VARIED TEACHING METHODOLOGIES INSPIRE STUDENTS LEARNING ABOUT THE CHICANO MOVEMENT

By Lisa Martinez, Associate Professor and Chair, Sociology & Criminology

In Winter 2017, I received a CCESL Community-Engaged Learning Mini Grant in support of my class, Latinos in American Society. The class focused on the legacy of the Chicano Movement and the Crusade for Justice, the Denver-based social justice organization founded by the late Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales. Given that last year marked the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Crusade, it provided an ideal opportunity to tailor the theme of the course to social justice issues and the legacy of the Movement for Latinos today. For the final project, students were tasked with collecting and analyzing data available through the Western History and Genealogy Library, which houses Gonzales’s papers and other primary sources on the Chicano Movement, as well as the Beck Archives of Rocky Mountain Jewish History at DU.

In addition to engaging with primary sources, I wanted students to leave the class with a greater understanding of the Chicano Movement and the history of Chicana/o activism in Denver specifically. Toward that end, I invited guest speakers to address core issues affecting Latina/o and Chicana/o communities during the civil rights era and the present. Speakers included Professor Tom Romero of Sturm College of Law who spoke about Keyes v. School District No. 1, the first non-southern school desegregation case heard by the U.S. Supreme Court, a

(continued on page 2)
case which involved Denver Public Schools. Students also learned about community activism from DU alum and founder of Project VOYCE (Voices of Youth Changing Education), Candi CdeBaca. Another DU alum, Jordan Sauers, shared her experiences as the first Latina and youngest person to successfully run for City Council representative in Northglenn’s Ward 1. Toward the end of the course, students were visited by Dusti Gurule, the founder and former executive director of the Latina Initiative, an organization committed to Latinas’ political empowerment, and Antonio Esquibel, professor emeritus at Metro State and member of the Crusade for Justice.

Through scholarship, historical records, personal accounts, poetry and art, and even song, students gained a robust understanding of Latinos’ struggles and ways in which they empowered themselves then and today. In working with the archives, Sociology senior, Linda Kornfeld wrote:

I was fortunate to have had the benefit of both the learning experience of utilizing archives as a form of research as well as having guest speakers brought to the classroom to address different aspects of what our class work was covering. The archive excursion to the Denver Library was an invaluable lesson in how to navigate archives as well as how they can benefit a research paper. After the experience of learning what is available, I’m sure each student will, in the future, utilize this unfamiliar, yet, very beneficial resource.

First-year Journalism major, Isaac Vargas, echoed these sentiments:

Working with archives instilled a sense of initiative and control over my own learning experience throughout the year. It was after hearing class lectures and being a part of class discussions that working with archives not only solidified my understanding of the content by reading about some of it first hand, but it also gave me the opportunity to further research some of the topics I was personally interested in. The archives ultimately offered a layer of understanding and self-discovery, and were reinforcement of the in-class information that we talked about. Though intimidating at first, I had a great deal of fun and interest in working with archives because it made me feel as if the knowledge that I was acquiring was not simply from a textbook but from my own research of the information through primary source[s]. This would create a positive learning experience that would eventually filter into my final research paper and my overall experience in the classroom.

The speakers also provided a valuable opportunity to engage with key figures in the Movement, who shared their memories and observations from that era in rich detail. Sophomore Sociology major, Jimmy Hessler, commented:

It is one thing to learn about the histories of movements through writing and analysis, however it is something completely different (and more easily relatable) to learn about the current state of things from those who are involved. ‘Inspire’ is the word I would use to define what the guest speakers did for me. I think a great aspect of education is showing students people who have defied the odds, so that it may flick a light switch in their minds which gives them the ability to defy the odds themselves. Candi [CdeBaca] definitely had this gift. She spoke with so much raw passion and intellect, it was beautiful. My favorite day of class, however, was with Antonio Esquibel. I mean, when else would we all agree to sing a corrido together? That really was a beautiful moment.

In all, it was a successful quarter as evidenced by the quality of the final papers and presentations as well as students’ reflections about the class. For these reasons, I am grateful to have received support from CCESL to enhance the classroom experience. It has motivated me to incorporate community-engaged learning in future classes.
BRIDGING THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM GAP

By Russell Anderson, M.S., Community-Engaged Fellow

The United States holds approximately 5% of the world’s population and a whopping 25% of the world’s prisoners. While the U.S. has the largest penal system in the world, it is hardly effective, as it prioritizes punishing behavior over changing behavior. Indeed, the system boasts a recidivism rate of about 60%. The criminal justice system in the United States is a failed experiment that is resistant to change due to economic and sociopolitical investments plaguing the system. Some citizens seek change by helping via policy shifts or serving those who have been incarcerated and marginalized. Others seek systemic change through academia and research on college campuses. In my role as a Community-Engaged Fellow with CCESL, I seek change through bridging the gap between the ingenuity of University of Denver academics and the groundwork of Denver community organizations who strive to revolutionize the criminal justice system and change the lives of those impacted by the system.

To unite the minds of DU with the heart of the Denver community, I organized a panel in March, titled: “Bridging the Criminal Justice System Gap: A Community Research Event.” As the title of the event suggests, the event served to connect the research needs of the community to the research interests of DU faculty and students. Before holding the panel, Nancy Reichman, DU Professor of Sociology, and I met individually with four different criminal justice community organizations: Second Chance Center, Women’s Empowerment Program, Gateway Program at Red Rocks Community College, and the Above Waters Project. In these meetings, we were humbled by the organizations’ continued dedication to making meaningful change within this system. In these meetings, we also learned about the organizations’ research needs, and we facilitated the process of formulating feasible research questions. These organizations posed a variety of research questions, such as: “What are the structural barriers to employment attainment and retention for returning citizens?” “How does one’s traumatic experiences within the jail affect recidivist behavior upon release?” and “What barriers prevent participation in services for HIV positive women returning from jail?”

On the day of the panel, representatives from each community organization shared their individual missions and research questions with DU faculty and students from various departments. Immediately following the panel, the faculty and students met with panelists to brainstorm collaborative research projects. The collective energy in the room was inspiring as ideas were shared and connections were made. For example, one notable connection was made between a Research Methods and Statistics PhD student, a Social Work professor, and the Above Waters Project. Their conversation catalyzed a research idea of constructing a predictive algorithm for recidivism in youth through mixed methods research, and they are meeting as a team in the beginning of May to further this project. This type of cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional team highlights the essence of CCESL’s mission and provides the greatest opportunity to make meaningful and lasting change in a stubborn criminal justice system.
INTERTERM CLASS BRINGS TANGIBLE CONNECTIONS TO COURSE READINGS

By Thomas LaVanchy, Teaching Assistant Professor, Geography & the Environment

The Geographies of South Africa is a two-week travel course offered through the Department of Geography & the Environment. In December 2016, eight students joined two professors to study the physical landscapes and human history of this remarkable, yet complicated country.

Starting in Cape Town, the class examined the ancient geologic history of the Cape Peninsula, the complex legacy of colonization, expanding efforts toward globalization, and the tragedy of apartheid. Activities included climbing iconic Table Mountain, hiking from the Indian to the Atlantic Ocean at the Cape of Good Hope, mapping a geological contact made famous by Charles Darwin, taking a boat trip to the Robben Island prison, and a humbling walk through the Langa Township. The class then road-tripped north across the blazing hot Karoo Steppe to Kimberley, the former epicenter of the diamond industry. Here students toured a diamond mine and discussed the economic and cultural impact of diamond mining on early South Africa. The class concluded travels in the Central Drakensburg Mountains, where students learned about the struggle of rural Zulu people for access to land and the impact of AIDS on their communities and the economy.

A key component of the curriculum is a service learning project at a local crèche (preschool) in a rural community. For many students, this experiential learning assimilated the many themes of the class and brought tangible connections to course readings and overall perspectives on the plight of black South Africans. Our work at the crèche was coordinated through a local NGO with long term commitment and prominence in the community. The DU class is offered on a regular basis, allowing for longer-term relationships between community members and DU professors. Some DU students also stay in touch with community members.

This year’s project was a partnership with four local Zulu women who had petitioned the State for permission to build a preschool to serve children in their growing community. These vibrant, motivated women scavenged for food scraps and constructed a 12’ x 18’ tin roofed building to serve the educational needs of 24 five-year old Zulu children.

Despite its modesty, the State requires these schools to be fenced before children are allowed on site. Through funds and muscle, the DU class made the fence a reality. Beyond erecting a fence, the students bonded with local community members, sharing uplifting comradery in a common task. One young father stood out to our group. He was visiting his homeland on leave from his job 1,100 km away in a coastal city. His daughter attended the small crèche. His wife was one of the teachers. He wanted to live full time with them but was
forced to find work where he could. This story mirrored the narrative from “Cry, the Beloved Country”, a required book for the class.

Editor’s Note: This project was funded in part through a CCESL Community Engaged Learning Mini Grant. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis; more information can be found on our website.

BUILDING THE WORLD AS IT SHOULD BE

By Larcy Brooks, Senior Puksta Scholar

For seven days in the middle of March this year, something magical happened, and I was able to take part. In the Redwoods of California, 25 queer people were brought together based on this shared basis of identity and our participation in our communities. The event was held by YES!, a nonprofit organization that hosts retreat programs, called “jams”, that connect change makers and activists from all around the world around different causes.

As a person who did not have access to LGBT communities until college, being surrounded by queer people that shared my experiences and identities brought a profound sense of safety and joy. This was crucial to the goals of the program. Its model focuses on self-transformation, interpersonal healing, and systemic change as interconnected goals. You cannot be effective at making change without first finding self-forgiveness and understanding for others.

Our lead facilitator put into words exactly what the program meant to me: “a practical experience in building the world as it should be,” which began the process of thinking about how I could sustain this energy and healing and bring it forward into the community work that I do in my daily life. I considered what kind of leader and builder that I wanted to be, and how I could incorporate kindness and personal support into my leadership strategies, as tangible tools for making healthier and more productive communities. Beforehand, I never would have believed that such profound change and encouragement could occur over the space of a week, but that is what I experienced. I feel more connected to my drive to work for my community, more supported by the new community we built together, and more at home within myself.

I would like to take the time to thank both the Puksta Foundation and CCESL for the financial support that enabled me to attend this program. It was absolutely life-changing, and my part in it wouldn’t have been possible without this aid.
SHARING INSIGHTS FROM THE COMMUNITY-ENGAGED FELLOWS PROGRAM

By Sara Abdullah, Community-Engaged Fellow

Campus Compact of the Mountain West held the 19th Continuums of Service Conference at the Auraria Campus in Denver this past April. The conference brings together organizations, centers, and departments across the Western United States in pursuit of collaboration and a shared commitment to action and engagement around higher education and the collective dedication to the public good. Imagine hundreds of CCESL-like employees, fellows, interns, and students, from all over, coming together to share best practices. It was intense yet empowering. While I attended most the conference, including a day-long workshop on Saturday, our team was in the lineup for presenting on our program on the first day of the conference.

Thursday afternoon, Michael Oyakojo, Dana Polley, and I, represented the rest of the graduate student Community-Engaged Fellows alongside CCESL Associate Director, Cara DiEnno, on a panel that focused on The Evolution of Sustained Campus Engagement. The title of our presentation was a mouthful: From Serving Individuals to Creating Community Engagement Programs Working toward Collective Impact - The Evolution of Collaborating for the Public Good. The panel was the perfect platform to share the pilot Fellows’ program that we all have been involved in over the last year. Getting to our assigned room was probably the most challenging part of the day. Down some steps, across the hall, up an old and narrow elevator, then up some more steps and to the right— you get the point – it was without guidance that we found ourselves in an atrium-esque room with an awkward floor plan. Our co-panelists were already at the scene trying to configure the projector and screen to match the room’s layout. Regardless of PowerPoint visibility, we were met by a crowd of 25 people, all eager to hear about our pilot Community-Engaged Fellows program.

After our co-presenters (a team from Stanford University) completed their presentation on a similar multidisciplinary approach to “community-engaged learning,” we were up to bat. Michael gave an overview of the University of Denver. Cara provided context on the formation of the Fellows’ program, including the programs that lead to its development (the Public Good Associates, Scholar Shop, and DU IMPACT 2025). Dana introduced the Community-Engaged Fellows Program and discussed the selection of issue areas that we are each assigned. I presented the primary roles of the fellows: both issue and Fellow-specific, and our role as an interdisciplinary collaborative “think tank.” We offered the crowd our candid thoughts on the challenges and successes that we faced in our individual work as Fellows, from organizing collaborative faculty cluster groups, to trying to define what “social entrepreneurship” really means in the context of campus community engagement opportunities. We shared our online engagement efforts, ideas for next year, and then opened the floor for questions. Unfortunately, there was not much time to have a group discussion, but we were all approached by audience members at the end of our panel. In my slightly biased opinion, we successfully knocked it out of the park!
GRADUATING PUKSTA SCHOLARS REFLECT ON THE LAST FOUR YEARS

By Kate Powers, Office Coordinator, and Elaina Fenstermacher, Student Social Media Specialist, CCESL

The senior class of DU’s Puksta Scholars program is comprised of just two graduating students, but these two Scholars command a strong presence. Laleobe Olaka and Larcy Brooks have each spent the last four years on a path of self-discovery and immense personal and academic growth, racking up a multitude of achievements along the way. When they depart DU this spring, they will surely leave a lasting impact behind.

Laleobe Olaka’s Puksta project has always been focused on issues related to poverty, children, and health. As a Biology major, she was initially focused on nutrition and education around food justice, and during her first year, she had a profound learning experience. She partnered with two community organizations to start an organic cooking class for homeless women, but on launch day, no one showed up. Laleobe was sad and confused, not understanding why her initiative failed, but this experience taught her a valuable lesson that she carries with her to this day – community organizing is all about building relationships. One must have an understanding of the experiences and wishes of the communities they intend to serve.

Her project’s focus shifted in her second year and has since been centered on the formation and development of the DU chapter of the Minority Association of Premedical Students (MAPS). The aim of MAPS is to close the gap between minority students and their white counterparts getting into medical school. The national board takes a hands-off approach, so Laleobe and her co-leaders have had to largely navigate the creation and implementation of DU’s chapter themselves. Though it has been daunting, they have had success in planning events and getting minority premedical students volunteer placements in various community health settings.

“I would not be the same person if I wasn’t in Puksta,” she declares, and being a Scholar has largely influenced Laleobe’s plans for her future. She will be serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in The Gambia on a healthcare-related project. Her Puksta experience directly led her to apply to the Peace Corps, as it taught her that her academics do not mean much if there is no civic engagement behind it. She stresses the importance of having a job that has a real impact in the community. She contends that one cannot truly help people— which is the purpose of being in the medical field – if one does not understand the circumstances of the community they serve. Laleobe’s career goal is to be a Pediatric Physician’s Assistant, as she is passionate about children and children’s health. Community organizing stresses the importance of root causes, and Laleobe draws the parallel that healthy children are the roots of a healthy society. She wants to send each individual that comes into her office out into the world better prepared to positively impact it.
One important piece of the Puksta program is an exploration of one’s identity, and for Laleobe, the evolution in her identity as an African American woman has been powerful. She recalls being angry and overwhelmed during her first year when reading from a class on gender and voice described African American women as being the “dirt” of society; they were at the bottom of the proverbial totem pole. Society and media portrayed women like Laleobe as the standard for what not to be. Being in Puksta has shifted her view on how the world perceives her and more importantly, how she views herself. Now Laleobe likens African American women not to dirt but to soil. She has reclaimed the space at the bottom of the totem pole, elaborating that, as a foundation, it is her job to grow and change and mold the totem pole in different directions. “Without me, trees don’t grow, and without me, the totem pole does not exist,” she beams. As she describes it, her Puksta experience has helped her to be the best soil that she can be in order to thrive and build up the communities around her.

Larcy Brooks, an English major from Pueblo, Colorado, applied to the Puksta Scholars program as a high school senior because it aligned with their values that were bubbling to the surface. As an 18 year-old, Larcy was only starting to think deeply about gender identity. They had a lot of anger as they were confronting this issue daily without a sense of community or support behind them. That the Puksta program creates an intentionally diverse community held great appeal, and while the scholarship funding that accompanies acceptance to the program was certainly a motivating factor to attend DU, Larcy maintains the financial component was only the tiniest piece of the reward that participation in the program has brought to them.

Larcy’s Puksta project addresses the intersection of two issues – the intergenerational gap within and the lack of emotional support amongst the LGBTQ community. For their first two years at DU, Larcy primarily focused on conducting research. They worked in visitor programs at nursing homes with LGBTQ-identified folks and led the LGBTQ organization here on campus, and it was during this time that they first noticed the lack of engagement between these groups.

Growing up in a conservative town meant that Larcy never came face to face with another out gay person. The process of coming to terms with their own gender identity involved looking at the cultural past of the LGBTQ community and recognizing that their identity was not just something to accept but rather an exciting quality. They were entering into a community with a tradition of great resilience, yet they did not see this excitement shared by others their age who identify similarly. Larcy’s Puksta project took off, and for the past two years, they have been creating a curriculum for LGBTQ alliances in middle schools, high schools, and colleges that aims to teach young people about queer culture. Working with community partners, Larcy has worked to grow this project beyond the local level.

When asked how their experience as a Puksta Scholar has shaped them, Larcy responded that it has fundamentally changed their life and provided a support like they have never experienced before. Spending all four years in the Puksta program offered Larcy the support and skills necessary to navigate this issue. Larcy recalls their first Puksta Passage as an incoming Scholar at which they expressed their interest in gay rights – for the first time out loud – and another Scholar immediately responded, “Me, too!”

Following graduation, Larcy will be taking a gap year, which they see as an exciting time to get to explore and have more time to engage in the community and continue their involvement with the organizations of which they have become a part. Eventually, they would like to pursue a degree in Counseling Psychology, possibly focusing on expressive theory-writing and art therapy or on somatic therapy in which a holistic approach is taken to address trauma. Larcy claims that their experience with Puksta has informed them that they can do work that is meaningful, fulfilling, and will have a lasting imprint on them and the community. For the incoming class of six new Puksta Scholars, Larcy has the following advice: take advantage of all of the opportunities in front of you. Go to that event; talk to that person. You never know which doors will open for you.
WORK ON PURPOSE: EXPLORING WORK AND LIVES WITH MEANING

By Sean McGraw, Graduate School of Social Work Intern at CCESL

Work on Purpose, a multi-organizational collaborative workshop, was held in February and focused on helping current undergraduate students explore ideas of how they can do meaningful work in an efficient manner. Members of CCESL, Academic Advising and Career Services, The English Language Center, Alumni Relations, Center for World Languages and Culture, DU Service and Change, and an alumni panel came together to lead students through a series of activities designed to help them reflect on the kind of work they are seeking to pursue following their undergraduate studies.

Activities such as “Moment of Obligation” had students listen to facilitator’s stories of when they felt the need to act in order to help a particular population or meet a community need and then reflect upon their own moments in life in which they felt urged to act for the service of others. Students also partook in “Out of Whack” in which they drew out diagrams to better understand aspects of their lives they find meaningful and how much time they devoted to them. They finished the workshop by completing their “Hustle Statement” and writing a letter to their future selves in which they make a commitment to pursue service to help a cause which they care about through using their strengths and given skill set. The workshop was a fun and conducive environment to help promote growth for students and was overall a creative and successful day!

USING RESEARCH TO INFORM PUBLIC POLICY

By Madelyn Rahn, Public Good Associate

This year I have had the opportunity to work as a part of a research team in the school of social work through CCESL’s Public Good Associate (PGA) program. The PGA program supports me in my work as a part of a research team that is facilitating a study which has the potential to make a significant impact for students in local schools and in turn, our community at large.

The research team that I am working on helps Denver Public Schools to evaluate their “restorative justice” efforts. Restorative justice is an approach that aims to create more sustainable and equitable disciplinary systems in schools. Currently, students from some demographics are at a much higher risk of being subject to exclusionary discipline practices like suspension and expulsion. These types of punishments take away from students’ time in the classroom which limits those students’ opportunities for learning and academic success.

Restorative practices are aimed to promote disciplinary practices which do not disrupt students’ education but rather help them to overcome behavioral challenges by using positive reinforcement and helping them to practice methods to help prevent undesirable behavior in the first place. As a student of public policy, I am hope to use my degree in a career where I am able to inform decisions that will benefit society. This experience has helped me to envision how a career in academia could allow me to inform important decisions within public institutions that can lead to real positive change outside of the “ivory tower”.

PGA Madelyn Rahn
BREAKFAST! DEBATES! TUTORING! BOOKS! OH ME, OH MY!

By Ashley Edinger and Mika Smith, Co-Chairs, DU Service & Change

DU Service and Change (DUSC) has been up to quite a lot these past few months, and more is to come! Project Volunteer continued their long-term partnership with the Bridge Project. This meant that 8-10 volunteers went each week of Winter Quarter to help elementary students with their homework. Project Volunteer has also partnered up with a new Community Organization: The Immigrant Resource Center. With this organization, DUSC is helping those immigrating to the United States pass the Naturalization Test and grasp the English Language.

Meanwhile, Project Action was keeping busy with service events. They brought volunteers to the Ronald McDonald House of Denver to make breakfast for those at the house so that their day could be brighter. A group of volunteers also spent their morning at Rocky Mountain Arsenal Wildlife Refuge planting seeds for pollinators. The seeds planted may not take root for a few years, but their eventual bloom helps sustain the pollinators that are crucial to the environment. Project Action also rallied volunteers to serve as judges for National History Day, to hand out midterm relief snacks in the library, and to support World Read Aloud Day.

Project Volunteer spent a great deal of time preparing a very large event: The 5th Annual Day of Action, held on April 29th. The event includes elementary students, parents, and staff from four local elementary schools coming to implement two service projects. College for Certain hopes to provide information on why college is important and how to make college attainable for these young children. There is also be a Denver Parks & Recreation Service project going on at DuBoer Park. Project Volunteer, along with their partners, put in over 200 service hours in Winter Quarter and have also spent much of their time in planning and implementing Day of Action. While doing this, Project Volunteer also managed to help coordinate DUSC’s involvement in the MLK Marade and to put on DUSC’s annual Hunger Banquet.

DUSC also ventured out to Northridge High School to judge for a Speech and Debate tournament and up to Boulder to help Autism Climbs run one of their climbing events.

DUSC has worked with Autism Climbs, Denver Parks & Recreation, Monroe Elementary School, Cascade Creek, The Immigrant Resource Center, The Bridge Project, and more Community Organizations in Spring Quarter! For more information on opportunities and/or leadership positions for the 2017-2018 school year please contact du.service.change@gmail.com
**INTERNSHIP SHEDS LIGHT ON SERVICE LEARNING CONCEPTS**

By Joe Winchell, Graduate School of Social Work Intern at CCESL

The Summer Associates Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program is a new partnership between the Colorado Service Learning Council (CSLC) and AmeriCorps. The program is an exciting way for students to engage in service learning while earning a modest living stipend and educational award. I became involved with VISTA through my internship at CCESL. At first, my role in the program seemed fairly rudimentary. I would create a couple of programmatic pieces and help to advertise the program. However, time would prove my role to be much more interesting and challenging than I could have ever imagined.

When I joined the partnership I had envisioned a small program in which we would recruit from local colleges in the metro area to volunteer with local community partners. However, community partners from all across the state began to apply for Summer Associates – we have sites as far south as Trinidad! This drastically changed my role within the program as I learned how to engage the community. We had to start thinking about how to get volunteers who were able to serve in more rural areas. In addition to the sites being far spread, we began to receive applications for the Summer Associates program from all across America. The program seemed to be expanding in scope right before our eyes.

During the course of my partnership with the CSLC and AmeriCorps, I have learned a lot about service learning. I have always felt that education can happen anywhere, but I am seeing it take shape through my community partnerships. I can see where the communities have a need for volunteer services, and I can see how those needs translate to educational concepts found in classrooms across the country. I can see now see why service and learning belong together as one concept.

As applications rolled in for the Summer Associates program I could not help but think about how I would engage this group of young and energetic learners in the upcoming months. Moreover, I am excited to learn from their experiences in the community. One of my main jobs over the summer will be to conduct site visits with the Summer Associates. I will be there to make sure that the experience is going well for them and that the sites where they are serving are compatible. I will be looking for lessons within the community partnerships to take home with me as well. This is by far one of the most memorable programs that I have ever taken part in, and I cannot wait to see the culmination of our hard work.

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**MUSEUM EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS THE MANY VOICES OF DENVER**

Rocky Mountain PBS recently featured This is My Denver, a project committed to documenting and sharing various stories and perspectives about our city. Earlier this year, the DU Museum of Anthropology held an exhibition as part of this larger project. Entitled “Para-Place: An Exploration of the Spaces Betwixt and Between,” the exhibition was sponsored in part by CCESL through a Service Learning mini-grant.
COLORADO PUBLIC ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAMS COME TOGETHER

By Grace Carson, Public Achievement Coach

On February 11, University of Denver’s Public Achievement (PA) program hosted its 6th annual Colorado Public Achievement Conference. This included the participation of PA programs from all over the state, including programs in Colorado College, Colorado State University, and University of Colorado Boulder. The conference was an opportunity for connections between universities to be made, learning on subjects such as lesson planning, identity and privilege, and team builders, and to connect with the high school students who joined the conference on a deeper level.

The conference started with breakfast and the keynote address given by Felipe Veyra. Felipe, an alumnum of the University of Denver and a previous Coach with PA, told the crowd his story. He spoke about how his mother raised him to be the community organizer he is today and how building relationships with students was the most effective way to make an impact in their lives. He then gave tips and inspiration for current Coaches participating in PA. He ended his address with a strong and impactful statement: “The first revolution is internal.”

The group then transitioned into going to their first set of workshops in which there was a variety of topics to choose to attend. Alicia Sax, DU PA Team Lead, gave a workshop on aesthetic learning and how the classroom can be made more fun. Ryan Hanschen led a workshop about identity, privilege, and the cycle of socialization and liberation. Overall, the workshops gave PA Coaches and Team Leads an opportunity to further their learning on how to make their classroom a better place.

Next up was lunch and networking, which gave the attendees an opportunity to relax, fill their stomachs, and get to know one another. Right after lunch was a student voices panel discussion. On the panel were students in PA and Coaches who helped teach PA. This gave the opportunity for Coaches and Team Leads to ask other Coaches about their experiences, as well as students what they like and dislike about their classes and how they could improve. It was a learning experience for everyone.

The last round of workshops was just as informational as the first round. The topics ranged from icebreakers and team builders, how young women’s stories are agents of change, and how PA fits into today’s democracy. Attendees particularly enjoyed letting loose about participating in team builders for 45 minutes.

After a quick snack break, the group received a virtual visit from the Public Achievement founders Harry Boyte and Dennis Donovan. This gave Coaches and Team Leads an opportunity to ask the founders questions about why PA was started, as well as voice their concerns about the struggles they were having in their own classrooms. The visit was insightful and full of inspiration.

The conference ended with reflection about how the day had gone, as well as a song sang by the whole crowd together. Everyone left feeling inspired and motivated for their next week of PA classes.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CORPS: AN INTERVIEW WITH MADISON ALDER

By Elaina Fenstermacher, Student Social Media Specialist

Elaina: How did you get involved with CCESL?
Madison: I got a work study award and was told that there were job opportunities as a mentor and tutor at a local school. I had worked a lot with kids at home and in high school. Once I got involved in the Community Engagement Corps (CEC), I realized this is where I want to be.

What do you do as a Community Engagement Corps member?
I work with 4th and 5th grade classes, going in and working with the kids that need more one-on-one attention that a teacher cannot give in a 30-person classroom. I work in small groups, and I work in the writing classroom, helping students work on their reading skills, comprehension, and their writing and grammar. Recently, I have been in the kindergarten classroom as the 4th and 5th graders were taking standardized tests. It was a new experience for me because I was not helping students with their writing but learning their alphabet.

How does participation with CEC inform your classroom learning?
The experience has helped me to gain the perspective that there are so many ways to learn. I used to get frustrated because I learn in different ways than others, and I never understood why teachers would try to teach lessons in so many ways. Now that I am in the position of teaching students, it makes sense to me that varied teaching styles can help more people. Because the 4th graders are just learning how to write essays it reminds me of the basic skills in my own writing I sometime forget.

Does your experience impact your plans for after college?
It has - in a way that I was not expecting! I have actually changed my mind about the career path I am working toward. I originally wanted to be a politician and then pursue the law route. Now, I am considering social work and community organizing because there are a lot of problems with the school system that I have come to realize. Some things are really messed up and someone needs to fix it. This experience changed what I wanted to do, and I am excited to see what is yet to come!

Editor’s Note: The Community Engagement Corps connects students at DU with Denver Public Schools through in-class and out-of-class tutoring support. It is just one of many CCESL programs that is now interviewing DU students for positions next fall. If you’re interested in learning more about working for any CCESL program, please email us at ccesl@du.edu.
ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET: CONGRATS TO ALL CCESL-AFFILIATED Awardees!

The Pioneer Awards Ceremony held on May 18th, 2017 provided a wonderful opportunity for DU students, staff, and faculty to come together and celebrate the spectacular folks that make up the DU community and their many achievements. We at CCESL are so proud to recognize an astounding number of CCESL-affiliated folks who received various accolades and recognition. A round of applause is in order for:

- Sara Abdullah
  *Public Good Student of the Year*

- Aaqil Anwar
  *Distinguished Junior Student*

- Ciera Blehm
  *Outstanding Second Year Student*

- Larcy Brooks
  *Kimmy Foundation Community Service Award Pioneer Award*

- Department of Anthropology
  *Community-Engaged Department of the Year*

- DU Service & Change (DUSC)
  *Student Organization Pioneer Award*

- Ashley Edinger
  *Kimmy Foundation Community Service Award Pioneer Award Service Student of the Year*

- Esteban Gomez, Assistant Professor of Anthropology
  *Service Learning Faculty of the Year*

- Omar Gudino, Associate Professor of Psychology
  *Public Good Faculty of the Year*

- Ryan Hanschen, CCESL Program Coordinator
  *Outstanding Staff Award Outstanding Student Group Advisor Award*

- Walid Hedidar
  *Outstanding First Year Student*

- Laleobe Olaka
  *Kimmy Foundation Community Service Award Pioneer Award*

- Alicia Saxe
  *Graduate Student Employee of the Year Public Good Student of the Year Student Community Organizer of the Year*

- Marie Spence
  *2017 Newman Civic Fellow Award*

Additionally, we would like to recognize CCESL students Ciera Blehm, Walid Hedidar, and Andy Fox for having their identity narratives published in the *Many Voices, One DU* book, released this month.