

# HOLLERAN CENTER ALUMNI IN ACTION

HC Fall Newsletter 2014



The Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy held the first PICA Reunion on May 31, 2014 during the College's Reunion Weekend. The centerpiece of the Reunion was an afternoon panel discussion for alumni entitled "Impacts of a Holleran Center Education and How I Continue to Make an Impact" with insights from the following PICA alumni:

Alexandria Cooley '04, Program Officer with the Corporation for National and Community Service;

Kendra Dickinson '03, Director of the Young People's Center for Creative Arts Junior Program;

Tiana Victoria Hercules '04, Attorney at Law, Hercules Law, LLC;

Emily Anne McDonald '02, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of California, San Francisco;

Christof Putzel '01, Senior Correspondent-America Tonight, Al Jazeera America.

The panelists were excellent and sparked a lively and interactive dialogue with the audience members. A reception and dinner followed the afternoon discussion, with approximately 30 Holleran Center alumni in attendance. We look forward to continuing to connect with PICA alumni through our events planned for this year's Fall Weekend on October 11 as well as a reception in New York City on November 14 and an event in Boston in the spring semester. Please stay tuned for more details.



## THOUGHTS FROM HOLLERAN CENTER PICA ALUMNI ABOUT THE HOLLERAN CENTER REUNION EVENTS

### BY TRISHA BOGAR '11

It was wonderful reconnecting with professors and classmates whom I hadn't spoken to in a few years. Hearing what my classmates have been up to and being able to share my experiences were by far my favorite aspects of the dinner. It was a relaxed environment full of enthusiastic discussions and questions. In some ways, despite the ups and downs I had during my program, these conversations renewed my original draw to PICA. I would definitely encourage my fellow PICA scholars to attend reunions and regional events. Sometimes all you need to feel rejuvenated is to be reminded that there are other people out there working and fighting to make changes in all aspects of life. Being back around my classmates and professors encouraged me to continue to question traditional ideas of education and bring something larger into my classroom.



Trisha Bogar '11 on the left with Holleran Center PICA peer, Annie Bigwood '11

### BY JAIME FREEDMAN '01

I felt that the events allowed me to re-connect in a fairly casual environment and fostered meaningful conversations. PICA was one of the main reasons I decided to attend Connecticut College and it meant a lot to me as a student. Looking back, it was one of the stand-out aspects of my college experience, so I wanted to participate in the reunion to show my support and to re-connect with the faculty that were so invaluable to me. It was wonderful to re-connect and I hope to continue to help the program grow in the future.

### BY EMILY HELLER '08

The alumni panel discussion set a great tone for the professionalism of what PICA can help you achieve, and was a nice tribute back to how each speaker began in PICA. From there everyone was "stirred" to talk more about their passions, catching up with old friends, or making new ones! I really wanted to come back to Conn for the best part of my 4 year experience. I wanted to see what the center was up to, I wanted to share what I had been up to, catch-up and maybe network for any other future possibilities there might be in store. It was a connection I wanted to foster and not lose. It was wonderful! The food didn't hurt, but the people, as I said, were really the best part. Old professors, other alumni, networking and talking about our passions and why we did PICA and got our degree and are no doubt doing what we're doing now; that's why we are who we are.



Emily Heller '08 on the left talking to Professor Audrey Zakriski

## HOLLERAN CENTER ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

### Updates on 7th Grade Education Teacher, Alia Roth '14



This summer was really intense but so incredible. I was teaching summer school in the South Bronx - Global History to 10th, 11th and 12th graders who have either failed their state test or didn't get credit during the school year. I loved my students so much. Almost all of them have IEPs and some have come straight from being incarcerated - they can be tough but they are so smart. Once you connect with them and let them know that you are there to help, it's amazing what they can accomplish. My students told me that they wanted to have me as a teacher all year because "I make them work but don't bore them" .. and tears actually came to my eyes.

I was officially hired as the 8th grade Special Education teacher at the Bronx School for Law, Government and Justice in the South Bronx. I am currently in an ICT setting (Integrated Co-Teacher) for English Language Arts and Math. So I am in the classroom with another teacher and we are working together to ensure that our students receive the services and additional support they need in order to succeed.

I honestly can't imagine doing any other work. Watching and experiencing the students grasp a concept or make connections or gain a skill or gradually improve their grade was the most rewarding experience I think I have ever had. The school I was working in encouraged tying sociological and social justice themes like race, gender, sexuality, socio-economic status which was the greatest gift for me and for my students. In the summer, we compared Machiavelli's "the end justifies the means" to Malcolm X's "by any means necessary" philosophy and the writing that they produced blew my mind.

### Career Pathways Class of 2014



#### Gabrielle Arenge

International Studies Mellon Initiative Program Coordinator  
Holleran Center for Public Policy and Community Action Specialist Projects Assistant

#### Margaret DeJong

Strategy/Planning Intern at Havas Worldwide (ad agency) in Sydney, Australia

#### Katharine Evans

Masters Student, Social Work, University of Denver, CO

#### Kaitlin Fung

Currently taking a gap year to focus on teaching certification test taking and most likely going on to Teach For America CT 2015

#### Kelsey Munger

Head Baker at Glutenus Minimus gourmet gluten free bakery with plans to pursue her masters in gastronomy from Boston University in Spring 2015

#### Julian Perez

Research Associate, Spencer Foundation in Chicago, IL

#### Alia Roth

7th Grade Special Education Teacher at the Bronx School for Law, Government and Justice  
Masters student, Education, City College (City University of New York), NY  
Fellowship: New York City Teaching Fellow

#### Blair Southworth

US State Department - Fulbright Scholar, Indonesia

## Holleran Center Advisory Board

We have been working with two Connecticut College alumni to develop an alumni advisory board for the Center. We envision this advisory group to serve as a resource for current students and alumni around networking, employment and mentoring opportunities; to offer advice on internships, careers, and other professional opportunities; and to bring trusted and valuable guidance related to programming, potential funding, or research opportunities that might benefit our PICA scholars. Thirteen alumni have committed to serving on this board, six of whom were Holleran Center scholars. All are activists or policy makers. The alumni advisory board members are listed below:

*\* indicates Holleran Center PICA alumni*

### **Samuel Bottum '89**

Current Employment: General Manager for Innovation Works at Snap-On, Inc., in Kenosha, WI.

Previous Employment: Chief Operating Officer of Boundless Readers of Chicago

Boards: Boundless Readers' board of directors; Board of Thresholds; Board of the Robert F.

Kennedy Children's Action Corps

Degrees from: Connecticut College; the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

### **Heather Day '09 \***

Current Employment: Associate Director of Youth and Community Programs at Crown Heights Community Mediation Center in Brooklyn, NY.

Previous Employment: Teaching Fellow, Volunteer Recruiter and Curriculum Developer for Citizen Schools New York.

Degrees from: Connecticut College and Master of Social Work with a Human Service Leadership concentration from Fordham University.

### **Warren Erickson '74**

Previous Employment: Admissions in Pomfret School and Ethel Walker, Financial services at Connecticut Mutual and MassMutual, Vice President of Human Resources at Mass Mutual  
Boards: Steering Committee Member at a new Rockport Library, Elementary teacher and Support Coach for adults

Degrees from: Connecticut College and M.Ed. at Harvard.

### **Lawrence Friedman '89**

Current Employment: Professor of law at New England School of Law

Previous Employment: Litigation associate at Choate, Hall & Stewart in Boston

Boards: Boards of the Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law & Justice; the Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps

Degrees from: Connecticut College, Boston College Law School, and Harvard Law School.

### **Chelsea Hanson '04 \***

Current Employment: Assistant Director for Immigration Policy in the Office of Government and International Affairs at the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in Washington, DC.

Previous Employment: Practiced immigration law and represented asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants from Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

Degree from: Connecticut College.

### **Tiana Hercules '04 \***

Current Employment: Attorney at Law, Hercules Law, LLC

Previous Employment: Assistant to the Mayor in the City of Hartford and worked with the US Attorney's office overseeing an anti-gun violence initiative

Degrees from: Connecticut College and University of Connecticut Law School and MBA at the University of Connecticut School of Business.

### **Diamond Howell '12 \***

Current Status: Ph.D. student at University of Wisconsin-Madison pursuing her doctorate in Curriculum & Instruction with a focus in Multicultural Education.

Previous Status: Teaching assistant of a course entitled: Critical Aspects of Teaching, Schooling and Education.

Degrees from: Human Development Major with a Certification in Elementary Education at Connecticut College and M.S. at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

### **John Maggiore '91 \***

Current Employment: Staff to the Lieutenant Governor of New York

Previous Employment: Worked for then-attorney general Andrew Cuomo

Degrees: Connecticut College and Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

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## Holleran Center Advisory Board (part 2)

### Elli Nagai-Rothe '03

Current Employment: Managing Director, Split This Rock (national nonprofit organization for poets)

Previous Employment: Principal for a rural start-up school in southern India, focused on providing a quality, holistic education to students of socially and financially marginalized communities

Degrees: Sociology-based Human Relations Major at Connecticut College, M.A. in International Peace and Conflict Resolution at American University with a focus on global race relations and inter-group dialogue as a tool for conflict transformation.

Awards: Anna Lord Strauss Medal, Fulbright Fellow to New Zealand

### Tammie Clayton Reid '01 \*

Current Employment: President of T. Reid Solutions (educational consultancy)

Previous Employment: Educational Consultant at Great Schools, Project Manager at Newark Charter School Fund, Educational Consultant at Foundations, Inc. and Head of Middle School at the Williams School

Degrees from: Connecticut College and M.A. Human Development and Education at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education

Award: Anna Lord Strauss medal

### Jamie Rogers '04 \*

Current Employment: Owner of PushCart Coffee  
Degrees: Connecticut College and Cornell Law School

### Marinell Rousmaniere '95

Current Employment: Vice President of Strategic Initiatives at EdVestors (Boston-based nonprofit school improvement organization)

Previous Employment: Executive Director of Mytown, Inc. and Senior staff member in Mayor Thomas M. Menino's first-in-the-nation mayoral initiative

Degrees: Connecticut College and Boston University's School of Management

### Katherine Williams '07 \*

Current Employment: Data Analyst with the D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education  
Previous Employment: Teach for America Corps  
Degrees from: Mathematics Major at Connecticut College and Carnegie Mellon's Heinz College

## Law and Community Building



### Advice from a member of the Advisory Board Lawrence Friedman '89

The mission of the Holleran Center is to advance “teaching, learning, research, and community collaborations. It works to create more just and equitable communities through programs that cultivate intellectual and ethical judgment.” It is difficult to overstate the importance of community-building to our daily lives as citizens, and it is fitting that the Holleran Center finds its home at Connecticut College, an institution that rightly prides itself on a sense of community that sets it apart from its peers.

The Holleran Center's reach extends beyond the College, and a commitment to the Center's community-building ethos need not be confined to one's time as a student. Indeed, the Center's teaching—a focus on cultivating active citizenship, leadership development, intercultural knowledge, and a passion for equity and justice—may inform one's post-graduate life and career in a variety of ways. In my field—law—there is a clear

connection to community-building: regardless of practice area, all attorneys take an oath upon their admission to a state bar to support the United States Constitution and its commitment to individual dignity and the requirement that all members of the community be treated equally.

Lawyers honor this commitment in many ways. Some devote their careers to the public interest, prosecuting or defending alleged criminals, working for government agencies, or representing individuals who cannot afford legal services. Others take time from private practice to take clients and cases pro bono, working for individuals and causes that might otherwise go unrepresented.

Despite the seemingly endless articles in the New York Times and Wall Street Journal suggesting that there are too many lawyers in the United States, the sad reality is that there are too few. Massachusetts, the jurisdiction in which I live, has among the highest standards of living of any state in the nation, and yet hundreds of litigants in routine court proceedings—especially those involving domestic matters—go unrepresented. There is, in Massachusetts and elsewhere, a pressing need for lawyers to serve these individuals: much evidence supports the view that the justice system works best when litigants are represented by well-trained attorneys advocating on their behalf. Whether they represent these litigants for a living or pro bono, the attorneys who take on these cases exemplify the ethos of the Holleran Center.

**Upcoming Holleran Center PICA events**

To deepen student-alumni engagement, the Holleran Center plans to host the following events this academic year:

- **Fall United Nations Trip/New York Reunion Event**  
 Holleran Center faculty and staff will bring PICA scholars to the United Nations on November 14. The students will go on a guided tour of the United Nations Headquarters to learn about how the United Nations addresses issues such as disarmament, peace and security, human rights, and the Millennium development goals.

Following the visit to the U.N., we will end the day with PICA alumnus James Rogers '04 at Pushcart Coffee (www.pushcartcoffee.com) located at 401 West 25th Street at 9th Avenue. PICA alumni, current students, the Steering Committee and the advisory board members are invited for a reception and dinner at Pushcart at 4:00 p.m.
- **Spring Boston Regional Alumni Event**  
 The Holleran Center staff will work with the Alumni Relations Office to plan an event in spring 2015 for PICA alumni from the greater Boston area. Current scholars, alumni, staff, faculty and advisory board members will gather in Boston for a reception. The Holleran Center will provide transportation to this event for current scholars.
- **Spring Panel Discussion for Current Holleran Center scholars**  
 The Holleran Center will host an alumni panel where several distinguished PICA alumni will return to campus to talk about the Center's influences in their lives and in their career aspirations. The panelists will aim to inspire current PICA scholars by providing them valuable internship and career advice.



**Upcoming Holleran Center PICA events**

**Friday, November 14**  
 PICA trip to UN and Alumni Gathering at Pushcart Coffee in New York City

**Saturday, April 11**  
 Holleran Center PICA Class of 2015 Conference and Banquet

**Sunday, April 26**  
 8th Annual Walk to End Homelessness and Health Fair  
 New London Homeless Hospitality Shelter

**Saturday, May 16**  
 Holleran Center PICA Certificate Ceremony



**Stay in contact!**

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