

## **Upstate Institute at Colgate University**

### **Summer Field School 2008**

#### **Fellow Projects**

In the summer of 2008, 23 Colgate students worked for community, not-for-profit and government organizations as part of the Upstate Institute Field School. The Field School matches students with non-profit organizations and government agencies in the upstate region to develop and implement projects that bolster organizational capacity. Both student fellowships and community projects are awarded competitively. Students are compensated by the Upstate Institute for full-time work for up to ten weeks working with the community organization. Generally, the organizations are located in Madison, Chenango and Oneida Counties.

Field School fellows work with a community partner to create and complete projects that will have a positive social, economic, cultural or environmental impact on the Upstate region. As fellows of the Upstate Institute, students are responsible for building relationships in the local and regional community. Through this experience, students will complete independent work on innovative projects that provide a community benefit and in so doing develop a deeper understanding of the issues facing the Upstate region and a strong appreciation for what the region has to offer.

#### **Abraham House**

Curry Knox, '09 worked with the Abraham House in Utica on a capital grant proposal that would allow the organization to renovate an office building. Abraham House offers residence and a staff of professionals and trained volunteer caregivers to persons who have reached the end of curative therapy options.

#### **BRiDGES**

Lea Furutani, '10, expanded the scope of a BRiDGES initiative that seeks to raise awareness of how alcohol is advertised to youth in Madison County. She expanded this initiative with additional public presentations, surveys of community opinion and the development of school and community partnerships to address the problem of underage drinking and the environmental influences of such behavior. She also helped the non-profit organize a youth leadership summit, which was a two-day retreat focused on skill development related to creating and delivering focused presentations to key community leaders and on action plan development.

#### **Cazenovia Preservation Foundation**

Kevin Williams, '09, created baseline documentation reports (BDRs) for Cazenovia Preservation Foundation's easement properties. BDRs detail current site and environmental conditions when a conservation or architectural easement is established. For each property, Kevin reviewed the property project files, conducted a site visit to document conditions and monitor adherence to terms of the easement, and prepared and filed the BDR with photo documentation and pertinent background information. This

project will support CPF's work toward accreditation by meeting several detailed Land Trust Alliance standards.

### **Central Adirondack Laboratory for Environmental Sciences**

Ryan Streams, '09, worked with an environmentally-focused research and education facility within the Adirondacks. The proposed field station, which will be located at the former Arts Center of Old Forge building, will offer short-term and long-term accommodations for researchers conducting fieldwork in the Central Adirondacks. Ryan helped CALES refine its goals and future plans in order to develop a business plan that provided a narrative for what CALES is, how it will operate, and what it hopes to accomplish. He conducted extensive research into other field stations around the world, examined their operational schemes, and determined how CALES could emulate and improve on their models.

### **Chenango Canal Association**

Rachel Surprenant, '08, worked with the Chenango Canal Association, an organization that seeks to preserve the historic cultural and present-day recreational value of the Chenango Canal and its associated towpath. She provided outreach and marketing assistance, trail maintenance, signage, research and education. She also designed a brochure to accompany the interpretive trail and educate visitors about the history of the Chenango Canal.

### **Chenango United Way**

Allison Bush, '09 worked with Chenango United Way to conduct community partner site visits and create a mid year outcome report. On these visits, she toured the program and examined the organizations' program outcomes and mid-year budgets. The organizations were scored based on the visit, and the scores will be incorporated into their request for funds next year. Allison also updated an existing document, started by fellow Julia Heymans in the summer of 2006, detailing the transition to a "business model" of evaluating requests for funding. The document, titled, "Our Transition to Community Impact," is to be used by the Chenango United Way when presenting to other United Ways planning to implement the business model.

Daniel Cavazos, '10 worked with Executive Director Elizabeth Monaco to develop the Youth Philanthropy Project, a pilot collaborative between the Chenango United Way, the Upstate Institute, the Community Foundation for South Central New York and Norwich High School that began in the fall of 2008.

### **Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, Inc.**

Swetha Peteru, '08, helped the Community Foundation pair with the United Way to create a capacity building program for regional non-profit organizations. She conducted research that would identify the best practices for approaching capacity building and make suggestions for short and long term goals for organizations interested in capacity building. She conducted interviews with people involved in the local nonprofit community in various aspects, community foundations across the nation and nonprofit support centers that already support capacity building programs to identify a successful

process for establishing capacity building programs. She also conducted a literature review of past capacity building efforts in the region in order to inform the program. Her research showed that capacity building programs need to have certain characteristics to be effective, such as being timely, assessment-based, customized, contextualized, competence-based, comprehensive, and allow for networking opportunities with peer connections.

### **Community Memorial Hospital**

Grace Baik, '10, worked on an orthopedic research project under the direction of Diane Bialczak, RN In-Service Coordinator for Community Memorial Hospital, and Dr. Ivan Gowan. This study will examine outcomes of approximately 1,000 total knee prostheses over a 20-year period. Grace reviewed medical records for each surgery performed and conducted follow-up interviews to determine which of the prostheses required the least number of revision surgeries. The final goal of the project is a publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

### **Earlville Opera House**

Katherine Byrns, '10, had the opportunity to study arts management while serving the local arts community. She assisted the EOH with a summer performance series of music and theater and with the East and West galleries, which present year-round exhibits of regional and national artists. She also assisted with the theater's circus camp program.

### **Hamilton Central School**

Chris Glendening, '09, worked with several teachers at Hamilton Central School to integrate the arts and communications technology into the traditional curriculum to create a broader, connected field of study for the students. He completed three projects while there: documenting past integrated arts projects; creating a short video documentary on the school itself; and running workshops for the school staff on communications software. He photographed and created notes on the past school projects that combined the arts with curriculum such as math or science, then organized the information into PowerPoint templates that will be used in grant applications.

### **Hope House**

Curry Knox, '09 worked with Hope House, a non-profit organization that operates as a food shelter. She interviewed staff members and volunteers, immersed herself in the daily activities at the center, then produced a booklet describing the organization and its successes.

### **House of the Good Shepherd**

David Pokorny, '10, worked with the House of the Good Shepherd in Utica to research and report on better ways to evaluate program outcomes within the organization. He looked at the activities of similar organizations to find potential new outcome measures that HGS could employ. He also created a proposal for an investment in a new software program that would allow for web based tracking of client's progress and outcomes.

### **The Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York, Inc.**

Ruben Leavitt, '08, worked with the Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York (LASMNY) to increase the organization's ability to provide bankruptcy representation to low-income clients, particularly victims of domestic violence, clients with mental health issues, clients struggling with medical debt as a result of being uninsured, and working families. Consumer bankruptcy gives the working poor who have incurred substantial debt an opportunity to reorder their finances and obtain a fresh start, but many individuals filing for bankruptcy are unable to afford a lawyer and typically cannot accurately complete the lengthy and confusing legal documents necessary to represent themselves in court. Ruben completed the legal forms and supporting documentation necessary for at least five of the cases to be referred to a pro bono attorney.

### **Lorenzo State Historic Site**

Kaitlin Tufts, '10, provided oversight of a day camp at Lorenzo State Historic Site that offers an immersion experience in turn-of-the-century life. She conducted research on the history of education and teaching in America, and incorporated the information into a format that can be used for training staff and volunteers.

### **Madison County Department of Health**

Allison Taylor, '09, worked with the Environmental Health Division at the Madison County Department of Health to enhance the GIS capabilities of the department to track environmental health indicators. Using department data, she mapped the facilities and occurrences regulated by the division, including county wells, food service establishments, mobile home parks, organic farms, and cases of elevated blood lead levels in children. Using ArcGIS software, she created a database that will assist in the identification of environmental conditions that may impact public health and property. The creation of this database will allow the division to better identify and track these conditions, and map surveillance data that could be used for assessments to improve delivery of services and protect the health of county residents.

### **Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees**

Mark Castiglia, '09, worked with Compass, the rebranding of MVRCCR's cultural services. He conducted web-based research on cultural competency curriculum and developed training materials. He also assisted with the Refugee Running Team, which participated in the Utica Boilermaker, and the International Mile section of the race.

### **National Abolition Hall of Fame**

The National Abolition Hall of Fame (NAHOF) honors exemplary people from three centuries that have dedicated their lives, efforts, and personal wealth to gain equal rights for all. Kate Joyce, '09, worked with NAHOF to prepare for the commemoration ceremony, held at Morrisville State College in October 2008. She conducted research on the abolitionist inductees to assist in monologue background and on geographic locations of the inductees' work. She also facilitated the afternoon symposia at the ceremony, and co-facilitated the evening commemoration, which is the heart of the weekend.

### **The Neighborhood Center**

Laura Simocko, '09, worked with the Somali Bantu Case Management Program at the Neighborhood Center in Utica. She performed outreach with interpreters and developed programming for future implementation. She researched and created life skills training materials for caseworkers and clients on transportation and home management. She also coordinated a community meeting between Somali Bantu leaders and representatives of local and state government hosted by the Neighborhood Center.

### **Resource Center for Independent Living**

Carly Turro, '09, worked on a quality study of the programs offered through the Resource Center for Independent Living, an organization in Utica that offers advocacy services to people with disabilities. She began by researching how RCIL programs work, who is being served, what is being provided, and how people benefit. She then identified what constitutes quality and how that can be measured, and applied the findings to six programs within the organization to determine how they could improve.

### **Young Scholars Liberty Partnership Program at Utica College**

Griffin Goldsmith, '09, worked with the Young Scholars Liberty Partnership Program (YSLPP), which aims to help low-income children graduate from high school and attend college. The YSLPP started in 1993 and has successfully graduated 10 cohorts of students. Griffin helped to create an alumni database that will allow the program directors to stay connected with graduates and use stories about their success as motivation for future YSLPP participants. She also assisted with the annual YSLPP Summer Session at Utica College, in which rising seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students attend classes at Utica College for three weeks.