

# The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center

Hamilton College



2009-2010

## Annual Report

### From the Director

A great deal was accomplished in the Levitt Center this year, with highlights including a major restructuring of programming and administrative staff, significant research efforts by Hamilton faculty and students, and a visit by Arthur Levitt, Jr. who spoke about the timely issue of financial regulation.

By creating three broad interdisciplinary programs, the restructuring will provide a strong framework for supporting interdisciplinary collaborations to address important public policy issues relating to inequality and equity, security, and sustainability. Furthermore, by organizing programming around these themes, the Levitt Center will be better able to communicate the originality and quality of its programs in a liberal arts college setting.

One aspect of Levitt Center programs that is unique is the extent and quality of faculty involvement with their own research that enhances the quality of the student research conducted with the support of the Levitt Center. One example of this type of synergy is the survey research described inside this report. These projects created opportunities for students to use original data in their own research and to participate in the design and collection of their own survey that yielded important conclusions for policy makers and national media attention.

In total, Levitt Center programs affected the academic endeavors of hundreds of Hamilton students. Inside this report are more details on the wide variety of initiatives supported by the Levitt Center and the ways in which they touched these students' lives.

Ann Owen  
Director, Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center

# The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center Reorganizes

The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center has reorganized into three thematically based programs: Inequality and Equity, Security, and Sustainability. The goal in creating these groupings is to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and discussion among those with similar interests, but potentially different perspectives. The programs will support empirical, ethical and theoretical research as well as projects that complement and enrich classroom learning. All are designed to encourage and support faculty research, curricular development and student initiatives in these areas. The engagement of individuals with diverse disciplinary backgrounds and views will be central to the success of these endeavors.

**The Program on Inequality and Equity** will investigate 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 Program on Security** will center on both domestic and international security. Security issues encompass the safety and protection of persons and property, food supply, market exchange, public health among other public and private concerns across nations, and cultural values and institutions. This program will address issues including national security, banking and security regulation, cultural preservation, cyber security and local law enforcement.

**The Program on Sustainability** will promote academic research on sustainable practices and the necessary policies to achieve them, with an emphasis on hands-on learning experiences for students. The program will support the study of how society can meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. These issues include environmental conservation as well as poverty reduction and health.

## The Levitt Council Spring 2010

**Ann Owen**, Director of the Levitt Center and Professor of Economics

**Frank Anechiarico**, the Maynard-Knox Professor of Government and Law

**Alan Cafruny**, Henry Platt Bristol Professor of International Affairs

**Stephen Ellingson**, Associate Professor of Sociology

**Betsy Jensen**, Professor of Economics

**Chaise LaDousa**, Associate Professor of Anthropology

**Robert Pacquette**, Publius Virgilius Rogers Professor of American History

**Robert Simon**, Professor of Philosophy

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# The New Levitt Center Team



**Ann Owen, Director of the Levitt Center.** Formerly a Federal Reserve economist, she earned a Ph.D. from Brown University and an M.B.A. from Babson College. She has diverse research interests and has published papers on long-run growth and income distribution as well as teaching economics to undergraduates. Examples of her current research projects include an examination of how the process of economic growth varies across countries and a study of the effect of individuals' knowledge about the environment on their pro-environment behaviors.



**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 in 1996. His latest project is a book on the relationship between ethics and the quality of performance in public management.



**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).



**Julio Videras, Director of the Sustainability Program,** 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.



**Chris Willemsen, Assistant Director of the Levitt Center,** has a master's degree in the study of religion and completed all but her dissertation in political theory 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.

# Survey Research

The Levitt Center supported two major survey research initiatives this year, the 2009 Hamilton College Environmental Survey and the 2010 Youth Poll on attitudes towards the U.S. economy. The Youth Poll gave students the unique opportunity to design and implement their own nationally-representative survey research project, showing them an on-the-ground look into the nature of conducting public affairs research. Although the environmental survey was a faculty-led initiative, students benefited directly from it by using the original data in their own research and class work. They also benefit indirectly by capitalizing on the expertise of the faculty involved in conducting their own youth poll

## Youth Poll

A panel of students taking Labor Economics with Associate Professor of Economics Stephen Wu presented the results of the most recent Levitt Center Youth Poll via webcast on Thursday, April 29. The survey of high school students' attitudes toward the U.S. economy and the performance of President Obama revealed significant differences in attitudes on both issues between African-American and white teens. Two-thirds of African-American teenagers believe they'll be more prosperous than their parents. In contrast, a little more than a third of white students believe their standard of living will be better than their parents. The Associated Press also released an article summarizing some of the results on April 29 on its national wire, and the story was picked up by a number of national media outlets.

When the survey results were broken down by race, African-American teens were much more optimistic than white teens: 69 percent of African-Americans said they believe they'll have a higher standard of living than their parents, while only 36 percent of whites feel the same way. Overall, 39 percent of respondents believe they'll be more prosperous than their parents. Asked about President Obama's performance, 26 percent of teens overall believe he's doing a "very good" or "good" job; but only 21 percent of white teens rated Obama's performance as "very good" or "good," compared with 71 percent of African-American respondents. When polled as to whether Obama is doing a better job than expected, 45 percent of African-Americans said "yes," compared with just 6 percent of whites.



*Members of the Hamilton class that worked on the Youth Poll.*

# Survey Research

## Youth Poll, continued

A half-hour webcast that included further survey details was presented on Thursday, April 29, at 9:30 a.m. at <http://www.hamilton.edu/pollcast/> by Professor Wu and four of his students. The complete poll report can be found at [www.hamilton.edu/economicpoll](http://www.hamilton.edu/economicpoll).

Wu and his students devised the poll questions, which were distributed via the Knowledge Networks Panel, an online, non-volunteer access panel whose members are chosen through a statistically valid sampling frame covering 99 percent of the U.S. population. This poll was conducted March 5 – 13, 2010. This survey is one of a series of youth polls funded by the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center. Previous polls have addressed youth attitudes on the environment, abortion, patriotism, immigration, politics and the U.S. Senate, Muslim Americans, gay issues, gun regulation and race issues.

## 2009 Environmental Survey

An interdisciplinary group of five faculty members designed and implemented a nationally-representative survey of U.S. households that elicited responses about individuals' pro-environment attitudes, behaviors, and opinions about public policy responses aimed at improving the environment. The survey was implemented as part of the American National Election Studies panel, a joint project with the University of Michigan and Stanford University. In August 2009, the Hamilton College survey was implemented as part of this larger data collection initiative on the American electorate. In total, the survey collected responses to almost 200 questions from approximately 2,500 respondents.

Several students used this data in their own research projects. For example, Carolyn Meyer '10 examined the influence of political identity and media access on support for climate change policy; Amanda Jordan '10 studied the influence of the local community on pro-environment attitudes and behaviors; and Michael London '10 looked to find a relationship between social interactions and support for environmental regulation. Laura Tornatore '10 took her research with this data in a different direction, seeking to understand the economic consequences of family ties.

The faculty involved in this project are using the data to study a wide variety of issues, including the effect of weather conditions on support for environmental regulation, the effect of the nature and type of social networks on pro-environment behaviors, and the extent to which religion and religious organizations influence attitudes and behaviors towards the environment.

### Survey Findings

Of the those who responded to the survey:

9% worked in the local community to solve an environmental problem

38% have suggested to others to change their behavior for the good of the environment

16% have invested in a socially responsible mutual fund

3% have purchased a carbon offset

22% discuss ways to slow down global warming with family members at least once a month

29% want other people to think that they do things to help the environment

33% either agree or strongly agree that their religion encourages them to be a steward of the environment



# Levitt Summer Research Fellows



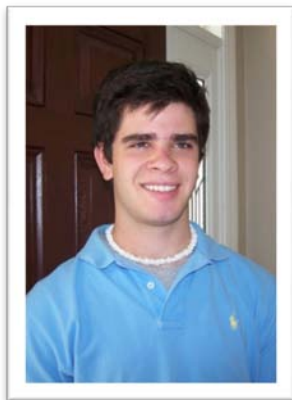
## **Daniel Bunger '11: "Bank Ownership Structures and Performance: An Analysis of Cooperative and Mutual Savings Banks"**

Co-operative banks and commercial banks have different structures and operate differently, and one type of bank may be more beneficial to society than the other. For example, the IMF concluded that financial co-operatives, as opposed to commercial banks, are a stabilizing force in a country's financial system. This past summer, Daniel Bunger '11 conducted research on co-operative banks to more qualitatively understand their efficiency and the benefits they provide to an economy. He was also interested in understanding how and why banks of different organizational forms behave differently during economically tough times. Bunger worked with the Irma M. and Robert D. Morris Professor of Economics Derek Jones to outline risk profiles of different banks, their financial and capital structures, and their efficiency.



## **Jiong Chen '10: "An analysis of digital piracy in China --the cause, reason and solution"**

Piracy, including software, gaming, and movie and music, is the number one issue for any digital company operating in China. The overall piracy rate is as high as 90%, resulting in a \$2.9 billion loss in 2007. Piracy normally takes the form of copying optical discs or internet file sharing. Working with Professor Elizabeth Jensen, Jiong Chen '10 studied the origin and the development of both the digital industry and of piracy within this industry. He examined reasons for the government's current ineffective intervention, and concluded that it is more efficient for companies to change their business model to combat piracy than to rely on the legal system.



## **J. Max Currier '10: "Obama's War: Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan"**

With help from former Ambassador Edward S. Walker '62, Max Currier '10 set out to find a way to increase the effectiveness of political restructuring in Afghanistan. This past summer he examined the role and efficacy of Provincial Restructuring Teams (PRTs) in the Middle East. PRTs in Afghanistan are designed to extend the Afghan Central Government from Kabul (the capital) to Afghanistan's 32 provinces. In order to learn more about PRTs and their triumphs versus their shortcomings, Currier sent letters to current and former diplomats, military officers, journalists, scholars at international policy institutions, and experts at non-governmental organizations. He asked that they speak with him either in person or by e-mail about Afghanistan, counterinsurgency, and their thoughts about Provincial Reconstruction Teams. His summer research culminated in a prize-winning paper which was published in the latest issue of The Levitt Center's *Insights Journal for Undergraduate Research* ([www.hamilton.edu/levitt/insights](http://www.hamilton.edu/levitt/insights)).

# Levitt Summer Research Fellows



## **John (Jack) Dunn '10: "Rugby: Sport or Means of Political Reconciliation"**

This past summer, Jack Dunn '10 studied the political and social symbolism of rugby in post-apartheid South Africa. He believes that rugby has served as a means of political reconciliation in recent years through conflict resolution and racial integration. Dunn wanted to investigate the legitimacy of the African National Congress's claim that rugby is an emblem for national unity. He discovered that in the seventeen years since the fall of the apartheid state, the meaning and composition of South African rugby has changed dramatically. The history of black rugby is now recognized next to the white rugby tradition, with the national team presented as a symbol of a new, integrated South Africa. However, if rugby is to truly represent the new South Africa, the next phase of this transformation must be in management and supporters, as well as symbolic significance. Dunn's advisor was Associate Professor of History Kevin Grant.



## **Robert Eisenhart III '11: "Examining Human Rights Abuses in the War on Drugs: U.S. Foreign Policy and Plan Colombia"**

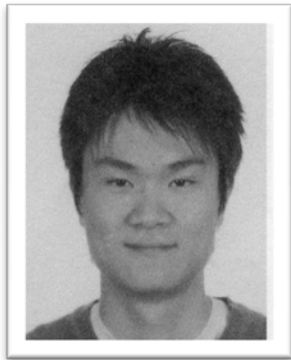
On June 17, 1971, President Nixon officially declared that America was entering a war on drugs. Since then the United States government has waged a long and unsuccessful battle against narcotics throughout the world. Through the lens of the US's relationship with two of the world's largest *narco states*, Colombia and Mexico, Robert Eisenhart '11 examined how the US has waged this war, and how the new administration under President Obama might alter its approach for greater success. Eisenhart concluded that the best policy, and least controversial, would be one that reduces America's demand for drugs. If the US were to attack drug producers and DTOs by eliminating their consumer, then the US would significantly reduce the power of these actors while preventing violence and human rights abuses from continuing to occur. Henry Platt Bristol Professor of International Affairs Alan Cafruny served as his faculty advisor.



## **Alex Gross '11: "Benjamin Alden Nourse: Farmer, Businessman, and Community Activist"**

At three years old, Alex Gross '11 chased cows and picked blackberries just like his great-great-grandfather Benjamin Alden did in the mid 19th-century. Alden, the manager of the farm at the time, kept his family's diaries and letters stored in an old horse-hair chest. Gross's family eventually inherited the chest from Old Nourse Farm, but it wasn't until last summer that Gross decided to read the chest's contents. This past summer, Gross worked with Professor of History Douglas Ambrose in analyzing the documents in the chest. The letters and journals, which date from roughly 1860 to 1877, record daily business agreements, community affairs, and personal thoughts. Through examination of these primary resources as well as supplementary secondary sources, Gross hoped to gain a better understanding of ordinary people in extraordinary times.

# Levitt Summer Research Fellows



## **Jae Yong Kim '10: "Ameliorating the North Korean Human Rights Crisis: the Roles of the South Korean Government and NGOs"**

Jae Yong Kim '10 spent his summer investigating the great North Korean famines of the 1990s, and the role South Korean government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) played in an attempt to alleviate starvation. He discovered that NGOs and South Korean government agencies often obtain limited information about the present condition of North Korea by defectors and international organization agencies working in North Korea. The North Korean government is the creator and the major driving force behind the North Korean human rights crisis and is also the biggest obstacle in resolving the dilemma. Although North Korea was the beneficiary of one of the largest emergency food aid programs in UN history, the North Korean government failed to alleviate food shortages, and numerous North Korean people still suffer from dreadful hunger. Professor DingDing Chen served as Kim's advisor.



## **Erica Kowsz '11: "Cultural Landscapes of the Irish Coast: Collaborating to Create Heritage"**

Erica Kowsz '11, along with several of her peers and her faculty collaborator Assistant Professor of Anthropology Nathan Goodale, lived on the abandoned Irish western island Inis Airc for six days as part of the Cultural Landscapes of the Irish Coast (CLIC) Heritage Project. Kowsz studied what it means to conserve culture and how that might be possible. She tried to answer questions about how groups of people perceive their mutual past. For example, who decides what is important? Some nations and ethnicities repudiate past eras in an effort to progress or establish certain behaviors and ideals as immoral. What are other ways in which groups perceive their past and how do they apply it to their modern lives? These questions should help determine why some people believe in extensive cultural conservation and why others do not. Kowsz's work culminated in a short documentary video "Silent Stones of Inishark: Memories, Archaeology, & Landscape," which she and Professor Goodale presented at the SAA 7.5 Film Fest as part of the Society for American Archaeology Meeting.



## **Samantha Rabin '11: "Open Season on Tourists? Identity and Community on Martha's Vineyard"**

Growing up on Martha's Vineyard, Samantha Rabin '11 never thought her home was that different from any other home. But now that Rabin is older, she realizes that because she is surrounded by crowded hotels and sun-scorched bathers, her seemingly commonplace life is actually dominated by an unusual economy. Rabin worked with Associate Professor of Sociology Jennifer Irons to assess how a person's financial position shapes his or her relationship to the community. To complete her project, Rabin read relevant sociological literature and theories on community and identity. She also consulted the U.S. census, the Martha's Vineyard Chamber of Commerce, and the Island Plan to map the local economic structure. She also interviewed full-time residents of the island.



# Levitt Summer Research Fellows



## **Injun Lyo '10: "A Comparative Study of the Childrearing Practices of White American Parents and Korean Parents"**

Injun Lyo '10 worked with Professor Dennis Gilbert this past summer to answer the following research question: "What child rearing practices enable the majority of Korean children to pursue professional lives although they do not fit the childrearing pattern of *Concerted Cultivation*, which Annette Lareau associates with the path to occupational success?" Lyo conducted interviews with South Korean immigrant parents from various social classes in the New York City area using a survey designed with Professor Gilbert's assistance.



## **Mario Magana '10: "El Salvador's Transition to Democracy"**

Mario Magana, a native of San Salvador, spent his summer exploring El Salvador's transition from authoritarianism to a multiparty democracy. The process involved significant sacrifices from the political opposition, attempts to change the system from within and even a civil war. The 13 year transitional process culminated in the peace agreements that ended the Salvadoran civil war and political exclusion, and marked the beginning of El Salvador's democratization. His investigation yielded the following recommendations to strengthen democracy in the country: mandatory primary elections, voting rights for Salvadorians living abroad, and improving access to the judicial system. Professors Shelley McConnell and Dennis Gilbert served as Mario's research advisors.



## **Lauren Perillo '10: "Friendly Societies: Mutual Aid in 19<sup>th</sup> Century England"**

Lauren Perillo '10 worked with Associate Professor of History Lisa Trivedi to examine the advantages of societies which helped women in need of financial assistance. Perillo investigated whether or not local institutions in 19<sup>th</sup> Century England distributed more assistance to lower class women than the government did. Were state-run programs at all effective? How much money did women actually receive after pooling their resources? Her ultimate goal was to answer these questions and then look at how prevalent the friendly societies were in a given community and how they changed over time.



## **Will Preston 11: "The Pilgrim and the Puritan in Seventeenth Century New England"**

Working with Professor of History Doug Ambrose, Will Preston '11 spent his summer on an examination of the first several generations of settlers in New England, and primarily focused on the Pilgrims and Puritans in 17th century Massachusetts. Based on the realization that many people have a limited understanding of the Puritans, their philosophy, socio-economic theory, and incredible influence on American history, Preston sought to educate people on a level that non-specialists will understand, while simultaneously providing complicated historical analysis to broaden the reader's historiographical perspective.

# Levitt Summer Research Fellows



**Kevin Rowe '10: "Public Spaces, Collective Memory: Environmental Justice and Community-Based Urban Planning in New York City"**

The five boroughs of New York City each have distinct qualities, and even smaller communities within them take pride in what they have assembled out of the masses. However, Kevin Rowe '10 fears that these neighborhoods have surrendered their rights to the organization of their own community. This past summer he researched community-based urban planning programs like West Harlem Environmental Action (WE ACT) and Sustainable South Bronx (SSB) that work to reverse this effect. With Assistant Professor of Government Peter Cannavo, Rowe set out to discover how remediating environmental hazards through community planning can create a sense of place and environment justice within a group of people.



**Ekaterina (Kate) Staykova '10: "Bulgaria's Integration in the European Union: the Terms of an Empire or a Path to Convergence & Unity?"**

The goal of Kate Staykova's summer research was to examine the impact of Bulgaria's accession into the EU on its economic and political development. Working with Professor Alan Cafruny, Staykova spent the summer in Bulgaria, her native country, investigating the economic and political development of the European Union's newest member. She also focused some of her time on the impact of the current global financial crisis. Prior to accession, the expectation was that EU political leverage would diminish once Bulgaria became a member. However, Staykova's research found that the EU's influence on Bulgarian politics has not disappeared and may actually have increased in significance.



**Elizabeth Weber '10: "Working Class Housing in Manchester, England 1844-1939"**

Liz Weber's summer project focused on attitudes towards working class housing in Great Britain (specifically, the city of Manchester) from 1870-1939. Her research provided a foundation for her senior thesis in history which examined a number of different views of working class housing held by various organizations and groups over time. Weber conducted an analysis of the writings of Seebhom Rowntree, a prominent social scientist during the early years of the twentieth century, as well as doing an analysis of several historiographical works which describe the religious and intellectual attitudes towards charity, poor relief, and social reform. The historiographical works demonstrate the intellectual attitudes towards social reform in general, and the relationship between gender roles and family structures to social reform in particular, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries--attitudes that influenced their views on housing.

# Levitt Summer Research Fellows



*Alex Gross, a 2009 Levitt Summer Research Fellow, and Professor Doug Ambrose study a map while working together*

## Levitt Summer Research Fellows, 2010

Jeffrey Cardoni '11 with Professor Alan Cafruny  
U.S. Auto Industry Reform

Adam Minchew '12 with Professor Robert Paquette  
The "Fusionism" of Frank S. Meyer

Cristina Garafola '11 with Professor Sharon Rivera  
Crisis and Control: Changing State Capacity of Post-Communist States

Emily Gerston '11 with Professor Stephen Ellingson  
Slacktivism and Activism in American Political Life

Anne Hudson '12 with Professor Alan Cafruny  
Tackling National Cohesiveness in the Balkans

Steven Mello '11 with Professor Stephen Wu  
Contraception as Health Development in Rwanda

Tongxin Lu '11 with Professor Douglas Ambrose  
The Future Relations between the People's Republic of China and the Holy See

Xu Shichen '12 with Professor Derek Jones  
The Behavior of Employee-owned Firms: Evidence from the Mondragon Cooperatives

Hanbin Yang '12 with Professor Christophre Georges  
Chinese Technological Innovation in High-tech Manufacturing Industry: A Case Study of the Semiconductor Industry

Arielle Cutler '11 with Professor Anne Lacsamana  
Teaching Media Literacy: Resisting Construction of Gender through Educational Programming

# Community Based Research

The Levitt Center engages students and faculty in the Greater Utica community to address public affairs on a local level and to connect academic learning to real life experiences. While co-curricular activities acquaint students with community-level issues, academic engagement in the community through community-based research uses the civic engagement as a "text" for learning academic content as well as local issues.

The Levitt Center provides support through coordination and technical assistance to faculty who want to add community-based research components to their courses, and transportation for students to their community sites. Several projects were undertaken in the community this year thanks in part to a grant from Learn and Serve America administered by Princeton University.

## Secrets, Lies, & Digital Threats



*Hamilton students  
present to 9th graders*

Computer Science students in Fall '09 participated in a project at the Clinton Central Schools. Professor Mark Bailey taught the course, Secrets, Lies, & Digital Threats, which serves as an introduction to digital threats, computer security technology, and strategies for combating digital threats. Students investigated the nature of digital threats, the limits of technology, and roles humans must play in protecting and securing digital creations. The Levitt Center supported the project through coordinating with the community schools and by providing support for statistical analysis. Hamilton students developed a 45-60 minute tutorial on an aspect of computer security such as recognizing e-mail scams, controlling privacy on the Internet, or the risks and benefits of using social networking sites like Facebook, and took it in small groups to 9th graders. The high school students were administered a pre and post-presentation survey that was used to gauge how well the service learning project increased students' awareness of digital threats.

Professor Bailey states that "everyone, especially those interested in public policy, needs to be exposed to the nature of digital threats and the strengths and limitations of computing. This course is being developed jointly at Hamilton and the University of Virginia with the expected outcome of national dissemination of course materials to an audience that spans small colleges and research universities. The initial research was supported by a grant from the External Research and Programs Division of Microsoft Research, and an additional grant from the National Science Foundation CCLI program has allowed the program to continue.

# Community Based Research

## Levitt Center Hosts CBR program

Hamilton hosted a Community-based Research (CBR) program on Friday, Nov. 6, arranged by New York Campus Compact, at which four CBR models currently in use as part of Hamilton courses were presented. Faculty members from Colgate, SUNY/IT, and Hamilton attended, as did Levitt Center VISTA workers, Jordan Davis and Nimi Idnani. The discussions focused on best practices for student learning and community outcomes.

Hamilton models that were presented included:

- Associate Professor of Computer Science Mark Bailey's Secrets, Lies & Digital Threats that includes a pre- and post-presentation survey of 9th graders in local schools who receive a lesson on computer safety from a team of his college students
- Associate Professor of Government Gary Wyckoff's Senior Seminar in Public Policy in which students take on changing projects solicited by a letter in the preceding summer
- Professor of Women's Studies Margaret Gentry's Women and Aging course in which students have worked with community agencies to interview older women caregivers as part of an ongoing research project for The Women's Fund
- Former Levitt Center Associate Director for Community Research Judy Owens-Manley's seminar in program evaluation focused on long-term relationships with community partners and most recently on the Family Drug Treatment Court and on a five-year program with the HOPE VI Project

## Rust to Green

The Levitt Center has begun an exciting new collaboration with Cornell University, The City of Utica, and the *Utica Rust to Green* initiative. A team of researchers from Cornell University selected Utica to be a test city in their study of ways to move rust belt cities toward a more sustainable future. Kevin Alexander '13 has been selected as the first Levitt Center funded *Rust to Green Civic Research Fellow*. He will be working this summer with a research team from both the Levitt Center and Cornell University. The Levitt Center team, headed by Professor George Hobor, will be mapping and surveying Utica area non-profit organizations in an attempt to better understand the networks and dynamics that animate this important part of the Utica community. In addition, they will be assisting the Cornell University team in a survey of Utica residents.



*Kevin Alexander '13 in a meeting with the Cornell University research team*

*Vige Barrie, Andrew Rogan '10, and Allison Eck '12 contributed to many of the articles in this section.*



# Community Based Research

## Applied Developmental Science Class

Students in Sarah Kempner's Applied Developmental Science class created and executed two community based research projects this semester. The Levitt Center offered transportation and helped facilitate connections between the class and the Community Partners where these projects took place. Students in one section worked with the Clinton Early Learning Center on campus and the Thea Bowman House in Utica. Working with the pre-k rooms at both child care centers, students observed children's prosocial behaviors (sharing, helping, and cooperating), emotions (happy, sad, and angry), and aggressive behaviors (physical and verbal). In addition, parents provided information about their household and completed questionnaires about their parenting practices. Children, whose parents described their parenting as more supportive, showed more sharing behavior with other children in the center, whereas children whose parents endorsed more demanding behaviors were more aggressive. Children whose parents worked longer hours showed less sadness and more happiness while in day care. Students in the other section worked with the Advantage Afterschool program (run by Catholic Charities) at Kernan Elementary school in Utica. Children who participate in this program are in grades K-5. Students in the class observed children's aggressive and prosocial behaviors and rated their engagement in program activities. Children were also asked about their perceptions of the afterschool program (e.g., did they like the activities they do, did they get along with other kids in the program, etc.). Parents also provided information about their household and their perceptions of the afterschool program. Children overwhelmingly enjoyed participating in the program. Children whose parents reported being more involved in their children's activities were rated by the afterschool program as being less hyperactive. In addition, children who had more positive social interactions with other children in the afterschool program were doing better academically.



*At right, Hamilton students, Kate Fillion, James Hogan, and Carolyn Dopp who participated in the Kernan school study.*



# Levitt Speaker Series, 2009-2010

## Crisis: Danger and Opportunity

### Dean Baker: "Origins of the Economic Crisis and the Ways Out"



*Dean Baker speaks with Hamilton students*

Co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington, D.C., Dean Baker presented a lecture titled "Origins of the Economic Crisis and the Ways Out" on Sept. 16 in the Chapel. Baker explained that in 1996 people had more stock and wanted to buy newer, larger houses. As a result, housing prices rose but never increased in value over time. This "self-reinforcing" cycle led to the housing bubble. According to Baker, the housing bubble was easy to identify and should have been easy to prevent. He believes that Alan Greenspan, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve, should have exhausted all of his resources to document and warn about the bubble. He also believes the Federal Reserve should have cracked down on bad mortgages and over-leverage, and as a last resort, raised interest rates. As a solution, Baker suggests that in the short term, the government should spend money. For the long term, it must reduce the value of the dollar because "we cannot have an economy running on a trade deficit for a long period of time". As far as prevention, Baker suggests we fire the regulators who failed to properly warn about the bubble. We

must also downsize the financial industry by implementing a financial transaction tax, as well as strengthen the power of shareholders with binding votes on compensation.

### Arthur Levitt, Jr.: "Regulation in the Financial Markets"

Arthur Levitt Jr., former chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and proponent of tougher corporate accounting standards, addressed a packed KJ Auditorium on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, as part of Hamilton's Fallcoming Weekend. Levitt's lecture focused on financial regulation and the current economic crisis. While he argued that the greatest blame for our economic woes lies with Congress, Levitt also emphasized the role of the Federal Reserve Board, which should be a regulator of the banks, and has instead acted more as a protector than regulator. In addition, he argued that the Senate Banking Committee is reluctant to give the Federal Reserve Board any more power, since that would be taking power away from Congress. He discussed a resolution authority as a partial answer to the problem of system regulation. This authority proposes a greater overview of financial networks, through which problematic institutions would be observed and promptly dealt with. Levitt concluded by suggesting that we need to pay particular attention to the regulation of derivatives, which he believes are poorly understood.



*Arthur Levitt, Jr (left) with Hamilton alum, Maurice Michaane.*

*The following students contributed to articles in this section: Andrew Rogan '10, Richard Maass '12, Danielle Raulli '10, Alex Pure '12*

# Levitt Speaker Series

## Eric Klinenberg: "New Urban Crisis"

On October 21 New York University Professor of Sociology and Director of Graduate Studies Eric Klinenberg presented a lecture on recently developing issues facing urban America. Klinenberg explained that a historically unprecedented number of America's population now lives in or around major metropolitan areas. He asserted that this new phenomenon creates new problems that require imminent solutions in the near future. Ignoring these issues will, and has by historical precedent, generated catastrophic results. Klinenberg pointed out that society constantly faces a crisis in some form or another. The 2000s have presented not only America, but also the world, with what Klinenberg referred to as "spectacular catastrophes." Hurricane Katrina ravaged southern coastal states, foreign terrorists struck New York City in a devastating display of hatred, and the world economy collapsed as financial and housing markets plummeted. Though these events were overwhelming, Klinenberg believes the world needs to look to the future, stating that new action is needed in the arenas of both climate change and pandemic disease.

## Tariq Ali: "Obama's War: Iraq and Afghanistan"

On November 11, famed historian Tariq Ali presented a lecture about the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Ali not only is an author and historian, but also a filmmaker, commentator, and political campaigner. In his lecture, Ali discussed the debate over the withdrawal of troops from Iraq and Afghanistan. He pointed out that the public has "been told that it's a sign of weakness for Obama to pull out of the war," yet Ali argues that further military occupation in the Middle East will actually exacerbate already critical problems. Furthermore, he discussed the one-sided western media coverage of the wars in that the plights of native Pakistani, Afghani, and Iraqi people are basically ignored by major Western news outlets. Ali explained that one million people have died in Iraq and two and a half million people are refugees, yet because students like those at Hamilton College have not been drafted, it is easy for us to distance ourselves from the situation. "But unless we act, this will carry on. And ultimately, it will affect you," he said. Ali proposed the need for an exit strategy for western powers and more involvement from regional powers.

## Tariq Ali and Kamila Shamsie, "Art, History, and Politics of the Novel"

Pakistani novelists Kamila Shamsie '94 and Tariq Ali participated in a panel on "Art, History, and Politics of the Novel" on Nov. 12. The lecture was moderated by Hamilton's Assistant Professor of English, Tina Hall. Each author attempted to define the role of politics in fiction. Shamsie noted that the post-colonial novel often examines the nation-state, and thus inevitably becomes "political." Tariq Ali discussed the sudden popularity of historical novels and fictional narratives based on historical truths. He noted the importance of reading historical novels in order to understand current events. Both authors agreed that they do not write novels to "be political." They do not write with the intention of changing people's minds, as fiction is simply a mode of communicating ideas but does not allow authors to really "create" as authors do in the non-fiction genre.



*Tariq Ali, Kamila Shamsie, and Tina Hall.*



# Levitt Speaker Series

## Andrew McCarthy: "New Framework for National Security"

On January 26, Co-Chair of the Center for Law and Counter Terrorism and former Federal Prosecutor Andrew McCarthy presented a lecture in which he discussed a "New Framework for National Security." In his lecture, McCarthy commented on the debate that the United States has been in since 9/11 over civil justice versus military justice. Given the new kind of war that governments like that of the United States face, McCarthy argues that terrorist combatants once captured should not be treated as typical P.O.Ws because terrorism, argues McCarthy, does not fall under the code of conduct set forth by the Geneva Convention. Combatants, therefore, should not have the right of being protected by protocol. He suggests the creation of a hybrid "National Security" court in which the prosecutor would not have to bear the full burden of proof as in a civil court.



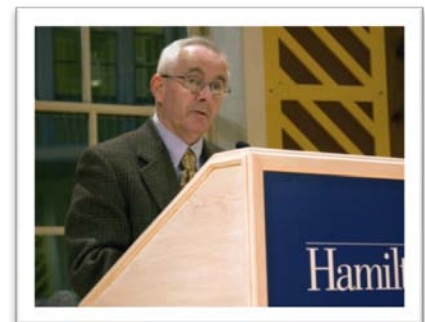
## Jonathan Skinner: "What You Need to Know About Healthcare Reform"



On Feb. 11, Dartmouth Professor Jonathan Skinner delivered a lecture on the problems that plague the U.S. healthcare system and what plausible solutions exist to rectify these problems. Skinner provided pessimistic data concerning the current growth path of healthcare reform in the United States, and the future implications for such a course. He argued that consumers should receive the care they want, as long as they can afford it. To make this more feasible, Skinner proposes that the U.S. institutes a voucher system funded by a value added tax, akin to a sales tax. Individuals wishing for 'higher quality,' or more care can pay for it if they wish.

## Amos Kiewe: "Crisis: A Rhetorical Entity"

On March 2, Amos Kiewe, professor of communication and rhetorical studies at Syracuse University, began his lecture with a brief history on the study of rhetoric and then continued on to define a crisis as an "event that is not normal, but urgent and alarming". He said that the materiality of a crisis is a discourse initiated by decision makers to remedy a certain situation. Simply put, leaders often use rhetoric to construct a crisis in order to accomplish certain political agendas. In terms of the financial crisis of today, Kiewe asserts that former President Bush linguistically created a crisis early in his presidency as the U.S. economy began to contract. September 11th further contracted the economy, eventually constituting an actual crisis. Again in 2007, the real estate bubble was an indicator of things to come, and thus when the banking crisis hit, people did not respond with the urgency required to rapidly increase national savings, as our government had already cried wolf one too many times. Kiewe concluded his lecture by stating that it is crucial to understand that crises are rhetorical constructs. We must understand what constitutes an actual crisis before "crying wolf," and must evaluate the character of the leader linguistically creating the crisis.



# Levitt Speaker Series

## Michael T. Klare: "Oil and War"



Michael T. Klare, the Five College Professor of the Peace and World Security Studies (PAWSS), presented a lecture titled "Oil and War" on Thursday, Oct. 29. Klare has been the director of PAWSS since 1985. Prior to his appointment, he served as director of the program on militarism and disarmament at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C. Klare is a prolific writer on U.S. defense policy, the arms trade, and world security affairs. He is the author of *Blood and Oil: The Dangers and Consequences of America's Growing Dependency on Imported Petroleum*.

## Christopher Hedges: "Empire of Illusion"

On April 5, Chris Hedges, senior fellow at The Nation Institute and the Anschutz Distinguished Fellow at Princeton University, lectured on a large range of topics, from the United States' political system to the economic crisis to global warming. He spoke within the context of large corporations' overwhelming power over nearly every aspect of culture and society. According to Hedges, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and journalist, the power of United States corporations has spiraled to enormous proportions. No action can be taken by government, by celebrities, or even by consumers without extensive, deliberate planning by large companies, which work tirelessly to grind away at the middle class and exploit citizens in search of higher profits. He asserted that even lobbying in Congress has reached the point where the president himself is powerless to effect any change that would counter corporations' interests. Despite the sobering reality that Hedges described, he ended his lecture on a hopeful note, encouraging his audience to become part of a counter-force to the current system.



Chris Hedges, second from left, listens to Hamilton student Mohamed Abdelwahab.

## Government Outsourcing Conference: "Outsourcing National Security: The Law and Politics of Military Contracting."

On January 28<sup>th</sup>, Maynard-Knox Professor of Government and Law Frank Anichiarico hosted a conference on government outsourcing, which was sponsored by the Government Department and the Levitt Center. Cadet First Class Benjamin Joelson of the U.S. Air Force began the discussion with a summary of his paper, "Hyper-Contracting and National Defense: The Wages of Outsourcing in Conflict Zones." Joelson created an appealing and comprehensible argument about the harmful effects of private organizations on the way in which the United States engages in warfare. Among the most prominent of these private organizations were KBR, an engineering and construction company, and Blackwater, a private military company. The crux of Joelson's argument lay in the "human toll" of military outsourcing and the instability that a lack of public sector ethics creates in war environments. He made it clear that he was not speaking in an official capacity. Following a short break, a panel of three professors from a diverse selection of New York universities discussed the potential solutions to the problems associated with outsourcing, including the need for increased accountability, proposed by Prof. Dennis C. Smith of New York University, and spreading the word about the current outsourcing issues, suggested by Prof. Gwendolyn Dordick of City College of CUNY, who also taught at Hamilton College from 1993-1997.



# Levitt Center in the Community

## Project SHINE

Project SHINE (Students Helping in the Naturalization of Elders) completed its seventh year as a service-learning program of the Levitt Center. Project SHINE is a national service-learning program that seeks to form intergenerational and intercultural ties between college students and elder immigrants and refugees. Participating Hamilton College students spend approximately 20 hours over the semester assisting adult immigrants and refugees in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and Citizenship Classrooms. This year, seven professors offered Project SHINE in eleven classes in the Anthropology, Education, English, Government, and Women's Studies Departments. During the seven years over 500 students have participated in Project SHINE.

Project SHINE continues to benefit both Hamilton students and faculty and community members. Through the connections that Project SHINE has fostered, Professor Emily Conover was able to assign her students in the Economic Development class a project that included interviewing refugees to write a report on developing countries. The refugees were invited up to Hamilton for lunch at the Levitt Center and interviews by Conover's students.

Teachers at Project SHINE's community sites, the Utica City School District's Adult Learning Center and the BOCES Utica Access Site, appreciate having Hamilton Students in their classrooms. The overwhelming consensus seems to be that they can never have enough students aiding them in the classroom. Each year students come back with stories of their broadened horizons: of people with different experiences and an appreciation for a person's ability and commitment to learn without the numerous resources that many of their peers have had. One returning student, Stacy Marris, was amazed at the ability and knowledge of a couple of the younger students she got to know:

"Unlike the first semester, I worked with the same group of students consistently. One student I knew from the BOCES program, while another couple actually worked at Commons on campus. I got to know the couple, Cesar and Luz very well, as well as their six-year-old daughter, Christina. I've never met a smarter first grader. She can answer any of her parents' citizenship questions with ease, and she even knows not just who the Speaker of the House is, but also what it is. I don't think I knew that until high school. One class they also brought their 18-year-old son who was also studying to become a citizen. I cannot put into words how incredibly impressed I was with his vast amount of political knowledge. He could not only argue with the teacher, but could put her in her place. Going into the program I did not know what to think about the level of knowledge students had, but I was incredibly impressed with each and every one of them."

– Stacy Marris '13.



Caroline Davis, '11 (above) assists learners in the SHINE program. A SHINE classroom, right.



### AmeriCorp VISTA

The Levitt Center has been fortunate to have two VISTA workers this year, Nimi Idnani and Jordan Davis. Nimi coordinated the SHINE program, while Jordan worked with the Bonner leaders. Both will be moving on next year. We'll miss them and wish them the best of luck!

# Levitt in the Community

## 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, 12 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 commented on the high quality of the students' presentations, and Scholars embraced their task with enthusiasm and enjoyed the experience.

### Participating Schools:

Bernards HS (Bernardsville, NJ)  
Canastota HS (Canastota, NY)  
Chittenango HS (Chittenango, NY)  
Cicero-North Syracuse HS (Cicero, NY)  
Clinton Central HS (Clinton, NY)  
Dolgeville Central School (Dolgeville, NY)  
Ethel Walker HS (Simsbury, CT)  
Fox Lane HS (Bedford, NY)  
Herkimer HS (Herkimer, NY)  
Jamesville DeWitt HS (DeWitt, NY)  
Lincoln Academy (Utica, NY)  
Lincoln HS (Portland, Or)  
Manlius Pebble Hill School (DeWitt, NY)  
Marcellus HS (Marcellus, NY)  
Mohawk Central HS (Mohawk, NY)  
New Hartford HS (New Hartford, NY)  
Poland Central HS (Poland, NY)  
Port Chester HS (Port Chester, NY)  
Remsen HS (Remsen, NY)  
Rome Free Academy (Rome, NY)  
Stockbridge Valley Central HS (Munnsville, NY)  
Waterville Central HS (Waterville, NY)  
Westmoreland Central HS (Westmoreland, NY)  
Whitesboro HS (Marcy, NY)



Levitt Scholars, Jennifer Whitman and Hilary Weiss ((bottom), Kevin Rowe (upper right) and Francesca Villa (upper left)

# Levitt Center in the Community

## Levitt Scholars Spring 2010

- ❖ Anna Barnard: "Understanding Economic Concepts: A Selective History of Recession and Depression in the US"
- ❖ Megan Bumb: "How to Make a Gap Year a Possibility."
- ❖ Hathaway Burden: "The Two Washingtons of the World"
- ❖ Julie DiRoma: "The Benefits of the Local Food Movement"
- ❖ Lucas Harris: "Trails"
- ❖ Sam Hincks: "A New Age of Human Computer Interaction: Machines that Literally Read your Mind"
- ❖ Julio Monterroso: "Moving Forward: Preparing for the Transition to College."
- ❖ Tyler Roberts: "Trial Outcomes: What Does the Jury See?"
- ❖ Kevin Rowe: "City/Nature: Rethinking the Human Relationship to Nature in Cities"
- ❖ Francesca Villa: "Media and Misperceptions."
- ❖ Hilary Weiss: "Moral permissibility of torture and targeted killing policies in Israel."
- ❖ Jennifer Whitman: "20th Century American Prison Writing"

## Microfinance Club

The financial crisis has made credit unavailable for many new businesses, but three local organizations are working together to ensure that entrepreneurial spirit can still thrive in the Utica area. Hamilton College's Microfinance Club began before the recession even started, and its help could not have come at a better time. The Club raises money through donations and looks for loan candidates who want to start businesses but may not have access to traditional forms of credit. Once a candidate is found, ACCESS Credit Union advises the Club on how to evaluate loan applications and underwrites the loan if the club approves it. Loan candidates are referred to the club by For the Good Incorporated, an organization that helps improve the Utica community through economic development. The partnership has just extended credit to Razzle Dazzle, a costume company located in downtown Utica.

Tom Owens, President and CEO of ACCESS Credit Union, enjoys advising Hamilton students about finance and helping the community at the same time. "I've always enjoyed working with students either as a coach or by sharing my banking experiences in the classroom. I like to think I can bring a common sense, 'no spin' approach to teaching," said Owens. The Club appreciates his approach and it gives students some practical experience that complements what they learn in their Hamilton classes. "As a club, we're thrilled that we can gain financial experience and help ensure the economic success of the Utica area," noted Club President Brendan Letarte.

The Club's latest loan recipient, Razzle Dazzle of downtown Utica, designs costumes for many different venues and also does costume alterations. The shop is owned by Fran Wagner, who has run the business out of her home for the past few years. "Fran's skill and professionalism at her craft made her loan application easy to approve," said Letarte. Ms. Wagner has also impressed other organizations in the area, as she is a finalist in the Mohawk Valley EDGE business contest, and has a chance to win \$30,000 for having the best business plan among the applicants.

*Article written by Patrick Gennaco, Acting President of the Hamilton Microfinance Club*

# Levitt Center in the Community

## VITA

Eleven students in Policy, Poverty and Practice (Econ 235), taught by Lecturer in Economics Margaret Morgan-Davie, acquired valuable life skills this past semester – skills that they otherwise would not be able to learn in a classroom. Students enrolled in the class are required to participate in the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program, a joint project of the Economics Department and the Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center. The program offers free tax help to low- and moderate-income families. Through their efforts, these Hamilton students are becoming more aware of their civic duties and increasingly proficient in the language of tax returns.



The local VITA program was initiated by the Mohawk Valley Asset Building Coalition (MVABC), the United Way of the Valley, and the IRS as a way to ensure that qualifying taxpayers could receive Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), tax refunds designed for low income households. 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, students chose to visit either the Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL) in Utica or the GPO Federal Credit Union in New Hartford to complete their hours.

Shirin Rashid, empirical research specialist for the Economics department and coordinator of Hamilton's involvement in the VITA program, said that the program is highly beneficial to students.

"This is an excellent program that gives the students a hands-on experience to examine a policy aimed at addressing inequality," she said. "It gives them the opportunity not only to gain basic knowledge about income tax preparation but also to get exposure to the wider Utica community and learn about available programs for the underprivileged." Rashid was assisted by transportation coordinator, Bret Lineberry '11.

Students can say with pride that they have made a significant contribution to their community. The students attending RCIL have collectively completed 43 tax returns and brought back \$81,280 in combined state and federal refunds to the community. Of that amount, \$30,553 were EITC dollars. Overall, the MVABC filed a total of 1,612 tax returns, an increase over last year, which brought over \$2.4 million in combined state and federal refunds back into our community for the 2009 filing season.

*Excerpted from an online article by Allison Eck '12*

## Service Learning Classes

EDUC 201 (1/4 credit): Methods in Tutoring ESOL Students, Britt-Hysell  
ANTHR 114: Cultural Anthropology, LaDousa  
GOVT 202 (1/4 credit): Immigrants and Refugees in the US, Owens-Manley  
ENGL 126: Children of the Empire, O'Neill  
WMNST 101W-01: Introduction to Women's Studies, Adair  
WMNST 101W-02: Introduction to Women's Studies, Gentry  
WMNST 101W-03: Introduction to Women's Studies, Lacsamana  
ECON 340W: Economic Development, Conover  
EDUC 301: Seminar in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, Britt-Hysell  
ECON 235: Policy, Poverty & Practice, Morgan-Davie



# Levitt Center in the Community

## Bonner Leader Program

The Bonner Leader program is in its last year here at Hamilton College. This year, students continued to prove that leadership and service can make a difference. The nine Bonner Leaders at Hamilton College chose a site last year to implement mentoring and after-school programs. This year their work at these community sites continued and evolved into successful programs that targeted disadvantaged youth in the Utica area.

**Yoko O'Hara** continued her work at the Underground Café, a drop in after-school program for high school students, teaching Japanese and tutoring a Juniors and Seniors for the College Prep program.

Both **Henry Edelson** and **Laura Gilson** have been working at Donovan Middle School where they have teamed up to mentor and teach students the importance of healthy living and financial literacy.

**Liam Ronan** has been working out of the Thea Bowman House where he works closely with around 70 students on their homework.

**Mariam Ballout** took on a new placement this year, volunteering at the American Red Cross. Mariam was in charge of reconnecting refugees with their lost family members due to war or separation while immigrating to the United States.

**Caroline Pantazis** continued her work out of the YWCA where she took on the role of mentor for several groups of girls from Utica. Caroline was able to take these girls on several field trips as well as provide programming for the YWCA.

**Isabelle Van Hook** is the newest member of the Bonner Leader group. For the past year, she has taken over a project called "Friends without Borders". Most of the refugee students are from Myanmar, as well as some from Nepal, Haiti, Belarus, and Bosnia. Isabelle recruited 20 volunteers from Hamilton College to work with the refugees on ESL tutoring and building recognition so that they can more comfortably participate in community events. The volunteers go into Utica everyday and work with 3-4 refugees each day. She received an NEA Global Youth Service Grant to continue her work at the Hamilton Community Outreach and Opportunity Project (COOP) next year.

### Presidential Honor Roll

The Corporation for National and Community Service named Hamilton as one of the colleges included on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for exemplary service efforts and service to America's communities. Levitt Center programs such as SHINE, VITA, and Bonner Leaders were included in the application.



*Jordan Davis (VISTA worker) and Bonner Leaders Liam Ronan, Yoko O'Hara and Isabelle Van Hook*

**Stephanie Russell** started a project this year that enabled students at Kernan Elementary School to become "Pen Pals" with Hamilton College students. Stephanie recruited 30 volunteers from Hamilton College to write to the Kernan students. This program intended to help the students work on their literacy skills, as well as writing and reading skills. At the end of the year Stephanie had the Kernan students visit Hamilton's Campus to meet their pen pals and tour the college.



# Levitt in the Community

## Bonner Leader Program, continued

This year **Leide Cabral**, along with **Young Peoples Project** (YPP) coordinators Hector Acevedo, Denise Ghartey, and Hannah Roth developed a program that is spreading rapidly. The Young Peoples Project is an organization that uses math literacy as a tool to develop leadership in young adults that can help change the quality of their education and their life. YPP holds that it helps bridge the gap between math literacy and social justice, allowing middle school students to have a better opportunity to help them reach their full potential. Hamilton College is the first YPP site on a college campus and has proven to be a huge success.

Leide Cabral along with the YPP coordinators recruited several Hamilton Volunteers to work at Donovan Middle School improving math literacy skills. The student volunteers went to Donovan everyday and facilitated workshops that “make math fun”. The volunteers were required to attend several workshops to learn and develop the tools that were used in the schools. If you were to attend one of the classrooms with YPP you wouldn’t see students hunched over a math book doing problem after problem. Actually it might not even look like the kids were doing math literacy work. The leaders take the middle school students through a series of chants that help them memorize times tables. Sometimes the students are working with the Volunteers tossing a ball around working on exponent homework. All of the workshops that YPP uses are infused with education, but they make it fun for the students and make it easier for them to memorize formulas, or how to multiply fractions.

This year Leide, Hector, and Denise attended several conferences to present their project to hundreds of college students. At the annual Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) conference in North Carolina, YPP leaders presented their idea of “YPP @ collegiate”, a national network of college students teaching math literacy workshops to middle school students. The result was magnificent. The YPP leaders at Hamilton College were asked to help develop programs at several other colleges across the country. The YPP project has shown to be a great success here at Hamilton College. That is not only shown by their success and recognition at the national level, but also at the local level. At the end of each semester YPP held a math

students to compete for prizes and round out the year on a positive note. It was easy to see that the students truly appreciated and enjoyed what they were doing.



*Leide Cabral '11 and Denise Ghartey '12 at the VSU STEM Conference (lower left). In the picture to the right: Tiago Correia '12, Omo Moses (founder of The Young People's Project and son of Robert Moses '56), Leide Cabral '11, Denise Ghartey '12. Upper left photo: Hamilton's Math Literacy Workers.*

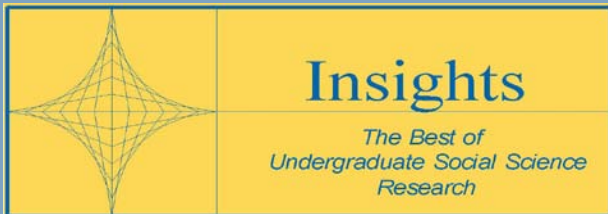
# Programs and Conferences

## Obama's Health Care Reforms Debated by Public Policy Class

The small Kirner-Johnson classroom was packed on Monday, May 3, for a debate regarding Obama's healthcare reforms and how these policies might be bettered. Fourteen public policy majors, "armed only with a semester's worth of study of the economics, ethics and politics of health care," engaged in the debate. Associate Professor of Government Gary Wyckoff served as moderator of the event. He was also responsible for assembling a panel of "outside experts" who listened to the students' proposals and then offered constructive critiques. The panelists included Jim Connolly '74, president of Ellis Hospital in Schenectady; James Millar '90, vice president for medical centers at GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals; and Anthony Carello '09, graduate student in law and public policy at Syracuse University.

The first team was comprised of students Coby Berman '12, Timothy Boucher '13, Scott Hefferman '11, James Kruger '12, Brendan Rafalski '11, and Anthony Scarpino '13. They proposed the Citizens Health Benefit Package (CHBP), which they would implement in lieu of Obama's current healthcare plan. Some of their more radical ideas included expanding the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) as well as phasing out Medicare over a 14-year period and cutting out Medicaid completely. The second team was comprised of students Megan Cairns '12, Russ Doubleday '11, Sarah Dreyer-Oren '12, Donovan Flint '11, Patrick Landers '12, Anna Mikhailovich '12, Sara Scheineson '12, and Cooper Veysey '12. They proposed PAQACA, which stood for "Providing Accountable Quality and Affordable Care for America." They explained that the current system was "unaffordable, unreliable, and inequitable" and that Obama's plan leaves 14 million Americans uninsured.

-- By Alex Pure '12



<http://www.hamilton.edu/levitt/insights/>

Paul Gary Wyckoff, Associate Professor of Government and Director of Hamilton's Public Policy Program, has long felt that outstanding student work has all too often ended up on some professor's dusty shelf, never to be read again. His belief that work of this quality deserves to be part of the scholarly discussion in the social sciences, to be read, discussed, lauded, and critiqued, led him to create *Insights*. His goal is that *Insights* will publish the best in undergraduate social science research, in print form and via the Internet. *Insights* is supported by the Levitt Center, but is both written and edited by undergraduate students. Professor Wyckoff solicited papers from both professors and students, and hashed out guidelines to help referees sort out the papers that were merely good from those which were exceptional. This year's selections are:

J. Max Currier: The U.S. Mission in Afghanistan: Counterinsurgency and Provincial Reconstruction Teams  
Lauren Howe: Hydropolitics of the Nile River: Conflict, Policy, and the Future  
Richard Maass: Nuclear Proliferation and Declining U.S. Hegemony  
Julie Melowsky: Balinese Cosmology and its Role in Agricultural Practices

# Programs and Conferences

## Monetary Policy Class Competes in Fed Challenge

A team formed of students in the monetary policy class taught by Professor of Economics Ann Owen competed in the Federal Reserve Challenge in New York City on Nov. 5, 2009. Although the team of five students made the presentation, all class members assisted in the preparation for the event. The Federal Reserve Challenge is a national competition sponsored by the Federal Reserve and the Eastern Economic Association. Teams of students compete by delivering 20-minute presentations that analyze current economic conditions, after which they make a recommendation for monetary policy. At the conclusion of the presentation, each team answers questions from a panel of judges that include Federal Reserve economists, finance professionals and other macroeconomic researchers. On Oct. 2, all of Owen's students attended a seminar presented by New York Federal Reserve economists that included sessions on the current economic situation, the labor market and the financial crisis. The seminar served as an orientation for the national competition.

## Model EU Team Travels to Belgium

Eleven students from Hamilton's Model European Union team and faculty advisor Alan Cafruny, the Henry Platt Bristol Professor of International Affairs, attended the 23rd annual EuroSim conference in Antwerp, Belgium, on Jan. 5-10, 2010. The topic of this year's conference was Russia-EU relations.

Hamilton students took on a variety of roles, including members of the delegation from the Czech Republic, the Justice Minister of Ireland, and several members of Parliament. Several students participated in leadership capacities, including the Czech Republic Head of Government (Brandon Moore '12) and the EUL-NGL rapporteur and party coordinator and leader (Hanna Kahrman-Zadak '12). Other Hamilton participants were Jamie Azdair '13, Amanda Barnes '12, Sam Doyon '12, Alex Singh '11, Brett Shannon '11, Erich Romero '12, Elizabeth Scholz '13, Stephanie Shapiro '12 and Kasey Kaspar Hildonen '10. The simulation involved the evaluation and amendment process of a commission proposal presented by one of the participating schools and all formalities of process within the EU were followed. Students gained vast knowledge of the international relations within the EU and developed their negotiations skills. The program included a lecture series to complement the simulation, with presentations from Russian relations specialists; members of both the Flemish Parliament and the EU Parliament; and the First Secretary and Unit Chief of the U.S. mission to the EU.



***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.***

# Programs and Conferences

## Hamilton Students Represent Georgia and Kyrgyzstan in Model UN

Eleven Hamilton students participated in the University of Pennsylvania Model United Nations Conference (UPMUNC) Nov. 12 – 15, 2009 in Philadelphia. The conference drew approximately 1,400 delegates. The keynote speaker at the opening ceremony was Scott Harrison, founder of the non-profit organization Charity: Water, which aims to provide safe, clean drinking water to those in less-developed nations. Students attending from Hamilton were Leah Berryhill '13, Philippe Coleman '12, Eve Denton '12, Mihai Dohotaru '13 Sam Doyon '12, Allison Fried '13, Jasmina Hodzic '13, Brandon Moore '12, Erich Romero '12, Elizabeth Scholz '13, and Stephanie Shapiro '12. They represented the delegations from Georgia and Kyrgyzstan on a variety of committees including the Disarmament and International Security Committee, The World Health Organization, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, and the Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Council.

## Hamilton Students Represents Austria and Norway at Model UN

Eleven Hamilton students participated in the McGill University Model United Nations Conference (MCMUN) January 28-31, 2010 in Montréal, Canada. The conference drew approximately 1,400 delegates. The keynote speaker at the opening ceremony was Canadian Member of Parliament and McGill alumnus Justin Trudeau, who encouraged students to be politically involved in the world around them. Students in attendance from Hamilton were Jamie Azdair '13, Philippe Coleman '12, Eve Denton '12, Sam Doyon '12, Allison Fried '13, Maria Del Pilar Lozada '11, Brandon Moore '12, Erich Romero '12, Stephanie Shapiro '12, Audrey Stano '12, and Jordyn Taylor '12. They represented the delegations from Austria and Norway on a variety of committees including the Disarmament and International Security Committee, the 2020 Olympic Selection Committee, and the United Nations Security Council. In preparing for the conference, Hamilton students conducted extensive research with the help of Government Professor Ted Lehmann, the MUN faculty advisor, in order to accurately portray Austria and Norway at the conference.



*The following students contributed to articles in this section: Kasey Hildonen '10 and Sam Doyon '12*



# Think Tank

A student directed organization sponsored by the Levitt Center



“Just bring an open mind and an empty stomach!”

**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.

David Foster '10 and Emily Anderer '10, with assistance from Abigail Glerum '11 and Woody Faugas '12, co-directed Think Tank for the 2009-2010 academic year.

September 8: Ann Owen, "The State of the American Economy"

September 25: Christopher Hill, "Torture Now and Then"

October 2: Eric Ziegelmayer, "Urbanization and International Security"

October 9: Philip Klinkner, "American Politics Today: Obama's Challenge"

October 30: Maurice Isserman, "Diversity at Hamilton: The First 200 Years"

November 6: Nancy Rabinowitz, "Performing Greek Tragedy as Anti-Imperialist Strategy"

January 22: Robert Martin, "Facebook and Freedom"

January 29: Richard Bedient, "Fractals"

February 4: Nigel Westmaas: Special Panel Discussion on Haiti with Robyn Gibson, Woodgar Faugas, and Edwin Gaston

February 5: Catherine Phelan, "Digital Evolution of an American Identity"

February 12: Elizabeth Jensen, "College Entrance Exams and GPA"

February 19: Gordon Jones, "Quarks"

February 26: Chaise LaDousa, "Ethnographic Reflections on College Fun"

April 16: Steve Wu, "Happiness"

April 23: HamPoll, "Survey Results and Methods"

April 30: Gary Wyckoff, "Obama's Health Care Plan: Not Quite as Advertised"