

COMMUNITY POLICY INSTITUTE

Year

in



Review

2017 - 2018

SIENACollege™

CENTER FOR ACADEMIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

What is the Community Policy Institute?

The Community Policy Institute (CPI) is a public policy think tank that serves nonprofits throughout the Capital Region. CPI Fellows research and address public policy questions to help community nonprofit organizations advocate effectively for the populations they serve.



By the numbers...

10

community driven policy research projects completed this year

21

fellows engaged in CPI in the 2017-2018 Academic Year

9

community partnerships developed since May 2017



CPI GOES TO YALE

This April three CPI Fellows attended the annual Global Health & Innovation Conference at Yale University. This is the world's leading global health and social entrepreneurship conference. The Fellows attended various sessions covering leadership, public health policy, international development, and sustainability. CPI Fellows were exposed to innovative ways to address

some of society's most pressing policy issues. Students networked with undergraduate and graduate students and professionals in the fields of economics, environmental studies, law and international development. Students attended a keynote address by Jeffrey Sachs, Director of The Earth Institute at Columbia University, one of the world's leading experts on economic development and the fight against poverty. Sachs discussed how positive health outcomes are possible on a global scale. Other speakers at the conference included Marie Martin, Assistant Director of Health Policy at Vanderbilt Institute for Global Health; Michael Schmoyer, Assistant Deputy Secretary for National Security; and Sten Vermund, Yale School of Public Health.



“If there is one thing I have learned during my time at CPI, it is that I have learned how to communicate effectively...being a team leader has honed this further.”

Jillian Madocs `19

17-18 RESEARCH PROJECTS

Nonprofit Coalition Management

Partner: City of Cohoes

Deliverables Provided: Best practices analysis of similar coalition established in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Significance: In the city of Cohoes, there are several nonprofits operating to achieve the same goals. However, most of them do not have the resources to help the community effectively. The development of a nonprofit coalition in Cohoes will benefit the community by providing a method for resource sharing and mainstreaming communication across agencies.

Increasing Equitable Education for Public Schools in NYS

Partner: Alliance for Quality Education

Deliverables Provided: A policy report detailing model programs across the country that are working towards increasing equitable education for public schools. This policy brief outlines different initiatives that schools are taking to provide opportunities for students' growth.

Significance: A major issue impacting public schools is the inequitable distribution of money and resources. This adversely impacts certain schools by restricting opportunities they can provide to their students, such as after school activities and development opportunities. Without the resources to help their students, schools are seeing lower retention rates, lower graduation rates and lower test scores. In a best practice analysis, the CPI team was able to identify low-cost initiatives that can feasibly be implemented in schools to strive towards a more equitable education level across New York State.

The Impacts of Water Infrastructure Spending

Partner: Environmental Advocates of New York State

Deliverables Provided: Economic analysis of water infrastructure spending state to state.

Significance: Across the country, water quality varies due to the different amounts of money that states invest into water infrastructure. Assessment of the spending patterns and water quality of other states shows what the likely impacts would be in New York State. CPI's economic analysis explored the impact of properly investing in water infrastructure on health, as well as business and economic development.

Food Insecurity on College Campuses

Partner: Food Bank Association of New York State

Deliverables Provided: A model program analysis of other states that are working to combat food insecurity for college students.

Significance: Food security and the lack thereof, examines the accessibility and desirability of food for everyday Americans. There are varying levels of food security and in the Capital Region there are a number of individuals who live at the level of very low security. A group that lives at this level but is often overlooked is college students. Many of the national and state food programs devoted to help people with low food security are not applicable to college students or are overly regulated. In other states, there are programs that reduce these regulations and are geared towards helping college students. The analysis of these programs and how they might be implemented in New York will lead to food security for this overlooked population.



ADVOCACY, TRAINING, CETx

This year, CPI launched Advocacy Presentations as part of the program's training opportunities. CPI Fellows were tasked with taking on a social justice topic that they are passionate about, researching the subject, and advocating for policy shifts that they believe will move towards a solution. CPI Fellows discovered innovative ways to tackle the problem and proposed ways to incorporate those policies locally.

This year we were also able to further develop Fellows' skills with on-campus presentations in collaboration with other ACE Programs and departments on campus. One of these collaborative events was a presentation from the Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences that helped to lay out all the facts of opioid addiction for ACE students and Siena's campus. This event was made successful from ACE's partnership with Siena's Health Promotion Office. This tied in with CPI Fellow, Rebecca Vitale's advocacy presentation. It helped her to further her knowledge on an issue about which she is quite passionate. As Rebecca stated, "I was happy to see that the Opioid presentation went into more detail as to the biology of addiction and its relation to the crisis."

Community Engagement Talks (CETx), conversations highlighting the innovative work of the students in the community, was an opportunity for the Fellows to share their work and the effect policy can have in creating systemic change with all ACE members. This presented a chance for Fellows to highlight their research and receive feedback from their peers. Opportunities such as these allow the Fellows to showcase their professional growth, depth of knowledge about the topic, and their enthusiasm to be changemakers.

FACULTY ENGAGEMENT

CPI encourages students from all departments to apply to become a Fellow. Each semester, CPI Fellows represent a mix of majors and academic disciplines. Currently, the 21 CPI Fellows represent 8 majors and 14 minors/certificates (Business, Liberal Arts, and Science).

Mentorship is a primary focus of CPI and each team of students works with a Siena faculty member that specializes in the project topic. Over time, CPI has developed a strong relationship with several departments including Sociology, Economics, Education, Environmental Studies, Political Science, Psychology, and Social Work. Faculty from these departments have always played a crucial role in Fellow recruitment, and this year have taken on a larger role in mentoring the projects and students. Fellows meet with these faculty on a regular basis to share updates on their project and receive feedback on their work.

This year, the Center for Academic Community Engagement launched the redesigned Certificate in Community Development, which allowed students from multiple disciplines the opportunity to complete the certificate.



THIS ACADEMIC YEAR:

29

% of CPI Fellows are enrolled in the Pre-Law Certificate

29

% of CPI Fellows major in Economics

33

% of CPI Fellows major in Political Science

60

% of CPI Fellows are enrolled in ACE's Certificate in Community Development

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The 2017-18 AY has been a banner year for CPI, as we have sought to enhance our impact on the community by more exclusively focusing on projects and partnerships with community organizations. With this sharpened focus, CPI Students have been able to provide more comprehensive and in-depth analysis to our community partners and increase the leverage of our work. I continue to be impressed with quality of work produced by our CPI student teams, whether they're assessing the impact of water infrastructure spending on water quality, developing policy recommendations to address campus food insecurity, helping to build a governance structure for a municipal non-profit coalition, or identifying best practices for programming to address educational inequality. Each project is well-designed and executed, and provides an important contribution to the well-being of our community.

Dr. Daniel Lewis



ACE 2018 CETx Talks

March 14, 2018



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After being in CPI for two semesters I was selected to become a team leader. This position has been rewarding and has allowed me to grow even further. I have been able to manage a team, delegate tasks, organize meetings, and connect with outside resources. The project I first worked on as a team leader was with the Alliance for Quality Education. This community partner was thrilled with the work we had done, making me feel extremely proud of myself, and even more so, my team. That project again opened my eyes to inequalities in school programs that I had not realized prior to researching it.

Jessie Havens '18



CPI means that I can confidently walk into other political science courses, and someday law school with the necessary knowledge of public policy and non-profits. CPI has given me a direct opportunity to learn about NYS and specifically the Capital Region through service and research into solutions for nonprofits to use and further explore in order to aid those most in need. CPI is using a platform to give a voice to those who may struggle to find their own.

Laura Durham '19

2017 - 2018 CPI Fellows



My advocacy presentation discussed the history and severity of the Opioid Crisis, as well as current non-profit organizations that are trying to combat the growing issue. As I was researching my topic, I came across 'The Opioid Diaries' series presented by Time Magazine, which highlighted its severity using various real-life images. Looking through all those images made me realize the intensity of the situation, and my peers reactions to my presentation as well were evidence of that.

Rebecca Vitale '18

Leadership Team

Dan Lewis, Ph.D., CPI Faculty Fellow, Political Science Department Chair
Courtney Tomeny '17, CPI Program Coordinator, AmeriCorps VISTA Fellow
Katie Zyniecki '14, Assistant Director, ACE
Jerry DeFrancisco, Civic Leader in Residence, ACE
Allison J. Schultz, Director of Programs, ACE
Paul W. Thurston, Ph.D., Director of Academic Integration, ACE

Report developed by:

Courtney Tomeny '17, CPI Program Coordinator, AmeriCorps VISTA Fellow
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