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## Unity House News Fall 2014

Connecticut College

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The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author.

# UNITY HOUSE NEWS



As Connecticut College's multicultural center, Unity House contributes to the educational mission of the College by providing leadership and support in the College's commitment to diversity and multiculturalism. Unity House not only provides programs and services for students of color and first generation students, but also the entire campus community including faculty and staff.

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- Unity House Programs and Events

For more information about Unity House - Please visit: [www.conncoll.edu/commitment-to-diversity/unityhouse](http://www.conncoll.edu/commitment-to-diversity/unityhouse)

### Meet the New Assistant Director Jennifer Nival

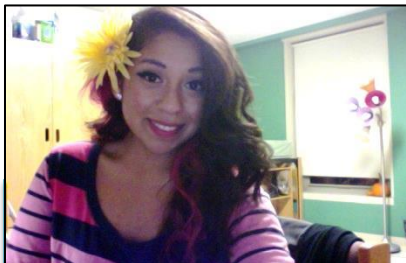


Hi Everyone, I am excited to be joining the Unity House Staff this year! I was born and raised in the Bronx, New York City. From there, my educational journey began at the University of Vermont where I earned my Bachelor's in Human Development and Family Studies. I went on to earn my Master's degree in Student Affairs in Higher Education at Colorado State University (CSU). At CSU, I worked alongside student organizations and diversity offices in programming initiatives around history and heritage months. I enjoy bike riding, watching TV shows and movies, spending time with my family and friends, and dancing. Feel free to stop by my office to chat, would love to get to know everyone.

## MEET OUR UNITY HOUSE INTERNS



Tonika Davenport,  
Class of 2016,  
Self-Designing  
Major: Medical  
Anthropology  
Minor in  
Ethnobotany



Jennifer Cervantes  
Class of 2017  
Major: Human Development  
interested in elementary  
teaching certificate

Alfredo Gutierrez,  
Class of 2017  
Posse Scholar  
Double Majors:  
Architectural  
Studies and Art



**STUDENT  
VOICE**  
Studying Abroad  
in  
Vietnam

In the spring of 2014, Neil Williams '15 and nine other Connecticut College students embarked on a journey studying abroad in Vietnam. The program allowed Neil and his peers to explore, research, and study the *Doi Moi* system, an economic philosophy in Vietnam which aims to increase Vietnam's contributions to developing their economy. Professor Rolf Jensen taught two courses on Gender Development and Political Economy exploring Vietnam's class division, economic status and growth. With the help of language

translators, Neil was able to assess Vietnamese's income class levels and how it impacts their purchasing power. Neil expressed that



this experience has allowed him to become more open minded. He believes this experience will allow him to advocate and disband misconceptions and stereotypes surrounding

Vietnamese communities. "Studying abroad in Vietnam enhanced my liberal arts education", Neil stated. Neil is the first in his family and within his neighborhood to experience such a powerful and unique trip. He is now considering working abroad, which is something that never crossed his mind.

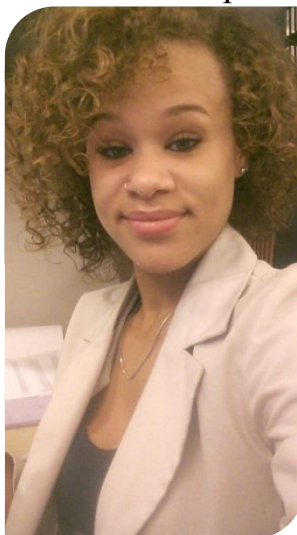


**STUDENT VOICE**

Foster Care

Shelly Rodriguez, '16 spent her summer working in the Bronx, New York City, at a foster care agency.

Her passion for social work has led her to advocate for fostered youth. Shelly was responsible for supervising visits between the youth and their biological families. Within these supervised visits, Shelly observed and documented the actions between the children and their families. The visits varied from day visits to the Bronx Zoo to arts and crafts activities. Shelly also visited the homes of the families to ensure safety



and security for the youth. Shelly gained an in-depth understanding about the foster care system in New York City as well as her own personal strength and resiliency. More

importantly, she learned to be emotionally strong and build a thick skin. Her priority was to ensure the health and wellbeing of the youth regardless of the positive relationship she had with families. Shelly aspires to become a lawyer; to continue hearing the voices and advocating for the youth through the legal system. She wants to be the type of lawyer who knows who she is representing and not just what she reads in her client's file.

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHT: GIVING A VOICE TO STUDENTS THROUGH RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Professor Ana Campos-Holland, Assistant Professor of Sociology, states her research brings opportunities to underrepresented identities, and gives diversity within her research topics, “I want to give them a voice”.

Professor Campos-Holland oversees several research topics under the umbrella study *Playground Negotiations*, which includes topics on “**Look at my shoes! Gender Performance on Social Media through Materialism**” by **Gina Pol ’16, Brooke Dinsmore ’14** and “**That’s My House! ‘Youth’s Perception of their Socio-Spatial Environments Through a Google Maps Neighborhood Tour**” by **Luis Ramos ’16, Kevin Zevallos ’16, Patrick Landes ’16, and Flor Campos ’15**. The ideas for these topics come from the students themselves. They are able to use their intelligent creativity, consume knowledge, and be involved in the process from start to finish. Professor Campos-Holland believes that her students need to be involved with the creation of knowledge.

“I feel prepared for graduate school. This experience has reaffirmed my passion to want to be a professor of Sociology”  
-Kevin Zevallos ’16 Sociology and History Major



Professor Ana Campos-Holland

“I have developed patience, appreciation, and understanding of what it takes to be a part of a research project. I have gained a vast amount of confidence and understanding of my capabilities”  
-Gina Pol ’16 Sociology and Economics Major

## WELCOME NEW CAMELS TO CONN – GENESIS 2014



**2014 Latino Heritage Month** kicked off with a panel discussion on “*Not Latino Enough*”. Panelist shared personal stories and experiences negotiating their identity development about being Latin@. Dean Garcia provided a historical context of Latinos in the U.S., challenging the audience to think about what it means to identify as Latin@.



**Unity House  
celebrates  
Latino Heritage  
Month**

**Sept 15 – Oct 15**



## UPCOMING UNITY HOUSE EVENTS – SAVE THE DATE

### TUNNEL OF OPPRESSION

Nov 6-7 – 12-7pm – Morrison Basement

### NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Nov 10 – 4-6pm - Cro 1941

### FUSION DANCE SHOW

Nov 14 – 8pm – 1962 Room

### BRAIN BOOST BREAK

Dec 15 – 8-10pm – UNITY HOUSE