

The Learning Connection



Grand Opening: President Poskanser, Dean Nagel and Professor McNally, the Faculty and Public Scholarship Coordinator stand together on CCCE's opening day, which combines Academic Civic Engagement (ACE), Acting in the Community Together (ACT) and Public Scholarship.

Greetings all,

This winter has been a satisfying term, as we publicly launched the new Center for Community and Civic Engagement (CCCE) which brings together ACE (Academic Civic Engagement - the curricular branch) with ACT (Acting in the Community Together - the co-curricular branch) and a new public scholarship program. We've moved our ACE offices to Sayles-Hill (in two locations). We've also become more intentional about connecting students in ACE course with corresponding ACT programs, enabling them to continue their good work and vice versa. Additionally, we're excited for the growing public scholarship program as it recognizes and supports Carleton's professors, dedicated to exchanging knowledge beyond the classroom. It is interesting to note that many of the faculty interested in public scholarship are already teaching ACE courses, so they are actively sharing knowledge and teaching with publics in a range of ways.

As an integrated Center for Community and Civic Engagement, we are aiming to improve and make clearer paths for students, faculty, and staff to connect beyond the Carleton classroom in meaningful, reciprocal, and educational partnerships. The articles, on faculty, courses, community partners and student initiative all showcase projects that integrate CCCE programs and community.

As the launch of the CCCE shows, Carleton has strengthened its commitment to civic engagement during this time of strategic planning. On January 20th we held our public launch of the CCCE and on February 14th we began to share ideas for future possibilities at an LTC lunch. Throughout this exciting transition, we've stayed focused on keeping students' experiences and voices at the heart of what we do.

I hope you enjoy these inspiring stories as much as I have!

-Adrienne Falcón,
Director of Academic Civic Engagement

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Public Scholarship in Psychology:

A Profile of Professor Lutsky

Professor Neil Lutsky, Carleton's William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of Psychology, aims to introduce a cluster of first year students to academic civic engagement through his A&I Seminar Measured Thinking. "What I found is that it's possible and valuable for students to do work that involves the surrounding community. Students find that meaningful," noted Lutsky.

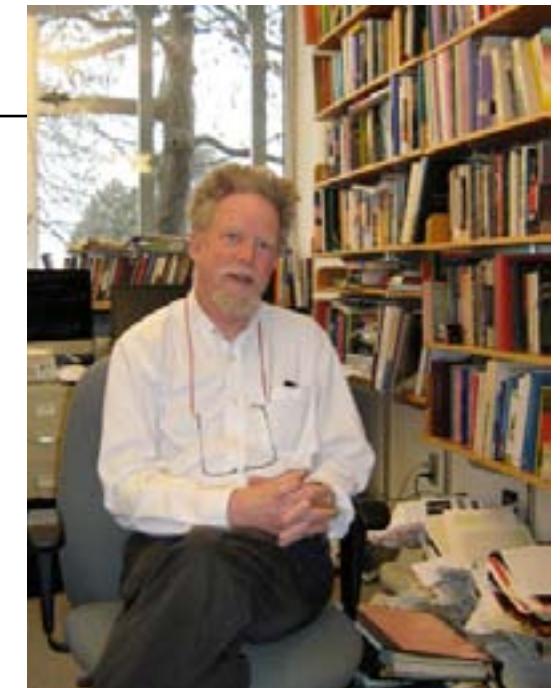
The work emerging from Professor Lutsky's classes has had significant impact on Northfield and nearby neighborhoods. One project has involved working with the Girl Scouts to use data to assess their future plans. "The very first year I taught the course I had students in my class work with subsets of the Girl Scouts' data, summarize the data, and write up little reports, and those reports went to the Regional Girl Scouts Council eventually," explained Lutsky. Ultimately, the Trustees of the Girl Scouts Regional Council circulated and assessed the data reports by Carleton students; those reports were considered as the Trustees met to plot out future years and plans.

"The course," he later articulated, "helps

students recognize how important quantitative reasoning is in contemporary society." This year's Measured Thinking students worked with Northfield Middle Schoolers on a collaborative art exhibition called Northfield Runs the Numbers in the Weitz Center for Creativity. "We couldn't have done it without the support of ACE, because they provided the transportation back and forth to the middle school...It was quite the operation. It was gratifying."

"My work [in public scholarship] has helped me better understand the conditions of various institutions in the community (e.g., the Girl Scouts, the Northfield Middle School) and the good work of the people striving to help those institutions best accomplish their missions. There's an openness to collaboration that you don't find everywhere."

Over the years, Lutsky has taught not only Carls the art of quantitative reasoning, but also many in the field of higher education. In the past two years alone, Lutsky has been a public figure promot-



In the Office: Lutsky discusses his ideas about the relationship between data, community, and assessment.

ing the learning of quantitative reasoning as an invited speaker at Pomona College, Berea College and many more. In addition, he has been a speaker at various conferences, including the National Numeracy Network, the Mathematical Association of America, and the Northeast Consortium on

"Applying Personal Creativity to Political Realities": Stuart Pimsler Dance and Theatre Company's ten-week residency at Carleton

On January 6, the Stuart Pimsler Dance & Theater (SPDT) Company brought together movement, music, and spoken word poetry in an evening of dance performances at the Weitz Center Theater. The Minneapolis-based company presented pieces explored human relationships and politically charged social issues through movement, music, and poetry. This performance was only the beginning of the SPDT Company's ten-week residency through which all the key groups at Carleton were able to exchange ideas and learn from the Company.

In addition to presenting their work, the SPDT Company began their residency at Carleton with a lunch discussion of "the artist as citizen," in which the dancers shared their perspectives on community engagement as it connects to dance. Stuart Pimsler also met with a small group of faculty to share insights as to how to do dance and civic engagement with the community in an ethical way.

Performing Politics, a winter term dance class taught by Pimsler and other company members, was another part of the residency. The fifteen members of the class explored their own political interests through movement and choreographed performance pieces based on issues of race, gender, bodies, and power. Pimsler called Performing Politics "a class for students who are interested in finding ways to integrate their own political sensibilities into performance."

The students' exploration of dance and society was not limited to the dance studio. Members of the Performing Politics class joined Pimsler and his company in bringing dance to the larger Rice County community through a series of movement workshops Pimsler calls "community connections." "Working in populations and in programs that typically...don't have a voice to express themselves through the arts" is part of the SPDT Company's mission, Pimsler said.

At the workshops, held with low-income diabetes patients at the Healthfinders Clinic, Somali youth in Faribault, and senior citizens and caregivers at Millstream Commons, an assisted living facility in Northfield, participants worked with partners and in groups to share their own stories through simple movements. For the students in the Performing Politics class, these community workshops offered a new perspective on the ideas they had explored in class. Roman Morris '12, a member of the Performing Politics class, said that working with youth at Faribault High School was a challenge for him, but ultimately, he concluded that "move-



ment carries the power of creativity and expression, and perhaps all we can do in the setting of an after-school program is offer a taste."

The SPDC has received funding to return to Northfield next year through a residency at St. Olaf College, so the community connections the dancers forged this term will continue to grow. "It's absolutely crucial that artists play a role in society at large—applying personal creativity to political realities," said Densmore.

For a full list of ACE courses offered in Fall 2012 see <http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/civic/courses/>!



Students Connect to Healthfinders Through the Classroom and Beyond

Several students share their stories of partnership with a local health clinic and patient advocacy organization

"I'm interested in medicine because I love working with people," explains senior biology major Sameena Ahmed '12. During her junior year, Ahmed participated in a health-focused off-campus program in Chile. Returning to the United States, she was eager to do more with medicine locally. "In Chile, I saw how health affected lives," she recalls. "Not having good health can make things really difficult."

To get involved, Ahmed turned to HealthFinders. For Rice County residents lacking quality health insurance, the clinic provides primary care, wellness programs, and patient advocacy. HealthFinders is committed to involving the community in their organization, because they rely on volunteers for many essential tasks and depend on feedback from patients to provide quality care. Of course, they found a way to put Ahmed to work, using her skills as a pre-med student, Spanish speaker, and former residential assistant.

Ahmed's opportunity was due in part to HealthFinders' strong relationship with Carleton. For years, the ACT Center has run one of its most successful programs at the clinic. The organization has also been the focus of several ACE courses. Director Charlie Mandile, an alumnus of Carleton, met with Ahmed to discuss how she could work with HealthFinders, since they weren't looking to fill any specific position. The two came up with a proposed summer internship, which the Multicultural Alumni Network made possible with a grant.

The summer internship was a success, as Ahmed worked hard on the clinic's community outreach initiatives. When school started up again, though, she wasn't done working with HealthFinders. Virtually every term, students do projects with HealthFinders through ACE courses. During the fall, Ahmed took Ken Abrams's Health Psychology course and assisted the clinic with creating an intentional model for strengthening and integrating its educational programs. This winter, she participated in Pamela Feldman-Savelsberg's Anthropology of Health and Illness, in which four students helped HealthFinders prepare to open a new Faribault office by conducting interviews and focus groups with potential patients.

Through opportunities like these, says Leah Eby '13, the student assistant supporting the Anthropology class, "Students can apply what they learn in class to real world

Community Decisions: Healthfinders holds a community meeting and focus group about its new location in Faribault.

scenarios, while also better understanding issues of diversity, both theoretically and in the Northfield community."

The ACT Center is also a hub for involvement with HealthFinders. Viviane Clement '12 is the student coordinator in charge of coordinating volunteers for the clinic, and enabling civically minded Carls to help sustain this essential public service. "With volunteers, HealthFinders is able to keep providing free services," states Clement. "Students help as translators, researchers, and one student even became a certified nurse."

This year's merger of ACT and ACE has strengthened Carleton's partnership with HealthFinders. Leah Eby works as an ACT student coordinator, but also works for the Sociology/Anthropology department and was able to serve as the ACE assistant for Feldman-Savelsberg's class. "ACE helps provide a critical perspective on community engagement," Eby asserts. "Hopefully, the relationship with HealthFinders can continue to be institutionalized and integrated into even more classes."

Viviane Clement points out that ACT is also able to fill gaps left by ACE. "People in the community don't want students to just leave an organization after ten weeks. Students who have taken an ACE class can get involved in the ACT program to maintain their relationships and continue their work with HealthFinders. Ideally, they could develop a lifelong commitment to public health."

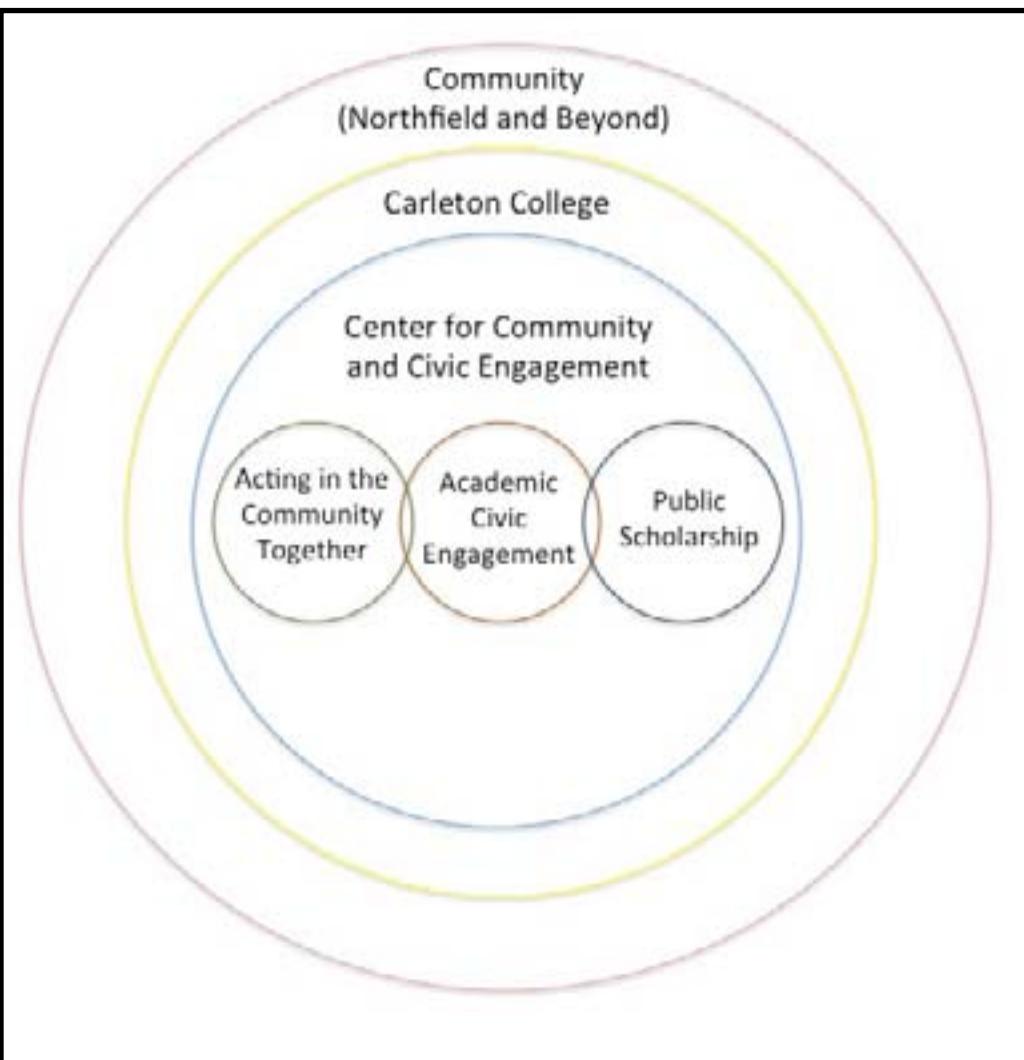
That's certainly been the case with Sameena Ahmed. "I want to go to medical school and become a doctor," she says. "But I want to do clinical work, and community work, and healthcare policy. I think it's important to have somebody who can see all levels." Sameena will be graduating from Carleton in June but will be continuing to be involved next year as a VISTA with Healthfinders as part of a public health corps. The on-going bridge will help Sameena as her career develops, Heathfinders and also Carls as we further our collaborations.

learn more at http://healthfindersmn.org/news/?story_id=242349

4ACE in Transition

Matchmaking: The New Center for Community and Civic Engagement (CCCE) Opens up Possibilities

Faculty, Staff and Students Create a New Vision of Civic Engagement and Carleton



Visualizing the Center: This Diagram explores the ways in which CCCE fits into the Carleton and Northfield communities.

On Valentine's Day this winter, the Center for Community and Civic Engagement played matchmaker for Carleton faculty, staff, and students. The date was a lunch hosted by the Learning and Teaching Center, and the intent was to get the college to fall in love with a comprehensive vision for civic engagement.

Michael McNally, Laura Riehle-Merrill, and Adrienne Falcón – directors of the CCCE's public scholarship, community service, and academic civic engagement offices – outlined the possibilities for community engagement at Carleton and summarized the activity of peer institutions. Afterwards, attendees partook in a discussion of what they'd like to see from the CCCE and which existing models seem worth replicating.

The response from the over 75 participants was enthusiastic. Participants lauded the work that ACE and ACT are already doing, and called enthusiastically for the CCCE to receive more resources. High turnout from faculty suggested the great potential for the office of Public Scholarship. The conversation made clear that Carleton has many possible ways to pursue community engagement, and the college's leaders and educators support bold action in the future.

We will be featuring the vision for the integration in our end-of-the-year newsletter.

Communication in the Modern World:

A group of Carleton students think outside the classroom

Beneath the dusty rafters of the rather deserted Cave, Carleton's student-run music venue, a small group of students has been gathering to approach the question, "Just what's really going on here at Carleton?" Acknowledging the vast nature of such a notion, discussion leader Jacob Hoerger '14 describes the subject matter as "things we otherwise might not be able to talk about in the classroom setting."

Winter quarter seventh week's discussion centered on how Carleton students interact in both the technologically advanced world and in the academic setting. Describing the tension he sees between these two modes, Brian Spisiak '13 said, "In class, interactions happen in a very specific way. We read a text, organize that information for our classmates and professors, and present it in a sort of formal and analytic way. That's not a bad thing, but it definitely sculpts us for a very specific kind of communication, and I'm not sure that we're really that good at other kinds of non-classroom based communication which might help us grow in a more holistic sense."

The group's goal is to develop a venue where students can talk about the nature of communication at Carleton, and the pragmatic ways we can broaden our interpersonal horizons. Things like new technologies have certainly changed this field and several group members referenced a shared notion of stress having developed extensively within the past few years. "When you pull yourself out of context and look at our college

lives here with a more critical eye, it makes a little more sense," says Ellie Youngblood '14. "As students at Carleton we sometimes don't have an accurate understanding of just what we're doing here. We know what we're 'supposed' to be doing in this setting, but I feel like our overall range of communication is a bit underdeveloped".

The general aim of these discussions is increased understanding of interactions at Carleton and practical ways we can improve these interactions, not just to be better students, but better humans and friends. Group members are interested in finding ways to begin to include the greater Northfield and world communities in the campus conversations. At Carleton, we are run through a fast-paced academic machine, gathering opinions and information and hopefully attempting to form a better understanding of the nature of the world. As students from the group say, "We don't want to graduate only to find we are missing a vast chunk of the human dialogue. Even if greater participation in the world beyond the academic sphere might not directly help us to do well in class, many students are finding that it helps create a more fulfilling existence."

The dialogue is set to continue into spring Thursday evenings at 9:00 PM, in the Cave.