



CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

This edition of HC Newsletter highlights three current PICA Sophomore scholars and their experiences with the Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy PICA program.

PICA Sophomore Scholar uses on-campus resources to become a change agent

By Kate Adams '16



I am a sophomore PICA Scholar, Human Development major and Hispanic Studies minor. My area of interest is educational justice, specifically in under-resourced school systems for students learning English as a second language. As a part of the New London Homeless Hospitality Walk for the Homeless team, I am actively planning, fundraising, and working in the hospitality center. I am a member of the ConnArtists a capella singing group, a Student Advisor to eight freshmen, and a team leader and mentor for the Expanded Learning Time afterschool program at Jennings Elementary School. Throughout my journey at Conn, I hope to become a more civically engaged individual who can take on problems that arise in my community by thinking critically and working with others. I am excited to already be using the tools I am acquiring through PICA such as conflict resolution, analytical listening and thinking skills, and communication to explore facets of social injustice and how my community can change these factors.

HC In Action

HC Newsletter March 2014

Participation from all corners of society—parents, educators, administrators, media, students, and other community members—can create the best avenue for collaborative change. Together, we can work to identify the causes of educational inequity such as a lack of understanding of family life, cultural differences, student needs and inequitable resource allocation to better find solutions. I see PICA as a resource that can shape the rest of my educational journey. I am confident that the skills I am developing through PICA will help me gain both a local and global perspective into issues beyond our national borders. I hope to gain a greater understanding of how to achieve educational equity amidst economic diversity, be able to apply my skills and work in an under-resourced education system, possibly in a Spanish-speaking setting. I know that coming out of PICA, I will be prepared to identify root causes of social injustice by collaborating effectively with various members of my community to create solutions. I hope to be able to see barriers to progress from all perspectives and listen to peoples' concerns with an open but critical ear. By weaving together a plan that addresses these issues, I hope to bring community members to a consensus. I am excited to learn from my environments and the people with whom I interact and to be an advocate of social justice and an agent of change in our global society.

Student activist confirms her passion regarding public health in her community

By Estefani Ignacio Gallegos '16



Being born and raised in Acapulco, Mexico molded me into the appreciative and conscious individual that I am today. My childhood experiences allowed me to appreciate many of the things that are taken for granted and is the main reason why I became interested in public health and tackling environmental issues. My PICA research topic explores the effects of lead poisoning on children's development, specifically Hispanic children. The ultimate goal of this research is to be able to provide educational classes for the Hispanic community regarding the consequences of lead poisoning, ways to prevent its effect on children's development, and increasing their accessibility to health care. Being a biological science major with a focus in public health has allowed me to continue pursuing the interests that started when I was a little girl.

Currently, I am an international student advisor and an intern in the Paramedics Internship program. Back home in Atlanta, Georgia, I am a volunteer at LaAmistad, an organization that provides support to Latino students and their families, and mentor seniors during their college application process. My PICA gateway course has exposed me to various topics that explore the foundations of community action and the adversities that many communities face. My community placement with the Alzheimer's Association and Beechwood Nursing Center will not only allow me to give back to my community, but also tackle some of the major issues associated with public health and access to health care. Racial discrimination has become an issue that harms health by becoming a form of societal injustice and embodies inequality by manifesting itself in health inequities. This is an issue that I plan to address and learn more about through my participation at Beechwood and by being part of the Alzheimer's Association.

I believe that PICA will provide an outlet that will allow me to make a huge impact on my immediate surroundings, while simultaneously developing the skills to make a difference in the other communities of which I am a member. Not only does the program build strong relationships between a community and its fellow citizens, but also provides the opportunity to reach out to other distant communities that are facing similar challenges. As an international student, whose primary community is miles away, I am drawn to the this program as a way to continue my passion to work within the community to address identified needs and contribute to improving the overall public health and quality of life.

Welcome Holleran Center PICA Class of 2016!



Announcement:

Alumni of the Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy's Program in Community Action are invited to attend a special panel discussion, reception and dinner Saturday, May 31, at Reunion. The discussion, scheduled at 2 p.m. in Cro's Nest, will discuss how participants' College and Holleran Center experiences have influenced their post-college and career aspirations. The reception will be at 6 followed by dinner at 7 with an open bar with wine and beer. The events are free for Holleran Center alumni and their families. Registration forms are currently available at <http://www.conncoll.edu/alumni/programs-events/reunion/register-for-reunion/> For more information, contact Penney Jade Beaubrun at pbeaubru@conncoll.edu.

Aleksandr Chandra'16: destined to make a difference



involves commitment and integrity from an individual or persons who are passionate about igniting change—"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it can be faced." My goal as a PICA Scholar is to make a difference! I also hope to form a stronger, more cohesive bond with fellow PICA Scholars through the process. We are all change-makers and I feel it is high time that I embrace this part of my being! I plan on studying abroad in India next semester and collaborating with an NGO to see how intergenerational contact through the art of dance can act as a bond between the youth and the elderly, thus yielding mutual benefits for and promoting the well-being of both ages.

I am currently involved in the PICA Gateway Course and completing a community project at Jennings Elementary School with fellow PICA Scholars. We are charged with the task of mentoring second graders and exploring ways to further connect parents, teachers, and students in the school. I am also involved as a floor governor at Connecticut College and work in the Office of Student Life as a receptionist. This year for the first time I am doing Eclipse, the student run variety show on campus. I hope that through the PICA program I walk away with more questions raised than answered. I hope to be challenged and to challenge others. I hope to transform into a well-rounded, educated, and more mature individual through the PICA program. PICA is not only an informative process but it is also a transformative one. I will use PICA to better shape my world and my future endeavors through exposure to a breadth of experiences and to a depth of knowledge that PICA imparts to all scholars to better prepare them to enact change in a variety of settings. My area of interest is educational and justice through arts. I believe that the purpose of community action is for students to translate their classroom studies in the liberal arts into forms of experiential learning in local and global communities. Community action is a dynamic process that

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- Jennifer Fredricks**, Director and Professor of Human Development
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- Kiesha Henry**, Administrative Staff
- Ariella Rotramel**, Gateway Course Instructor and Professor of Gender and Women's Studies
- Aracelis Vazquez-Haye**, Junior Seminar Instructor

Save the Date!

- April 5:** PICA Class of 2013 Conference and Banquet
- April 5:** President Bergeron's Inauguration
- April 27:** 7th Annual Walk for the Homeless and Health and Wellness Fair
- May 17:** PICA Certificate Ceremony
- May 31:** Holleran Center PICA Reunion Alumni Panel Discussion, Reception and Dinner

This edition of HC In Action was edited by the Holleran Center Assistant Director for Alumni Development and Publications
Penney Jade Beaubrun '11