

# The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center

Hamilton College



2014-2015

## Annual Report

The Levitt Center provides opportunities for Hamilton College students to develop the academic knowledge and practical skills needed to understand and address persistent social problems in innovative, effective, and ethical ways. Our programs foster this changemaking mindset by focusing on four fundamental qualities: (1) understanding, (2) self-awareness, (3) empathy, and (4) creativity.

**Understanding:** Our research grants, speaker series, and course development grants create opportunities for in-depth academic study that provides insights into the complexity of social problems, the constraints of action, and possibilities for change.

**Self-awareness:** Our programs on transformational leadership and social innovation focus students on becoming aware of the values that inspire them, the skills that enable them, and the challenges that confront them.

**Empathy:** Effective and ethical solutions to social issues require an ability to imagine others' experiences and to respond in meaningful ways. Our service-learning programs and public service internships help students understand the needs and circumstances of others; while our transformational leadership and social innovation programs develop the skills needed to work successfully and ethically with others.

**Creativity:** Our social innovation initiatives introduce students to the ideation and creative problem-solving processes, and nurture creative solutions to social problems with financial and mentoring support.

*Sharif Shrestha '17 makes a point during a visit with Arthur Levitt, Jr. and Lauri Levitt Friedland. Photo by Nancy Ford.*

# The Levitt Center

## Levitt Council Members and Staff, 2014-2015

- Frank Anechiarico: Director of the Security Program and the Maynard-Knox Professor of Government and Law
- Heather Buchman: Associate Professor of Music
- Katheryn Doran: Associate Professor of Philosophy
- Steve Ellingson: Director of the Sustainability Program and Associate Professor of Sociology
- Nathan Goodale: Assistant Professor of Anthropology
- Paul Hagstrom: Director of the Inequality & Equity Program and Professor of Economics
- Shoshana Keller: Professor of History
- Madeleine La Cotera: Coordinator of Community-Based Learning
- Herm Lehman: Director of the Public Health and Well-Being Program and Professor of Biology
- Sharon Topi: Coordinator of Leadership Programming
- Julio Videras: Director of the Levitt Center and Professor of Economics
- Chris Willemsen: Associate Director of the Levitt Center

***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 enable students to engage in public affairs through research, service-learning, lectures, discussion, and practice.***
- ***To foster creative, ethical, and informed responses to public issues by providing opportunities for students to engage with the local community, develop leadership skills, and explore careers in public service.***
- ***To support interdisciplinary collaboration and discussion; and to encourage faculty to address public affairs in their own research and in collaborative research with Hamilton students.***

# The Levitt Center

## A Visit with Arthur Levitt, Jr. and Lauri Levitt Friedland

Arthur Levitt Jr., and Lauri Levitt Friedland '81 visited campus on Friday, October 31, and met with fifteen Hamilton students. Both Mr. Levitt and Ms. Friedland engaged all the students in energetic conversation, with numerous questions and positive comments. Mr. Levitt also advised students to be open to many different career opportunities, especially those that will allow them to make a meaningful difference in the world.

Tsion Tesfaye '16, a Levitt Social Innovation Fellow, described her social innovation project, a leadership-training program for high school students in her home country of Ethiopia. Ryan Ong '16 spoke about his plan to develop, along with other Hamilton students, a fashion social enterprise that will be used to support programs for homeless LGBTQ youth. Jose Vazquez '15 described his experience as a Levitt Public Service Intern and his work with Susan Mason in helping design a leadership theory course.

Josh Glen '16, Megan O'Sullivan '15, and Brian Sobotko '16 all discussed their experiences with the Levitt Leadership Institute (LLI). O'Sullivan also explained her LLI commitment project, the first-year leadership program LEAP.

Sawyer Konys '16 and Sarah Izzo '15, both Levitt Research Fellows, shared their findings. Emma Wilkinson '16 discussed the Levitt Social Innovation Roundtables; Lisa Yang '17 focused on the work of the Hamilton Micro-Finance group; and Daphne Assimakopolous '17 discussed Project SHINE. Sharif Shrestha '17 highlighted his work with a Clinton Global Initiative team in Nepal this past summer. Eren Shultz '15 along with other members of the Social Innovation Team (Lisa Yang '17, Thomas Figueroa '15, and Zach Pilson '16) described the process of designing the new Levitt Social Innovation Lab and their plans for its use.



Arthur Levitt, Jr. speaks with Kevin Alexander '13 about his work with the Levitt Center. Photo by Nancy Ford.

# Social Innovation

## Social Innovation Fellows

The Social Innovation Fellows Program is a Levitt Center program designed to prepare and support students who aim to use innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to address persistent social problems. These innovations can be implemented in a variety of ways: through a for-profit business, a non-profit or student-run organization, an improvement to an existing institutional process, a new network of existing organizations, or some other method. Whatever the approach, these innovations aim to bring a creative, entrepreneurial, and disruptive approach to solving social problems.

The program includes a weeklong workshop with **Anke Wessels**, who teaches an award-winning course on social innovation at Cornell University. Students may apply for project funding after completing the workshop. Faculty members, Levitt staff, alumni, and others provide on-going mentoring and advice.

Over the past year Levitt Center provided funding to eleven students to research, explore, or implement their social innovation projects. Three additional awards were made for the summer of 2015.

Here are a few examples of what our students are doing:

**Aleksandra Bogoevska '17** is using her Social Innovation Fellowship to address the issue of elderly people living alone in her home country of Macedonia. To do this, Aleksandra aims to establish a program that will assign people to help seniors with their daily needs. With her pilot program, Aleksandra hopes to emphasize the importance of helping elderly in our society and the impact it has on their lives. She is working with Associate Professor of Sociology Steve Ellingson to better understand how to assess the impact of her enterprise.

**Sharif Shrestha '17** is taking aim at poverty in Mude, a rural village of Nepal, by collaborating with villagers and a local non-profit to develop a local herb farm. To increase shared ownership, the business will be a cooperative consisting of local workers and key stakeholders within the village. A portion of the revenue from selling herbs to partner firms will be used as income for the village and other operational costs, and the rest will be invested to improve quality education to villagers. He is working with Professor Derek Jones to better understand worker cooperatives.

**Tsion Tesfaye '16** has created a leadership and SAT prep program in her native country of Ethiopia. Last summer she instituted the pilot project in her own high school. This summer she has expanded the size and scope of the project to include more students and two additional high schools. In addition to the test preparation, the program introduces students to leadership training, social innovation, volunteering in the local community, and to activists and innovators in Ethiopia. She worked with Associate Professor of Economics Emily Conover to design an assessment instrument to measure the impact of the program.

### 2015 Social Innovation Fellows

Aleksandra Bogoevska '17, Alicia Rost '15, Austin Lokre '16, Chidera Onyeoziri '18, Christopher (Chris) Loan '15  
Elise Eagan '15, John McGonigle '17, Katie Jickling '15, Mary Langworthy '17  
Meghan O'Sullivan '15, Ronald (Andrew) Sprague '16, Samuel (Sam) Carletta '17, Sharif Shrestha '17



# Social Innovation

## Innovation Workshops

### Social Enterprise Design Lab

The Social Enterprise Design Lab provided an opportunity for students to present their own social enterprise project to a panel of experts and receive both group and one-on-one feedback on how to start, manage, and improve the project they presented. **Christian Girard**, an assistant professor at the Asian University for Women, led the Lab.

### Preventing Genocide and Other Moral Disasters

Religious Studies Professor **Heidi Ravven** led a workshop based on her new book, *The Self Beyond the Self*. Using a “public health” model of ethics, she introduced students to how circumstances profoundly influence our ethical behavior.

### StartUp Experience Workshop

This two-day intensive program introduces students to social entrepreneurship. Working in teams, students learned about problem identification, tech trends, design thinking, business model canvas, and the pitch process to gain the confidence to create a real viable startup. It was led by Danish serial entrepreneur **Henrik Scheel** who brings a wealth of experience from the startup ecosystem in San Francisco and has worked with entrepreneurs in 14+ countries around the world.

### Oral Communications Workshop

**Jim Helmer**, Coordinator of the Oral Communication Center, held a Communication Workshop for the campus community focused on social innovation and transformational leadership. The workshop covered topics such as empathic communication, improvisation, and reading your audience.

### Story Telling Workshop

**Rachel Centariczki**, a staff member with Ashoka, led a workshop on how to use storytelling to change the world.

### Innovator-In-Residence Program

The Levitt Center introduced the Innovator-in-Residence Program this spring. Two social innovators came to campus to help students develop ideas and projects that seek to address a long-standing social problem in innovative and creative ways. Both Innovators-in-Residence met with students and led a workshop:

**Teddy Clements** graduated in 2014 with a degree in Geosciences. He has a passion for entrepreneurship and social innovation, and won the 2013 Pitch Competition. During his time at Hamilton, he played soccer and worked at the Levitt Center on the Innovation Team. He currently lives in Boston where he works for a start-up. Teddy led a workshop on the process of putting an entrepreneurial idea into practice.

**Melinda Little** is an entrepreneur by background who led the successful effort to establish The Community Store in Saranac Lake, the first community owned department store in NY State. In 1996 she co-founded Independent Means, the leading provider of family-centered financial education programs and products in the United States ([www.independentmeans.com](http://www.independentmeans.com)) and in the late 1980's founded The Company of Women, a national mail order catalog company which was a for-profit subsidiary of a non-profit battered women's shelter. She led a workshop in which students developed a simple business plan complete with start-up costs, income statement, and balance sheet.

# Social Innovation

## Innovation Roundtable

The Innovation Roundtable program provides a forum for the community to discuss, research, develop, and implement innovative approaches that address a persistent social problem. A facilitator initiates discussion by introducing a social problem in the hopes that there will be an on-going collective effort to address the issue in a meaningful way. There have been three Roundtables: one focused on hunger in the local community, one on sexual assault education reform at Hamilton College, and the other on helping formerly incarcerated persons reintegrate into the community. The meetings have drawn between 14-24 participants with a mix of students, faculty, staff, and community members. Two roundtables met regularly last year.

### Hunger in Utica

**Paul Hagstrom**, Professor of Economics, led an Innovation Roundtable on hunger in Utica, NY. This ongoing roundtable group addresses what can be done to help Utica families on SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) who are struggling to feed their children. The average SNAP benefit is \$1.40/person/meal, and children and their families go hungry when SNAP assistance runs out at the end of the month. With the help of community members both in Utica and at Hamilton, this group studied the problem, designed and implemented a new program that harvests food from leftover dining hall meals, freezes it, and then delivers it to a local community partner for distribution at the end of each month when SNAP assistance is depleted. For more information on this project, see the back cover of the annual report.

### Sexual Assault Education at Hamilton College

**Meredith Harper Bonham**, the Senior Associate Dean of Students and Title IX Coordinator, led the roundtable focused on how to best educate Hamilton students about sexual assault policy. Hamilton College spent the summer of 2014 updating its sexual assault policy to become more effective in handling complaints. The college also increased its programs directed at first years surrounding sexual assault and its prevention. The participants discussed the issue of sustained education throughout students' college careers and how to reach out to upper class students.



Chidera Onyeoziri '18 listens as a student pitches his non-profit business idea during a Levitt Center Social Innovation Fellow workshop. Photo by Nancy Ford.

# Social Innovation

## Social Innovation Lab and Team

This January, the Levitt Center inaugurated the Levitt Social Innovation Lab. The Lab is a space in the Levitt Center where social innovators in the Hamilton community work together to tackle long standing social problems in creative and innovative ways. Clear glass doors and windows, comfortable and mobile furniture, white board walls, huddle rooms, Legos, plants, paint colors, and music all foster the creative process. Student “community animators” staff the Social Innovation Lab and provide guidance to student innovators.

The Levitt Social Innovation Team is a student-led team that designed the Innovation Lab and continues to staff and create programming for it. Members of the team: Aleksandra Bogoevska, '17; Andy Chen '16; Steve Ellingson, Associate Professor of Sociology; Thomas Figueroa '15; Meghan O'Sullivan '15; Zach Pilson '16; Tsion Tesfaye '16; Sharif Shrestha '17; Eren Shultz '15; Chris Willemsen, Associate Director, Levitt Center; Lisa Yang '17.

## Ashoka U and Changemaker Maps

Hamilton College became the 29<sup>th</sup> Ashoka U Changemaker Campus in the fall of 2014. The designation recognizes Hamilton College's commitment to social innovation education, as well as the quality of its programming. As part of this initiative, the Levitt Center designed a number of **Changemaker Maps**. These maps introduce students to relevant courses, programs, and opportunities on and off campus. Similar maps created by two other Changemaker Campuses, Middlebury College and Brigham Young University, inspired us. Our maps include academic departments and programs, co-curricular centers, our campus art museum, our Social Innovation Lab, and student organizations.

The Levitt Center offers the following Changemaker Maps:

### Academic Departments

Economics  
Education Studies  
English and Creative Writing  
Environmental Studies  
History  
Philosophy  
Religious Studies  
Sociology

### Co-Curricular Centers

COOP  
Days-Massolo Center  
Levitt Center  
Wellin Museum


### Student Organizations

Microfinance  
Social Innovation Lab  
Womyn's Center

**CHANGEMAKER MAP**

**HAMILTON MICROFINANCE**  
Microfinance organizations provide small loans to individual entrepreneurs and businesses that do not otherwise qualify for traditional loans. These microloans can help kick-start small businesses, strengthen local economies, and improve the economic well-being of individuals and their families.

Do you ever think about the intersection between finance and community service? Interested in providing local entrepreneurs with affordable loans? Use this map to learn how Hamilton Microfinance can help you become a **Changemaker**.

**A Changemaker Organization**  
Hamilton Microfinance is a student-run, micro-lending organization that seeks to increase economic growth and opportunity in the Greater Utica area by providing small business loans to individuals who might not qualify for a traditional bank loan. Through the use of loans rather than grants, Hamilton Microfinance helps local entrepreneurs establish their own credit histories and borrowing power.

For more information, please contact [micro@hamilton.edu](mailto:micro@hamilton.edu)

Hamilton College  
An Ashoka U Changemaker Campus

**ENGAGE**

**Hamilton Microfinance Initiatives**  
*Lend for America Summit*  
Making loans to local entrepreneurs  
Partnering with a local credit union, ACCESS Federal Credit Union and other local community organizations.  
*The Giant Pumpkin Challenge Fundraiser*  
Annual Date Auction Fundraiser

**CONNECT**

**Leadership Team**  
Lisa Yang '17: ([lyang@hamilton.edu](mailto:lyang@hamilton.edu))  
Arthur Williams '16: ([ahwillia@hamilton.edu](mailto:ahwillia@hamilton.edu))  
Sadiq Abubakar '15: ([sabubaka@hamilton.edu](mailto:sabubaka@hamilton.edu))  
Oliver Magnusson '17: ([omagnuss@hamilton.edu](mailto:omagnuss@hamilton.edu))  
Catharine Crandall '15: ([cpcrand@hamilton.edu](mailto:cpcrand@hamilton.edu))  
Brady Sprague '15: ([bsprague@hamilton.edu](mailto:bsprague@hamilton.edu))  
Alexa Cohen '15: ([atcohen@hamilton.edu](mailto:atcohen@hamilton.edu))  
Russ DeGrazia '15: ([rdegrazi@hamilton.edu](mailto:rdegrazi@hamilton.edu))  
Landon Morin '16: ([lmorin@hamilton.edu](mailto:lmorin@hamilton.edu))  
  
Chris Willemsen, Advisor: ([cwillems@hamilton.edu](mailto:cwillems@hamilton.edu))

**EXPLORE**

**Other Opportunities**  
*Lend for America Fellowship*  
([www.lendforamerica.org/fellowship/](http://www.lendforamerica.org/fellowship/))  
*Kiva Internship Program*  
([www.kiva.org/internvolunteers/internprogram](http://www.kiva.org/internvolunteers/internprogram))  
*Ashoka + Ashoka U* ([ashoka.org](http://ashoka.org))  
*Clinton Global Initiative University* ([cgui.org](http://cgui.org))  
*Levitt Center programming* ([www.hamilton.edu/levitt](http://www.hamilton.edu/levitt))  
*Think Impact* ([thinkimpact.com](http://thinkimpact.com))  
*Social Innovation Fellows*, Levitt Center

# Social Innovation



## Clinton Global Initiative University

Four Hamilton students who have created meaningful projects to address global problems through their work with the Levitt Public Affairs Center had the opportunity to share their ideas on a much larger stage when they were chosen to attend the Clinton Global Initiative University (CGI U) in Miami on March 6-8. Ryan Ong '16, Sharif Shrestha '17, Tsion Tesfaye '16 and Jose Vazquez '15 - all of whom are Levitt Social Innovation Fellows or Public Service Interns – were among 1000 college and university students selected to take part in the prestigious conference.

Building on the successful model of the Clinton Global Initiative, which brings together world leaders to take action on global challenges, President Clinton launched the Clinton Global Initiative University in 2007 to engage the next generation of leaders on college campuses around the world.

Nepal native Sharif Shrestha '17 presented his commitment to action project titled “Herbs Cooperative for Economic Empowerment” (HCEE) which aims to alleviate poverty and promote gender equality in the village of Mude in Nepal. Shrestha’s project was one of 23 selected for funding. He received a \$4000 grant at CGIU and as a Resolution Project Fellow will receive ongoing mentoring/guidance from two Resolution Project staff members. HCEE plans to capitalize on the abundance of rare medicinal herbs in the village by constructing an herb plantation site and selling the harvest from the site to partner firms as raw resource.

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# Social Innovation

## Clinton Global Initiative University

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The business model includes a workers cooperative that encourages investment by the villagers affiliated with the project to ensure shared ownership. Revenue generated from this project will be reinvested in the village through increase in income and re-allocation of the profit in development of key infrastructures, primarily education.

Tsion Tesfaye '16 was invited to represent her Commitment to Action project Youth for Ethiopia on stage at CGI U. Donna Shalala, president of the University of Miami and President Bill Clinton's Secretary of Health and Human Services, gave a lengthy and complimentary introduction to Tesfaye and her project at one of the workshops. Tesfaye was one of 26 students highlighted in person in this way, from among more than 1000 participants. Her project was awarded a certificate of recognition.

Youth for Ethiopia came to fruition this past summer as a four-week leadership and social innovation training program. Comprising 15 students from the Ethio Parents School in Addis Ababa, the project consists of three courses: leadership, social innovation, and SAT training, taught by Tesfaye and three of her former teachers. "Our goal is to nurture exemplary Ethiopian leaders," Tesfaye explained, "...to make the best of every single student that we have."

Ryan Ong '16 and Jose Vazquez '15 also were selected to attend CGI U in recognition of their Commitment to Action project, "Disclosure Group." Disclosure Group is committed to increase awareness for and provide support to LGBT homeless youth in New York City. It will activate and educate its supporters through its clothing apparel and social media platforms. To support LGBT homeless youth, the proceeds from Disclosure Group's apparel will go to the Ali Forney Center, the largest and most comprehensive homeless LGBTQ youth center in New York City.

Ong commented, "Attending CGI U has been such an incredible experience. I met so many inspirational peers, all passionate about tackling problems in the world. One thing I will take away from this conference," he said, "is that all of our issues that we are trying to address are linked together one way or another. Moreover, we must collectively work together to make progress."

Vazquez called CGI U "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet students from over 80 countries and 250 colleges and universities in one place . . . every student had a commitment to action and was passionate about their projects for social good." Vazquez said he was especially affected by something Bill Clinton said in his closing session: "Just because we cannot do everything, doesn't mean we can't do something." Vazquez remarked, "That quote has stuck with me and has reinvigorated my efforts in working on my commitment to action concerning LGBTQ homeless youth with Ryan Ong."

Julio Videras, professor of economics and director of the Levitt Center, remarked, "At the Levitt Center, we are proud of being part of the network of support that enables Hamilton students to understand pressing social issues and bridge the gap between theory and practice, and we are delighted how far and thoughtfully these students have progressed in their commitments toward positive social change."

Excerpts taken from article by Holly Foster published on the Hamilton College web page.



# Social Innovation

## Hamilton Microfinance

The Levitt Center provides logistical and advisory support for Hamilton Microfinance, a student-run group that makes microloans to business people in the community. After careful consideration, the group made two new loans to local entrepreneurs. Below is a Hamilton news story about the group written by the group's President, Lisa Yang '17.

While most students were studying for exams as the semester came to a close, members of Hamilton Microfinance (HMF) were finalizing their third loan. Building off the momentum from October's Great Pumpkin Challenge Fundraiser – which raised more than \$1000 toward providing small business loans to local entrepreneurs – Hamilton's micro-lenders identified several potential loan applicants, moving one step closer to achieving their strategic goal of issuing a loan by the end of the semester.

Students first met their newest successful loan applicant, Lourdes Alvarez, during an October information session hosted by Lisa Yang '17 and Arthur Williams '16, president and vice president of HMF. Over the course of a few weeks, leaders of HMF met individually with Mrs. Alvarez and her husband to create an entrepreneur profile and to work on a business plan for a thrift shop in Utica.

In December, Yang met with Tom Owens, president and CEO of ACCESS Federal Credit Union, and Mrs. Alvarez to initiate a loan application. Within a week, Mr. Owens came to Hamilton to evaluate the loan application with students.

For many HMF members, reviewing the applicant's financial statements and credit application is the most exciting and educational phase of the loan process. After Mr. Owens explained the loan underwriting process using the applicant as an example, members of HMF ultimately decided to give a loan to Mrs. Alvarez.

HMF would like to thank ACCESS Federal Credit Union and Mr. Owens for their support and facilitation of student efforts to increase economic growth and opportunity in the Greater Utica area. Through the use of loans rather than grants, HMF hopes to help entrepreneurs establish their own credit histories and borrowing power. To learn more, please contact [micro@hamilton.edu](mailto:micro@hamilton.edu).

Lisa Yang '17, President of the student-led Hamilton Microfinance group, discusses the organization's activities with Arthur Levitt, Jr and Lauri Levitt Friedland. Photo by Nancy Ford.



# Transformational Leadership

## Levitt Leadership Institute

The Levitt Leadership Institute provides students an 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.

LLI is a two-week program that takes place on Hamilton's campus during the first week and in Washington, D.C., the second week, during spring break. Participants learn about their own skills and attitudes as they listen and work with others in a succession of group challenges, practice active listening, and engage in difficult conversations. The hands-on, practical training ends with the large group challenge to design two days of activities in Washington, D.C., with leadership practitioners who will put week one's learning into context in areas of interest to participants. The Institute culminates with the chance to make a real and positive difference through a long term Commitment to Action Project that also transfers LLI skills and knowledge into real life situations.

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

Below you'll find excerpts from articles written by Holly Foster and Shea Patrick '16:

The LLI week in Washington centered around five different events planned, organized and executed by student groups formed at the end of the first week of LLI. Each group derived from interests in international affairs, congressional affairs, the non-profit sector, the Department of Justice, and alumni networking. The weeks between the first and second halves of LLI gave each group time to meet the "Washington Challenge": envision an interactive event around a topic of interest in the Washington, D.C., area, and make it happen.

(Continued on the next page.)

### Participants in the Levitt Leadership Institute, 2015

Abby Leitschuh '17, Alexandru Hirsu '17, Christopher Wallace '17, Corinne (Cori) Smith '17, Elijah Spang '17, Ella Dean '17, Emily Moschowits '16, Hady Hewidy '17, Isaac Kirschner '17, James Mesiti '17, KaraLin Pintye-Everett '17, Leonard Kilekwang '16, Leslie Campos '17, Logan Yu '17, Margaret Hylas '15, Matthew Bleich '18, Natalia Mahabir '17, Rebecca Mullaley '17, Sara Puriton '17, Sarah Hogoboom '17, Sharon Di '17, Shea Patrick '16, Tanapat (Ice) Treyanurak '17, Taylor Elicegui '17.

# Transformational Leadership

## Levitt Leadership Institute

(Continued from the previous page.)

A panel at the United States Agency for International Development on March 17 fostered dialogue between students and alumni in international affairs. Hosted by Christie Vilsack K'72, the group visited the Ronald Reagan Building in downtown Washington for an interactive panel, which featured Vilsack as well as Stephen O'Dowd '81, Brendan O'Donoghue '04, and Kim Bauer '08. During a question and answer session moderated by the students, each alumnus offered perspectives on leadership and the intertwining nature of their organizations in development, diplomacy, and defense.

The group then visited the office of Youth Service America (YSA) to hear CEO Steve Culbertson '79 speak about his experiences leading a non-profit organization. Echoing the advice of alumni from the USAID panel, Culbertson encouraged students not to ask for permission to take on a social problem, but instead to take active leadership initiative and begin the process of social change.

Students experienced the high energy of Capitol Hill in meetings with Stephanie Valle '05, chief of staff for Chris Gibson (R-NY) and Hunter Ridgway, chief of staff for Matt Cartwright '84 (D-PA). Each gave advice on how best to move forward despite the revolving-door nature of the Hill. The afternoon ended at the Department of Justice, where students toured the historic library and met with Phil Toomajian '01, a current trial attorney at the DOJ. The string of student-planned events concluded with a reception, which provided a networking opportunity for the LLI students, Hamilton students currently participating in the Washington Semester, and many alumni working in the DC area.

In debriefings of each event, Powers and Bushnell challenged each student to critically reflect on leadership displayed in the various Washington institutions. "This week opened my eyes to all the possibilities that Washington has to offer. I gained a deeper understanding of what it means to be a leader not just in government, but in all settings," said Sara Purinton '17.

### Quotes from LLI participants:

"One of the main takeaways from the LLI was how to work with new people. We learned about different personality types and how to turn conflict into collaborative problem solving. In the future, being able to adjust to any environment will be hugely beneficial in any job or working environment."

– Sarah Hogoboom '17

"Leadership at Hamilton is interesting. Sometimes we see leadership when we do not expect it. At other times we experience a dearth of leadership where it was sorely needed. The formation of the Levitt Leadership Institute is a good example of the former and we can all think of examples of the latter. I believe Hamilton is a great place for students to practice leadership in various forms. We can be leaders in the classroom, in our residence halls, among our friend circles. We can practice leadership in the day-to-day life as we interact with the college community and that is a key lesson for me: leadership *can* be practiced."

– Tanapat (Ice) Treyanurak '17

# Transformational Leadership

## The Commitment Projects

Students who participate in the Levitt Leadership Institute commit to undertaking a project that will make a measurable and positive difference to their community. This year's leaders are in the process of planning and implementing a diverse and ambitious set of projects.

**Sarah Hogoboom '17, James Mesiti '17, Ella Dean '17, Logan Yu '17, Alexandru Hirsu '17, and Christopher Wallace '17**, are members of the 2015 Levitt Leadership Institute who envisioned and implemented a project to bring students from the Newcomers Classroom at the Mohawk Valley Refugee Center (MCRCR) to Hamilton College. They created a two-part program that involved both classroom learning and socializing by playing sports up on the hill. The Refugee Center lies in close proximity to Hamilton and yet most students know very little about the population. The LLI students hope this program will bond the refugees and Hamilton students together while also encouraging the refugees to continue their education and improve their English skills. The first part of the program was a classroom component where students learned the English words that would be useful for communicating about sports and other activities. Later in the day the students went outside for a sports session. This activity aimed to help students decompress from the classroom and build friendship through the universality of sports like soccer, basketball and volleyball.

### LEAP: Leadership Experience and Preparation Program

2014 marked the second year of LEAP: Leadership Experience and Preparation Program. This program began as the brainchild of former LLI participants in the spring of 2013 to facilitate leadership training, deliver mentorship, and provide students with tools to make an impact on the campus community.

Excerpts from an article by Hallie Loft '15:

LEAP co-directors Gretha Suarez '15 and Taylor Elicegui '16 restructured the program for its second year. "The decision was made this year to ground [LEAP] firmly in with the Hamilton curriculum. This meant tying the program to a class, instead of having it as a residential program [as it was last year]" said Suarez.

Suarez is referring to The Pursuit of Happiness, a philosophy course taught by Professor Rick Werner. Without a residential requirement, a commitment to LEAP meant only a responsibility to actively participate in the weekly meetings—however, participation would not reflect in the student's classroom grade.

During the fall, participants and mentors attended 12 meetings where they discussed leadership through the perspective of The Pursuit of Happiness class. Topics included self-awareness, active listening, and conflict management, to name a few. The students will work on a capstone project that doubles as a public service initiative for the Hamilton community.



Class of '17 LEAP students Rui Osaka, Jenna Crawford, Ice Treyanurak, Caroline Kriedberg, Beth Prescott and Caleb Williamson.



# Transformational Leadership

## Leadership Workshops and Conferences

### Personal Leadership: Influencing Change in Institutions

This two-day highly interactive workshop focused on institutional change with the aim of enabling participants to enter into organizational life (at school or work) with an awareness that they themselves can bring change from any position they occupy. Not only did participants learn to build the skills necessary to become change agents, they also developed personal awareness and learned the importance of being grounded in values that need to be maintained and deployed in the midst of organizational change. Kirkland College alumna **Martha Freymann Miser** of Aduro Consulting, and **Ann Dinan** of Deeper Leadership Institute and Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative, led the workshop.

### Neal Pilson Workshop

Neal Pilson's connections to Hamilton run deep, not only as an alumnus, but also as a grandfather of students currently enrolled. Pilson served two terms as president of CBS Sports and is now president of his own consulting company called Pilson Communication Inc., which focuses on media, marketing, and sports television. PIC clients have included the Arena Football League, NASCAR, the Kentucky Derby, the Rose Bowl, the World Series of Poker as well as the IOC. Neal also teaches Leadership and Personnel Management with Val Ackerman in Columbia University's Master of Science in Sports Management Program. He led students in a discussion of the leadership issues he faced as president of CBS Sports.



Kara Lin Pintye-Everett '17, explains her group's project during a Levitt Leadership Institute exercise called "Marketplace of Ideas." Photo by Nancy Ford.



# Public Scholarship

## 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 publicly share the results of their research. This past year ten students were selected to be Levitt Summer Research Fellows.

**Sarah Izzo '15** spent her summer collaborating with the Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Law, Brain, and Behavior (CLBB). She worked with the CLBB on a research project investigating the field of fMRI lie-detection research. Izzo worked to analyze the possible ways this research and its findings may impact our judicial system, as well as our society. Furthermore, she investigated the ethical and legal issues that are brought forth by this research and its possible uses. Sarah went on to present some of her findings in collaboration with the CLBB at the Atlanta Neuroethics Consortium "Neuro-interventions and the Law Conference: Regulating Human Mental Capacity". **Richard Werner**, John Stewart Kennedy Professor of Philosophy, served as her advisor.

**Nicole LaBarge '15** spent her summer understanding the climate change opinions of New York State farmers, as well as how changes in weather patterns have already impacted their production. LaBarge visited several local farmers' markets to talk to farmers, and distributed an online survey developed with the help of the Oneida County Cornell Cooperative Extension to farmers across the state. Nearly 40 farmers participated in the survey, describing varying degrees of damage caused by floods, drought, late springs, disease, and several other setbacks linked to New York's climate becoming warmer and wetter during the last few decades. For her senior thesis in environmental studies, Nicole followed up on several farmers' concerns about the impacts of extreme flooding and heat events on their production by analyzing how trends in these extreme events have changed across New York State since 1981. Associate Professor of German and Russian Languages and Literatures, **Franklin Sciacca**, served as LaBarge's advisor.



Nicole LaBarge '15.  
Photo taken by Mike  
Verostek '16.

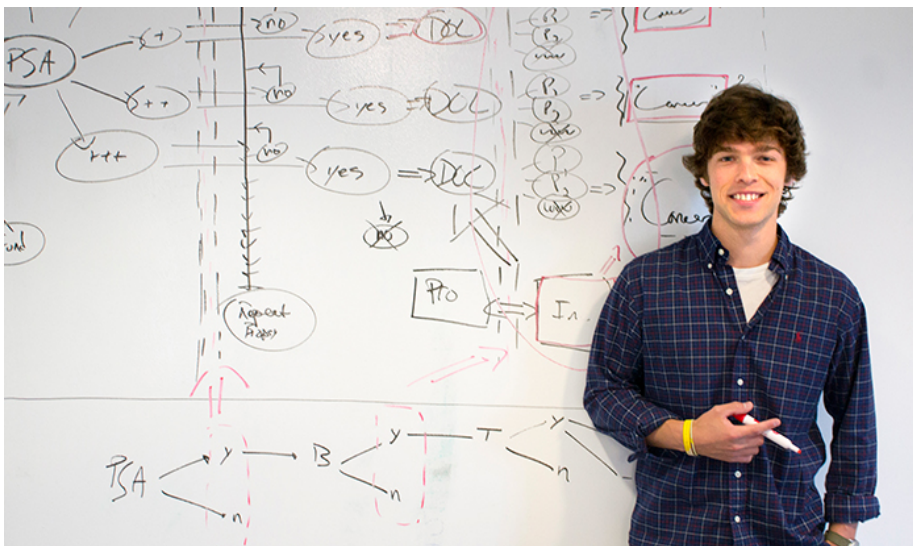
# Public Scholarship

## Levitt Summer Research Fellows

**Annie Lindahl '15** spent her summer examining the experiences of mothers in prison. Due to lack of access to the prison system, she conducted a series of interviews with social agents in the prison world to help understand the reasons why women, specifically mothers, might be incarcerated. Additionally, she examined what steps the prison system might take to alleviate negative outcomes for mothers and their families upon release. Through analysis of the qualitative interviews, Lindahl gained a broad perspective of the experience of mothers in prison and was able to propose both social and policy based solutions to improved the incarceration experience of mothers. **Stephen Ellingson**, Associate Professor of Sociology, served as her advisor.

**Keri Lloyd '15** spent her summer evaluating legal restrictions on Russian non-governmental organizations imposed under Vladimir Putin's leadership, particularly between 2006 and 2012. The restrictions included two laws, passed in 2006 and 2012, imposing demanding monitoring and funding regulations on both domestic and international NGOs. Lloyd studied a broader program of restrictions on civil society initiated by Putin in 2000, and identified both what role these laws had to play in that plan, as well as the manner in which they were enforced. Professor **Sharon Rivera**, Associate Professor of Government, served as Lloyd's advisor.

**Philip Parkes '17** studied Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) screening, a blood test used to help detect prostate cancer in middle-aged and elderly men, from two academic perspectives. He used the "PubMed" medical reference database to establish a current scientific understanding of the harms and benefits of PSA screening. He also used newspaper evidence from the LexusNexus database to contrast this consensus with the logic behind high initial demand for PSA testing upon its release in the early 1990's. One surprising result was that published results from clinical trials on PSA testing themselves, as opposed to recommendations from medical experts interpreting those results, appear to have directly fueled demand. Fear of prostate cancer was significant enough to occasionally prevent rational discourse between doctor and patient about the harms and benefits of PSA testing from occurring. Professor of Biology **Herm Lehman** advised Parks.



Philip Parkes '17.  
Photo taken by Mike  
Verostek '16.

# Public Scholarship

## Levitt Summer Research Fellows

**C. Adam Pfander '16** used his summer to study the differential impact of the Great Recession on immigrant and native labor markets. Using data from the American Community Survey and Current Population Survey, Pfander tracked the employment outcomes of immigrant sub-populations in major cities across the US; these outcomes include both employment and unemployment rates, as well as the aggregate earnings and hours-worked of the immigrant population within each city. Pfander also studied the role of immigrant employment networks in either buffering or exacerbating labor-market cyclicalities in and out of the Recession. Professor of Economics **Paul Hagstrom** served as his advisor.

**Rachel Sobel '15** spent her summer conducting an investigation of the medicalization of women's bodies throughout Western history, from the writings of Aristotle to 21<sup>st</sup> century gynecology textbooks. Rachel highlighted two forms of accepted medicalized narratives, social network theory and standard of proof. She concluded that "medical narratives can and have reinforced gendered, sexualized, racialized and classed scripts (for example the feminine as weak, passive objects of desire and the masculine as powerful, strong, active agents) read by the culture as objective descriptions of human biology. Associate Professor of Women's Studies **Vivyan Adair** served as Rachel's advisor.

**Brian Sobotko '16** spent the summer studying leadership strategies in American public schools. Specifically, he focused on strategies employed by leadership teams in low-performing, urban schools that turned around. These schools often do not have the same levels of funding or parental involvement as their suburban counterparts. Through interviews with principals and case-study analyses of successful turnarounds, he learned about the need for high expectations in all schools and the ways communities could work together to achieve their goals. **Susan Mason**, the director of the Education Studies program, served as his advisor.

**Ming Chun Tang '16** spent the summer investigating news media coverage of the Fifth Assessment Report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The first paper of the Fifth Assessment Report was released in September 2013. Tang analyzed how four major English-language news outlets conveyed the paper's findings to assess both the quantity and the accuracy of coverage. **Peter Cannavo**, Associate Professor of Government, served as his advisor.

**Wenlu Weng '16** returned to her mother's village in Henan, China, this summer to study how government policies influence malnutrition in rural China. Scattered small schools in the countryside were consolidated into boarding schools in an effort to reduce commute time and costs. Weng studied the meals provided in the boarding schools and interviewed students, parents, and faculty. She found that school meals were insufficient but that school meals were still better than the nutrition provided at home. Professor **Zhuoyi Wang**, Assistant Professor of East Asian Languages and Literatures, served as her advisor.

# Public Scholarship

## Levitt Summer Research Groups

Levitt Research Group Grants support groups of two to three Hamilton students completing summer research projects under the supervision of at least one faculty advisor. The research projects completed by each individual student in the group last for 8 to 10 weeks and help to answer an overarching research question. Students in research groups and their faculty advisors meet face-to-face regularly to coordinate and communicate research efforts. The grants are intended to encourage faculty publication as well as faculty-student publications. Projects that have output that will be useful for policy makers or other researchers are also encouraged. The Levitt Center funded two Research Group projects during the summer of 2014:

### **Sacred Spaces in Transition**

Jasmin Thomas '15, Sawyer Konys '16 and Shannon Boley '17

Professor Robert Knight and Professor Brent Rodriguez-Plate

This research project examined the construction, maintenance and power of sacred spaces in Utica, New York, particularly the religious spaces in the second ward of Utica. The students conducted archival research looking at religious spaces in Utica from 1850-present. They also assisted Professor Knight and Sawyer Konys with filming and photography; and helped to interview practitioners of various religions. Some of the spaces they explored were the Islamic Association of Utica, Temple Beth-El, Quan Am Temple and St. Matthew Church of God in Christ. Thomas examined the religious coherency of each religious space and looked at the interplay between the sacred spaces and the rituals performed within these spaces. She believes that the data she collected showed that human beings are inherently religious and that they search for something to worship in the endeavor to quell the insatiable desire to transcend that which they consider profane. This "pursuit of happiness" is rooted in a desire to experience something beyond oneself. Sawyer Konys created his own portfolio of photographs of religious spaces that was exhibited in the Levitt Center.



Sawyer Konys '16,  
Shannon Boley '17, and  
Jasmin Thomas '15.  
Photo taken by Mike  
Verostek '16.



# Public Scholarship

## Levitt Summer Group Research

### **Representing Arrival in Utica: Mass Media and Narratives of Experience**

Emily Banzer '15, Jeremy Cottle '17, Justin Long '16, Gabriel Rivas '16, Christopher Rogers '15 and Elizabeth Wilson '15

Professor John Bartle and Professor Chaise LaDousa

The group worked at two local institutions that have been closely involved with the arrival and settlement of refugees in our area: the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees, better known as the Refugee Center, and the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services of New York State, aka BOCES. For 8 hours a day, 4 days a week, they tutored students in ESOL classes, served as assistants to the teachers there, observed dozens of classes, and conducted about 25 interviews with refugees and immigrants from around the world. They also did readings on and engaged in discussions about teaching methodologies, interview techniques, transcription practices, and discourse analysis. They gathered roughly 30 articles from Utica's only daily newspaper, the *Observer Dispatch*, on refugee resettlement in 1997, a year which saw the Refugee Center grow dramatically. Each student wrote a 25-page paper on a topic of their own choice in consultation with their advisors. The students collaborated to create two posters, which they exhibited at a poster session in the fall, and a 45-minute presentation of the results of their work, which they delivered in December during a Faculty Brown Bag event.

In the picture below, the research group works with students in the Newcomer Program. Photo by Nancy Ford.





# Public Scholarship

## Course Development Grants

The Levitt Center provides course development grants to faculty wishing to incorporate the theory and practice of social change, using the lens of transformational leadership and social innovation, into a new or existing course. It is expected that faculty will teach a course in their field of study that helps students gain the academic knowledge and relevant skills needed to address persistent social problems in an effective, innovative, and meaningful way. The Levitt Center awarded four grants this year for courses being taught in the departments of chemistry, philosophy, creative writing, and East Asian literature and languages. That brings the total number of grants awarded for this program to fourteen over three years.

### Awards for 2014-2015

#### **Naomi Guttman, Professor of Creative Writing**

Professor Guttman writes that she intends to “introduce students to a range of writers who represent different approaches and styles. However, along with the usual goals of any creative writing course—which aim to provide students the opportunity to experiment with craft and to learn by reading, imitation, and discussion—I plan in this course also to educate students on issues of food justice and food activism. Specifically, I intend to get the students out of the classroom and to bring into the classroom farmers and community leaders in order to introduce them to key issues in food justice, such as nutrition, accessibility, sustainability, and cost. In addition, I intend for the students to participate in the initiative begun by Paul Hagstrom of saving unused food from Bon Appetit’s kitchens to be frozen and distributed in Utica.”

#### **Marianne Janack, Professor of Philosophy**

Professor Janack proposed a course called The Working Life which will address the following issues: “1) the place of family, work (and pay) in a meaningful life, 2) the ways in which our valorization of intellectual labor over manual labor is justified or unjustified, and 3) is it important to have a job that is meaningful in order to live a good life? Or should one aim to have a job that just pays the bills, allowing one more time outside work to spend with family, or on other pastimes? Though I have, for many years, encouraged my students to think of jobs not just in terms of earnings, but also in terms of social value, I now realize that some of the jobs that we think of as providing lots of social value are often jobs that creep in and take over many facets of our lives—squeezing out time for family, or for other pursuits that may bring other kinds of value.”

#### **Max Majireck, Assistant Professor of Chemistry**

Professor Majireck plans “to engage Chem 360 students in a discussion of the often neglected, but critically important interplay between the general public’s perception of science and the vitality of the scientific enterprise. One key area that I wish to engage with my students in more detail is in how basic research is funded primarily by the public, and the role social engagement by scientists play in this mechanism such as in building the public’s trust in science, or educating the public on the importance of fields like chemistry to human health.”

#### **Kyoko Omori, Associate Professor of East Asian Literature and Languages**

Professor Omori writes, “This course will focus on various modes of storytelling by people who experienced traumatic events. The narratives we read will include both literature and film; nonfiction and fiction, works by amateurs and professional writers/filmmakers, and even storytelling in person in class. Through this process, we will pay close attention to what gets remembered and who wants to (or has the urge to) talk, as well as in what order and style the story is told, rather than simply recounting events such as the Atomic Bomb on August 6, 1945 in Hiroshima or the attacks on the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001 in NYC. Rather, we will be spending more time in learning how those people (often with PTSD) attempt to piece together their fragmented memories of the event to overcome the psychological trauma. However, our goal is not only to seek to understand the pain of others. In such a process, we need to reflect on ourselves as members of the globalized society. To do so, observing the suffered and treating them simply as victims is not enough.”

# Public Scholarship

## 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, 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. Our four program areas, Inequality and Equity, Security, Sustainability, and Public Health and Well-Being; as well as our Transformational Leadership and Social Innovation initiatives, provide a focus for our yearlong lecture series, as well as for our Faculty Lunch series and Innovation Roundtable discussions. The Levitt Center also co-sponsored multiple talks in conjunction with academic departments and other co-curricular centers.

## 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. Paul Hagstrom, Professor of Economics, is the Director of the Inequality and Equity Program.

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

## 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. Steve Ellingson, Associate Professor of Sociology, is the Director of the Sustainability Program.

## Public Health and Well-Being Program

The Public Health and Well-Being Program is a broad-based interdisciplinary program that supports research on all dimensions of public health and well-being as well as programs that complement and enrich classroom learning. Herm Lehman, Professor of Biology, is the Director of the Public Health and Well-Being Program.

# Public Scholarship

## 2014-2015 Speakers

### **Kwame Anthony Appiah**

"Honor and Moral Change: At Home and Abroad"

Dr. Kwame Anthony Appiah, professor of law and philosophy at New York University and accomplished novelist, spoke to the Hamilton community about how honor codes can incite moral revolutions and social change. He used dueling in England and foot binding in China to illustrate his theory. In both cases, the practices contradicted logic, law and the church; however, these forces were unable to stop the harmful traditions. Positive change was only realized once the honor code surrounding these practices evolved. Appiah argued that honor is a powerful tool that can influence people for better or worse, and that we should understand honor as a means to positive moral change in the world. This description uses excerpts taken from a Hamilton news page article by Ben Isenberg '17.

### **Death Penalty Panel Discussion**

**Sarah Turberville**, senior counsel at The Constitution Project, and **Robert Blecker**, professor of law at New York Law School, participated in a panel discussing perspectives on capital punishment in the United States. Professor **Frank Anechiarico**, the Maynard-Know Professor of Government and Law, moderated the event. Turberville began the discussion, representing the view that the death sentence should be abolished. She stated, "the only way to ensure we aren't killing the innocent is to abolish the death penalty." She touched on the death penalty's history of bias in disproportionately affecting people of color and individuals from certain economic classes. Blecker contrasted Turberville's absolute stance on the death penalty, expressing his belief that only, "the worst of the worst" should be subject to capital punishment. The debate's conclusion elucidated the unclear future of the death penalty in the United States. Right now, it seems likely that the death penalty will remain, but a global abolitionist movement draws the prospect that capital punishment could be abolished in the US in the future. This description uses excerpts taken from a Hamilton news page article by TC Topp '16.

### **Siddhartha Mukherjee**

"The Past and Future of Cancer"

World-renowned oncologist, scientist and writer, Siddhartha Mukherjee, spoke to the Hamilton Community about the history of cancer, cancer research and recent strides in cancer research. Mukherjee discussed his recent book, *The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer* (2010), that was also released as a PBS Documentary in March of 2015. "This is a project of cultural history, a project of American history, just as much as baseball is or the Civil War," Mukherjee said in regards to the documentary. Mukherjee explained the varied nature of cancer. He remarked, "Cancer is not one disease, but many," and explained that even the same type of cancer could play out with drastic differences in two individuals. As the second leading cause of death in the United States, cancer kills more than 600,000 citizens a year. Mukherjee's race to treat and understand this killer enhances the American and global narrative of cancer. This description uses excerpts taken from a Hamilton news page article by Andrew Gibeley '16.

# Public Scholarship

## Sendhil Mullainathan

### "Scarcity: A Talk for People Too Busy to Attend Talks"

Sendhil Mullainathan, esteemed behavioral economist and co-author of *Scarcity: Why having Too Little Means So Much* visited Hamilton to discuss the convergence of psychology, economics and poverty in his most recent work. Mullainathan explained the relationship between humans and scarcity, introducing the concept of mental bandwidth. Mental bandwidth refers to an individual's ability to utilize cognitive functioning. Scarcity, through either lack of time or lack of money, reduces an individual's mental bandwidth. "Time poor" individuals are able to take a vacation to reduce this burden; however, "money poor" individuals cannot escape the psychological implications of scarcity. This description uses excerpts taken from a Hamilton news page article by TC Topp '16.

## Janet Halley

### "A Legal Realist Analysis of Rape Law: The Case of Rusk v. State"

Janet Halley, the Royall Professor of Law at Harvard, discussed a realist analysis of rape law. Author of *Don't: A Reader's Guide to the Military Anti-Gay Policy*, Halley's talk was centered on a famous rape law case called Rusk v. State, in which Edward Rusk allegedly raped a young woman named Pat. However, the details in this case are unclear and highly contested. What is significant about it, as Halley demonstrated, was that the main piece of evidence against Rusk was that Pat claims to have been threatened by "the look in his eyes." The lecture then focused on when it is appropriate to use such highly subjective evidence to establish guilt, and more broadly, how rape laws should be written to avoid both incarcerating innocents and letting the guilty go free. This description uses excerpts taken from a Hamilton news page article by Ryan Bloom '18.

## Barry Anechiarico & Ross Cheit

### "Politics, Psychology and the Sexual Abuse of Children: Dynamic Risk Factors Related to Sex Offending"

Hamilton's Levitt Center hosted two experts on March 4 for a lecture and discussion on the sexual abuse of minors. Ross Cheit, a professor of political science at Brown University and author of the new book *The Witch-Hunt Narrative: Politics, Psychology, and the Sexual Abuse of Children*, and Barry Anechiarico, the co-executive director of the Counseling and Psychotherapy Center in Newton, Mass., discussed themes including the stigmatization of the survivors of sexual assault, the effects of punishment versus treatment of convicted sex offenders, and the psychological motivations behind sexual predators. This description uses excerpts taken from a Hamilton news page article by Tom Georges '17.

## The Levitt Center is fortunate to have a large staff of dedicated and talented student workers

Office workers: Daphne Assimakopoulous, Emma Wilkinson, Margaret Hylas, Nora Demere, Sean Smith, Wenlu Weng, Yeun Jae (Amy) Song, Newton (Hunter) Green

Drivers: Anne Govern, Andrew Haser, Anna Do, Eric Walborn, Heather Tomkowicz, Jeremy Acosta, Calvin Nash, Karly Moore, Kiana Sosa, Osaruese Odeh, Steph Muller, Taylor Healy, Zach Pilson

Social Innovation Team: Andy Chen, Thomas Figueroa, Lisa Yang, Eren Shultz, Zach Pilson, Meghan O'Sullivan, Sharif Shrestha, and Tsion Tesfaye

# Engaged Citizenship

## Levitt Public Service Interns

**Levitt Public Service Internship Awards** provide funding for students who have secured an unpaid summer internship that focuses on some aspect of public service. Thanks to this program, 14 students were able to explore careers in public service by working with a government agency, a non-profit, or a non-governmental organization.

**Nicholas Anastasi '15** worked with the BreakThrough, a collaborative based in Cambridge, MA, that launches high-potential, low-income middle school students on the path to college, and inspires high school and college students to pursue careers in education. Nicholas served as a writing teacher with BreakThrough, teaching college preparatory skills to low-income high school students in Cambridge.

**Charlotte Carstens '16** interned for the City of Philadelphia, participating in the local government's annual "Mayor's Internship Program." Through the program, she was placed within the Managing Director's Office in the Department of Philly 311, the city's centralized non-emergency Contact Center. Carstens, as the Community Engagement Intern, spent a large portion of her time in the field, giving the Philadelphian citizens presentations and trainings to educate them about the department. Carstens found her community engagement work extremely rewarding in that she "had the chance to represent and put a face on local government for the citizens of Philadelphia."

**Malindi Chesnut-Tangerman '15** worked with SolarFest, a renewable energy music festival and sustainability conference in Tinmouth, VT. Malindi worked as an administrative intern. This involved working with the marketing team, running the street team and creating the 20 year anniversary retrospective. Malindi also worked as one of the heads of volunteer coordination for the over 250 volunteers that work throughout the weekend of SolarFest. Having grown up with SolarFest, Malindi really valued the opportunity to be a part of the inner workings of SolarFest and help put on a quality festival.

**Rebecca Gaines '15** worked as a research and communications intern for the National Center for Health Research in Washington, D.C. The NCHR provides objective, evidence-based health information for public consumption, to combat misleading health advice offered by the media. Gaines conducted research, wrote and updated articles on the website, edited Wikipedia pages, managed social media, attended Senate hearings, and organized events for patient advocates. She got to see how a not-for-profit worked so closely with government officials and the FDA to strike a balance between safe and effective drug and device testing and production.

**Hunter Green '16** interned with the American Bar Association Death Penalty Representation Project in Washington, D.C. At the ABA, he responded to prisoner requests for assistance, researched the status of death row prisoners, wrote various articles for a biannual newsletter, and managed all of the Project's social media. Green says "I couldn't have asked for a more perfect internship. The Project does incredible work and I was truly honored to spend the summer with them."



# Engaged Citizenship

## Levitt Public Service Interns

**Suzanne Jacobson '15** interned at the Children's Law Center of Connecticut this past summer. Located in Hartford, Connecticut, the nonprofit organization provides guardian ad litem services to those families who would not typically be able to afford such legal assistance. Committed to providing legal advocacy to children, the organization also offers a free legal help-line, mediation services, and advocates for legal change on behalf of the countless children they represent. Jacobson learned more about the legal profession and the nonprofit sector while engaging in rewarding work.

**Tyler Lovejoy '16** interned at the Trade Institute of Pittsburgh, a non-profit that trains formerly incarcerated individuals in the construction trades. Tyler spent much of his time creating a database to help the organization with outcome reporting and grant writing. "[I] appreciated the support of the Levitt Center and the opportunity to contribute to a great organization, while gaining an understanding for non-profits and specifically their role in Pittsburgh."

**Sarah Mandel '15** interned with Food & Water Watch, an international non-profit in Philadelphia, PA that "works to ensure the food, water, and fish we consume is safe, accessible, and sustainably produced." In her role as Grassroots Organizing & Advocacy Intern, Sarah worked on a campaign to stop the misuse of antibiotics on factory farms and garner support in West Chester and Chester County, PA to pass local resolutions in support of stricter regulations of antibiotics on a federal level. She notes "It was extremely valuable for me to receive funding for my work this summer because it allowed me to work on a grassroots campaign-raising awareness and inspiring action for members in the local community. I have had an amazing and fulfilling summer, and I could not have done it without the generosity of Mr. Levitt!"

**Erika Marte '15** spent her summer interning with the New York City Urban Debate League. With NYCUD, she created a strong and concrete curriculum for debate beginners, researching debate camp methods and going out into schools to examine how the curriculum is most affective. In addition, Erika further developed the first "Girls Debate League" under the NYCUDL, serving as coach and judge. She met with the board, facilitated events in order to make the program successful, and both recruited and coordinated all-girl's debate tournaments. Erika also assisted NYCUD with grant writing and meetings with corporate sponsors.

**Ishaq Pathan '16** interned at the Al-Khayr Foundation, an organization that began focusing on education scholarships for children in Northern India but has since expanded to other programs both domestically and internationally. While furthering work on existing projects, he managed to establish and develop his own project, which consisted of an environmental initiative campaign. In doing so, "I learned about the level of nuance involved in crafting sustainable solutions as well as the challenges associated with their implementation."

# Engaged Citizenship

## Levitt Public Service Interns

**Shea Patrick '16** interned at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., She worked with both Foreign and Civil Service officers in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, where she gained hands-on experience with public diplomacy, including citizen exchanges. One of her favorite initiatives was "Empowering Women and Girls Through Sports," a campaign launched by Hillary Clinton when she was Secretary of State. Patrick's experience at the State Department reinforced her belief in cross-cultural exchange as a necessary means for dialogue and the strengthening US-bilateral relations.

**Emily Rivera '16** spent her summer interning in Washington, D.C., at IOS Partners, Inc., a consulting firm for international development, with offices all over the world. As an assistant project coordinator, Rivera conducted research for development projects under donor agencies such as the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, and USAID. Her other tasks included drafting Expressions of Interest and recruiting and communicating with experts— both international and local consultants and firms—in relevant fields of work for EOIs and proposals. Rivera commented, "Interning at IOS was an unforgettable experience. The best part of my internship was that I was given the opportunity to take ownership of important projects, as well as having been given several opportunities to attend exclusive lectures and events dealing with global affairs."

**Simone Sevilla '15** worked at Damayan Migrant Workers Association. Her responsibilities ranged from improving organization workflow of the office, attending workshops and Damayan's annual leadership retreat (for which she also provided logistical support), organizing an outreach event for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), and participating in the National March on the White House: End the Massacre in Gaza, organized by ANSWER coalition. Simone described her experience as very valuable, as it allowed her to "work at a non-profit organization that was both rewarding in work experience, and allowed me to make a difference in people's lives."

**Kiana Sosa '15** spent her summer as a WorldTeach volunteer English teacher in Costa Rica. WorldTeach sends dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers abroad to schools in developing countries that would otherwise not receive English Language instruction. Not only did Sosa gain valuable experience in the classroom, she also made lasting relationships with her students and host family. Sosa says this experience confirmed her desires to become a teacher.

### A special thanks to the guest mentors who share their knowledge and expertise:

- Ambassador Prudence Bushnell (Rtd), designer and facilitator of the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Chris Powers, facilitator of the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Isabelle Van Hook '11, facilitator for the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Kevin Alexander '13, facilitator for the Levitt Leadership Institute
- Anke Wessels, facilitator of the Social Innovation Fellows Workshop
- Henrik Scheel, founder and facilitator of the StartUp Experience Workshop
- Martha Freymann Miser K'75, designer and facilitator of the Institutional Change Workshop
- Ann Dinan, facilitator of the Institutional Change Workshop

# Engaged Citizenship

## Project SHINE

**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 92 students participated in Fall 2014 and 52 in the Spring 2015 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.

## VITA

VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) is a service-learning program that offers free tax help to low- and moderate-income families. 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 Mohawk Valley Asset Building Coalition (MVABC), the United Way of the Mohawk Valley, and the IRS initiated the program 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, twenty-six students worked at the Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL) and the Mohawk Valley Perinatal Network in Utica to complete their hours.

## Social Sector Fellowship

Levitt Center will provide supplementary income for a graduating senior who is pursuing work in the public sector, including local government (city or county) or a local non-profit. The recipient must have secured a job in the Central New York region and plan to work with the organization for a minimum of one year. Two graduating seniors received the Levitt Center Social Sector Post-Graduate Fellowship:

**Joshua Mescall '15** received a post-graduate fellowship to work at Central New York Services, Inc. in Utica as a Supportive Living Case Manager. His main function is working with the substance abuse/homeless population.

**Sean Henry-Smith '15** received a post-graduate fellowship to work at Light Work in Syracuse as an intern. His duties will include exhibition installation, curating, writing for press materials and wall text, social media, digital printing production, lab assistance, and artist-in-residence assistance.

# The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center

Hamilton College



2014-2015

## Project Spotlight

### The Harvest

The Harvest is a new Hamilton College program that “harvests” Hamilton’s unused food, freezes it, and redistributes the food to low-income families in the Utica community. This project arose out of a Levitt Center Innovation Roundtable that has been meeting since the Spring of 2014, led by Professor of Economics Paul Hagstrom and Samuel Carletta ‘17.

After countless meetings with Bon Appetit staff, the Physical Plant, the Levitt Center, the Community Outreach and Opportunity Project, and the Johnson Park Center, the program has begun to take shape. They have received food science tips and help with containers from the Bon Appetit staff, electrical specifications and freezer guidance from the Physical Plant, and the support from the Johnson Park Center, to make this idea a reality.

The first drop was Friday, April 24, at the Johnson Park Center (JPC) in Utica. The JPC relies on volunteers to package leftovers at the Hamilton dining halls each night of the week, and welcome all to help out with this project that will greatly impact many families and lower Hamilton's food waste. Next the project will run with the assistance of Bon Appetit, the Community Service Internship program, Physical Plant employees, and student, staff, and faculty volunteers.

*In the Picture above, Samuel Carletta ‘17 pitches his idea for The Harvest to his fellow Social Innovation Fellows.*

*Photo by Nancy Ford.*



# Hamilton