CCESL REPRESENTS AT THE 2016 DIVERSITY SUMMIT

By Jaci Abeloe, Graduate Assistant, and Ryan Hanschen, CCESL Program Coordinator

The 15th annual Diversity Summit on Inclusive Excellence, titled Beyond Good Intentions: Confronting My Bias to Change Our Community, was hosted at the DU on January 21 and 22, 2016. CCESL was a co-sponsor of the summit and presented two workshops: Leveraging Identity and Critical Reflection to Increase Community Impact, presented by Ryan Hanschen, Neda Kikhia, Ashley Edinger, and Sarah Yaffe and Innovative Community Organizing Strategies to Develop Inclusive, Socially Just Communities, presented by Jaci Abeloe and Vanessa Vazquez.

Both workshops featured important aspects of the Community Organizing Model to engage workshop attendees in ways to confront their personal biases. In the Leveraging Identity & Critical Reflection workshop, participants

(Continued on page 2)
learned specific tools and strategies for critical reflection that will strengthen their ability to make an impact on campus and in the community. The workshop focused on the community organizing concept of self-interest, provided participants with the resources needed to facilitate critical reflection activities, and led activities around the development of individual action plans that integrate identity, reflection, and community change.

_Innovating Community Organizing Strategies_ also drew on self-interest as a tool for participants to confront personal bias. This workshop highlighted the importance of finding collective self-interest based on shared values as a way to achieve social change.

Participants were able to gain an understanding of Community Organizing principles, such as how to work with others to take collective public action, and how they may be strategically used to address social inequalities. They were able to engage in activities, like one-to-ones, in order to practice their new Community Organizing skills and share what they were able to learn about themselves through their self-interest assessment activity. Participants were sent home with a copy of the Community Organizing Handbook to support their continuous effort towards community change.

Co-presenter Neda Kikhia articulated that “this workshop was a very cool venue to present on topics that we, as DUSC Co-Presidents, are extremely passionate about and have spent most of our undergraduate experience honing in on. I loved the way our participants made it clear this was a relevant subject for them and how they soaked in the material and made plans to apply it in their work and personal lives.”

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**CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE**

Congratulations to Sarah Yaffe, DUSC Co-President, and Ryan Hanschen, CCESL Program Coordinator, on receiving the 2016 Provost’s Champions of Change Award!

Each year, the Center for Multicultural Excellence and the Diversity Summit Committee recognize faculty, staff, students, alumni and/or departments/organizations from across campus that have demonstrated outstanding accomplishments and contributed to advancing the tenants of Inclusive Excellence at DU through exemplary leadership.

We are incredibly proud of Ryan and Sarah. To learn more about the Champions of Change, visit:

THE HEART OF HELPING FAMILIES HEAL FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF A BABY

By Erin Willer, Associate Professor, and Kate Hoyt, Ph.D. Student; Communication Studies

Erin: In our Fall 2014 class Visual Narratives of Women’s Health, we did a service learning project with Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep (NILMDTS), which is an international organization headquartered in Colorado that provides free remembrance photography to families following the death of a baby. We worked with NILMDTS and their program Drawings from the Heart, volunteering and researching at the organization’s annual remembrance walk where they host a pavilion where children come to draw pictures in memory of babies they have lost. Kate, can you share the work that you and your classmates did on one of the deliverables for NILMDTS?

Kate: While our class as a whole performed research on challenges and coping strategies bereaved children face, the main product of the partnership was a digital storybook entitled, Help Me Remember: A Storybook for Children and Families Coping with the Death of a Baby. The book highlights major themes we found in our research and ethnographic observations, featuring three main characters who struggle with grieving the death of a sibling. I am currently a doctoral student in Communication Studies and I have an MFA in Emergent Digital Practices. With this background I was able to digitally illustrate the book that my classmates and I wrote, as well as publish it on Amazon, where it is currently on sale. Proceeds are going toward NILMDTS and The Scraps of the Heart Project (a CCESL Public Good Fund Project).

Erin: Can you reflect on how this project facilitated your growth academically, civically, and personally?

Kate: Because you were so open about your own story of losing a baby and the way that it inspired both your research and teaching, we as graduate students felt like we shared a personal stake in the outcome of the class’s research. By connecting us to NILMDTS, we were able to hear more stories of families who had gone through similar experiences of baby loss, and it ignited in us a passion to do work that matters to them. As with all academic work, it is extremely rewarding to see your research endeavors actually impact the community it is intended to serve.

Erin: We are continuing our service learning work with the baby loss community and The Scraps of the Heart Project (SOTHP) this Winter 2016 quarter in the undergraduate course Visual Narratives of Women’s Health and graduate course Health Communication. We are studying hurtful and compassionate memorable messages families receive following the loss of their babies. Kate, can you talk about what our creative team is doing to apply this work?

Kate: After interviewing parents and family members who have lost babies, we are crafting a series of “grieving cards” that incorporate compassionate memorable messages that our interviewees have found helpful throughout their journeys. Working with the SOTHP, our plan is to make these cards available for free to anyone hoping to support family members facing baby loss. I personally hope to combine powerful design elements with well-crafted messages in order to spread awareness of the power of these memorable messages and to support those who need it most.
MY PUKSTA PROJECT: BLACK MALES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

By Mawukle Yebuah, Puksta Scholar

As a Puksta scholar, I have spent my academic career working to address issues of higher education access for young Black males. The majority of my work has been spent with the Black Male Initiative Summit (BMIS), a college access pipeline program through the Center for Multicultural Excellence (CME).

During my freshmen year, BMIS was an annual summit in which one Friday during the school year, we brought approximately 200 young Black males to our campus to participate in small group workshops lead by a combination of Black professionals and Black undergraduate or graduate students. For many of our scholars, BMIS is the only time they get to experience a safe, positive space for them to express and discuss their Black identity.

In my sophomore year, some of the leaders of the program and I wanted to find a way to make the BMIS more sustainable. We discussed our options and decided to create the Black Male Initiative Summit Scholars Program (BMISSP). With BMISSP, we would develop relationships with organizations in the community in order to coordinate three additional events every year for our scholars. Doing this allowed us to see our scholars multiple times a year, which meant we were able to address some important issues around sustainability and the overall impact BMIS was having in the lives of our young scholars. Each BMISSP event involved Black professionals, showing our scholars what it was like to be in various fields and some of the activities they perform in their line of work.

Some of the highlights of BMISSP have been our trip to Google headquarters in Boulder where our scholars got to meet Black engineers and programmers and try out gadgets like Google Glass. Our scholars have also participated in the Law School Pipeline Conference at DU. They really enjoyed the chance to meet Black lawyers, talk about going to law school, and ask important questions about the current state of our justice system. With the scholars program now in its third year, we are working to develop our research methods in order to measure the success of the Scholars program in achieving the goal of making BMIS more sustainable.

This year, I was extremely blessed to go to Kingston, Jamaica with members of our BMIS team and present on both programs at the International Colloquium on Black Males in Education. My experience at the conference was filled with hearing other people’s research as well as talking about the many global issues around Black Males in Education. I was very happy to interact with an international group of scholars, some of whom I now call my friends. Presenting at the Colloquium has been one of the major highlights of my experience as a Puksta Scholar and DU student. I am very grateful for CCESL, Puksta, CME, the Undergraduate Research Center, and our BMIS team for allowing me to have this experience. It has energized me and motivated me to continue my work even after graduation.
Congratulations to Neda Kikhia for being named Colorado Leadership Alliance’s (CLA) 2016 Student Leader of the Year! Neda has been a big part of CCESL throughout her time as a DU student. She previously served as a Public Achievement Team Lead, and her current roles include Co-President of DU Service & Change and Program Assistant for Service Initiatives.

Neda explains, “I have worked hard to challenge stereotypes around gender, race and religion, and I’m committed to continuing my work as a leader to actively create spaces where underrepresented voices can be heard.”

The award is given by the Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation and the Boettcher Foundation annually.

Way to go, Neda!
Associate Dean Nancy Sasaki sings the praises of the Division of Natural Science & Mathematics (NSM) for making “DU a go-to place for doing public good.” NSM sponsored two large-scale events during Winter Quarter that brought members of the greater community to campus.

On January 30th, the Denver Public Schools (DPS) Science Fair was held in the Gates Fieldhouse of the Ritchie Center. More than 1,000 attendees came to view 285 posters, which was nearly triple the number of projects from 2015. According to Sasaki, DPS families praised the event’s location on campus, saying it made the fair feel more official. The Society of Physics Students and the Chemistry Students Organization hosted tables with STEM-aligned activities to engage attendees. The popular features helped attendees creatively pass the time while projects were judged. Visitors also toured the Human Dynamics lab, talked to esteemed professors, and visited with current DU science students.

On February 6th, DU and the Math department hosted the Denver metro area MathCounts competition in Davis Auditorium at Sturm Hall. MathCounts is a national math enrichment, coaching, and competition program that promotes middle school mathematics advancement across the United States. The event featured 35 regional middle school teams composed of over 250 participants.
SLA PROFILE: A DEDICATION TO THE PUBLIC GOOD

By Justin Nelson, Service Learning Associate

DU’s vision portrays an educational institution that is strongly devoted to community engagement, service learning, and appeasing all stakeholders in the community. It simply and concisely states that DU “will be a great private university dedicated to the public good.” But can a university with an estimated yearly tuition of $61,460 truly impact the community without coming off as boastful and presumptuous? It seems improbable that many surrounding communities would accept DU’s community engagement without feeling objectified and marginalized in some way. However, through a deeper look, one can see that this great university is more than their top tier athletics and exceptional business school, but truly is dedicated to the public good.

I have been lucky enough to experience and partake in this commitment through CCESL as a Service Learning Associate (SLA) for the past three years, taking on many different roles and challenges in the community. My position has taken me from working with the mentally ill homeless community to building a curriculum plan for an underprivileged elementary school, and everywhere in between. While I have worked with many professors and staff at DU, I have primarily assisted Dr. Elizabeth Drogin of the Writing Program in her efforts to make an impact in low income, low performing schools in Denver. We partnered her undergraduate writing classes with SCORES, a program which works nationwide in underprivileged districts to teach poetry and coach soccer to 3rd through 5th graders. Through these efforts we hoped to increase these children’s grades, decrease after school crime rates in the areas, and ultimately improve the community through education and action.

My role as an SLA, especially with Dr. Drogin and SCORES, has been extremely hands-on. My main role has been to bridge the gaps between the students, community partner, and the faculty member. By leading discussion and reflection sessions, volunteering with the students on a weekly basis, and assisting with administrative duties for the class, I am able to perform a wide variety of tasks and remain extremely involved with the students and community partner. This conglomerated job description has allowed me to grow tremendously as a student, young adult, and community member. I have been subjected to a myriad of different viewpoints and perspectives from people of all backgrounds. I have learned more than I ever thought I could through what I first considered a job, but what has morphed into a critical part of my identity and college experience.

DU’s vision of providing for the public good may seem like a publicity stunt on the surface; however, I have experienced first-hand how truly dedicated the school, faculty, and students are to making a positive impact in their community. The altruistic initiatives and actions of CCESL and all of its constituents have allowed me to approach problems with multiple lenses and have instilled a passion within me for community action. Being a member of CCESL has played a huge role in my college experience, and I am proud to be a part of a great University and organization that is dedicated to the public good.

Photo courtesy of Denver Scores
KEEPING ENGAGED IN FALL QUARTER WITH DU SERVICE & CHANGE

By Sarah Yaffe, Co-President of DUSC

It was easy for DU students to get involved with volunteering during Fall Quarter. DU Service & Change (DUSC) gave students opportunities to serve our community on and off campus, from loading eggs at Metro Caring to promoting zero-waste lunch at the PeaceJam Slam on DU’s campus. In total during Fall Quarter, DU students volunteered for 325 hours with DUSC. We also welcomed four new student leaders to the ever-growing volunteering organization.

The short-term volunteering team, Project Action, hosted several off campus events for DU students. Project Action brought students to volunteer with Café 180 during a warm September morning. DUSC Co-chair, Julia Scanlan reflected on the event, saying that the best memories she had at DU were volunteering with other passionate students.

During Fall Quarter, DUSC also co-programmed with several DU faculty members including an ongoing partnership with the University Chaplain, Gary Brower, who hosts several service-based events on and off campus. Project Action participated in box sorting at Metro Caring on a busy Friday. They also brought ten volunteers to Centennial Towers to converse with senior citizens affected by Alzheimer’s disease with the organization Hope through Hoops.

DUSC was excited to partner with local non-profit PeaceJam Foundation to bring hundreds of high school students to campus to participate in the PeaceJam Slam. Project Volunteer hosted a zero-waste lunch by teaching students about the differences between compostable, recyclable, and trash items. Overall, the day was incredibly fun and will lead to further engagement between community partners and students on campus.

DUSC focused on wellness during week eight by handing out apple cider and hot cocoa to students studying in the library. New student leaders Michaela Nee and Teresa Wright created and shared care packages to market DUSC and to promote self-care during busy times for students. This self-care continued into our final meeting of the quarter which included a critical reflection of our volunteering and time to unwind with coloring.

Join us on April 16 for our 4th Annual Day of Action! We will be bringing students from Denver elementary schools to experience college for a day. College access inequality is a large social issue that we strive to change. To find out more about getting involved with the planning find us on Facebook!

For more information about DUSC, please email du.service.change@gmail.com or find us on Facebook.
Public Achievement Joins Marade to Celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr.

By Grace Carson, Public Achievement Coach

Martin Luther King Day is a day of reflection for not only how far we’ve come, but also for how far we still have to go. The MLK Marade (a mixture of a march and a parade), held in downtown Denver on January 20th, was the perfect time both to consider how much America has changed in terms of civil rights, and to demand more in the areas where we still lack justice for minorities. It gave minorities a space to appeal for answers and mourn their struggles. It was also a time of hope – to be made aware of the change that is certain to come from those who follow in Dr. King’s footsteps.

Public Achievement (PA), one of CCESL’s programs, empowers students to make the changes they wish to see in the world. The MLK Marade gave students an opportunity to use that empowerment. Not only were they surrounded by an environment of hope, but they were given an opportunity to voice the issues that they care about. Many of the students made signs about racial inequality. One student’s sign asked, “Has Dr. King’s dream really come true?” Other students shared Dr. King’s ideas and quotes on their posters. One girl’s sign held his quote, “A riot is the language of the unheard.”

Seeing the way the PA students found their voices to promote social justice during the MLK Marade was amazing. As they marched to the state capitol, they chanted for justice and love. At the end of the day, their faces showed hope, love, and empowerment to make a change. When the march ended, the students listened to the speeches, dances, and songs that minorities preformed. They also looked at the art displayed at the event. There was laughter, there was singing, and there was happiness.

The students left that day feeling hopeful and as though their voices had been heard. They left feeling connected to Dr. King in a way that many others have never felt, and as though they could, and will, make a difference. They did not regret giving up their day of sleeping in and were glad they spent their day honoring and rejoicing in the life of a man whose impact will never fade away.
ALUMNI CORNER: SEAN DAVIS, CLASS OF 2013

By Michael Gooch, CCESL Social Media Specialist

Recently, I interviewed CCESL alum Sean Davis. Here’s what he had to say about the impact Public Achievement had on him.

“I am currently working as a Special Education Teacher at South High School. It is my third year teaching and my first year at South. I spent my first two years teaching with Teach for America in New York City and taught at a high school in the Bronx. I was teaching U.S. History as a special education teacher and working with a lot of kids from all over the world – the Bronx is a very diverse place. I spent two years helping them to prepare for their U.S. History Regents Examination which they need to pass in order to graduate. After two years, I kind of felt like Denver was more like a home, so I came back and now work with South. I had previously worked at South with Public Achievement; it’s a great school.

“During my senior year at DU, I saw a job opportunity with CCESL to be a Public Achievement Coach. I had been doing more administrative office work as a student employee at DU, and I felt like working with CCESL would be a lot more meaningful to go out into the community and help in any way that I could. I joined the Public Achievement program, and I was actually working at South High School for that entire year. It was a really cool experience to work with kids that might need a little extra support and show them what it means to be citizens and what they can do to stand up for issues they think are important.

“That experience is kind of what got me into teaching to begin with. I was an International Studies major and unsure of what to do, and then I decided that teaching is really cool and I feel like I can really make a difference. It was probably a big reason that I was given the opportunity to teach here now - because I was able to work at South a few years ago. When I met with the principal she was so excited that I loved South and wanted to come back, so CCESL really set me on the path that I ended up being on for being really invested in kids, teaching, and education as a whole.

“In terms of goals at South High School, I want to find ways to support my special education students as much as I can. I want to make sure they know it is okay if they don’t go to college, as long as they have some way to be happy and independent in their lives. Another goal I have is to help to push South to celebrate its diversity as much as possible. I think that South is such an amazing place and the fact that it has students with so many different cultures, languages and stories is great. I want to push it even more to celebrate the great attributes that these kids bring to the table.

“I think the most important advice I would have for [students] that are in CCESL or Public Achievement is that if teaching is what you love, then find a way to do it. I think that Teach for America was a decent option for me and it did provide me with a lot of good opportunities, but there are a lot of other ways you can get involved. CCESL is a great way to get that background experience, and it’s a great resume builder to say that you have experience in the classroom. I just think it’s important that if you are passionate about working with students, then find a way to make that happen.”
THE Civic Development Initiative
@ DU’s Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CCESL)

About
CCESL's Civic Development Initiative seeks to promote civic identity development by preparing students, staff, and faculty for active participation in civic life through public good work and community organizing.

Public Achievement
DU Public Achievement (PA) coaches facilitate teams of high school students in the Denver metro area to conduct public work (service learning) projects that address social justice issues identified by teens.

20 DU STUDENTS
CONTRIBUTED
4,340 HOURS
PREPARING OUTSIDE THE CLASS AND
560 HOURS
IN LOCAL CLASSROOMS AT 4 PARTNER SCHOOLS SERVING
105 K-12 STUDENTS

The annual Puksta Passage celebrates the accomplishments of scholars, particularly graduating seniors.

Puksta Scholars
The program is a four-year, developmental civic engagement program with an intentionally diverse community. Scholars are provided curricular and co-curricular personal and civic development training, personal and group critical reflection opportunities, and mentoring.

$66,000
AWARDED IN SCHOLARSHIPS TO
12 SCHOLARS
WHO SPENT
1,385 HOURS
WORKING WITH 16 COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The Community Organizing Institute
The Institute brings together students, faculty, and community members to explore techniques in relationship building, self and collective interest, issue research, public action project development, and implementation.

Participants engaging in group work at the Community Organizing Institute.

Spectator-to-Citizen
This 3-course sequence of 2-credit classes teaches DU students the civic skills required to actively participate in the public life of their communities.

31 STUDENTS
CONTRIBUTED
158 HOURS
WORKING WITH
5 COMMUNITY PARTNERS

PA Coaches participate in Denver’s MLK Marade (March & Parade) with their teams of high school students.

www.du.edu/ccesl

Data reflect AY 2014-2015