

The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center

Hamilton College



2011-2012

Annual Report

From the Director

This year the Levitt Center has expanded its programs in significant ways to encourage more students to engage in public service and public policy issues. The Levitt Leadership Institute (LLI) is a new initiative made possible by the financial support of Arthur Levitt, Jr. P'81, and the Norman and Rosita Winston Foundation. The LLI focuses on the development and practice of personal leadership set in the context of individual student career interests, a global mindset, ethical behaviors, and regard for the public good. The Institute follows an intensive two-week format used to train the senior Foreign Service staff in the U.S. government. Former Ambassador Prudence Bushnell led the inaugural 2012 institute. The LLI is the centerpiece of a series of programmatic elements at the Levitt Center that include internships for students interested in public service, summer research fellowships for community-based research, and faculty workshops to incorporate the teaching of leadership skills in the curriculum.

These new programs as well as our speakers series, summer research fellowships, and service-learning initiatives provide unique opportunities for the intellectual and personal development of Hamilton students. In fact, this year almost 200 students have participated directly in Levitt Center programs, in addition to many others who have attended public talks. The Levitt Center continues exploring emerging trends in higher education and developing programs that enhance the academic experience and career prospects of Hamilton students.

Julio Videras
Director, Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center

ARTHUR LEVITT PUBLIC AFFAIRS CENTER



Hamilton

The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center

The Levitt Council 2011-2012

Frank Anechiarico, Director of the Security Program and the Maynard-Knox Professor of Government and Law

Peter Cannavo, Director of the Sustainability Program and Associate Professor of Government

Emily Conover, Assistant Professor of Economics (Fall 2011)

Katheryn Doran, Associate Professor of Philosophy

John Eldevick, Assistant Professor of History

Jenny Irons, Director of the Inequality and Equity Program and Associate Professor of Sociology

Chaise LaDousa, Associate Professor of Anthropology

Julio Videras, Director of the Levitt Center and Associate Professor of Economics

Stephen Wu, Associate Professor of Economics (Spring 2012)

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The following students assisted with the writing and the photography for this year's Levitt Center Annual Report:

Bonnie Buis '13, Adam Fix '13, Grace Fulop '13, Jose Mendez '14, David Morgan '15, Alexandra Nasto '13, Cecelie Pikus '13, Marghuerita Scott '13, Brady Sprague '15, Dylan Wulderk '13, Thomas Youngblood '13

The Levitt Center Team

2011-2012

Julio Videras, Director, earned a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Colorado at Boulder. His research focuses on applied environmental economics, in particular how cultural and social factors influence the voluntary provision of the public good of environmental quality and sustainable development practices; the relationships between community composition, collective action, and the supply and demand of environmental goods; and how to identify and account for sources of unobserved heterogeneity through finite mixture models.

Jenny Irons, Director of the Inequality and Equity Program, completed work for her master's degree and Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Arizona, Tucson. She has published articles in *Gender & Society* and *Mobilization*. Irons' research interests include race, gender, social movements and culture. Her current research focuses on the relationship between the state, social movements and race. Irons is the author of a book published by Vanderbilt University Press, *Reconstituting Whiteness: The Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission* (2010).

Frank Anechiarico, Director of the Security Program, studies constitutional law and public administration. He is the co-author (with Eugene Lewis) of *Urban America: Politics and Policy* and the author of *Suing the Philadelphia Police: The Case for an Institutional Approach*, and *Remembering Corruption: The Elusive Lessons of Scandal in New York City*. Anechiarico and James Jacobs' book, *The Pursuit of Absolute Integrity: How Corruption Control Makes Government Ineffective*, was published by University of Chicago Press. His latest project is a book on the relationship between ethics and the quality of performance in public management.

Peter Cannavò, Director of the Sustainability Program, received a Ph.D. from Harvard University in 2000, an M.P.A. from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School in 1992, and an A.B. from Harvard University in 1986. He is the author of *The Working Landscape: Founding, Preservation, and the Politics of Place* (MIT Press, July, 2007), in which he examines the conflict between development and preservation as a major factor behind our contemporary crisis of place. Cannavò's work and teaching are in the areas of political theory, environmental politics, and ethics and public policy.

Chris Willemsen, Assistant Director of the Levitt Center did her graduate work in the Study of Religion and Political Theory, both at Harvard University. She was previously the Associate Dean of Students, Academic at Hamilton College. She has published a paper on happiness and democracy with Ann Owen and Julio Videras. Her research interests include the relationship between happiness and freedom and the decline of the American middle class.

Sharon Topi, Levitt Center Administrator and Service Learning Coordinator, is a 2002 graduate of Hamilton College where she majored in Anthropology with a minor in Physics. Sharon lives in Clinton, NY with her husband Jason and their four children. Her research interests include medical anthropology and cross-cultural child-rearing practices.

The Levitt Center is fortunate to have a large staff of dedicated and talented student workers: Adam Fix, Alexandra Nasto, Allison Fried, Anna Paikert, Anne Loizeaux, Anne Phillips, Bonnie Buis, Brady Sprague, Cecelie Pikus, Charles Allegar, Charlotte Hough, Lenox Chitsike, David Morgan, Duy Vo, Dylan Wulderk, Elizabeth Amster, Emily Cranshaw, Ephraim McDowell, Grace Fulop, Grace Lee, Henry Anreder, Jennifer Rougeux, Jose Mendez, Kayla Winters, Kristen Morgan-Davie, Lily Rothman, Marghuerita Scott, Nathaniel House, Nicholas J. Solano, Pauline Wafula, Rachel Hirsch, Rafael Freire, Sade Oyalowo, Shakil Hossain, Shu Yi Liew, Thomas Youngblood

Leadership

Levitt Leadership Institute

The Levitt Leadership Institute is a two week intensive leadership training program administered by The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center at Hamilton College. Its mission is to provide Hamilton students with the opportunity to develop and practice personal leadership skills in the context of their individual career interests with a focus on developing a global mindset, ethical behaviors, and regard for the public good.

The inaugural institute was held in 2012, and was led by former Ambassador Prudence Bushnell and Christine Powers. Ambassador Bushnell was responsible for providing leadership training to senior state department officials under Secretary of State Colin Powell; Ms. Powers has managed senior leadership training at the State Department from 2007-2010 and continues to train senior embassy staff. The Levitt Leadership Institute is modeled on the programs used to train the senior Foreign Service staff in the U.S. government.

The first week of the Institute is held on the Hamilton College campus in January. Week One focuses on self-awareness, self-management, relationship management, and communication skills. The curriculum encourages students to better understand their leadership and communication styles and their personality preferences, while learning best practices for communicating and working in groups. Participants take type and style indicator tests, and spend time during the Institute analyzing the results. In addition to lectures and readings about relevant topics, students participate in role playing and group activities that allow them to practice such skills as handling difficult conversations. Students also take part in networking interviews with community leaders, a formal dinner, and a reception with senior Hamilton College staff, alumni, and local leaders.

The second week of the Institute is held in Washington, D.C. in March over spring break. Week Two focuses on problem-solving, decision making, motivation, networking, and conflict resolution. In addition to classroom time, students arrange networking and information gathering opportunities for their fellow Levitt Leaders in Washington, D.C. The 2012 cohort arranged meetings with officials from the State Department, the Federal Communications Commission, Capitol Hill, the Heritage Foundation, and the Search for Common Ground. Finally, participants spend time developing plans to put their leadership skills to use when they return to campus where they commit to completing a project that will have a measurable and positive impact on their communities.

Participants in the Levitt Leadership Institute, 2012

Patrick Bedard '14, Julia Brimelow '14, Hannah Coffin '14, Zhuolun Du '15, Caroline Epstein '13, Adriana Fracchia '14, Alice Henry '14, Krista Hesdorfer '14, Katrina Keay '14, Matthew Langan '14, Beryl Li '14, Jimmy Nguyen '14, Trang Nguyen '13, Sade Oyalowo '14, Alex Powers '13, Max Schnidman '14, Galia Slayen '13 and David Tse '14

Leadership

Levitt Leadership Institute

Max Schnidman '14

"I found the Levitt Leadership Institute to be a powerful, transformative experience. It forced me to confront my skill sets, my strengths, and above all, my weaknesses. However, more than just confronting them, the Institute helped me to acknowledge and improve on them. As a result, it helped me not only to become a better leader but a better follower and a better person."

Krista Hesdorfer '14

"The Levitt Leadership Institute has been a productive and enjoyable experience, one I would readily recommend to friends and classmates. This experience will surely motivate and assist us as we assume leadership roles on campus and beyond."

Zhuolon Du '15

"The LLI definitely strengthened my awareness and skill of self-management. What's more, I am spurred to think about what an individual could do for the common good of society as a whole. I start to realize that we do not need to be heroes to make changes, instead we can just contribute to our community as ordinary people. "

Matt Langan '14

"LLI has, and continues to be, a great experience. Through the program I developed important lifelong leadership skills that I can apply to benefit the Hamilton community and the career I choose to pursue. After only a week of leadership training, I can already see the impact it has had on the way I approach leading, or following, in a group setting. I learned some invaluable lessons especially in our team building, personal reflection, and seminars that I will work on successfully using as a group participant or leader."



*Levitt Leaders on the steps
of the U.S. Capitol during
Week 2 of the
Levitt Leadership Institute*

Levitt Public Service Interns Summer 2011

Levitt Public Service Interns

During summer 2011, eleven students with career interests ranging from human rights advocacy, law, and politics worked at the Institute for Policy Studies, Amnesty International, the offices of several members of Congress, and the National Research Center for Women and Families, among others. These internships were made possible by financial support from Arthur Levitt, Jr. An additional thirteen students were funded for summer 2012.

Elizabeth Bilharz '12 interned at the New Hampshire Center for Public Policy Studies, a think tank devoted to conducting research that has implications for policy-making in the political and economic arenas. Bilharz spent her summer conducting data-based research. She delved into the literature, looking for inefficiencies that have resulted in the loss of state funds. Bilharz noted "My work this summer at the think tank has sharpened my research skills, developed my ability to synthesize a great deal of information in summary "policy note" reports, and helped improve my communication skills."

Victoria Grieves '12 interned at the Environmental Law Institute (ELI), an independent organization that aims to improve and develop environmental legislation. As an intern, Grieves worked on a series of research projects related to "climate change adaptation policies, post-conflict natural resource management, and wetland restoration," and she wrote for the Environmental Law Reporter, ELI's own periodical. Grieves stated, "Receiving the Levitt Center grant enabled me to have my first true career-related experience, and to learn a lot about the world of environmental policy non-profits."

Roxanne Makoff '12 interned at Amnesty International, a non-governmental human rights organization whose goal is to protect against and rectify human rights violations. A Public Policy major, Makoff spent her summer working with the development division of Amnesty, devoted to fundraising, fund distribution and supporting the financial foundation of this institution. Makoff helped in requesting donations and in writing and editing grant proposals for other divisions of Amnesty International.

Caroline Novas '13 interned at the National Research Center (NRC) for Women and Families, a non-profit institution dedicated to providing information to the general public about safety and health issues that concern women and families. Novas's responsibilities included managing the organization's social networks, answering health-related questions from the public through research, and contributing to writing an article on FDA's inadequate regulation of medical devices. Novas stated, "This experience has showed me the necessity and utility of the non-profit sector and the public service sector in general." Furthermore, she found that Levitt Center's funding "was invaluable and has changed what jobs I will apply for after graduation."

Fertaa Yieleh-Chireh '12 interned at the Public Forum Institute, a non-profit organization in Washington, DC, devoted to "facilitating public engagement on a range of policy issues, including small business and entrepreneurship." Yieleh-Chireh's duties included helping organize the institute's Global Entrepreneurship week, which brings youth from around the world to voice their ideas on entrepreneurship initiatives. He also attended congressional hearings at the House and the Senate and completed a research project in business and international affairs.

Levitt Public Service Interns Summer 2011

Sarah Miller '13 interned at Human Rights First (HRF), a non-governmental organization which focuses on protecting civil rights and liberties, fighting discrimination and xenophobia, and protecting refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers. Miller's responsibilities included updating the HRF hate crime survey, which records the changes in hate crime legislation of OCSE member states, and tracking human rights violations in Uganda. This internship gave Miller the opportunity to meet Julius Kaggwa, an LGBT rights activist in Uganda.

Kevin Tutasig '13 spent his summer in Quito, Ecuador, interning for Assemblyman Dr. Luis Morales Solis. He conducted research projects, participated in meetings of the Institutional Renewal Party of National Action and Commission on Citizen Participation and Social Movements, and travelled across Ecuador translating documents. He wrote: "To receive this internship funding meant a lot to me. I think this internship was crucial in getting accepted to work for the Direct Marketing Association this fall as part of the Hamilton College Washington D.C program."



*Kevin Tutasig '13 with
Ecuadorian Assemblyman
Dr. Luis Morales Solis*

Levitt Public Service Interns Summer 2011

Dylan Wulderk '13 spent his summer interning at Senator Frank Lautenberg's office in Camden, NJ. Wulderk's casework allowed him to get acquainted with issues such as immigration and labor. He also attended various community events and represented the Senator at a gathering of small business owners from NJ. Wulderk noted: "Mr. Levitt's funding provided me with my first real experience in public service, gave me a solid networking foundation, and built a launching pad for what I hope will be a long career in public service."

Robert Kosineski '12 spent his summer working at the Federal Offices of Congressman Paul D. Tonko, a Democrat from the 21ST District of New York State. His duties included constituent services, research, and office maintenance. Kosineski wrote: "My time spent in Washington has led me to believe that this is something I could do professionally one day. The excitement of the Hill is not something that any other profession enjoys, a job that is constantly changing."

Trang Nguyen '13 spent her summer working for the Criminal Justice Department. More specifically, she devoted her time to writing the OBTS (Offender Based Tracking System) Data Integrity Plan for future interns to evaluate the accuracy of OBTS data. Nguyen noted: "This experience has helped me see vividly the inner workings of a state government office. I have become much more familiar and understood much more about how Criminal Justice Department works. This is truly an eye-opening experience. I have become more sure of pursuing a career in public service."

Susannah Spero '13 interned at New Farms for New Americans (NFNA), a program that facilitates the transition process for refugees and immigrants in the United States. The Association of Africans Living in Vermont (AALV) manages this program, which provides Vermont newcomers with the necessary tools, financial support, and education to become independent organic farmers. Spero led small technical workshops, managed farmer's market booths, and updated an online blog about the program's progress. Spero wrote: "This internship has shown me that to truly make a difference a person must be willing to put aside the idea of a 9-5 job and that it's not absolutely necessary to go into politics or business to make a positive impact in the world."



*Susannah Spero '13 at
work at New Farms for
New Americans*

Levitt Student Research Summer 2011

Levitt Research Groups

The Levitt Research Group grants support two to three Hamilton students who work together under the supervision of one faculty advisor. The research projects last 8-10 weeks and help to answer an overarching research question. Students in the research groups meet regularly with their faculty advisors to coordinate and communicate research efforts.

William Rusche '13 and **Andrea Wrobel '13** spent this past summer doing research on religious environmental groups. Rusche and Wrobel became interested in this social movement because it is a relatively new development in American culture, and has been largely unexplored in the field of sociology so far. The students investigated together why religious environmentalism is an anomaly, but took different angles on their project. Rusche focused on political trends in both government and religious organizations, and how atmospheres that are more receptive to environmentalism are created. Wrobel examined the cultural side of religious environmental movements, specifically focusing on how members of this movement use religious texts to support environmental efforts. Wrobel and Rusche hope their research opens new doors for exploring this important cultural movement. "The topic of Green Religion remains a new area of study in social movements. Still developing, it'll be interesting to see how our work this summer holds up," said Rusche.

Professor Stephen Ellingson, who served as their faculty advisor, wrote "it . . . was a great opportunity to introduce two promising young students into the craft of social science research. In short the summer grant jump-started my research and gave two students an opportunity to acquire a set of transposable skills (writing, finding patterns in data, applying abstract concepts and theories to concrete data). "



*Will Rusche '13 and Andrea
Wrobel '13*

Levitt Student Research Summer 2011

Ana Baldrige '12, Paige Cross '13 and Chip Larsen '13 examined the strategies that characterize recent state initiatives to address problems—poverty, economic and social inequality—that have come along as a side effect of deindustrialization. Baldrige noted that “Although we learn and read about these concepts in our anthropology and sociology classes, the firsthand experience I gained through developing the project, conducting the field research, and finally the analysis of my entire project has been an incredible opportunity for me because only through this type of research can we become aware of what is really going on in these situations and how it is impacting others.” “Working with undereducated individuals in Cornhill was an eye opening experience,” said Cross. “I learned a lot not only about New York State initiatives to increase statewide literacy, but also about the struggles these people face on a day-to-day basis.” Although the students worked on the project collaboratively, each pursued a unique aspect of their research in their individual papers. “It was incredibly important to me to be able to receive this funding to conduct research at Hamilton this summer. Serving the impoverished and undereducated is a great need in this country, and those who are without a high school diploma are effectively proscribed from contributing to the economy due to hiring restrictions,” said Larson.

Professor Chaise LaDousa, who served as their faculty advisor, wrote “I can honestly say that it has allowed for research collaboration of a kind that I have not experienced with students before. The students and I were able to congregate and rethink every stage of our project, from the initial fieldwork schedule for participant observation to working through drafts of the students’ final reports. We were able to engage each other in conversation about how our field sites differed, and this became significant in the arguments the students made in their final reports. Aside from this one difference between us – graduate training in theory – the students and I were a research team, and to be a part of a situation in which students were one’s equals was really thrilling for me. ”



*Paige Cross '13, Anastassia Baldrige '12, Professor
Chaise LaDousa, and Clayton Larsen '13*

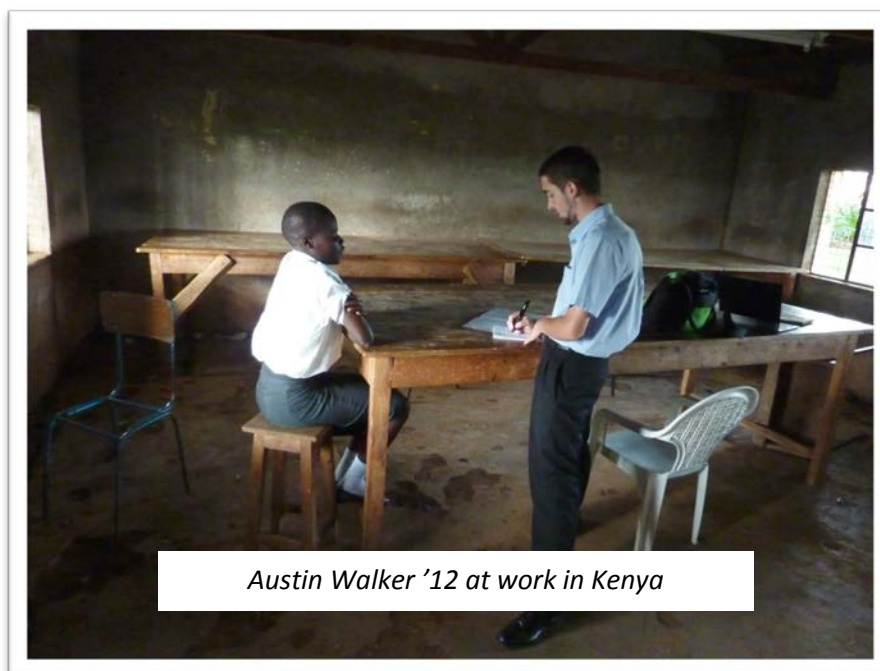
Levitt Student Research Summer 2011

Levitt Summer Research Fellows

Every summer, the Levitt Center funds students who wish to pursue a research question of their choosing. The students work closely with a faculty advisor on their project which culminates in a 25-30 page paper and a poster session over Parents' Weekend where they publically share the results of their research.

Wlajimir "Jimmy" Alexis '13 and **Rodric "Camron" Waugh '13** believe that the middle school experience is a vital turning point in childhood, and can even determine whether or not the child will want to go to college later on. Arguing that field trips stimulate and supplement learning in a substantial way, Alexis and Waugh explored the effect of field trips on middle school students in Washington, D.C. Alexis and Waugh wrote that they were grateful for this funding because it allowed them the "opportunity to shed light on what should be an integral aspect of all school systems. Quality education enriches a country and keeps a nation competitive on a global scale, but America has fallen short in excellence of education, which is why the issue is so essential for us to discuss." Professor Todd Franklin served as Alexis and Waugh's faculty advisor.

Austin Walker '12 spent his summer speaking with Kenyan youth. "The overarching goal of the project is to bring the voices of Kenyan youth into the often theoretical debate raging in academia over how to approach development," said Walker. He hopes that by writing from the perspective of those who are in need of aid, he can help bring the most important issues to light. To carry out his project, Walker partnered with the Lwala Community Alliance (LCA), an organization founded by two Kenyan brothers in their home village of Lwala. Walker's research revealed that many young people were concerned with the issues of school fees and the lack of available jobs, as he anticipated, but they also had concerns about inadequate counseling and advice regarding relationships, sex and negative peer influence. Professor Steve Orvis served as Walker's faculty advisor.



Austin Walker '12 at work in Kenya

Levitt Student Research Summer 2011

Henry Anreder '12 spent his summer researching the issues surrounding African asylum-seekers and refugees in Israel. Anreder conducted interviews and studied information from various non-governmental organizations to analyze the comparative effectiveness of governmental agencies and NGOs in the assistance of African refugees in Israel. Through his research Anreder explored the complex elements of Israel's governmental and social structures that may not be immediately visible to outsiders. "It was personally very important for me to have the opportunity to further explore the NGO community in Israel, as I had long held an interest in Israeli civil society and previously interned at the New Israel Fund, an organization that funds many of the organizations I interviewed during the process of my Levitt fellowship," said Anreder. Professor Steven Orvis served as Anreder's faculty advisor.

Scott Blosser '12 spent the summer researching the economic relationship between state governments and the U.S. federal government. Blosser thinks that examining the past can be a valuable practice for dealing with present issues: "Understanding the context under which the United States first created a national debt, and how the unique conditions of American federalism shape the way we view that debt, has been a thrilling investigation given the present debate about our federal debt ceiling and our ability to service our debt. I have learned that each debt must be understood in its proper context to understand how people viewed and reacted to debt and the plans for paying it off. Furthermore, I have learned that our national debt must be viewed as a dynamic force rather than a static number." Professor Douglas Ambrose served as Blosser's faculty advisor.

Jasmina Hodzic '13 spent the past summer studying whether or not Bosnia and Herzegovina is ready to transition to sustainable self-governance. Growing up in the post-Bosnian War era sparked her interest in politics and state-building, which led her to major in world politics at Hamilton. She explored her interests in more detail through the Levitt Summer Research Grant, where she researched how the international community could help Bosnia secure stable, autonomous statehood without excessive or harmful interference in domestic affairs. She is thankful for the aid provided by the Levitt Grant, saying that "It made all the difference that, after preliminary desk research at the Hamilton campus, I was able to go to Sarajevo and conduct my work from where it all took place. Suddenly my research was less about academia and proper formatting, and more about the meaning this debate has for the future of a country and an entire society. I now know that after graduating I wish to go back to BIH and apply my classroom knowledge to working with a vibrant society that every day debates its position between the East and the West, its identity between the traditional and the modern, and its future between resentments and longing for a prosperous tomorrow." Professor Alan Cafruny served as Hodzic's faculty advisor.

Mihai Dohotaru '13 explored the major causes of the current deterioration of the American economy in his project "The Housing Bubble and the U.S. Labor Market after the 'Great Recession.'" Dohotaru began his research with an investigation of why this recession is unique, and why the labor market is recovering differently than it has after other recessions. He then examined conflicting hypotheses that aim to explain this anomaly, focusing on the housing bubble in particular. Through his statistical analysis, Dohotaru concludes that household debt is a main factor behind the weak recovery, specifically as it relates to disposable income growth and asset price swings. His final paper offers some advice to alleviate these problems, specifically advocating a sustainable growth path for the U.S. economy that involves large investments in modern infrastructure and renewable energy. Professor Christophre Georges served as Dohotaru's faculty advisor.

Levitt Student Research Summer 2011

Throughout history, the interplay of morality and law has proved to be a point of debate and intense interest for philosophers. Specifically, does one concept determine the other? And if so, does law establish what is moral or should it be the other way around? **Thomas Cheeseman '12** spent his summer exploring these issues. Cheeseman's research explored the prevalence of atheism in modern culture, how it affects moral thought, and its influence on attitudes toward law. "I believe that this project really aided my understanding of the debates over the enforcement of morals. I have a much better view of both sides and believe that this is a topic I will continue to research on my own for many years," said Cheeseman. "The opportunity to study Natural Law for the summer is an opportunity I doubt I'll ever be afforded again or would have been afforded anywhere else." Professor Douglas Ambrose served as Cheeseman's faculty advisor.

Entrepreneurship among immigrants to the U.S. has a significant impact on the economy's growth. But what kinds of environments encourage entrepreneurship, and how do networks affect start-up rates? **Noah Ford '13** spent his summer exploring this subject in his project "The Effects of Local Networks on First and Second Generation Immigrant Entrepreneurs in the United States." Through his research, Ford wanted to delve deeper into the particular network factors that influence self-employment the most, including network income per capita, house ownership rates, and average house value within the network, to discover a more nuanced and complex picture of networks and entrepreneurship. Ford wrote that this experience was especially meaningful for him because "this project helped me explore what a career as a research economist might be like." Professor Paul Hagstrom served as Ford's faculty advisor.

Yinghan Ding '12 spent his summer researching climate finance support in developing countries. Ding believes that an accountable system for resource allocation is the first step toward persuading developed countries to fulfill their promises for funding. "As we know, climate finance is closely related to the public. It is something that has become too political in recent years and requires a lot of efforts from the public to push the politicians for more action," said Ding. Ding hopes to continue working on climate change-related projects in the future. "I'd like to extend my efforts in this summer research into my senior thesis in the economics concentration, and all of this would not have been possible without the Levitt Summer Research Grant." Professor Margaret Morgan-Davie served as Ding's faculty advisor.



*Thomas Cheeseman '12
explains his research at the
Levitt Research Fellows Poster
Session*

Research in the Classroom

2011-2012

Youth Poll

Professor of Economics Paul Hagstrom and students in his Economics of Poverty class collaborated with the research firm Knowledge Networks to conduct a national poll which queried more than 1,652 Americans aged 18-29, 60 percent of whom were Caucasian, 19 percent of whom were Hispanic and 13 percent of whom were African-American. Based on this sample, the margin of error for all respondents is approximately +/- 2.5 percent.

American young people say that the top two causes of poverty are a lack of jobs (83.7 percent) followed by a lack of health insurance (64.3 percent). More than two thirds (67.7 percent) of the respondents also cited the growing incomes of the wealthiest people as negatively affecting the quality of life of those with lower incomes. The full results of this survey are available online and were presented by webcast at www.hamilton.edu/poverty. Almost three-quarters of respondents (73.8 percent) intend to vote in next year's presidential elections. Among those sampled, 38 percent indicated that their financial situation was worse than it was two years ago. The poor, non-whites and female respondents were more likely to indicate that their financial situation had worsened.

To measure attitudes toward poverty, respondents were asked how various national issues affected poverty, their perception of poor citizens' handling of money, the causes of poverty and how and by whom poor people should be helped. These are some of the significant findings:

- 59.7 percent feel the wealthy have a responsibility to help the poor.
- 62.6 percent of all respondents feel those earning \$200,000 and above should pay more taxes.
- 67.7 percent feel the government is morally obligated to help the poor, but 58.5 percent are not willing to pay more in taxes to help the poor.
- 77 percent feel that government anti-poverty programs were not effective. 60.7 percent believe that anti-poverty programs discourage people from working, although there was a significant difference in response rates by race with 69 percent of whites and 52 percent of non-whites agreeing that anti-poverty programs discourage people from working.



Professor Paul Hagstrom and students from his Economics of Poverty Class

Research in the Classroom

2011-2012

Youth Poll continued

- Respondents tended to answer that the poor put “the same amount of effort” into their work (46.4 percent) or even more effort (31.6 percent).
- When asked if people were more likely to be poor because of bad luck or because of bad choices, 82.7 percent answered bad choices.
- 75.3 percent support increasing the minimum wage.
- When asked how they would rank these issues – unemployment, health care, the national debt, national security – if they were president, 80 percent choose unemployment as their first or second most important issue.
- When asked if they would be willing to pay more in federal income tax if the purpose was to help the poor, non-whites are more likely to say yes than whites. 49% of the poor would agree to pay higher taxes in order to help the poor while only 35% of the non-poor would be willing to do so.

Excerpted from a Hamilton News web article by Vige Barrie

Public Policy Projects, 2011-2012

The Levitt Center provides administrative support for a public policy course taught by Gary Wyckoff, Professor of Government and Director of Hamilton’s Public Policy Program. Students in this class did two public contracts this year:

Anthony Scarpino did an analysis of the feasibility of privatizing energy inspections in New York State. His project is entitled “The Efficacy of Third Party Energy Inspectors in New York State: A Cost-Benefit Analysis.” Currently, energy inspections are done by municipalities and towns, but there is interest in having them done by professional private energy inspectors. The analysis was requested by Joseph Hill of the New York State Department of State. Anthony found that privatization is a good idea, not because it would save money, but because it would probably result in higher quality inspections.

Sara Scheinesen did a cost-benefit analysis of bariatric surgery for obese patients on Medicaid in New York State. Her thesis is entitled “Beat the Bulge: The Burden of Obesity on New York State Medicaid and the Potential of Bariatric Surgery to Cut Costs.” The analysis was requested by Gabe Deyo of the New York State Comptroller’s Office. Sara found that, in the obese Medicaid population, the costs of bariatric surgery could be recouped in lower health care costs in a little over five years. However, because Medicaid recipients stay on the program for only short periods of time, encouraging bariatric surgery for all of the obese would not save money, although it would yield large quality-of-life benefits. The surgery may save money when performed on obese people with diabetes and hypertension, because their health costs are particularly high and both of these additional conditions are relieved by the surgery. Also, there is a potential to save money by providing bariatric surgery to obese elderly and disabled people, since they stay on the Medicaid program longer.

Summer 2012 Preview

Levitt Research Groups, Summer 2012

Professor Andrew Holland with Emily Delbridge '13 and Katherine Delesalle '14

"Bricks: An Intersection of Community and Architecture"

Professor Carole Bellini-Sharp with Erika Marte '15 and Victoria Harbour '14

"Bricks: An Intersection of Architecture and Community"

Professor Philip Klinkner with Benjamin Anderson '14 and Peter Adelfio '13

"A Field Experiment Approach to Analyzing Voter Behavior"

Professor Chaise LaDousa with Paige Cross '13, Robert Trevor Howe '14, and Kara Vetrano '13

"Organizing to Teach Literacy, Reading Cultural Significance"

Professor Chaise LaDousa with Anna Zahm '13, Grace Parker Zielinski '14, and Melissa Segura '14

"Learning Cultural Lessons while Seeking English in the United States"

Levitt Public Service Interns, Summer 2012

Emily Anderson, Journey Home

Elly Field, Connecticut Coalition against Domestic Violence

Grace Fulop, LIFT

Catherine Gold, The Leukemia and Lymphoma Foundation

Jasmina Hodzic, International Organization for Migrations

Lauren Howe, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Peter Maher, City of Atlanta, GA

Nicholas Solano, Suffolk County District Attorney's Office

Erin Sullivan, College of Mount St. Vincent Center for Immigrant Concerns

Emma Taylor, Preble Street

Jose Vasquez, Heart of America Foundation

Maggie Whalen, No Labels

Jacqueline Winter, Horizons for Homeless Children

Levitt Fellows, Summer 2012

Julian Aronowitz '14 with Professor Betsy Jensen "A Network Analysis of the Inter-connectivity of Financial Firms"

Beril Esen '13 with Professor Nesecan Balkan "Domestic Violence against Women in Istanbul, Turkey"

Martin Lavallee '14 with Professor Steve Orvis "Agrarian Land Reform in Honduras"

Melissa Mann '13 with Professor Peter Cannavo "Brownfields in Brooklyn: How Environmental Injustice is Affecting Latino Communities"

Jimmy Nguyen '14 with Professor Doran Larson "A Comparative Study of Human and Constitutional Rights in Developed and Developing Countries"

Ashley Perritt '14 with Professor Vivyan Adair "Emergency Room Profiling in High and Low Income Neighborhoods"

Pauline Wafula '13 with Professor Steve Wu "Female Education and HIV/AIDS Prevalence in Kenya"

Joshua Yates '14 with Professor Shoshana Keller "Israel's Hidden Crisis: The Rise of Fundamental Judaism in Israeli Politics and Society"

Nicholas Yepes '15 with Professor Emily Conover "A Needs Assessment of Guarani Migrant Entrepreneurs in Asuncion, Paraguay"

Levitt Center Speakers

General Speaker Series

The Levitt Center Speaker Series is committed to enhancing the academic experience of our students by introducing them to a wide array of intellectually challenging speakers. The Series features many speakers with substantial academic and policy experience, and are an invaluable asset in helping students make the connection between the classroom and policies enacted in the real world. Students and other audience members have the opportunity to engage speakers in thoughtful discussion following each lecture.

Christina Romer: What Do We Know about the Effects of Fiscal Policy? Separating Evidence from Ideology

On November 7th, 2011, Hamilton College welcomed UC Berkeley Professor of Economics and ex-chair of President Obama's council of economic advisors Christina Romer to deliver a lecture on the effects of fiscal policy. Beginning with a brief explanation as to how fiscal policy is studied, Romer explained that the estimation of the effects of fiscal policy is a challenging exercise for even the best of economists. Romer described the results of a multitude of cross-sectional studies on the Obama administration's 2008 stimulus program. Romer's overall evaluation of the stimulus program was as follows: certain elements of the stimulus program were more successful than others, and the Recovery Act needed to be larger in scope. The program may, however, have prevented a more damaging financial crisis. In closing, Romer outlined what she believes to be the biggest economic problems of the future: reconciling the need for fiscal stimulus with the pressing need for fiscal austerity to ensure solvency.



*Christina Romer speaking
in the Hamilton College
Chapel*

Levitt Center Speakers

Inequality and Equity Program

The Program on Inequality and Equity investigates the factors that affect the distribution of income, distribution of health outcomes, impact of policy on intergenerational equity, welfare analysis, discrimination, access to the legal system and the role of incentives, race, gender, and immigration. The Inequality and Equity Program sponsors speakers, lunch discussions, and the service learning program, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA). Jenny Irons, Professor of Sociology, is the Director of the Inequality and Equity Program.

Speaker Series

Peter Demerath: Neoliberalism's Hidden Curriculum Agenda for Personal Advancement: Equity Implications

Peter Demerath gave a lecture on the subject of inequality within public schools. He conducted a four year study in an upper middle class public school, which he referred to as "Wilton." What he discovered is that Wilton and many schools like it not only offered better academic resources than lower-income schools, but also inculcated a set of worldviews and a culture that groomed students for future success. Wilton students were all taught, at least implicitly, that virtually all fields in life are competitive, and that life is stressful. As a result, the majority of Wilton students took extra classes and played varsity sports, and they were likely to be ambitious and self-assured. Demerath concluded that in the end, the real advantage of the wealthiest school districts comes not in their economic resources but their relative autonomy in policy setting. Demerath suggested that if there were more standardization and oversight in public education, the positive practices of schools like Wilton could be implemented elsewhere.



*Peter Demerath speaking to a
Hamilton College Student
after his talk*

Levitt Center Speakers

Inequality and Equity Speaker Series, continued

Ronald Ferguson: Educational Excellence with Equity: A Social Movement for the 21st Century

Ronald Ferguson, Senior Lecturer at Harvard's Kennedy School and Graduate School of Education, spoke to the Hamilton College community about inequality in education on October 12th, 2011. In his lecture, Ferguson discussed how to achieve higher levels of excellence in school while increasing social and racial equity. He argued that in order for positive changes to take place, people on every level, from teachers, parents, peers, future employers and the community, need to get involved. He believes that if we are to improve education in the United States, we need a proactive social movement.

Jacob Hacker: Winner Take All Politics

Yale Political Science Professor Jacob Hacker delivered a lecture to the Hamilton community about the systemic challenges of the American political landscape, especially those pertaining to inequality, and how the financial sector has influenced these changes. Hacker argued that income inequality is increasing, and that the federal government often neglects to ameliorate this trend. He believes that taxation should not be based on redistribution, but should be an effort to shape markets to respond to changing forces, and that fighting income inequality needs to be an organized movement.

Faculty Lunch Series

Elizabeth Lee, Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology, gave a talk about her work on social class and higher education. Description: Although there are student clubs for seemingly every interest, clubs that provide advocacy and support for low-socioeconomic status students (first-generation, low-income, and/or working class) at selective colleges are rare. Drawing on two years of ethnographic fieldwork and interviews, she discussed some of the functions and challenges encountered by one such group, the "Class Activists of Linden College".

Dennis Gilbert, Professor of Sociology: "Social Class in an Age of Growing Inequality." Description: Professor Gilbert discussed some observations about class and inequality in America based on the new edition of his text, *The American Class Structure*.

Chris Vasantkumar, Luce Junior Professor of Asian Studies and Anthropology: "Everybody Else is Doing it so Why Can't We? Post-Racial Conceptions of the Nation-State in China and the US." Description: This topic emerged from his long term ethnographic research on racial and ethnic classification in the People's Republic of China, with special relevance to some recent attempts on his part to put the Chinese *minzu* (race, ethnicity, nationality) system into comparative framework. He compared the differing visions of post-racial national belonging in the United States and in China.

Levitt Center Speakers

Security Program

The Security Program centers on both domestic and international security. Security issues encompass the safety and protection of persons and property, food supply, market exchange, national security, banking and security regulation, cultural preservation, cyber security, local law enforcement, and public health among other public and private concerns across nations, and cultural values and institutions. The Security Program sponsors speakers, lunch discussions, and the service learning program, Project SHINE. Frank Anechiarico, Maynard-Knox Professor of Government and Law, is the Director of the Security Program.

Speaker Series

Valerie J. Bunce: When U.S. Democracy Assistance Works

On September 27th, 2011, Valerie Bunce, The Aaron Binenkob Professor of International Studies and Professor of Government at Cornell University gave a lecture entitled “When U.S. Democracy Promotion Works.” Bunce began with an overview of the cases for and against American democracy promotion. Her focus was the “color revolutions” that occurred in post-communist Europe and Eurasia. Comparing successful and failed opposition movements, she determined that the groups who followed an American electoral model were the most effective. In addition, she determined that successful opposition members often traveled to assist similar movements in other countries, and that this transnational network was integral to opposition successes.



*Valerie Bunce speaking
in the Hamilton College
Events Barn*

Levitt Center Speakers

Security Speaker Series, continued

John Dehn: War and the Constitution: Military Commissions, Targeted Killing of Citizens, and Other Hard Cases

On April 26th 2012, John C. Dehn, a distinguished senior fellow at West Point, delivered a talk and discussion session titled "War and the Constitution: Military Commissions, Targeted Killing of Citizens, and Other Hard Cases." Dehn began by stating that the views expressed in his lecture were his, and not necessarily those of the U.S. government. He then went on to explain that despite the fact that the founding fathers argued against military rule in the Declaration of Independence, the American government has consistently taken extra-constitutional actions during times of armed conflict.

Andrew Fiala: The Just War Myth: From Bush to Obama

On March 1st, 2012, Andrew Fiala presented a lecture entitled "The Just War Myth: From Bush to Obama." Fiala is Professor of Philosophy and the Director of the Ethics Center at California State University, Fresno. In his presentation Fiala outlined the history of the Just War Myth in the narrative of United States history, and how it has been used over time to justify and legitimize war. Fiala argued that the Just War Theory is a useful critical theory for examining the morality of war, but that wars rarely live up to the standard of the tradition. Furthermore, the mythic idea that we actually fight just wars makes it more likely that we'll fight unjust wars. As a result, Fiala urged people to be critically engaged citizens who constantly question and resist war.

Conference: Attica! 1971-2011--Reflection, Re-Assessment, and the Prison Today

On September 16th, 2011 a panel spoke about the 1971 Attica prison riot and its implications. The panel was composed of Scott Christianson, a journalist who has covered prison issues for over twenty years, Brian Fischer, the Commissioner of the New State Department of Corrections, Theresa Lynch, a historian who has written extensively about Attica, and Melvin Marshall, a witness to the uprising. Doran Larson, Professor of English at Hamilton College, invited students from his prison writing class to attend, as well as members of the public. The keynote speakers discussed the implications of the media coverage and responses to the riot, and spoke about how this has affected both the American prison system and the American public today.

Levitt Center Speakers

Sustainability Program

The Sustainability Program is an interdisciplinary program that supports research as well as programs that complement and enrich classroom learning. This broad-based, multi-faceted initiative promotes both academic research on sustainable practices, and policies to achieve them, as well as hands-on learning experiences for Hamilton students. Peter Cannavò, Associate Professor of Government, is the Director of the Sustainability Program

Speaker Series

Edward Glaeser: The Triumph of the City

On April 11th, 2012, Harvard University professor Edward Glaeser, an economist, delivered a lecture titled, "The Triumph of the City." Arguing that cities are both economically and environmentally good for humanity, Glaeser explained how for the first time in history, more than 50% of all humans live in cities. This may initially seem like a bad thing because of unfair stigmas attached to cities, but in point of fact it is a good trend. Urbanized countries usually have roughly five times the incomes and one-third the infant mortality of less urbanized countries, in addition to being happier. This is a result of the fact that cities allow people to invent and innovate, because these actions are taken collectively. It is these functions of the cities that governments must continue to foster as society moves into the next century, with urban schools, highway subsidies, and single-family housing subsidies in need of serious scrutiny.



*Edward Glaeser speaking in
the Hamilton College
Chapel*

Levitt Center Speakers

Sustainability Speaker Series, continued

Michael Egan: The History of Now: Decoding Environmental Sustainability

On April 18, 2012, Michael Egan delivered a lecture entitled “The History of Now: Decoding Environmental Sustainability.” Egan is associate professor of history at McMaster University, author of *Barry Commoner and the Science of Survival: The Remaking of American Environmentalism*, and co-editor of *Natural Protest: Essays on the History of American Environmentalism*. According to Egan, we need to rethink sustainability – sustainable development assumes that we know the limits of our resources and “rests on a critical unexamined acceptance of traditional worldviews of progressive, secular materialism.” Humans need to recognize that we cannot control nature, and therefore start planning for the future with a greater sense of humility. Egan suggested that we start to “rethink, redesign and replace” and, ultimately, “re-educate, re-orient, redistribute and revalue.”

Panel: Hydrofracking

A panel consisting of Eugene Domack, Joel W. Johnson Family Professor of Geosciences, Bruce Selleck, Harold Orville Whitnall Professor of Geology at Colgate University, and Stuart Gruskin, former Executive Deputy Commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, discussed both the geological and political sides of the hydrofracking debate, as well as its economic implications.

Panel: Creating Sustainable Urban Communities in Syracuse and Utica

On October 27th, 2011, students, faculty and local residents gathered in the Science Center Auditorium for a panel entitled “Creating Sustainable Urban Communities in Syracuse and Utica.” The panel, mediated by Associate Professor of Government and Director of the Levitt Center Sustainability Program Peter Cannavo, featured five guest lecturers, each with relevant experience and knowledge in regards to the sustainable communities within the Rust Belt of New York State. Panelists discussed various ideas and programs in which “devastated,” cities, such as Utica and Syracuse, can become revitalized in terms of industry, the environment, population, and community.

Faculty Lunch Series

Tim Elgren, Professor of Chemistry: “Exposed: Toxins in Your Environment.” Description: The discussion focused on the impact of persistent exposure to toxins that we encounter in our daily lives. These include carcinogens used as flame retardants in furniture, plasticizers in various containers and heavy metals in pressure-treated wood. Understanding these threats to human and environmental health is the important first step to protecting both.

Stephen Ellingson, Associate Professor of Sociology. Title: “The Making of Green Religion: Explaining the Emergence of Religious Environmentalism.”

The Levitt Center also co-sponsored a Sandbox lunch with ITS entitled, “Research in Action” with **Professor Chaise LaDousa** and **Professor Steve Ellingson**. They discussed their experiences leading two different Levitt Summer Research Groups in the summer of 2011.

Levitt Center Programs

Project SHINE

Project SHINE completed its eighth year as a service-learning program of the Levitt Center. Project SHINE is a service-learning program that seeks to form intergenerational and intercultural ties between college students and immigrants and refugees. Participating Hamilton College students spend approximately 10-20 hours over the semester assisting adult immigrants and refugees in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and Citizenship Classrooms. This year, 49 students participated in Fall 2011 and 75 in the Spring 2012 term.

Each year students come back with stories of their broadened horizons and of people with different experiences, as well as an appreciation for a person's ability and commitment to learn without the numerous resources that many of their peers have had. Here are some of the things students wrote this year about their SHINE experience:

"SHINE is one of the most uniquely rewarding experiences you will ever participate in."

"Project SHINE was honestly the best thing that I did all semester."

"I can confidently say that getting involved with Project SHINE was the most rewarding experience I had in my four years at Hamilton. It built my confidence in how I interacted with others and it allowed me to build relationships with people outside of the Hamilton community. I was able to improve my communication skills through leading group lessons to working with learners one-on-one. I encourage students to get involved with Project SHINE because Hamilton students offer their valuable English skills to the refugee community in Utica, while Hamilton students learn so much about themselves and people in the greater community."

"SHINE is a wonderful and fulfilling opportunity in which you can help willing students, while being immersed in a world outside the Hamilton bubble."



*Hamilton College student,
Rafael Freire '12 working in
a Refugee Center Classroom*

Levitt Center Programs

Rust to Green, Utica

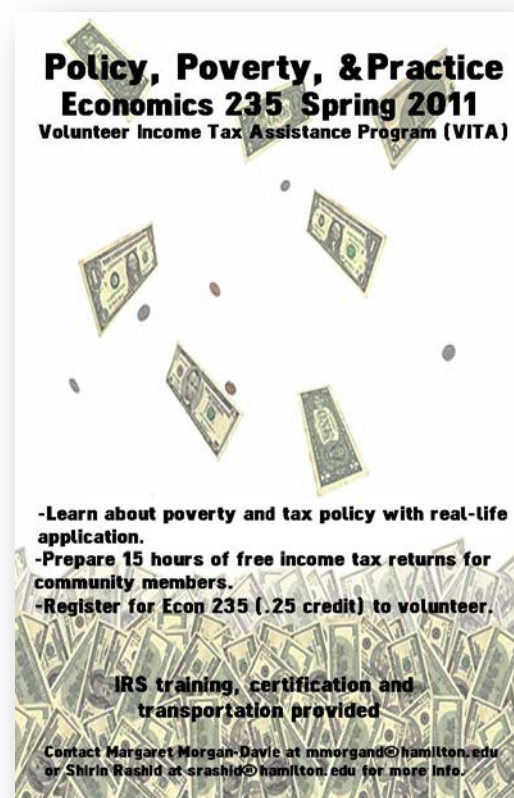
The Levitt Center continued to participate with Rust to Green, Utica, forging successful partnerships with Cornell University, other local colleges and universities, and local organizations. Rust to Green is an action research project started by Cornell University professors and funded by the Federal government that has the aim of bringing the resources of the academy to the struggling rust belt cities of New York State.

The Levitt Center supported two *Rust to Green Civic Research Fellows*. Emina Memesevic '12 worked with Cornell University graduate students and other local undergraduates doing Story Corps style interviews of Utica residents. Kristen Morgan-Davie '12 worked with the newly formed Rust to Green College Consortium to help design a website to allow Consortium members to share information about research and programming.

VITA

VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) is a service learning program that offers free tax help to low- and moderate-income families. More than 20 students in Policy, Poverty and Practice (Econ 235), taught by Lecturer in Economics Margaret Morgan-Davie, trained and then worked to assist local residents in applying for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Through their efforts, these Hamilton students are becoming more aware of their civic duties and increasingly proficient in the language of tax returns.

The VITA program was initiated by the Mohawk Valley Asset Building Coalition (MVABC), the United Way of the Mohawk Valley, and the IRS as a way to ensure that qualifying taxpayers would receive Earned Income Tax Credits. The Levitt Center coordinates with MVABC to enlist college students' help with the program. Students in Policy, Poverty and Practice attend IRS TaxWise training and obtain at least basic-level certification. Thereafter, they complete at least 15 hours of electronic tax filing as a part of their class requirement. This year, the students worked at the Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL) in Utica to complete their hours.



Policy, Poverty, & Practice
Economics 235 Spring 2011
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA)

- Learn about poverty and tax policy with real-life application.
- Prepare 15 hours of free income tax returns for community members.
- Register for Econ 235 (.25 credit) to volunteer.

IRS training, certification and transportation provided

Contact Margaret Morgan-Davie at mmorgand@hamilton.edu or Shirin Rashid at srashid@hamilton.edu for more info.

Levitt Center Programs

Levitt Scholars

Every year since 1993, the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center has sent Hamilton students to area high schools to speak on a wide variety of topics. These Levitt Scholars are typically juniors and seniors, selected by faculty members for their outstanding research and communication skills. Levitt Scholars first complete an Oral Communications course taught by Professor Susan Mason. During this class, they refine their public speaking skills and learn to tailor their presentation to a high school audience.

This year, 15 students participated in the program. In addition to speaking to several area high schools, most of this year's Scholars brought their presentations to their home town high schools during Hamilton's winter and spring breaks. Local educators participating in the program consistently comment on the high quality of the students' presentations, and Scholars embraced their task with enthusiasm and enjoyed the experience.

Participating Schools:

Canastota HS (Canastota, NY)
Chittenango HS (Chittenango, NY)
Clinton HS (Clinton, NY)
Dolgeville Central School (Dolgeville, NY)
Jamesville DeWitt HS (DeWitt, NY)
KIPP NYC College Prep HS (New York, NY)
Lexington HS (Lexington, MA)
Manlius Pebble Hill School (DeWitt, NY)
Marcellus HS (Marcellus, NY)
Masuk HS (Monroe, CT)
Middlesettlement Academy (New Hartford, NY)
New Hartford HS (New Hartford, NY)
Ridgefield HS (Ridgefield, CT)
Rome Free Academy (Rome, NY)
ShIPLEY School (Bryn Mawr, PA)
Southampton HS (Southampton, NY)
TR Proctor HS (Utica, NY)
Waterville Central HS (Waterville, NY)
Westmoreland Central HS (Westmoreland, NY)
Whitesboro HS (Marcy, NY)
Wilde Lake HS (Columbia, MD)

Levitt Scholars Spring 2012

Henry Anreder: "Israel and Jordan: Beyond the Stereotypes of the Middle East"

Colin Chapin: "National Identity vs. Statehood: The Sudetenland's Legacy"

Sarah Dreyer-Oren: "Applied Behavior Analysis"

Frederique Dupre: "A Leg Up: College Admission Strategies"

Anne Hudson: "Creative Expression in Everyday Life"

Nicholas Kaleikini: "Decisions"

Jennifer Keefe: "I Can Tell That We're Gonna Be Friends: A Story About Friendship"

Patrick Landers: "Modern Campaign Advertising"

Roxanne Makoff: "What Goes Around Comes Around: Recycling at Your School"

Ephraim McDowell: "Agents of Justice: Exploring the Functions and Powers of American Prosecutors"

Sarah Mehrotra: "Brown v. Board of Education: How Far Have We Come?"

Mariela Meza: "Video Games as Reflections of Culture"

Clare O'Grady: "The Importance of Giving Back: A Reflection on an Andean Adventure"

Perry Ryan: "Anorexia: Not Too Taboo To Talk About"

Austin Walker: "Kenyan Youth Perspectives"

Levitt Center Programs

The Levitt Center supported a number of additional programs that encourage students to explore the world of public affairs either through funding, advising, or by providing office space and transportation.

- Model EU Program
- Model UN Program
- Fed Challenge
- Young People's Project, a math tutoring program
- Friends Without Borders, an English for Speakers of Other Languages program aimed at teenagers and young adults
- Hamilton College Micro-finance Club
- SCUSA Conference (Yuning Liu)
- UNSPOKEN Human Rights Conference (funded two student internships)
- Southern Sociological Conference (Elly Field)
- Utica Refugee Photography Project (Evan Warnock)

Think Tank, 2011-2012

Think Tank is a student-directed organization sponsored by the Levitt Center that strives to increase dialogue between professors and students outside the classroom. On Fridays, students and other members of the Hamilton community gather for lunchtime discussions, which are facilitated by a faculty member. **Benjamin Hootnick '12 and Mikayla Irle '12** co-directed Think Tank for the 2011-2012 academic year.

- *The American Prisoner as Witness*, Doran Larson
- *The 1812 Garden: Celebrating the Hamilton Bicentennial with Seeds*, Frank Sciacca
- *The Commodification of Pregnancy and Childbirth as Class and Race Privileges*, Jenny Irons
- *What Neutrinos Can Tell Us About Science*, Gordon Jones
- *Transgender (In)Equality & Trans-phobia in the 'Gay Rights' Movement*, Amit Taneja
- *The 2012 Election: Where Are We Going, How Did We Get Here, and Where Might We Be Going?*, Phil Klinkner and Andrew Milstein
- *The Goodness of Evil: Shekhinah, Lilith and Kabbalah in La Celestina*, Anjela Mescall
- *Eating Disorders at Hamilton College: Their Prevalence and Impact*, Jan Fisher and Suzanne Adelman
- *KONY 2012*, Steve Orvis
- *Religion, Sex, and Film: The Case of the Chilean Film 'Young and Wild'*, Virginia Gutierrez-Berner and Stephen Rodriguez Plate
- *Open Curriculum, Limited Options*, Peter Rabinowitz
- *Truth and Lens Based Media: A discussion about the changing nature of photography and video in relationship to objectivity and the news media*, Robert Knight

The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center



Student Spotlight

Austin Walker '12 received a Levitt Summer Research Fellowship in the Summer of 2011 to do research in Kenya. He interviewed children to ascertain their perspectives of what they believed were the important issues that need to be addressed by development agencies. Building on this research, Walker was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to continue his research in Kenya for the 2012-2013 academic year. When he returns from Kenya he plans to pursue an advanced degree in international studies specializing in East African youth development. In reflecting on his Levitt Fellow Award, Walker wrote:

This funding allowed me to exercise a study that I am incredibly passionate about both professionally and personally. Not only did it allow me to explore the academic ideas I have wanted to study, but it allowed me the opportunity to realize that conducting this form of research and carrying out projects to support the findings is what I hope to do with the rest of my life. In this way I feel far more sure of what I want after graduation in relation to graduate school and work.

Congratulations, Austin, and good luck!

The mission of the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center is to strengthen and support the study of public affairs at Hamilton College. The goals of the Center are:

To encourage students to address public affairs in their classes and research

To create opportunities for students to become involved in public affairs

To encourage faculty, particularly in the social sciences, to address public affairs in their own research and in collaborative research with Hamilton students