

May 2017



CONNECTICUT  
COLLEGE

# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

*PICA Conference & Davis Award Winners, pg. 2; Experiences With Community Partnerships, pg. 3; Thank You, pg. 4*

## Holleran Center PICA Conference

*Shameesha Pryor '17*

During the spring semester of 2015, The Holleran Center admitted 21 students into the Community Action and Public Policy certificate program. Students work on various projects ranging from healthcare, art, restorative justice, globalization, and many others. Senior year the students present their research and projects to the community during the conference and invite family, friends, mentors, and community leaders to join them in sharing their stories. The PICA conference, on April 8, was very informative and creative in many presentations. I participated on the panel about Empowerment of the Self through Communities. This panel started with a general focus on sports empowerment to women empowerment and then ended with two very unique presentations that took the audience by surprise in a way that may have made them feel uncomfortable, emotional, and uplifting all at once. I created and presented a praise dance piece that embodied resistance and healing with underlying issues of pain and community injustices.

My "PICA Peep", Georbina DaRosa, created a film documentary entitled, *I Am Because We Are*, that focused on black students' experiences at a predominately white institution. It ended with the students giving advice on how to make



*Class of 2017 HC Senior Dinner at Dean Reiser's home*

their experiences better and making sure they are thriving and surviving at these institutions.

The PICA Conference made me feel very proud to be a scholar in the Holleran Center. Many of the students in my cohort advocate for issues that not only affect themselves, but issues that affect their peers, under-classmen, the New London Community, and people across the world. The conference was well crafted and showed various forms of scholarship and activism and took the audience out of the mind-set of the "traditional"

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forms of activism and ways many people define activists as people who put their lives at the forefront of movements and protests. It was amazing to see ordinary students making a

difference in many facets and everyday experiences. I am happy to be a member of this cohort and hope all my PICA Peeps feel accomplished about their work. •



*From left to right: Molly Rosen '17, Sarah Rosadini '17, Shameesha Pryor '17, & Georbina DaRosa '17 on the panel at the PICA Conference*

## *Davis Award Winners, Allie Girouard '19, Sarah Potter '19, & Kate Stockbridge '19*

*Kate Stockbridge '19*

Allie Girouard '19, Sarah Potter '19, and I decided to apply for the Projects for Peace grant in order to grow and expand BOLD. We have been able to do a lot with smaller grants and have already established programs in New London and a few schools in Massachusetts, but this larger grant will allow us to run in more school systems and impact more high school and middle school girls.

We were especially excited to apply for the Davis 100 Projects of Peace because we believe BOLD is a wide reaching program that promotes peace in the communities it impacts. In a society where females are indoctrinated into cycles of self-loathing from a young age, teaching girls to unapologetically love themselves and their bodies is a radical act. By promoting feelings of confidence and self-love in adolescent girls, girls will be less violent towards themselves and their peers, and less susceptible to the violence of others, making them more likely to feel empowered to take on leadership roles and to take action to help others. We believe that a society with compassionate and confident female leaders is a society best able to promote and sustain the equity necessary for peace. •



*“Our ultimate goal for BOLD is to build a network of girls and women who will support each other as they make change in their respective communities and the world.”*

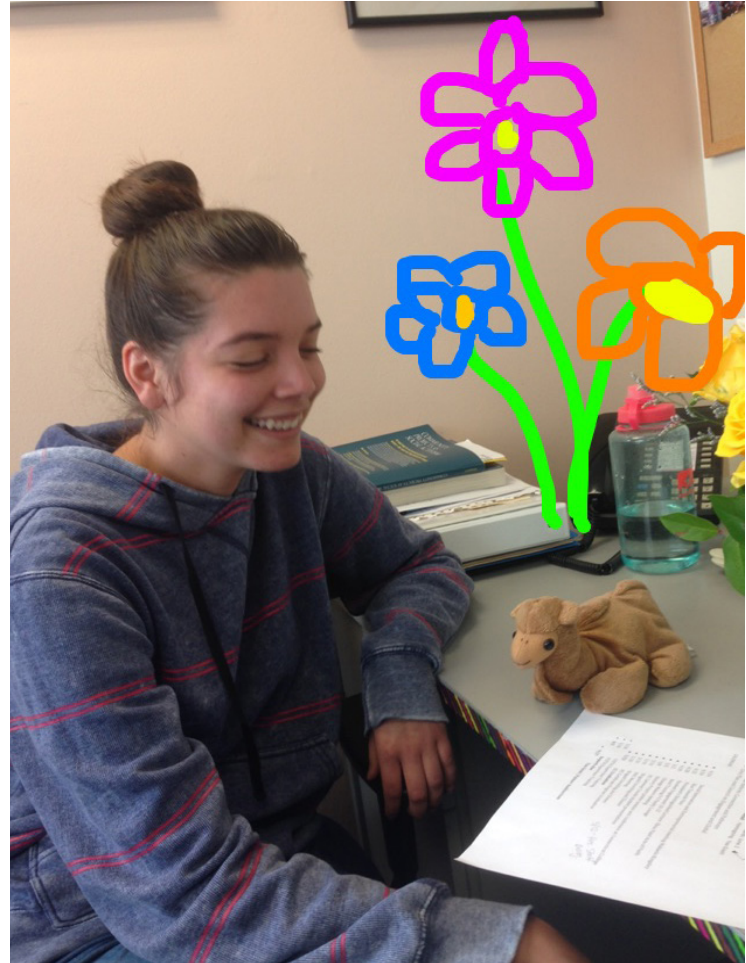
## *My Community Learning and Growth Through Experiences with Community Partnerships*

*Lysandra Saldana '18*

My name is Lysandra Saldana and I am a rising senior majoring in American Studies with a Teaching Certificate. My involvement with Community Partnerships began my Freshman year at Connecticut College and I assisted at Jennings Elementary School during the Fall and Spring semesters. While I was at Jennings, I was a Teacher's Assistant in a Spanish class. A whole year commitment was beneficial for me because I was able to see the growth of the students from the beginning to the end of the school year and develop a much more personal rapport with each of them. During my Sophomore year, I realized I wanted to teach History in a middle school in the near future so I assisted in the classroom as a Teacher's Assistant in New London High School and ISAAC Middle School the for the entire academic year. As an aspiring teacher, Community Partnerships has exposed me to the various schools systems in New London and has complimented my work in the Education program here at Connecticut College.

My experiences on and off of campus have made me much more focused on issues affecting the surrounding community when engaging in community spaces. In particular, in the schools that I assist in I've gotten to develop and cultivate relationships with children and assist with their growth through this mutually benefitting experience. I've also made a personal commitment to engage more with the greater New London community for more mutually benefitting experiences.

Currently I am interning at the Children's Program and I love what I do there, especially



*"I've been able to immerse myself in the child's world"*

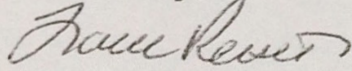
since the school is play based learning I've been able to immerse myself in the child's world that they create through play. It relieves a lot of stress for me because I laugh a lot and get to really connect with the children who are curious about the world around them.

I think that by aiding the teacher in the class I am positively impacting the overall learning experience for children because I become another facilitator. I am able to read to the children and address their concerns whenever they arise. •

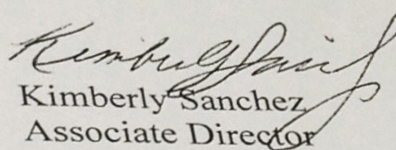
## Dear Community Partnerships' Student Leaders,

*We thank you for the dedication and hard work you invested in our programs and at sites throughout the community. You have assisted in creating a campus-wide culture of engagement and strengthened the collaborative relationships among components of the College. You have contributed to improving the quality of life by working with the New London community, building on community assets, addressing identified needs, and co-creating mutually beneficial partnerships. You have promoted community engagement as a national movement and underscored Connecticut College's leadership and innovation in this moment. Thank you for putting liberal arts into action and for extending teaching and learning outside of the classrooms.*

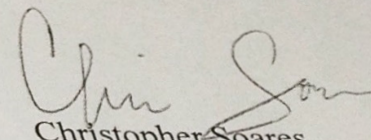
Sincerely,



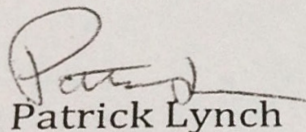
Tracee Reiser  
Senior Associate Dean for  
Community Learning



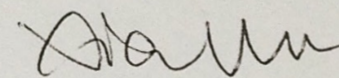
Kimberly Sanchez  
Associate Director



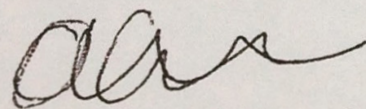
Christopher Soares  
Community Learning Coordinator



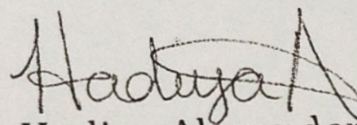
Patrick Lynch  
Assistant Director College - School Partnerships



Xia Wu  
Staff Assistant



Aleksandr Chandra  
AmeriCorps\*VISTA



Hadiya Alexander  
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Send questions and/or interesting stories for the newsletter to [csoares@conncoll.edu](mailto:csoares@conncoll.edu)

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