you have to create something. Every school project, resource sheet, or presentation can use creativity. It helps make things more engaging and interactive. My presentation will show how I learned to use creativity in traditionally non-creative spaces.

Global/Local Engagement:
Study Away: Studying abroad in Denmark at DIS Copenhagen Spring '26, doing field studies with my classes.

Via Manicone

From Body to Art- Exploring the Relationship between Artistic Process and Meaning

What are we searching for when we create? How can art that shows vulnerability foster belonging in oneself? By exploring the relationship between the process of creation and the meaning associated with the piece, we can better understand ourselves and just how powerful art is as a conduit of expression. The work I am developing focuses on tactile interaction with materials such as wood in order to move a feeling out of the body and into the world through art. I urge participants to consider where their own joy lies in their practice, and just how often they follow it.

Global/Local Engagement
Community Partnership: Arts Lab of South County, weekly volunteer, Summer 26

Madeline Motes

From Chaos to Connection: Using Creativity to Help Neurodivergent Students Communicate Clearly

In this talk I will go into how my project has helped neurodivergent children who struggle with social skills communicate more clearly through reading and creative writing.

Global/Local Engagement
Community Partnership: Volunteer at lab school Fall '26

Luckmann Pierre

Building Beyond the Margins: Addressing Systematic Homelessness through Architecture

How can architecture enhance global standards amid the housing crisis? This presentation explores the application of creativity within architectural practice to confront this crisis. I will offer a brief overview of housing and homes as concepts, alongside architecture as a Western discipline. I will further examine how art and architecture can pioneer change by physically embodying social and cultural values. Additionally, I will reflect on classroom experiences framing architects as definers of taste and cultural transformation, as well as my honors thesis and prior work on housing and community building.

Global/Local Engagement
Community Partnership: New London Homeless Hospitality Center, weekly volunteer, Fall '26; Resident Assistant, fall 2024- spring 2027

Bailey Regan

The Recurring Singular Sensation: The Process and Reward of the Musical

Why do we choose the musical as an art form to express ideas? Musicals demand weeks or months of rehearsal, memorization of choreography and lines, countless hours of creating costumes, lighting, and set, and mountains of paperwork- all before the first performance ever occurs. However, such an interactive and collaborative art form is extremely useful in sharing ideas while evoking empathy. Through my experiences working on mainstage musicals at Conn and my work at two summer stock theaters, I will examine why we chose the musical again and again, despite the complexity and amount of work inherent to it.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Costume Intern, Surflight Theatre, Beach Haven, NJ, Summer '25; Wardrobe Technician, Maine State Music Theatre, Brunswick, ME, Summer '26

Skye Roberts

How to Find Starlight

I feel like a larva who is constantly consuming all that is around me. After all of this consuming of ideas, media, emotions, how do I digest what is in me? I consume. I feel. I create. And when I create I look for starlight.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Junior Archeologist, Center for Conservation Archeology, Italy and Greece, Summer 2026

Cristina Ruperez

How creative approaches in social work break language, cultural, and societal barriers

I will be talking about how creative approaches, such as art therapy, can be useful when breaking down cultural, societal, and language barriers, specifically with youth. I will talk about my own experience using art and creativity as a way to adjust to a new country when I was little. I will talk about my internships and how I was able to work with art therapy first-hand in the first one, and the second one I was able to develop a camp for children in alcohol abusive homes and how creativity played a big role in forming it.

Global/Local Engagement

Internship: ArtRelief - Waltham MA, art therapy organization, Summer 25' & Joseph Nee; Collaborative Center - Boston, MA, non-profit, Summer 26'

April Schilling

Creating Space to Grow: Support, Connection and Development

What factors play a role in development among vulnerable children? This project explores how creativity, interventions, and environments can promote positive development. In addition to my majors, Psychology and Human Development, I have always been interested in how environments and relationships shape childhood development. Through global and local experiences, an internship in Ghana working with child trafficking survivors and work at a low-income childcare center, I have explored the role of creativity in providing children with support and opportunities they need to grow. This project reflects on how relationships, settings and community resources come together to support positive development.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Challenging Heights in Ghana, summer 2026, working to end child trafficking, child labor, and economic exploitation.

Olivia Siegel

The Vulnerability of Being Heard: The Connective Language of Personal Stories

All of us have a unique power inside of us: the power to be vulnerable. And one of the most powerful things we can do is use this vulnerability to create, and share a part of ourselves with the world. In this presentation, I explore how using vulnerability in my songwriting has allowed me to connect with others through the courage of sharing personal stories and feelings in song, and how intimate emotions can transform into something beautiful that others can connect with and find comfort in, helping them feel less alone.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Area 52 studios, Saugerties, NY. May 2025-August 2026. Assisted recording sessions and live events, and recorded original music.

Ian Splaver

Exploring Speech & Stuttering: Learning to Slow Down

Raising awareness for stuttering, speech pathology, disfluencies, and learning to be a better listener. Fueled by my own personal experiences as someone with a stutter, along with my aspirations of becoming a speech therapist. Will also include the results of interviews that I conduct with as many people as I can collect: on their own experiences with their voice, and how they feel about speech and other aspects of socializing. The ending goal/call-to-action is for people to give each other a little bit more patience and grace in conversation.

Global/Local Engagement
1) Internship: Mount Sinai Speech Pathology Rehab Center, Shadowing, observed and assisted, NYC, Summer 26'

Johanne Wartelle

Why Do I Jump?

Through the Creativity Pathway, I began to recognize that movement is not separate from my creativity; it is one of the ways I express it. Volleyball has become an unexpected creative practice, requiring improvisation, problem-solving, instinct, collaboration, and constant adaptation. Now, as a senior preparing to enter a career in film, I face the possibility of leaving competitive volleyball behind. This presentation explores how I can carry communal expressions of creativity and physical expressions into my future career.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Video Intern, New London, CT, Fall '25-Present
Pozen-funded documentary, Tacoma, WA, Summer '25

Kelli Woodworth

Reading as Connection: How Stories Shape Us

Since the beginning of time, stories have been told, regardless of what form they take on. Whether it is poetry, film, song lyrics, or fiction, all stories have validity and resonate with us in different and distinct ways. In this presentation, I will discuss my personal connection to storytelling and how it has evolved over time. Additionally, I will explain how stories can provide feelings of comfort and build unlikely connections through discussion of my time spent in courses at Connecticut College and at my internship with the Milton Public Schools and Library.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Milton Public Schools and Library, Summer '26

DATA INFORMATION AND SOCIETY PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Cianna Grama

What role should synthetic data play in scientific research and software development?

As data-driven systems expand, researchers often face scarce, sensitive, or biased data. My research explores what role synthetic data should play in building responsible, ethical, and scalable systems. Drawing on computer science, statistics, and sociology, I examine synthetic data as both a practical solution and a source of inherited bias. In Professor Douglass's lab, I developed HiFiSim, a synthetic DNA sequence simulator, and used it to benchmark IMCCAT, a tool that identifies species in mixed DNA samples. This raised questions about when synthetic data can be trusted and where real data remains essential.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Connecticut College Biology and CS lab (Summers '25-'26). Developed a synthetic DNA simulator to benchmark a metagenomic tool.

Keira Haas

How Can Data Science Optimize Female Athletic Performance Across the Menstrual Cycle?

This presentation explores how athletic performance varies across the menstrual cycle and how data science can be used to optimize performance for female athletes. Women remain underrepresented in sports science research, leaving gaps in how female athletes are trained. Drawing from my coursework in statistics, psychology, and sociology at Connecticut College, as well as my internship at Flourish Care, a pregnancy-focused healthcare company, I examine how data can capture individual differences in women's health. Rather than assuming every athlete responds to her cycle the same way, I focus on individual patterns in recovery, fatigue, and performance.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Data Science Intern, Flourish Care (virtual) Spring 2026

Will Hurd

AI in Sports Administration: Tool, Replacement, or Something In Between?

This project asks whether AI is changing sports for the better, or changing it too much. Philosophy of AI helped me understand what AI actually is, and that it mimics rather than understands. Statistical Computing with R taught me how data drives AI's accuracy in sports. Power and Inequality sharpened my research and communication skills. Applying all three, I spent a summer as Sailing Director for the West Dennis Sailing Program using AI to run daily operations, using AI to compress time between problem and solution rather than replacing human judgment.

Global/Local Engagement
West Dennis Yacht Club, West Dennis Massachusetts - Sailing Director - Summer '26

Declan Leclair

Where does historical data fall short when identifying and measuring risks?

Oftentimes, past data is our best resource available when it comes to evaluating the future and assessing risks in financial markets. But where does this data come up short? Throughout my classes in a variety of departments and fields, I have been evaluating this question from different angles, analyzing the implications of relying on past data and how we can improve such practices. Additionally, my experience interning with the internal Audit team at Fidelity Investments has given me relevant experience assessing risks in areas where we have very little background information on, such as cryptocurrency or quantum computing.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Fidelity Investments Internal Audit Internship, Merrimack NH, Summer '26

Stephanie Shawaryn

The Evolution of Human Reliance on Artificial Intelligence

As artificial intelligence becomes integrated into everyday life, education, and the workplace, it is important to examine its impact on human efficiency, productivity, and decision-making. Throughout my time as a Statistics and Data Science major at Connecticut College, I have taken a multitude of courses that have allowed me to explore this question from different perspectives. My internship this summer as a Data Engineering intern at BlackRock gave me the opportunity to explore this question in a professional environment. Through these experiences, I seek to understand how AI is changing from a productive tool to human dependency.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Data Engineer Intern at BlackRock, Wilmington, Delaware, Summer '26

Carly Trapeni

Mitigating Healthy Volunteer Bias to Improve the Generalizability of Health Data

Healthy volunteer bias occurs when study participants are systematically healthier than the general population. My experience conducting research at the University of Vermont on postmenopausal women's cognitive health revealed how this bias created a truncated distribution of key Alzheimer’s biomarkers, and left us unable to answer our intended research question. Similarly, working on wearable technology research with Professor William Tarimo, we noticed health conscious students naturally tend to participate. My question explores a socioeconomic framework as one approach to mitigate healthy volunteer bias, subsequently improving data generalizability.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Research Intern at the University of Vermont, Summer 2026; Yale School of Public Health Summer Institute in Biostatistics, Summer 2025.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP, SOCIAL INNOVATION, VALUE AND CHANGE PATHWAY
SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Nikhil Agarwal

Informal Markets in North Korea

My project asks how North Korea's informal markets change citizens' economic dependence on the state. Drawing on satellite research, published defector testimonies, and my internship at the Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights in Seoul, I examine how households obtain income and necessities when state provision falls short. One defector described relying on markets to buy enough food for a single day. I consider whether markets expand people's economic agency despite continued state control. Future research will explore what that agency might mean for North Korea's political control, international openness, and prospects for gradual Korean unification.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Research Intern at the Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights, Seoul, South Korea, Summer '26.

Jon Barker

Corporate Lending and Commercial Real Estate Trends

Real estate continuously changes, it is the beautiful part about this industry, you typically never see a property sold at the same price. Why is this the case? There are so many different reasons why properties change value throughout the course of time. So what are some of the main factors? Interest rates, property conditions, market conditions, and so much more. There are so many different avenues throughout real estate, commercial and real estate but throughout my project I will dive into what to look for when seeing if a property is a good investment for you."

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Commercial Real Estate with TD Bank, Boston, MA, Summer '26

Logan Cleary

Psychology Prep for Finance Roles

People who have the same trading strategy could have completely different results. Psychology matters as much as your model or analysis in trading/finance because the

market constantly tests how you handle uncertainty, loss, profit. Some things include overconfidence in yourself, revenge trading after you lose to get back your money which could create a larger problem, FOMO, confirmation bias, recency bias, herding etc. How to improve? Journal your trades, talk with members of team or trading groups, judge your process not the outcome. Think in numbers and percentages.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Equity Research Intern, Broadleaf Partners Hudson Ohio Summer 2026

Abdou Dare

Can a Togo Farm Profit Where Ginger Supply Lags?

I asked whether a farm in Togo could profitably grow crops that buyers import. Testing that question against the site, the water and the prices changed the plan. Rayhan now grows rain-fed ginger and yam at Folo, with one borehole and small onion and garlic trials.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship, Other: MVM Edibles LLC, New York, Summer 2024; Sprout Garden, Connecticut College, Summer 2025; ADIS26, Santa Clara University, March 25–27

Joe DeMarzo

Corporate and Investment Banking's Role in AI Development

AI development requires enormous amounts of capital before economic returns are proven, creating opportunities for corporate and investment banks to provide financing. During my internship at TD Securities, I supported industrial companies providing HVAC systems for AI data centers. This experience showed me how revolving credit facilities, term loans, bridge loans, and equity financing can support liquidity and infrastructure expansion. When I return full-time, I hope to join CMT and become more involved in AI. Banking can be entrepreneurial through providing financing solutions to companies' needs while evaluating credit risk, risk-adjusted returns, and debt repayment to support growth.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Corporate and Investment Banking Summer Analyst at TD Securities, New York, Summer '26

Ty Dorow

Overcoming Modern Affordability Constraints in Investment Real Estate

Elevated valuations and borrowing costs bar early-career professionals with limited liquidity from traditional real estate acquisitions. To overcome these barriers, buyers can utilize Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loans to acquire 2- to 4-unit properties with 3.5% down. By occupying one unit and leasing the remaining space, rental income offsets debt service, reduces living expenses, and accelerates equity accumulation through mortgage amortization. Safe execution demands automated operating reserves and strict underwriting based on independent cash flow over speculative appreciation. Ultimately, this framework provides essential operational experience, establishing the financial foundation to scale into advanced creative financing.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Internships: Summer '25 at Arthur Thomas Properties, Summer '26 at Matthews REIS

Charlie Emery

Closing the Human Error Gap: Cybersecurity Education in Higher Education

Universities remain among the most frequently targeted institutions for cyberattacks, yet most lack structured cybersecurity education for students. Drawing on coursework from Behavioral Finance, Health Economics, and Power and Inequality, alongside a cyber insurance underwriting internship and study abroad in Seville, this project asks why cybersecurity education remains largely absent from university curriculum despite human error being the leading cause of breach claims. I'll argue that misaligned institutional incentives, not a lack of awareness, drive this gap, and that solutions must build practical judgment under uncertainty rather than one time awareness training, while accounting for threats beyond individual behavior.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away, Internship: Cyber Insurance Underwriting Intern, Chicago, IL, Summer '26, Study Abroad, Seville, Spain, Spring '26

Ashley Engle

What Success Looks Like After Graduating Transition Academy

Transition Academy is a program for young adults (18-22) with disabilities that helps them transition from high school to independent adult life. This program not only helps students build social skills, communication, and independence, but also allows students to explore careers, build good work habits, and get a local job or internship. For the past

three years, I have volunteered at a Transition Academy working closely with students seeing the challenges they face. This experience has broadened my perspective on success, showing me that success looks different for everyone.

Global/Local Engagement
Other: Volunteer: Transition Academy, Groton CT, weekly volunteer, Fall 2023- Spring 2026.

Cooper Growney

Compass: Reimagining Course Registration and Academic Planning

This project explores how a unified digital platform could make course registration and academic planning more intuitive, personalized, and accessible.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Financial Risk Analyst at Goldman Sachs, New York City, Summer '26

Tom Harrison

Who Is Looking After NZ and Australian Athletes' Finances?

Our business provides financial education and support to Australian and New Zealand basketball athletes pursuing college opportunities in the United States. International athletes face unique challenges involving NIL income, U.S. and home-country taxes, banking, investing, and financial planning. Drawing on the gap identified through my internship research, the business aims to give athletes a clearer understanding of their financial responsibilities and options. By combining practical financial guidance with education, we help athletes make informed decisions about their money while navigating the transition from Australia or New Zealand to U.S. college basketball.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Koau Capital Partners ltd, Christchurch, New Zealand, Summer '26.

Quinn Kennedy

Reimagining the Fan Experience at Capital One Arena

Sports arenas are no longer just places to watch a game. They compete to deliver memorable experiences. As a summer intern with Monumental Sports & Entertainment during Capital One Arena's $1.2 billion renovation, I explored how rethinking an arena can transform the fan experience. Through projects including concierge training, VIP

concert space add-ons, interactive concourse visuals, Aramark culinary planning, and a number of other new developments, I saw how technology, hospitality, and partnerships shape every fan touchpoint. This poster examines what today's fans deserve and what it takes behind the scenes to deliver it.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Business Operations Intern at Monumental Sports & Entertainment

Erik Lambert

Bridging the Information Gap: Creating Accessible Ethics and Sustainability Guidelines for Consumers

Most people are not indifferent to how their food is made, they simply have no practical way to find out. I propose a smartphone application that allows users to scan or search grocery items and restaurants and instantly receive a comprehensive ethics score out of 100. Each search would also include key points and important press releases about the company behind the product. The app could recommend higher scoring alternatives, encouraging gradual change rather than asking people to overhaul their habits overnight. Users could share scores and comparisons with their networks, turning individual choices into a collective conversation.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away, Internship: London School of Economics 25-26, Massachusetts State house Summer 2024

Hope Lane

Improving Elementary Students Food Literacy and Physical Health Habits.

Creating a program in schools that creates a curriculum to educate studnets on food literacy and engage them in the kitchen in a healthy and safe way. As a way to create community and understanding of how food works. Also works with cafeterias to create healthier food options for students that are made in-house rather than brought from big companies. Working with local businesses to bring in that sense of community to the schools and connect students with people in their own community through food and education.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: IES Rome Italy, Fall '25

Zach Levitt

Pricing Out Fairness: Rethinking Risk in Small-Business Lending

Small-business lending markets typically treat fairness and viability as opposing goals, pricing out the borrowers who need capital most. This project asks why, and how serving underserved borrowers could become viable rather than risky. I argue that information asymmetry, strict underwriting, and narrow risk models lead lenders to ration credit rather than resolve uncertainty. In response, I propose CapitalMatch AI, a platform using better data, mission-focused lender matching, and financial coaching. Fairer lending means measuring risk more accurately, not ignoring it.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Executive Analyst, Covino Family Office, New Canaan, CT, Summer '26 – Present

Mikey Magyar

MyCoachRated: Democratizing Knowledge in Sports

MyCoachRated, like that of MyProfessorRated, aims to increase the democratization of knowledge surrounding sports, helping players and parents make informed decisions for their future. The website allows athletes to anonymously rate coaches and organizations on development, communication, safety, and advancement. Coaches and organizations are given a score out of ten, and pages where you can read real reviews. The future of this product revolves around garnering attention to build player reviewed profiles of coaches, and to populate the website with current organization data.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Davis-AI-Summer-Program, Colby-College, Waterville, Maine, Summer '26

Olivia Montembeault

The Role of AI in Commercial Banking

During my internships, I became interested in how bankers can use AI to save time while still thinking critically about their work. Drawing on my internship experience and coursework, this project explores where AI is useful and where bankers need their own judgment. I look beyond the final loan decision to smaller decisions along the way, from understanding a client’s needs to evaluating repayment ability. Even when AI helps with analysis, bankers need to understand what the numbers mean and question whether they tell the full story of a business.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Corporate and Commercial Banker, Associated Bank, Chicago, Summer 26'

Kate Moroney

Housing at Connecticut College

Exploring how at Connecticut college we find ourselves in a housing shortage within a small institutional scale. Freshmen are packing into small rooms, many in bunk beds. Not having a conducive space can be a detriment to a student's wellbeing and academics. College students are not the only ones who are unable to find housing that supports their needs. This is generally a representation of the greater crisis that we find ourselves in globally. To narrow down my research I am going to be focusing on Connecticut as the greater crisis and Connecticut College as the Smaller Institutional Scale.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: 1. Study Away: Pantheon Institute, Rome, Fall '25-26 2. Internship: Lowkey Architecture Studio, NYC, Summer '26

Nate Polakoff

How Can Real Estate Developers Successfully Deliver Middle-Class Housing?

How can real estate developers create housing that meets the needs of the middle class? Drawing on my experiences with a small real estate business in Baltimore and my internship at Bozzuto, this poster explores that question through the relationship between development, property management, and residents' needs. I examine how location, amenities, and marketing shape a property's appeal, alongside the challenge of balancing quality and affordability. Through these experiences, I reflect on my growing understanding of the housing industry, and some possible answers I have found to this question along the way.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Bozzuto Real Estate Group, Leasing and Marketing at Anthem House in Baltimore, Summer '26

Arjun Premkumar

Discovered or Overlooked?

International tennis players may have the talent and academic ability to compete at American universities, yet many families still struggle to understand how the recruiting process works. Drawing on research about international student-athletes and my own experience being recruited from India, this project asks what really determines whether a talented international athlete is discovered by a college coach.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away : London, UK. Fall 2025

Anish Reid

Insurance Can't Find Young Talent, What Conn Can Do About It?

Insurance carriers say they can't find young talent, yet Connecticut College students with the right skills rarely hear the field exists. Drawing on coursework in accounting, health economics, and entrepreneurship, and a summer in wholesale property underwriting at Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance, this project argues that the gap is one of visibility more than curriculum. Conn can send students toward insurance by making the work visible, building fair and formal pipelines with alumni and employers, and putting student voices at the center.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Wholesale Property Intern, Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Boston, MA, Summer ‘26

Kellyn Scheel

What does a sustainable career look like for creative professionals?

As I prepare to enter the creative industry professionally, I have questioned what makes a creative career sustainable. My experiences with entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, and traditional employment have revealed tradeoffs between creative freedom, financial stability, and personal fulfillment. Through these experiences and interdisciplinary coursework, I have recognized the importance of adaptability, continued learning, and opportunities for creative growth. I conclude that no single career model guarantees sustainability. Instead, a sustainable creative career requires balancing financial security, creative autonomy, professional growth, personal fulfillment, and work-life balance within an environment that supports individual interests and long-term goals.

Global/Local Engagement

Internship, Other: 1. Internships: Apple, Summer ’24 & ’25 2. Internship/Employment: Red Sox, Summer ’26 – Present 3. Entrepreneurship: Freelance, Self-Employed, Ongoing

Pete Stanger

Leveling the Playing Field: Rethinking the Cost of Youth Sports Access

Youth sports are getting more expensive, and families who cannot keep up are getting pushed out. Equipment, registration, travel, and coaching add up fast, and hockey is one of the worst examples. My pathway looks at how competitive youth sports can lower that cost without cutting the quality kids need to stay safe and get better. I built this response using Corporate Finance, Econometrics, my work as a Team IMPACT fellow, and a dance course that pushed me outside my comfort zone. My answer is to change who pays, while keeping lower-cost programs welcoming to beginners.

Global/Local Engagement
Community Partnership: 4. Volunteer: Team Impact Fellow Fall '25 - Present

Chloe Steinfeld

Designing for Depth: Access and Entrepreneurship in Creative Industries

As algorithms, platforms, and branding increasingly mediate how people encounter art, music, fashion, and heritage, this project asks how entrepreneurial models in creative industries can create genuine access without flattening culture into another commodified product among millions. Drawing on cultural entrepreneurship, creative industries research, and participatory museum practice, I argue the real gap is depth, not reach. Grounded in my work guiding tours at a basilica and museum in Florence, Italy, and as a current Senior Admissions Fellow, I show that strong models optimize reach while adding depth: adaptive human mediation, deliberate funding, and room for difference.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away, Internship: ISI Florence study abroad; volunteer tour guide, Basilica di Santa Maria Novella (Ars et Fides), Florence, Italy, Fall 2025; current Senior Admissions Fellow at Connecticut College.

Chris Travers

GLE Lacrosse: How I Built a Company From My Dorm Chair

GLE Lacrosse started out of frustration. I wanted to improve at lacrosse but couldn't find any resources. With a computer and a $30 microphone, I broadcast what I knew to the internet. Month after month, my audience grew, and I fell into the hole that is entrepreneurship. For the next two years, I stared every night into a laptop screen, learning how to market, build, and sell a product. GLE Lacrosse training programs are now used by more than 8000 players with over 82,000 followers across all platforms.

Global/Local Engagement
Other: Founder: I built a lacrosse company

Ava Virga

Can reworking garments offer a sustainable alternative to new clothing consumption?

The fashion industry's emphasis on constantly changing trends contributes to overconsumption and growing environmental concerns. This project explores how a rework-focused fashion product could help consumers transform clothing they already own into new styles while reducing the need to purchase new garments. Drawing on concepts of circular fashion, consumer behavior, sustainability, and entrepreneurship, the research considers how reworking clothing can satisfy consumers desire for creativity, self-expression, and novelty.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: DIS Copenhagen, Fall junior semester, visited numerous textile companies

Wade Volo

How can financial advisory firms align advisor incentives with clients' best interests?

My animating question asks how advisory firms can be structured so advisor incentives serve clients' best interests. Every compensation model, whether commission, asset based fee, or flat fee, creates some pull away from the client, so no single pay structure solves the problem. Drawing on my internship at Lenox Advisors and research into different firms, I argue that alignment requires four layers. A fiduciary legal standard, compensation tied to long term client outcomes, independence from product manufacturers, and a culture that rewards honest advice. Together, these make serving the client the easiest path.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Lenox Advisors, New York, NY, Summer '26

Brayden Warde

How to Solve the Youth Sports Crisis in the United States?

I will be exploring the potential solutions to address the current culture and status of the youth sports dilemma in the US. This study includes consideration of the burnout problem among youth athletes, the effects of early specialization/focus, as well as the impacts of the club/travel organization model that force a rise in costs and affordability for US youth sports. My recommendation for an overall systemic improvement is to encourage a new model similar to that in Norway, based upon principles that guide youth sports and focus on affordability, practice/skill development, and fun for long-term success.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship, Other: North Yarmouth Academy Hockey Camp Summer 2021-2026; Volunteer Yarmouth Community Youth Sports' 26

Lily Werges

Making government easier to navigate with AI

How can AI-driven innovation make government services more accessible and responsive while protecting privacy, fairness, and public trust?
My interests in government and AI came together through my coursework, an AI class at Simon Business School, and my internship in a congressional district office. Each experience showed me how technology could help people understand government while also creating new ethical questions.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Interned for Congresswoman Claudia Tenney, Canandaigua New York summer ‘26

Shane Zarcone

The College Pocket: Financial Literacy for College Students

College students struggle with managing finances due to a lack of financial literacy, impulsive spending, and limited access to guidance. Specifically those who take on debt, have temporary income, and struggle managing spending. This leads to financial stress, missed opportunities to grow wealth and take advantage of things like compounding interest. The College Pocket integrates financial advising to empower students to take control of their financials. Through education, personal banking data, financial newsletters, budget advice, and a social component in which you can track

other’s investments, college students will experience improved financial literacy, increased savings, and more informed spending

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Taglich Private Equity, Cold Spring Harbor, NY, Summer '26

FOOD PATHWAY
SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Catherine Beach

Suppressing Pests and Sustaining Vines: Optimizing Vineyard Pest Management Through Agroforestry Systems

Pest control continues to be an enormous challenge for vineyards globally. Turning to sustainable alternatives is necessary to prevent the over application of harmful chemicals. Agroforestry, a system of land use that intentionally combines trees with crops, has risen as a promising method for pest control. Through the pathway program, I have worked on a vineyard and been involved with agroforestry management on a community farm. I also gained vital knowledge in agronomy during my semester abroad in Brisbane, Australia. Intertwining these experiences has inspired me to bridge the gap between suppressing pests and sustaining long-term vine health.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away, Internship: 1. Internship: Grow Food Northampton (Northampton, MA) Summer '25. Internships: Worthington Vineyard (Somers, CT) Summer 2026

Seren Hopkins

Beyond the Bottle: Balancing Sustainability, Tradition, and Economics in Italian Winemaking

How can Italian wineries balance environmental sustainability with the cultural traditions and economic realities of winemaking? By working at Terre Margaritelli, a sustainable and organic winery in Perugia, Italy, I saw how environmental practices are connected to local knowledge, tradition, biodiversity, tourism, and business. This experience challenged me to think critically about sustainability and the complexity of finding balance. While sustainable practices can protect biodiversity, soil, and long-term productivity, they can also create economic challenges. Using ethnography, I examined everyday practices and perspectives, asking who benefits, what is sacrificed, and how sustainability is understood differently by those involved.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away, Internship: Internship: Terre Margaritelli, Perugia, Italy, Summer '26

Gillian Kibbey

Rethinking Nutrition in Healthcare: Integrating Nutrition Education to Support Health

Nutrition is widely understood as a key aspect of better health outcomes despite being taught for less than 20 hours throughout medical school. This project explores how nutrition education can be integrated into healthcare to help patients understand the connection between what they put into their bodies and their overall health. It will examine the connection between nutrition, physical health, and mental health, as well as ways providers can incorporate nutrition education into care plans. By viewing nutrition as a vital component of treatment and prevention, healthcare can provide patients with holistic tools to support their health beyond clinical settings.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Rutgers Football Dietetics intern summer 2025, Job: Patient Care Tech, Hopewell NJ Summer 2026- currently

Eliza Macaluso

Grassroots Campaigns as a Tool for Political Change

Underserved and marginalized residents are experiencing an exponentially widening wealth gap in San Francisco. As costs of living rise, those already socially defenseless are increasingly vulnerable to inequitable policies. With municipal budgets defunding essential services, community organizers and activists have assumed the role of supporting struggling communities. Advocates influence city policy with public facing education and government accountability campaigns– promoting public awareness of stealth urban policies and in turn embarrassing political leaders to force investment. Through an ethnographic approach, I study how grassroots campaigns succeed in enacting political accountability in San Francisco.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Housing and Environmental Justice Researcher, League of Women Voters of San Francisco, Remote, Summer '26

Mia Wolpe

Making Hands-On Garden Education Accessible to Students: Growing Food Systems Knowledge

Food systems are the complex networks in which food moves from the ground to our plates. They are important to our everyday life yet most people have limited educational resources to learn about where their food comes from. Hands-on garden education can provide students with experiences to explore food systems through gardening, cooking, and outdoor learning while also connecting with nature. This presentation will examine

the benefits of hands-on garden education, the barriers that limit students' access to these resources, and ways schools can integrate food and garden education into the curriculum.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: CitySprouts Intern, Cambridge, Summer '26

GLOBAL CAPITALISM PATHWAY
SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Kwesi Asiedu

Why Did the Bush Doctrine Endorse the Overthrow of Saddam Hussein?

The purpose in invading Iraq in March 2003 was to bring about a regime change that aligned with American values of democracy. The Bush Doctrine under the presidency of George W. Bush was brought forth as a way to show that Iraq was anti-western and didn't align with the values of American democracy. It also shows to prove with reasonable doubt why the Iraq system is weak compared to the U.S and why the parties are equally as weak.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: I analyzed criminal court proceedings

Ethan Goldman

Why do nations prohibit child labor?

If nearly every nation prohibits child labor, why do 138 million children still work? Drawing on nonpartisan organizations and laborers' own accounts from the United States, China, and Russia, I argue that nations often ban child labor for status: the ban certifies them as upholding children's rights and safe to trade with. This is earned at passage, not enforcement. So governments exempt whole sectors, as Congress did with agriculture in 1938, or reclassify the work as schooling or recreation. Children pay in injuries, in years of schooling lost, and in lower lifetime earnings.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: House Oversight Committee, Washington D.C, Summer 2025 & 2026

Megan Pons

Why are there so few mothers working in finance?

Women are often told they can pursue a demanding career and have a fulfilling home life as long as they accept the give and take that comes with these roles. But does this advice hold true in competitive professions? I study the financial world because of its emphasis on availability, strong relationships, and sustained performance. My case study focuses on cisgendered, white women in the field as their career trajectories currently set a standard for women's access.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: DIS Copenhagen, Denmark, Spring 2026.
Internship: Wealth Management internship with Wealthspire Advisors, West Hartford, CT, Summer 2026

GOODWIN-NIERING CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Katherine Bridges

Narratives of Extinction and Rewilding in the End-Pleistocene and Modernity

At the end of the Pleistocene epoch, dozens of genera of megafauna (animals exceeding 44kg in mass) became extinct, especially in the Americas and Australia. Paul S. Martin's "overkill hypothesis" posits that these continents' earliest human inhabitants rapidly hunted megafauna to extinction. While the extent of scientific evidence supporting this hypothesis remains debated, "overkill" is often cited to support an understanding of humans as inherently destructive killers whose impacts must be actively reversed in order to maintain a "natural" environment. This thesis examines the scientific and philosophical basis for "Pleistocene rewilding" proposals that aim to restore extinct megafaunal ecosystems.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Museum Intern, The Mammoth Site, Hot Springs, South Dakota, Summer '26

William Coughlin

Saltwater Intrusion in Maryland's Aquifers and Surface Waters

Roughly 40% of the United States' drinking and agricultural irrigation water is derived from underground freshwater aquifers. As sea levels rise, these aquifers become inundated with ocean water saline. Agricultural workers have already experienced effects of this process– including water contamination, reliance on long-distance irrigation, crop dieback and death, and degraded soil health. Slope and elevation analysis in ArcGIS will be used to determine areas of highest risk of saltwater inundation. Furthermore, ecological protection strategies such as tree plantings along bare soils, and relocations of wells may be suggested, depending on the terrain and sea level rise predictions.

Global/Local Engagement
Wetland Studies & Solutions Inc., Environmental Technician Intern, Summer '26 - present

Sasha Jansujwicz

Assessment of Climate Stressors on Marine Invertebrate Physiology

Zostera marina (eelgrass) meadows are essential components of marine ecosystems providing habitats, while also conducting important ecosystem functions. However, eelgrass meadows are experiencing worldwide density decline. The larval stages of marine invertebrate species that rely on eelgrass meadows are extremely vulnerable to environmental stressors, including temperature which can negatively impact survivorship and developmental rates. Crepidula fornicata (slipper snail) has been determined to be a de facto model system for understanding mollusca development. The aim of this study is to better understand the compound effect of decreasing eelgrass meadow density and increasing temperature on the larval stages of C. fornicata.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Summer Science Research Institute, New London, CT, Summer '26

Amelia Newstadt

The Life Span of Textiles: Denim, Sustainability, and Environmental Impact

The textile and fashion industries are some of the largest contributors to environmental waste and greenhouse gas emissions, from water-intensive material cultivation to energy-demanding production to chemical waste created by coloring processes. This presentation takes a look at denim as a case study for textiles' environmental impact and how this can be reduced through extending clothing and fabric life cycles. Drawing on in-class learning, land stewardship and material reuse internships, and academic research, I will examine how responsible clothing and textile consumption can impact environmental change.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Avalonia Land Conservancy - Summer 26, GradBag - Summer 26

Baxter Prescott

Growing a Food Forest: Native Edible Plants and Their Role in Agroecology

In this project I document the creation, from sustainable projects fund proposal to planting and future plans, of a campus food forest. This project is dual purpose as both a native food forest, and as a bioswale, protecting the Sprout Garden from excessive

moisture and runoff which could harm crops. It is therefore an exploration on the benefits of native edible plants (food-web foundation, pollinator support, flood control), undervalued food sources (plums, elderberries, hazelnuts), and community efforts in a campus farm environment. Additionally, it documents the creation of a management plan for the future of the food forest.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Outreach and Conservation Intern, Norwalk River Watershed Association, Norwalk CT, Summer '26

Philip Swammy

Examining Stream Health in the Connecticut College Arboretum

I intend to use GIS to map the Arboretum's watersheds and roads. Potential impacts of roads on stream health will be evaluated through measures of E. coli, chlorine, turbidity, and macroinvertebrates. I will be working with CT Audubon for site evaluation and sampling techniques.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: School for Field Studies, Costa Rica Spring 26'
Internship: Hudson Valley Stream Conservancy summer '26 Ossining NY

Madeline Synnestvedt

Localized Effects of Epizootic Shell Disease of Homarus americanus in Southern Massachusetts

To better understand the population health of the American lobster, I worked closely with CSCR and the fishing vessel Golden Eye to collect population health data off of Cohasset Massachusetts. Focusing on Epizootic Shell Disease, or shell rot, I collected length, width, sex, and photo evidence of shell rot in the catch pulled. Shell rot is scientifically said to be linked closely with climate change, and the warming of the Atlantic Ocean. My research helps to expand this understanding, while allowing for a rounded comprehension of lobster fishing on a local scale.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Research Intern at Cohasset Center for Student Coastal Research, Summer '26

Grace Webb

Weighing the Risks of Historical New England Dams

Rivers across the United States, and especially in New England, are inundated with dams of all sizes and intended purposes. In recent decades, dam removals across the U.S. have increased in frequency as more communities question both the ecological impact of dams as well as their role in perpetuating settler colonialism. Within the context of small town place-based politics, I aim to understand the environmental, historical, cultural, and economic risks of aging historical dams in New England, and how those ultimately influence restoration initiatives.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Physical Oceanography and Ecology Intern, Shoals Undergraduate Research Group (SURG), Shoals Marine Laboratory, Appledore Island, Kittery, ME, Summer ‘26

Phoebe Wood

Snyder Creek, WA through post-naturalist environmental philosophy

My thesis will investigate the land use of Snyder Creek, WA within the post-naturalist environmental philosophies of Steven Vogel’s Thinking Like a Mall. Snyder Creek is a historic lumber mill site, an interest to restoration groups, and trivial to the local government. Can Vogel’s arguments inform how we make land use decisions at Snyder Creek? I’m interested in what exploring these questions suggests about the broader conversation between Vogel’s arguments and the concept of localism. Is localism a cure for the societal issues of alienation and misplaced intent which Vogel identifies in the present environment?

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Water Quality Technician, Columbia Riverkeeper, Oregon, Summer '26

HOLLERAN CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ACTION AND PUBLIC POLICY SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Joshua Caskey

Oops, We Did It Again: Zoning Decision Patterns and Housing Inequities

Connecticut municipalities face increasing housing costs for residents that destabilize communities. Local decisions to enact exclusionary zoning limit the supply and raise the cost of housing. Such challenges exacerbate existing racial and economic inequalities between municipalities. While the negative effects of exclusionary zoning policy broadly are well understood, there is limited research connecting individual zoning decisions on specific housing developments and how they become part of a larger pattern. My research project addresses this knowledge gap locally through a review of Southeastern Connecticut zoning authority meeting minutes for key themes that emerge in discussions and decisions on housing developments.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Center for Housing Opportunity of Eastern CT, affordable housing advocacy summer 25'

Abby Cassidy

Spaces of birth: a program addressing maternal mortality in the U.S.

The rate of maternal mortality in the United States is alarmingly high compared to countries with technologically similar medical systems. There are many compounding factors contributing to this issue, including physical space that birthing occurs.This project looks to identify the issues seen across prenatal care, childbirth, and postpartum care and propose a space that can serve as an in between to biomedical care and home birth. Spaces that allow women to feel empowered, understood, and less like a guest could be a way to deliver more culturally competent healthcare.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Public health studies at Stellenbosch University in South Africa

Ava Gebhart

Queer Theory & Rurality: Tangible Practices as Experiential Learning

This Gender, Sexuality, and Intersectionality Studies honors thesis will examine how tangible practices engaging with queer theory can serve as sites for understanding one's relationship to their self, community, and environment. By applying queer theories on memory, temporality, and futurity to a rural case study, we can reimagine how places and people are defined by our mass society. Asking how theory and creative modes of expression can foster futures of understanding, hope, and belonging for those who engage.

Global/Local Engagement
CHEO Intern, Summer Civic Leaders, '24; Intern, PAC, '25; Intern, Hearing Youth Voices, '26; Intern, GSIS + Holleran Center, ‘26

Isabella Gilchrist

Good-Living Principles to Practices: Land and Community Wellbeing in the Andes

This environmental studies honors thesis will examine relationships between land, community, and non-governmental organizations grounded in a Quechua value system of wellbeing. Using a case study from an internship with Asociación ANDES in Cusco, Peru, this paper analyzes field notes, existing literature, interviews, videos, and publications to understand how holistic wellbeing exists in the context of both underlying values as well as social, economic, and historical conditions. The project addresses climate adaptation strategies, giving insight into the capacity, willingness, and preexisting belief systems of communities responding to a changing environment in Peru, the United States, and elsewhere.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Asociación ANDES, Summer '26

Veronica Groner

Virtue, Vice, and Responsibility in Non-Human Animals

Who is at fault when a dog bites a person? Can it be wrong for an animal to eat meat? What standards can we use to hold animals accountable? Can we at all? These are philosophical questions that have important bearing on animal welfare and their role in the legal system. Looking at different philosophical traditions I aim to define what is required to hold a being responsible for their actions, and discover to what extent different non-human animals meet those requirements.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Los Angeles City Attorney

Claire Hlotyak

“Charcoal Scratchings”: AIDS Poetry as a Vehicle for Advocacy and Education

The HIV/AIDS crisis is widely thought to be “solved,” when the opposite is true. Many young people are unaware of AIDS history. To engage the community in learning about AIDS, I will direct and host a poetry reading featuring Connecticut College students and a selection of AIDS poetry. This event will take place with portions of the AIDS Quilt as our backdrop. Through this public event, we will expose the community to the emotional scope and scale of the AIDS crisis through cultural and artistic nuances and critically consider: Is poetry a possible vehicle for change?

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: News reporting intern at hometown nonprofit newspaper.

Andrew Jordan

Why Voters Said No: Oklahoma’s Minimum Wage Debate

I analyze Oklahoma’s State Question 832, an unsuccessful 2026 ballot measure that would have raised the state’s minimum wage from $7.25 to $15. Drawing on political advertisements and voter guides, I examine how advocacy groups used partisan appeals and competing economic arguments to mobilize voters. I argue that both sides employed selective economic arguments to mobilize voters, revealing a disconnect between campaign rhetoric and the policy’s true effects. My research points to a larger theory that political campaigns fail to inform the voting public.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, Alhambra, CA, Summer '26

Dexter Knight-Richard

White Lies: The Cruel Optimism of Whiteness on Young American Men

This English Honors thesis applies Lauren Berlant's theories of “cruel optimism” to contemporary American whiteness to answer the question: “What happens when a group who is systematically intended to have a dramatic advantage over everyone else (white men) fails to achieve the ‘good life?’” Close readings of a multimedia selection of contemporary texts intended for and depicting young American men like Diary of a

Wimpy Kid, Rejection, and a series of iDubbbz YouTube videos will serve as primary case studies in conjunction with empirical literature to answer this question, in turn revealing whiteness's self-destructive construction.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Columbia University's Internship in Building Community, New York City, Summer 26'

Erin Lawrence

Comparative Analysis of Political Rhetoric on Poverty and Welfare Retrenchment

This independent study explores presidential rhetoric on work requirements for welfare programs as a reflection of political and cultural understandings of poverty, deservingness, and government responsibility. Through a comparative analysis of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 and the One Big Beautiful Bill of 2025, this paper explores the similarities and differences in rhetoric used to justify imposing work requirements on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Medicaid, respectively. By comparing these two periods of welfare retrenchment, this analysis considers the enduring ideological assumptions that underpin both policies across a thirty-year divide.

Global/Local Engagement
Community Placements: Eastern Connecticut Housing Opportunities Spring '25, FRESH New London Spring '26
Internship: MaineHealth Philanthropy Summer '26

Jessica Marks

Hikers on the Trail: Wilderness, Community, and Danger

For many, hiking trails are places for community, where norms are shared and publicized, like "Leave No Trace." I conducted semi-structured interviews over two summers in the National Forest of New Hampshire, exploring community (n=307) and communications (n=37) among outdoor users and organizations. This research revealed that while community is prevalent on hiking trails, there is a variety of existing and contrasting norms that hikers follow. These variations create conflict, which denies some a sense of belonging on the trail. These results warrant further exploration to reduce divides among hiking communities to foster a more welcoming environment.

Global/Local Engagement

Volunteer: Lawrence and Memorial Hospital, weekly volunteer, Fall 24'-Spring 25' and New London Recreation Center, weekly volunteer, Fall '25

Menna Morris

More than a ramp: The Application of Disability Justice in Contemporary Wales

Disability justice challenges the structure of civil rights for disabled people and encourages collective liberation. As a sister and a scholar I have a zeal for learning about how people with disabilities navigate our capitalist and too often, inaccessible world. This research brings to light the broader idea that “there is no neutral body from which our bodies deviate” (Aurora Levins Morales). Through a combination of reviewing disability studies scholarship along with my interviews with family members and non-profits, I seek to uncover if, and how, a disability justice framework prevails in spaces of family, social institutions, and policy.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Policy and Communities Intern with Mirus, Cardiff, Wales Summer '26

Natalie Poftak

Cities for Everybody: Communities, Eminent Domain, and Representation in Local Government

This American Studies honors thesis will explore the role of the New London City Council in the redevelopment of the Fort Trumbull neighborhood, and the impact on the New London community. I will be conducting my research through the notes of former Councilor Charles Frink and interviews with former councilors and community members. My goal is to understand how different stakeholders understood what was best for the city and their divergent theories of change.

Global/Local Engagement
Volunteer Opportunities Industrialization Center New London, Winter '25
Intern/Volunteer, Horizons Beyond High School

Amelia Racicot

Instability in the Foster Care System and Its Effects on Support Accessibility

The foster care system faces a structure built on instability, leaving children to be frequently moved between various placements with families or in group homes. This SIP will examine the relationship between instability in the foster care system and ability

for foster care kids with disabilities or developmental delays to access support, such as Early Intervention services. I will be exploring this topic as an independent study literature review in the sociology department, identifying lapses in the system that lead to accessibility difficulties. By the end of this project, I will have data determining the connections between instability and access.

Global/Local Engagement
Weekly volunteering: Homeless Hospitality (Spring ‘25) CB Jennings (Fall ‘25) BP Mission (Fall ‘26)
Internship: Guild St Agnes (Summer ‘26)

Charlotte Steinhauer

Who Has Been Educated to Participate? Civics Education and American Democracy

Who has been educated to participate in American democracy? My History Honors Thesis traces how policymakers and educators have defined civics education from the United States’ founding to today. I argue that these choices shaped who is prepared and empowered to participate in democratic institutions: historically, predominantly land owning wealthy white men. I use textual and historical analysis of educational theory, legislation, curricula, and state standards, including case studies of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Texas, to explore how changing ideas about citizenship, race, gender, and political power have shaped civics education and continue to influence the American political climate.

Global/Local Engagement
Community Partnership: New London High School, weekly volunteer, Fall '25

Chelsea Stevens

Preventing youth crisis through recreational activities and prosocial engagement

There is a common theme in low income neighborhoods where the residents are aware of an issue but simply cannot act upon it due to the needs of the neighborhood such as funding, safety, etc. Many adolescents fall victim to the dangers of neighborhood adversities and engage in negative influences. When people think of youth crime, they are quick to judge the adolescent instead of focusing on what supportive measures are available for the youth. My goal for this project is to identify the successes and failures of recreational centers and see how they are effectively targeting positive youth development.

Global/Local Engagement
Volunteer: New London Recreation Center, weekly volunteer, Fall '24-Spring '25

Kate Stone

"Dismantling Spectacles of Degradation": Representing Substance Use Disorder in American Narrative

This honors thesis in the English department will focus on the deconstruction of an “addict” identity in American autofiction texts. I will be conducting a literature review of historical and contemporary texts with a focus on authors such as William Burroughs, Ocean Vuong, Kaveh Akhbar and Barbara Kingsolver. I hope to examine the myriad of ways that literature on the topic of addiction has been impacted by the changing legal and cultural perceptions of substance abuse.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Child and Family Focus Inc, Summer '26

Cecelia Wilde

Effect of Impulsivity on Suicidal Ideation and Attempts: Gender as a Moderator

This honors thesis examines whether impulsivity (UPPS-P dimensions) is associated with suicidal ideation and attempt history, using questionnaire and clinical data from an ongoing study of patients transitioning out of inpatient psychiatric care. Logistic regression and correlational analyses will test whether each impulsivity facet (negative urgency, positive urgency, lack of premeditation, lack of perseverance, sensation seeking) relates to these outcomes, and whether gender moderates the relationships. An exploratory analysis will examine whether associations vary across baseline, 3-month, and 6-month follow-ups, offering preliminary insight into temporal patterns for future research.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Cognitions, Emotions, and Life Experiences Lab, Providence, RI, Summer '25 & '26

Abigail Williams

Foreign Aid and U.S. Policy: Effects on Maternal Health In Kenya

This presentation will simultaneously weave in my experiences with non-profit work and my own interest in the ways U.S. policy has affected the ways foreign aid is given

overseas. This past summer, I interned at an organization called Partners For World Health, where I gained direct, hands-on experience assisting a nonprofit in delivering foreign aid. This opportunity sparked my interest in the maternal health of other countries. In my research, I will analyze Kenya as a case study and examine the different US policies that either hurt or helped Kenya's maternal mortality.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Partners For World Health Operations Intern Summer 26'
Trip Related: Global Engagement Experience in Ghana Spring 26'

MEDIA, RHETORIC, AND COMMUNICATION PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Ava Gershon

Can a business speak to every generation?

As social media continues to shape how we interact with the world, digital media has become a powerful tool for businesses to build their identity and connect with audiences. For corporations going through periods of change, such as a rebrand or renovation, digital media provides an opportunity to introduce a new image while remaining connected to existing audiences. Reflecting on my summer internship in social media marketing at Hilton, I will explore this question through my experience observing how a hospitality corporation balances its evolving identity with the expectations of different generations.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Social Media Marketing Internship, TPG Hotels, Resorts & Marinas, Hilton Providence, Summer '26

Martha Heffernan

Pics or It Didn't Happen: Remembering Ourselves in the Digital Age

So much of our daily lives are stored in our devices. One scroll and a lost memory can be rediscovered; it's all at our fingertips. We document our lives to preserve our memories, but in doing so, we change how we remember and experience them. Minds are adapting to changing technologies. In an ever-evolving digital world, how does the media we consume daily affect the memories and reactions we associate with them? It is essential to consider the benefits of tangible stories and learn how to balance them with communications that are increasingly temporary, digital, and online.

Global/Local Engagement
Camp Counselor, Marblehead MA, Summer23-2026; Study Abroad: University of Galway, Spring2026

Ellis Iurilli-Hough

Power, Politics, and a Nation Without Trust

In 2026, an Edelman Trust survey asked people to respond to this statement: “I trust media to do what is right.” Only 44% of respondents from the United States answered affirmatively—one of the lowest from the 28 countries measured. A report from the Reuters Institute suggests that trust in public media is even lower in the United States. Once a bastion for the free press, only 25% of people say they trust news most of the time. It wasn't until my internship with a NPR station that I finally understood how important local news is to journalistic trust.

Global/Local Engagement: Study abroad in Riga, Latvia; visited newsrooms and spoke with scholars about journalism in a former soviet state; summer '25

Gretchen Magill

Isolated by Language: Product Translations and Inaccessibility

Translations on products are meant to bring accessibility to their consumers, whether that be directions, descriptions, or other information, but what happens when those translations become dictations for what people can purchase? I noticed a pattern that certain products tend to feature certain second languages and neglect others regardless of the demographic of the area surrounding the store. From my own experience, it is difficult to live in a language that is not your native tongue. It can be extremely isolating and exhausting, but having accessibility in all products can help people feel truly welcomed in their community.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: New England Seafarers Mission, Boston, Massachusetts, Summer 2026

Lilly McGee

When Reality Becomes Fiction

We live in a zone flooded with shit. In a desperate attempt to make sense of constant updates from news, social media, and our everyday lives, humans turn to a tool they have always utilized; storytelling. In doing such, complex issues are watered down to the simplicity often found in fiction; the heroes, the villains, the beginning, the end, the comedy, the tragedy. Real political moments and circumstances are compared to dystopian fiction, and real people are turned into stock characters, made anything but real. The equating of conventions in fiction to real life creates easily polarizing messages.

Global/Local Engagement

Study Away; Student at University of Galway, Spring '26; Internship: Maryland Writers Association, Publishing Intern, Summer '26.

Anneli Medina

Meet Them Where They Stand

Last summer, I interned at Cradles to Crayons, a nonprofit organization that provides children in need with essential items such as clothing, shoes, backpacks, coats, and school supplies. I was responsible for researching potential community partners and thinking about ways Cradles to Crayons could build relationships with these organizations.
This experience made me think more deeply about how we communicate a problem, rather than simply whether people know the problem exists. I realized that giving someone information does not necessarily mean they will act on it.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Cradles to Crayons, Newton MA, Summer 25

Mimi Noe

The Art of The Blend: Culture, Creativity, and Communication

As a young girl, I would walk down the stairs and I remember my dad asking “Did you or your mom dress you this morning?”, I’d confidently respond, “I did; it’s a blend”.A blend became a way of experimenting with self-expression, combining influences, and communicating something about who I was.

Throughout my studies in Media, Rhetoric, and Communication, I have become interested in ways communication extends beyond language. Culture and creativity offer individuals various ways to express themselves. I will explore how creative and cultural practices function as mechanisms of communication.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: City, St. George's Student, London, Fall '25

Christine Oar

How brands communicate: The influence of brand rhetoric on global consumer behavior

Every company or business utilizes a specialized tone to represent their brand missions and ideas. This tone reaches audiences, and operates as a sole driver behind profit

increase or decrease. How do companies get the attention of audiences utilizing calculated rhetoric to ensure they are promoting their brand the way they feel should be communicated? Through advertising and market research companies utilize their foundational initiatives to elevate their image. Yet, when companies gain traction in one area of the world, how do they alter their rhetoric in order to continue resonating with communities across the globe despite cultural differences?

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Student, Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch South Africa, Summer 2025

Olivia Penna

Storytelling and Marketing in Education: The Disappearance of Humanity

Throughout life, we are surrounded by stories and storytelling, shaping the narratives and realities we believe in. Storytelling requires a speaker and a listener, making human connection an inherent part of the practice. In the early educational setting, we tell stories that are in the best interest of students to comfort them. However, as we get to collegiate communications, we tell stories that are in the best interest of the institution, prioritizing profits over real human experiences. When used as a marketing tool, the human part of storytelling is removed—despite it being about connection in the first place.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Marketing and Communications Internship, Russell Sage College, Summer '26 Social Media Content Creator Internship, Connecticut College, Academic year 2025-2026

Jessica Pistorino

Communication For Free: Propelling Non-Profit Engagement Through Communication

Non-profit organizations are often neglected or under-represented, especially in the media. New research has shown that non-profits are increasingly dying out and philanthropy efforts are not helping. What can we do to reverse this issue before it continues to get worse? This presentation will highlight the importance of communication within these organizations and how understanding this term can help foster and build connections across various communities. Organizations that utilize communication will have a higher success rate than those that do not truly connect on a personable level. Hopefully leading to increased involvement and engagement, rebuilding nonprofits.

Global/Local Engagement
Local: Marketing and Events Management Intern, Woburn MA, Summer'26 and Study Away: Stellenbosch, Business, Summer'25.

Nic Sanfilippo

The Digital Age’s War Against Film

With the increasing availability of films, TV shows, and other forms of digital media at our fingertips, the film industry built around physical viewership and distribution is encountering a tremendous shift. Film crews are watching their film's profit go everywhere but their pockets and cinemas are losing customers as they favor their hand-held, portable screens. Additionally, the multitude of streaming services blocked by paywalls is making media more inaccessible. How have we gotten here? I argue that the invention and endorsement of Video on Demand and Subscription Video on Demand is to blame.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Distribution Intern, Frameline, San Francisco, Summer '26;
Study Away: Media Landscape in the Baltics, Latvia, Summer '25.

Aida Sherwani

Trad Wife/Girl Boss: The Role of Women in Conservatism

"Traditional family values" are at the heart of the right-wing political movement. In theory, this means nuclear families and strict gender roles. Yet, increasingly, we are seeing women like Erica Kirk become prominent leaders of the modern conservative movement. How has Erika Kirk become such an icon on the right, while not practicing the life of domesticity she preaches? Does her existence contradict her beliefs, or is she sacrificing her traditional feminine role to serve the larger movement? Who is she, and what does she really stand for?

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Student, Media and AI in the Baltics, Riga, Latvia, Summer '25

Abby Wagner

They Will Tell You Who I Am: Otherization Through Media and Rhetoric

So often, we see negative depictions of “othered” groups in media and have since shareable media began to be accessible. These separations are everywhere and are

invariably illustrated by the in-group. What leads to this? How are these separations strengthened? By analyzing the research projects that I have completed in my classes, Cold War Cultures, Politics of Motherhood, and How to Make a Witch, patterns of how these in-groups manipulate media and rhetoric emerged. Being aware of these patterns is crucial to stopping the violence of otherization.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: DIS Copenhagen, Cultural Diversity and Integration, Research on belonging in Denmark, Fall '25

Emma Ward

The Polite Avoidance: Politics in Everyday American Conversation

Almost everyone has had the experience of awkward family holidays where the elephant in the room is that certain political subjects should be avoided at all costs, unless you want to spark up an intense debate between some family members. However, I'm interested in how this type of polite avoidance has grown from an occasional circumstance into the standard of how Americans interact with each other. With social media today, has the need to discuss political topics with others around us subsided? Has the tension in U.S. politics today deemed the topic of politics as taboo or impolite?

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: IES Abroad, Rome, Italy, Spring '26.

Anna Wong

"Free to All" and the Value of Effective Storytelling

Essential services and organizations rely on funding to continue deepening their impact. Shifting funding priorities in today’s political landscape have left many nonprofits vulnerable, even as their resources and reach are needed more than ever. Drawing on experiences in public service and community engagement, I reflect on how communication, fundraising, and digital platforms work together to protect access across immigration and education, immigration, affordable housing, and social service sectors. From preparing grant proposals and sharing lived experiences to supporting donor stewardship, I explore how organizations communicate their mission to different audiences and how storytelling creates tangible impact.

Global/Local Engagement

Development/Membership Intern, Presidents' Alliance, Spring '26; Advancement Intern, BPLF, Summer '26; Research Assistant, A Right to Housing, Spring '25.

MUSEUM STUDIES PATHWAY
SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Theo Andres

Envisioning curricula towards a critical museum studies

In constructing a series of syllabi, focused on topics such as decolonization in museums, classical reception, bodies and exhibition, and other related seminars, I intend to evaluate both topics in progressive museum studies and pedagogy. Intended to be utilized whether by my future self or in inspiring the coursework of other instructors, I aim that the structure, assignments, and readings of the courses will influence future generations of academics, museum professionals, museum visitors, and students in all disciplines-- all of whom can benefit from critical coursework and inquiry into history, memory, and display.

Global/Local Engagement
College Archives Assistant at the Linda Lear Center 2024-present; Summer Civic Leaders 2024; and local museum volunteering.

Eliza Brennan

Alternatives to the Conventional Museum: The Online Exhibition

This project will explore the benefits and drawbacks of an online exhibition, and how a digital format can aid in artist exposure. By creating an online exposition of John Brennan's artwork, I will analyze the framework of an online exhibition, and the degree to which it assists in accessibility to the artwork. This project will explore how to expose artwork beyond the traditional canon and the manner in which we experience art. By presenting digital copies of Brennan's artwork and interviews, the exhibition will provide a personal story of an artist, a flexible, scalable archive, and a permanent family resource.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Intern at the Museum of Old Newbury, Newburyport Massachusetts, Summer 2026.

Mara Cartwright

A Strung Up Story: Nathan Hale's Legacy through Media and Objects

“My only regret is that I have but one life to lose for my country” are the words that Nathan Hale allegedly proclaimed before he met his fate in the British gallows on September 22, 1776. While these words remain solidified in American History, they were never spoken. Media such as the Newspaper articles, plays and comics will be explored, along with objects such as statues, dolls, and even spoons will be highlighted. This digital exhibition aims to provide a commentary on American History turned propaganda, using media and objects featuring the failed spy from the 18th century to today.

Global/Local Engagement
West Virginia Independence Hall Museum, Wheeling WV. Museum Intern, Jun-Aug 2025.

Dakota Ciappenelli

Art and Alzheimer’s: The Role of Museums in Holistic Care

This project considers the role of museums as institutions for public health. Based on the existing research surrounding the use of art therapy as a non-pharmacological treatment for Alzheimer's, I propose a hypothetical research study that adds to the existing body of research. The parameters of this study are limited to simple and accessible pedagogy tailored to the abilities of community museums. This project consists of a literature review and a novel research paradigm, as well as all necessary materials.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Events Planning Intern, Cape Cod Museum of Art, Dennis MA, Summer '25.

Dani Crosta

A Living Archive: Preserving and Remembering African American Modern Dance History

Dance festivals play a crucial role in preserving dance history and inspiring future generations of artists. This project builds on my archival work at the American Dance Festival, where I worked with materials used to create the PBS documentary Free to Dance, which highlights the contributions of African American artists to American dance history. Through a digital exhibition and interactive timeline, I am exploring the preservation of African American modern dance history using archival footage, interviews, and other materials from the American Dance Festival archives. The project aims to make these artists’ histories accessible to contemporary audiences.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Archives Intern at the American Dance Festival, Summer '25.

Adam Dinjian

Thresholds: A Digital Archive

Thresholds: A Digital Archive is a permanent website documenting the student-run collaborative juried exhibition by the Studio Art SAB and Museum Studies program at New London's historic Hygienic Art Gallery. While the physical Thresholds show provides a professional off-campus space for students to market and sell their work to the community, this digital archive preserves and expands that impact. Incorporating digital media, artist bios, and interviews, the website captures aspects of the exhibition. It transforms a temporary event into a long-standing, accessible resource, elevating the artists' presence and connecting the college community with the public.

Global/Local Engagement
Exhibition at the Hygienic Gallery Bank Street NL, October 10th – November 8th.

Ella Feury

The Fabric of Our Lives: The Importance of Women's Craft

Throughout history, the value of women's craft has been widely underscored. Hand skills like weaving, sewing, knitting, embroidery, etc., the core textile design processes responsible for the fabric in the world around us, have been deduced to domestic hobbies from artistic skills. Meanwhile, the men who work as blacksmiths, cobblers, carpenters, painters etc. dawn the title of craftsman and are celebrated for their technique. This exhibition aims to display the neglected importance of women's craft, not only as an art form, but as a time capsule of history, culture, and female identity.

Global/Local Engagement
John Hay Estate at The Fells, Newbury, NH: Education Intern. Study Away in Paris, France.

Leah Lorenz

The Curated Truth: A Curatorial Construction of Political Reality

This project analyzes museums and cultural spaces as inherently political institutions that represent and reconstruct culture, societal meaning, and political identity. No matter

how objective an institution claims to be, museums will always be an authority of social ontology. Museums have a responsibility to engage in political discourse because, as cultural institutions that construct behavior/culture which in turn shape our values/legislation, museums will forever be directly correlated with politics. Through the exhibit curation of select propaganda posters, I seek to showcase how the curatorial decisions within museums have the power to cultivate political thought and forge reality.

Global/Local Engagement
IES Freiburg, Language and Area Studies, Fall 2026; Curatorial Intern, DELPHI_space, Freiburg, Germany, Summer 2026; Archives intern, Acorn Hall, NJ.

Carina Panfili

Please Do Not Touch: Displaying Fragile Collections

This project will examine ways archeological sites and museums can protect their collections while allowing the public to access them, especially in cases where putting an item on display or opening a site risks damaging it. In addition, it will examine how and when technology should be used as a substitute for in-person viewing.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Archeological Conservation Institute, Italy and Greece, Summer '24.

Lian Piso

The Matriarch's Eye: A Chinese Art Collection

My project explores three generations of women and their shared connection to Chinese art, culture, and collecting. Through the digital documentation and presentation of my family's collection, I plan to transform a domestic space into an accessible online archive. Bringing together objects accumulated across generations, it examines how art preserves cultural connections, expresses individual perspectives, and carries family history across time and geography. At its center is the role of women as collectors, caretakers, and interpreters of cultural heritage, and the ways in which a family's relationship with China is reflected in the objects it preserves.

Global/Local Engagement
Study abroad in Beijing, Spring '26, reconnected with motherland.

Lily Scofield

Art Through Different Eyes: The Influence of Artistic Background on Perception

This project explores how artistic background may influence the way people perceive and engage with art. Specifically, it compares the responses of artistically inclined individuals with those who have little or no artistic experience. Using participant responses, the study will examine where viewers look, how long they focus on different areas, and how they describe their reactions to artworks. By considering both visual attention and personal background, this research aims to better understand how experience, culture, and perception relate. Ultimately, the project asks whether what we learn truly changes how we see art.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Gallery intern, A HUG FROM THE ART WORLD, New York City, Summer '25.

Ronan Staab

Beyond the Bottom Line: Exploring Museum Evaluation Theory in Practice

This project seeks to synthesize existing evaluative frameworks for museums and apply them to individualized models for select Connecticut museums at a long-term institutional level. Interviews with museum staff will provide insight into each institution's circumstances, missions, operations, and goals. The resulting models will then be compared to each other to determine significant differences and overarching similarities. Drawing on these findings and existing museum evaluation research, the project will explore opportunities to refine evaluation approaches while considering the unique characteristics of each museum.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Galway City Museum, receptionist intern, Spring 2026.

Stevie Thomsen

Material Culture of Ancient Jewish Ritual: Semitic Superstition, Religion, and Magic

Private Jewish ritual culture dispersed further from community worship to diasporic religion in the wake of the Second Temple Destruction. My project aims to identify and interpret Jewish ritual culture from pre-Biblical canonization and engage with its origins from the lens of Greco-Roman religion. My research utilizes ancient text, material remains, and mythos of cultic practice in order to examine how the field of Jewish worship and "magic" evolved and restructured ritual. Furthermore, I seek to define

understandings of magic/ritual, private/community worship, and the entanglement of Greco-Roman religion with the growth of Jewish diasporic practice.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Old Mystic History Center, Mystic CT, transcription assistant, December 2025 – June 2026.

Ava Tyszkowski

Egyptomania and Postcolonialism: Examining the Sociocultural Context of the Art Museum

At the turn of the twentieth century, highly publicized archaeological digs in Egypt fueled a widespread fascination with Egyptian aesthetics in Europe and the US that coincided with the development of the art survey museum. The resulting exhibits were heavily influenced by Western audiences' perception of Egyptian culture, and those influences are still evident today. How was this phenomenon influenced by the social construction of the art museum, and how has that construction been affected by postcolonial movements within the museum field? This project is part of a larger thesis examining how museum exhibits can shape our identity and worldview.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Research Library Intern, Rhode Island Historical Society, Summer '26.

Alexandra Vidinha

Where in the World is (Ancient) Egypt?: Orientalism in Fine Arts Museums

This project examines the ways ancient Egyptian objects are displayed relative to ancient Greek and Roman objects in fine arts museums in the United States. After providing some context, I will present the first of my case studies, applying theoretical frameworks related to both Edward Said's Orientalism as well as Museum Studies in an attempt to answer questions about the cultural identities of both curators and target audiences and how the separation (or lack thereof) of these objects impacts audiences' perception of history and physical space.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Archaeological Conservation Institute, Belmonte in Sabina, Italy and Corinth Greece, Summer '26.

PEACE AND CONFLICT PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Anakali Castillo-Randgaard

Why is it Important to Understand Indigenous Communities as Dynamic?

Indigenous communities are reshaping their futures and identities while honoring their histories. Over the past three years as a Peace and Conflict scholar, I explored my animating question through English and Spanish coursework and immersive education working with the Amaru Indigenous community in Peru. Conversations with the community, friends, family, peers, and staff helped challenge the Eurocentric viewpoints I had come to know from society. I want you to leave recognizing that Indigenous communities are rich, complex, and diverse, while also listening to new voices and challenging the preconceptions you have.

Global/Local Engagement
In spring 2026, I stayed with a host family from the Amaru Community in Parque de la Papa, Peru.

Sam Dickerman

How can countries outside great powers protect sovereignty as global politics shift?

As competition between China and the United States reshapes international politics, less powerful countries face challenges in protecting their sovereignty and interests. My experience studying political science in New Zealand exposed me to how countries navigate these pressures differently depending on their economic and security capabilities. Using New Zealand as a case study, this presentation explores how countries between great powers navigate a volatile global environment and create opportunities to safeguard their sovereignty. It examines how New Zealand can use diverse multilateral relationships, cooperation with other nations, and membership in international institutions to pursue its interests in an unstable world.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Victoria University of Wellington, Spring '26.

Michaela Goodman

Can a democratic government safeguard constitutional rights while strengthening national security?

I examine whether a democratic government can address national security threats by increasing state surveillance authority without infringing on citizens' constitutional rights. This topic is prominent in contemporary debates where partisan tensions arise between those who support broadened state authority, as opposed to those in favor of maximizing civil liberties. By utilizing the works of political philosophers, and researching democracy's historical foundations, I reason that citizens should play a meaningful role in determining the limitations of expanded governmental power. From this, I conclude that the legitimacy of power ultimately depends upon active civic participation that operates within constitutional parameters.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Institute of International Studies, Florence, Italy, Spring '26

Benjamin Kosty

How does law shape societal perceptions of persons with disabilities?

While society has increasingly marginalized people with disabilities, disability protection laws have nonetheless still been enforced. Still, rigid social hierarchies have limited implementation. For example, many classrooms in the United States are unwelcoming to neurodiverse students, even though the law may require full access. I argue that there must be stronger enforcement of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), to provide an accessible, safe environment so that all people have the opportunity to thrive.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Senior Councilor. JCC at the North Shore. Summer '26.

Lydia Marvin

How does magical realism in literary fiction reveal oppressive political realities?

Magical realism is a literary genre in which magic is grounded in reality. Often, magical realist fiction takes place among the backdrop of historical events and highlights the hazy chaos, confusion, and contradiction that major political transformations produce. The lines are blurred between what is possible and impossible and forces the reader to confront what reality truly looks like. For many, magical realism reflects the reality of those living under oppressive conditions. Through analyzing Midnight's Children by Salman Rushdie, I want to highlight the political power of magical realist fiction and its relevance across the globe.

Global/Local Engagement
I studied away at CIEE in Prague, Spring 2026, where I took classes on banned books and modern Czech literature.

Lillian Saffer

Contentious Civility: How Democracies Thrive in Conflict

My research explores how events of mass participation create conflict, which may lead to healthier democratic systems. This topic is prominent as countries all over the world exhibit shifting values towards authoritarianism and away from democracy, including the U.S. Using a comparative study between Chile and the U.S., I explore how Chile's 2019 protests and subsequent constitutional reform process inform a path forward for the U.S. From this study, I conclude that although mass participation creates conflict, it is in that conflict that the democratic process occurs.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Intelligence Analyst, I-OnAsia, Larchmont NY, Summer 26'.

Liam Schwartz

How can US propaganda influence public opinion in times of geopolitical tension?

I focus on how government narratives impact how Americans understand the current international tech race. Investigating strategic government messaging, this study demonstrates how U.S. government information may expand or inhibit people's knowledge of other nations and their policies. While many consider American technology superior, many nations, especially China, are advancing even more quickly in artificial intelligence and its security applications. Through an examination of presidential statements and policies, I assess U.S. government actions that are shaping global power around AI as an economic, political, and security disruptor.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship, Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office, NJ, Summer 2026: Financial Crimes Unit.

PUBLIC HEALTH PATHWAY
SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Luke Begg

Education to Access: A Community-Based Approach to Alzheimer's Prevention

Alzheimer’s disease affects millions of older adults in the United States, and that number is expected to grow as the population ages. The current literature increasingly supports diet, exercise, and early screening as essential preventive measures, but only a small subset of the population has access to the resources needed to act on this knowledge. My solution is a multi-faceted community-based program designed for aging adults in Butler, PA. The program delivers evidence-based diet, exercise, and cognitive screening interventions through Butler Memorial Hospital, giving underserved populations the means to act on what the research recommends.

Global/Local Engagement:
Study Away: Public Health Program, Stellenbosch University, South Africa, Summer 25'

Frances Brisbane

Targeting the Antibiotic Crisis: Clinical Risks, Systemic Overuse, and Interventions

Antibiotic resistance is a growing public health concern due to overuse of antibiotics and increasing potency, exposing patients to both short- and long-term adverse effects. Through an evidence-based integrative and globally-inspired innovation, I propose a two-part public health solution. Through primordial prevention and secondary prevention, I suggest an analysis of the current antibiotic prescribing procedures to evaluate and research quality improvement, and the creation of an educational series of documents to be provided for parents to offer information and support in the event of serious adverse reactions to antibiotics.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Abroad in Copenhagen, Denmark, Spring 2026.

Hannah Cibotti

Transitioning to Adulthood with Cerebral Palsy: A Community-Based Occupational Therapy Model

Cerebral palsy is a lifelong, non-progressive central nervous system disorder that often presents as spastic motor dysregulation. Individuals with cerebral palsy are living well

into their adulthood; however, healthcare knowledge and practice do not reflect this. There is a need for increased transitional support to ensure young adults with cerebral palsy are well adjusted to and supported by their communities. Following an internship in pediatric occupational therapy, I have proposed an integrative community-based occupational therapy program to address the question: how can the healthcare system better support individuals with cerebral palsy during their transition to adulthood and beyond?

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Leading Therapy Home Pediatric Occupational Therapy, Summer '26

Riley Clark

Preventing Vision Health Disparities in New London Schools Through Accessible Resources

How can adults collaborate to make children's eye care a priority and accessible? Many children go for years without getting their eyes checked due to structural barriers, financial hardships, and parental unawareness, which can increase disparities in children's eye health and cause children to struggle. My evidence-based integrative public health solution, rooted in optometric experience, is to provide an accessible information hub and pamphlets to inform parents and school faculty about where to get children's eyes checked in the New London, Connecticut, area. This prevention ensures that children get the vision care they need to thrive.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Optometrist Intern/Technician, Dynamic Eye Care, Kingston, Massachusetts, Summer 25'.

Caitlin Cormier

Using Public School Curriculum Intervention to Combat Rising Antibiotic Resistance

Antibiotic resistance is the growing ability of bacteria to survive all known antibiotics. As bacteria continue to develop resistance to existing antibiotics over time, infections that were once easily treatable become difficult to eliminate. To address this issue, greater public awareness of responsible antibiotic use should increase to give science more time to develop alternative treatments. This project proposes to integrate an antibiotic usage safety and importance chapter into the science or health curriculum in public schools in Ashburnham, MA. The aim of this solution is to improve scientific literacy and promote responsible antibiotic use.

Global/Local Engagement
Volunteer: UMass Memorial Medical Hospital.

Bryn Curtin

Prevention of Skin Cancer in Massachusetts Communities Through Education

Skin cancer is one of the most prevalent forms of cancer, and yet it is also one of the most preventable. The detection of skin cancers is extremely important for survival rates. Through physician shadowing in Barcelona, Spain and working as a Home Health Aide, I have gained experience with primordial and primary prevention. My project explores how to sufficiently educate the population about skin cancer risk factors and when to know to get a screening.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Student, physician shadowing, Barcelona, Spain, Summer '25. Internship: Home Health Aide, Massachusetts, Summer '26.

Ella Dorwin

The Cost of Food Insecurity: Addressing Early Onset Cancer in the USA

Early-onset cancer rates have been rising drastically in the United States, becoming the second leading cause of death in individuals under the age of 55. A root cause of this increasing prevalence is food insecurity and low-consumption of fresh foods, with individuals living in poverty being more likely to turn to inexpensive alternatives such as fast food or highly processed, packaged goods. This integrative evidence-based public health prevention aims to increase equitable access to fresh foods through the expansion of federal food assistance programs in order to mitigate dietary risk factors associated with early-onset cancer.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Berries Health & Genetics, Washington State, Summer '25.

Nieve Fromhein

Beyond the Death Toll: Reframing Tuberculosis Advocacy for Vaccine Investment

Tuberculosis remains the world’s deadliest infectious disease, yet funding for TB prevention, treatment, and vaccine research remains far below global need. Support for

global health R&D responds more to perceived personal and national relevance than to disease burden knowledge. I argue that TB advocacy in high-income, low-burden countries should be reoriented around antimicrobial resistance and treatment failure, while acknowledging that the pathway from public attitudes to research funding remains poorly evidenced. The project is based on my research on TB at UMass Chan Medical School, ultimately aiming to improve funding for this public health issue.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: UMass Chan Medical School, 25-26.

Sadie Gearan

A Neurodiverse-Informed Approach to Mental Health Education

Neurodivergent students experience challenges with emotional regulation, navigating communication, and understanding mental health, yet education on mental health is not always designed to meet their individual needs. My project aims to find solutions for educational systems so they can implement neurodiverse-informed mental health programming into their schools. By applying background research, coursework, and local experiences, my proposed program focuses on mental health literacy, coping skills, and how to access support for neurodiverse students. This is a preventative public health approach, aiming to empower neurodivergent students, but also helping educators and families better understand their student's/child's needs.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Northshore Education Consortium, Instructional Assistant, Beverly, MA, Summers '25 and '26.

Will Grove

Adult Physical Health and Injury based on Childhood Nutrition and Activity

This study examines the differences in nutrition, obesity, activeness and health outcomes between the U.S and other similarly developed countries, primarily the U.K. These three factors operate as determinants of health in adolescents and adults. Global and community based experiences as well as the research from this study suggests that an integrative innovation be implemented in the public health system. Policies must be implemented to improve school nutrition programs in the U.S; The infrastructure and economy of the U.S must also be reworked to provide the possibility for an active physically healthy society.

Global/Local Engagement

Study Away: QMUL, experiencing public health in the UK.
Internship: WV Physical Therapy.

Matthew Hernandez

Tearing Down Barriers to Mental Healthcare

The most vulnerable populations in the U.S. have no proper access to the mental healthcare system. In search of an evidence-based integrative public-health solution, global and local healthcare approaches were reviewed to see what can help the American system, particularly in North Bergen, New Jersey, a primarily Hispanic town in the NYC metropolitan area. I propose a community-based program that reduces stigma, brings resources directly into trusted community spaces, trains community members in basic mental health support, and connects those in need to primary care, telehealth, and professional treatment before they reach a mental health crisis.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Forensic Psychiatry Unit Malmo, Sweden Fall '25.

Katherine Hicks

Addressing Social Determinants of Health to Improve Rural Prenatal Care

Rural areas of the United States face higher levels of maternal and infant mortality, perinatal depression, as well as other unique challenges when compared to urban and suburban areas. I propose an integrative public health solution, rooted in prenatal pharmaceutical work, to intervene in care early and efficiently. A universal screening program for social determinants of health would help healthcare workers assess patients for these determinants and risk factors. It is essential that this screening be paired with community- based health care and resources; screening should be a bridge to resources, not just a questionnaire.

Global/Local Engagement
Job: Pharmacy Technician, Milford, CT, Summer '26.

Matthew Huisken

Tackling the underdiagnosis of girls with ADHD in public schools

Why are girls with ADHD underdiagnosed compared to boys? This prevention initiative goal is to address the health inequality in Minneapolis Public Schools by developing an evidence based gender ADHD screening tool. This would utilize research showing

symptom presentations, bias of teachers, and different objective assessments. The solution combines Biology, Psychology, and Sociology, and my study of ADHD assessment in Copenhagen. This novel tool would prioritize inattention, hormonal factors, and misdiagnosis. For this to work, there would need to be school psychologist training, screening protocols, and clear referral pathways to identify girls with ADHD.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: neuropsychology, ADHD project, Copenhagen Spring '26.

Addi Hunter

Changing Medical School Curriculum to Combat Implicit Bias in Postpartum Care

The objective is to understand implicit bias and its role in postpartum care. A mother's minority characteristics can influence the treatment they receive, often being worse than those in the majority. The unequal care provided results in maternal morbidity and mortality, which oftentimes is something that is preventable. Classes in psychology and sociology provided information about this. Experience was gained through the BroadStreet Institute internship, specifically with the program planning. A program is proposed to help students understand how implicit bias influences the care they provide, and Essex County, NJ was used as a sample location for this training.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Maternal and Infant Health Intern, BroadStreet Institute, Summer '26.

Chase Ireland

Can brushing your teeth prevent Alzheimer's Disease?

Alzheimer's disease (AD) is a progressive neurological disorder that is highly prevalent and severely disrupts daily life. Recent research links AD to periodontitis, as the same bacteria are found in high concentrations in affected brain regions. Since a cure is still being researched, prevention is the focus, through policy and early childhood education. The focus population is Connecticut residents at or below the poverty line. Proposed integrative solutions include Medicaid policy changes favoring preventative care, school-based oral health education, and dental cleanings required in school physicals. Early prevention should reduce the risk of AD and other neurodevelopmental diseases.

Global/Local Engagement
CT Mission of Mercy Volunteering Spring 2024 2. Dental Assisting Internship Summer 2026.

Anna Kalapatapu

Supporting Students, Strengthening Schools: Responding to Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse childhood experiences, including poverty, abuse, violence, and family instability, can significantly affect children's ability to learn. My research examines how ACEs impact students and how educators can provide more effective support. Drawing from research, coursework, and experience teaching students with limited educational opportunities, I propose a school-wide, trauma-informed approach. This includes teacher training, school-based counseling, referral systems, supportive classroom routines, and social-emotional learning. By equipping educators and mental health professionals with the tools to identify and address trauma early, schools can strengthen protective factors, improve learning, and promote long-term student well-being.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Teaching Fellow with Breakthrough Collaborative in Houston, Texas, Summer '25 and '26.

Emma Lent

Bridging the Gap: Improving Newborn Screening Outcomes Through Coordinated Follow-Up Care

Newborn screening is a public health intervention that identifies genetic, metabolic, and endocrine disorders. As a form of primary prevention, screening can help reduce disparities in care. However, infants in underserved rural communities may face barriers to receiving care after a positive screening result due to limited healthcare infrastructure. My clinical experience in Greece helped me understand how disconnected healthcare systems shape access to care. This project proposes using a newborn screening registry within Massachusetts's existing electronic health record exchange system to connect healthcare providers across the state to improve care coordination from screening to long-term treatment.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Cerca Abroad, Athens, Greece, Summer '25.

Hadley Levendusky

Physical Activity as a Preventative and Therapeutic Measure for Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease has become a growing public health concern that affects millions of individuals and their families. As the US aging population increases, there is a growing need to identify accessible strategies to prevent or slow disease progression. Through this project, physical activity as both a preventative and therapeutic approach to Alzheimer's disease will be examined. Guided by current research and a summer working in orthopaedics, it explores how lifelong exercise may influence brain function and disease progression. This project considers how an exercise-based “prescription” can be incorporated into healthcare settings in the Greater Boston area.

Global/Local Engagement: Internship: Medical Assistant, Orthopaedics at Mass General Hospital, Waltham/Danvers, MA, Summer '26.

Mary Lonergan

Public Health Communication Strategies to Address Vaccine Hesitancy

This project explores vaccine hesitancy as a public health issue and how public health systems can increase vaccination rates and reduce preventable outbreaks. Through my medical assistant training, I developed a greater understanding of the importance of communication and accessibility in healthcare. These experiences, combined with my coursework in biology and public health, shaped my understanding of the social factors contributing to vaccine hesitancy. This project proposes an intervention that connects families with reliable information and healthcare resources through local ambassadors and community organizations to improve confidence in vaccines.

Global/Local Engagement
Clinical training: Medical Assistant Training, Summer ‘26.

Madeline Mason

Not Quite Broken: Rethinking “Dead” Enzymes in Disease-Causing Parasites

Evidence-based public health practices require original research, with primordial prevention guiding drug or vaccine development. This empirical project investigates understudied parasites known to cause diseases such as schistosomiasis, liver fluke disease, and tapeworm infection. Within these organisms, enzymes with a mutated catalytic site are often written off as dead, but is that always true? This project uses AI-predicted protein structures to study pseudoenzymes in the copper amine oxidase family, finding one mild mutation that barely disturbs the rest of the enzyme, suggesting it may retain partial function rather than being completely dead.

Global/Local Engagement
Independent Study with Prof Zimmer: Connecticut College Department of Chemistry, August '25 - now.

Una McCorry

Mental Health Resources & Collegiate Athletes

College athletes are a unique population facing the challenges of mental health. Due to physical and mental stressors, injuries, expectations, and more, student-athletes are left vulnerable to mental health struggles. In college athletics, mental health resources are severely limited, and the motivation to change the surrounding stigma and stereotypical interpretation of elite athletes is lacking. What is needed to fix this public health problem are changes to how college athletics address mental health concerns. Supported by research and real-world experiences, this project provides integrative evidence-based solutions to best support and better the mental health of this population.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship with Unlimited Resilience: a therapy and sport psychology organization; Summer '26 - Spring '27.

Julia McPhee

Equitable Access to Community-Based Neurodevelopmental Disorder Interventions: A Multimodal Approach

Growing up with a neurodevelopmental disorder (NDD) is already challenging, as individuals face social isolation along with the impairments associated with their disability. Coupled with socioeconomic and environmental stressors, NDDs can be aggravated further, decreasing the individual's chance of being able to lead a fulfilling life. Equitable Access to Community-Based NDD Interventions confronts the inequalities regarding multimodal support for children, adolescents, and young adults diagnosed with NDDs in New York City. By innovating a public health approach through clinical experience, I've developed an evidence-grounded organization that implements neuroscience research with a community-based approach to treatment.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: VISIONS Services for the Blind & Visually Impaired, NY. Summer **'26**
Volunteer: Lawrence & Memorial Hospital, New London. Fall '24 - Present

Olivia Newhouse

Essential to Human Development: Addressing Water Insecurity and Access

Access to clean water is a fundamental human need, yet social barriers continue to make safe water unattainable for many communities. This project examines how water insecurity affects physical health and broader aspects of human development, including education, employment, food security, and economic stability. Building on evidence-based global research and previous experience, this project applies an integrative public health solution to New London, Connecticut. While long term improvements to water treatment and infrastructure require government involvement, this project proposes immediate mitigation strategies in collaboration with community organizations to raise funds and distribute bottled water to disenfranchised individuals.

Global/Local Engagement
CT/NJ. Worked with Villages in Partnership to bring clean water to rural villages in Malawi, helping communities gain access.

Hannah Prescott

Addressing Emergency Department Overcrowding Through Patient Boarding Solutions

Emergency departments (ED) offer the most crucial medical service in the United States. However, they face patient overcrowding, an imbalance between patients' needs and hospitals' capacity. Overcrowding emerges from the practice of keeping patients admitted to the ED for prolonged periods due to inadequate capacity of inpatient wards. These extended stays delay care and increase pressure on the healthcare workers. To address ED overcrowding in my hometown of Attleboro, MA, where I volunteered as a hospital patient care liaison, this project proposes the implementation of a dedicated patient boarding system to reduce bottlenecks and improve emergency care.

Global/Local Engagement
Volunteer: Sturdy Memorial Hospital, Attleboro MA, weekly volunteer, Summer 2026.

Stella Ridolfi

Movement in Healthcare: Dance as a Mode for Neurodegenerative Disease Intervention

What are non-pharmacological treatment options for those with early onset of neurodegenerative diseases? Neurodegenerative diseases are characterized by the progressive loss of neurons, leading to deficits in brain function. They are long-lasting and progressive, making symptom management integral to care. As I observed during my internship with a neuropsychologist, this is a public health issue because aging is

the primary risk factor affecting the entire population. This evidence-based integrative solution explores how dance serves as a secondary prevention measure through free dance therapy sessions at community centers for people with Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Neuropsychologist Intern, Wentworth Douglass Hospital Neurology, Summer '26.

Jesley Rua

Increasing Immunization Uptake Among Spanish-Speaking Communities in New London, Connecticut

For some communities, receiving a vaccine can involve barriers beyond whether the vaccine is available. This project asks: How can immunization uptake be increased? My focus is on Spanish-speaking communities in New London, Connecticut, where language, transportation, cost, and healthcare navigation may affect preventive care. Through my literature review, coursework in public health, sociology, psychology, and Narrative Medicine, and experiences through UCLA SHPEP and Connecticut College's SSRI, I explored healthcare barriers. I propose community-based outreach providing Spanish-language information, vaccination resources, and local partnerships.

Global/Local Engagement
Internships: UCLA SHPEP, Los Angeles, California, Summer '25 & SSRI Connecticut College, New London, Connecticut, Summer '26

Abby Schultz

Type One Diabetes: Addressing the Cost of Insulin Through Public Health Policy

Type One Diabetes is an autoimmune condition characterized by a deficiency in insulin production and/or function. People with the condition are reliant on insulin to prevent glucose from building up in the bloodstream. However, the financial cost of managing the condition has skyrocketed in recent years, making care options inaccessible. In my project, I explore how we can make insulin more accessible for patients with Type 1 Diabetes. In addressing the issue, I propose an integrative public health policy, based on my global study away experience, to bring more generic cost-friendly forms of insulin to Massachusetts pharmacies.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: University of Stirling, Scotland, Spring '26

Phoebe Shane

Turning Nutritional Knowledge into Habits: What US Schools Can Learn from Italy

Diet-related chronic disease continues to rise in the United States even though nutritional knowledge is widely available, suggesting the problem is not a lack of knowledge, but a failure to turn knowledge into habits. Drawing on research and my experience living in Italy, where people learn about food through everyday practices, I propose a school-based program for elementary students that combines a farm-to-school garden, cooking lessons, and a family meal night. The program adapts Mediterranean diet principles to local food traditions to help combat these dietary issues and build healthier eating habits at a young age.

Global/Local Engagement
Studied abroad in Rome, Italy in Fall 2025. Courses on Italian culture and cuisine, developmental psychology, and cross-cultural psychology.

Olivia Smith

Your Food, Your Future: Preventing Early-Onset Colorectal Cancer

Early-onset colorectal cancer is increasingly common among young adults. My project explores the relationship between diet, social and racial disparities, and early-onset colorectal cancer. Public health can address risk earlier by changing the environments in which young people make decisions about food and nutrition. Using an integrative and evidence-based approach, I developed a proposed Massachusetts Healthy Food Environment Act for Youth. The policy creates regulations surrounding nutritional quality of foods offered in public schools, increasing access to fresh foods, providing nutrition education, improving food labeling, and prioritizing funding for communities with limited access to healthy foods.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Rome, Italy, IES Abroad, studied food regulations and markets in the United States vs. the EU, and Internship, Summer ‘26

Vivian Smith

Creative Writing Programming: Holistic Approaches to Substance Abuse Prevention for Adolescents

Current public health solutions to youth substance use are centered around education about adverse health effects, or rehabilitation post-addiction, not on prevention. Focusing my research on risk and protective factors of adolescent substance abuse, I located 3 main determinants: 1. Attachment, or Interpersonal Relationships, 2. Adverse Childhood Experiences, and 3. Poor Socioemotional Development. Modeled after programming for victims of domestic violence and academic work on environmental determinants of health, I propose an innovative approach, focused on offering reflective and creative writing programming for late elementary school students to prevent substance abuse later in life.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship/Community Partnership: Junior Sailing Director at Orient Yacht Club, Orient New York, Summer '26.

Kiera Tallas

Bridging the Gap: Improving Access to Pediatric Hospice Care

Pediatric hospice care provides support for children with life-limiting or life-ending conditions and their families, but there are still barriers to specialized services and family support. This project proposes expanding pediatric-specific hospice services with trained volunteers to help provide emotional support and connect families with community resources. Using background research and my hospice volunteer experience with Kaiser Permanente, this innovation emphasizes the importance of pediatric-specific services and individualized care. With the additional help of trained volunteers, pediatric hospice programs may better address the emotional and practical needs of patients and families.

Global/Local Engagement
Volunteer: Kaiser Permanente Hospice Program, weekly volunteer, Summer '26.

Hayle Thompson

Fixing nutrition in schools to help children's cognitive development

Nutrition plays an important role in cognitive processing and overall development of elementary-aged children, how it affects memory, attention, energy, behavior, and academic performance. Proper nutrition provides the brain neurotransmitters, amino acids, glucose which are vital for neurotransmitter function, communication, and neural development. Limited access to nutritious foods contributes to difficulties with academic success. Nutrition is also influenced by socioeconomic factors such as having access to

affordable healthier food options. Nutrition is important in every aspect of life, especially early development when learning, and schools should do a better job providing healthier foods for the benefit of their students.

Global/Local Engagement
Boys and Girls Club of Assabet Valley, Summer '24-Summer '26.

Zane Tyszkowski

Access to Dental Care Can Shape Our Health and Wellness

Oral health and hygiene often gets overlooked in medical care, but its neglect can lead to major bodily dysfunction. This evidence-based project aims to address this public health crisis by increasing access to dental care. My integral coursework in biology, anatomy, and neuroscience combined with my experiences working with both dentists and national dental nonprofits has allowed me to formulate a solution that incorporates legislative action in terms of healthcare reform, increasing public awareness to the benefits of dental health, and increasing access to dental professionals by bringing the care directly to patients.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Unpaid Intern with Rhode Island Dental Association, Warwick Rhode Island, Summer '25.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABILITY PATHWAY SYMPOSIUM 2026 ABSTRACTS

Maddie Baybeck

Developing Climate Resilient Housing in a Remote, Climate Exposed City: Ushuaia

Remote, climate exposed cities face rising risks from changing climate and extreme weather while depending on limited financial capacity and fragile transport links. Ushuaia, Argentina, the southernmost city in the world, exemplifies these pressures: rapid population growth is occurring alongside glacial retreat, heavier precipitation, and coastal exposure. Ushuaia is also the main gateway to Antarctica, and growing tourism adds emissions and infrastructure demand, while the long-term climate costs fall on residents rather than visitors. I will contextualize the affordable housing crisis within the larger issue of climate change, specifically in remote and climate exposed cities.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Ushuaia, Argentina, Fall'25 2. Intern: Center For Housing Opportunity, weekly volunteer, Fall '26.

Cecilia Duffield

Art Outside: Engaging Community and Connection to Nature

The modern world has shifted from that of our predecessors — our society clusters in cities and has modernized ideas like the digital world. People are increasingly separated from the outside world; many young people have no experience with the wild. I explore the ways art installations (such as sculptures, murals, plein air paintings, and ephemeral art) can create a focus on nature and reconnect communities. My fascination started with Thomas Dambos' trolls, sculptures that intersect art, nature, storytelling, and recycling. Can art installations be a bridge to draw us back into nature and to help us reconnect with our planet?

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: Volunteer for DOC, Wellington, New Zealand, Fall '25 2. Volunteer in New London Community Spring ‘26.

Lily Funk

Fast Fashion: Acknowledging the Journey Behind Our Clothes

There are enough garments on Earth to clothe the next six generations. The fast fashion industry has disastrous environmental and social effects that start at the beginning of a garment's lifecycle and extend for decades after it is discarded. Consumption of fast fashion only continues to rise, though. What can be done to help individuals truly consider the life behind their clothing? How can storytelling be an effective way to shift harmful perspectives on clothing?

Global/Local Engagement
Engagement with local Goodwill and thrift stores, Fall '26.

Caroline Graziani

Schooling in Two Systems: The Divide in Public and Private Schools

I explored the education gap between private and public schools, focusing specifically on how funding and resources differ. These disparities impact the future of education, who has access, and what the purpose of schooling has become. Conversations with teachers and students gave ground-level perspectives. As an aspiring public high school teacher, my research explored what educators can do to help narrow the gap. My local engagement further demonstrated this and shifted my view on top-down policy to lived experiences.

Global/Local Engagement
Internship: Teaching intern St. Paul's School Summer '26 – Community Partnership: Summer Civic Leaders (Horizons Beyond High School) Summer '25.

Kalevi Kaukonen

Pluralistic Ignorance: Sensationalist Media and the Abstraction of Systemic Inequalities

The dominance of episodic framing in attributing homelessness to individual failings neglects broader systemic inequalities that shape access. The lack of pluralist narratives within legacy media depicts unhoused communities as those that have deviated from societal norms into violence, barbarism, and self-inflicted addiction. Reshaping a public paradigm would look to attribute homelessness not to moral shortcomings but to institutional flaws. Through a systemic review of existing literature, I contextualize the importance of thematic framing in fostering productive public discourse, increasing empathy, and demanding accountability from bureaucratic actors to address a governmentally induced homelessness crisis.

Global/Local Engagement

Internship: Journalism Work w/ Street Sheet (San Francisco Coalition on Homelessness) Summer '26.

Flannery Miller

Rooted: How Environmental Camps Give Children a Place of Belonging in Nature

In this pathway project, I examined how the environmental education summer camp Moose Hill in Sharon, Massachusetts, aims to foster belonging, nature connectedness, and community among participants through its programming and educational goals. In an analysis of relevant literature, I framed an argument that place-based identity–a location–informed sense of self– formed at summer camp is the foundation for community at environmental education camps. I also argued that environmental education summer camps readily shape participants' lifestyle choices. In this pathway, I connected the significance of place-based identity to the ongoing climate crisis.

Global/Local Engagement
Summer Job: Lead Summer Camp Counselor, Moose Hill Summer Camp, Sharon, Massachusetts, Summers '24, '25, '26.

Lauren Multari

American Wind Energy & Regulations: Increasing Efficiency Through Reflection on Northern Europe

In the fight against climate change, renewable energy has been presented as an important and successful solution. However, it is necessary to ensure that proposed infrastructure does not exert additional impacts on already harmed communities and environments. As wind energy emerges as a leading source of renewable energy, national and international regulations must be enhanced to improve conservation and restoration efforts. To determine impacts prior to official installation, test sites must be mandated for all wind farms in unique environments. Endemic and endangered species ought to be considered in operation periods and lease areas, with required pauses during migratory seasons.

Global/Local Engagement
Study Away: DIS Copenhagen, Fall '25. 2. Research Assistantship: DIS, Fall '25. 3. Internship: Clean Ocean Action, Summer '26.

Finley Regan

"Fine with Shamu?" Analyzing Captive Orca Performance's Conservation Efficacy

The public perception of cetacean captivity in the United States, particularly the act of live orca performance, has shifted from the 1960s to modern day. I examine the evolution of Sea World's "Shamu Show;" the 2013 documentary *Blackfish,* Kristiana Rae Colón's *Tilikum,* a theatrical work featuring a human actor as Tilikum; and case studies concerning recently deceased and currently captive orcas. Via praxis, interviews, and archival research, I interrogate which acts inspire conservation action and which perpetuate harmful ideas about human dominance over non-human species. Ultimately, I argue for the efficacy of art-based alternatives to live animal performance.

Global/Local Engagement
Study away: Visited museums and archives, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, June 2026.

Matthew Vinisko

Campus Culture and Cultivating Equity: Collaborative Ethnography with Community College Students

Ethnography is a qualitative research approach revered for its holistic framework, immersive methods, and propensity for social justice. Social scientists practice ethnography to understand systems of inequality, but research itself is produced within an imbalanced social structure. Demographics, resources, and prestige reflect social stratification in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Community college students represent a significant portion of U.S. undergraduates, but remain an underserved and devalued sector of higher education. In this project, I analyze collaborations between ethnographers and community college students for methods and social impact. My research centers the resilience, adaptability, and knowledge demonstrated by marginalized student populations.

Global/Local Engagement
Cajamarca Ethnoarchaeology Field School, Institute for Field Research, Peru, Summer '26. Peer Mentor, Northwestern Community College, Fall '24 - Spring '25.