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# Unity House News Spring 2015

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

## FAREWELL DEAN GARCIA

Elizabeth Garcia, dean of multicultural affairs, will be leaving at the end of the academic year to pursue a career in consulting. Dean Garcia joined Connecticut College in 2006 and has worked closely with all of the major offices and programs focused on diverse student constituencies. Through her work, Dean Garcia has helped advance a meaningful dialogue on our campus about equity and inclusion.

During her tenure at the College, Dean Garcia has been an important advocate for underrepresented students on campus. She has developed diversity initiatives to increasing awareness about issues of race and ethnicity. In 2008, she created the Diversity Peer Educators, a yearlong course aim to build understanding across difference. In addition, she nurtured the ongoing development of the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program and the Posse program while being actively involved in the Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity and the Holleran Center for Public Policy and Community Action. Dean Garcia, your presence on campus will be missed and we wish you the best of luck.

# Asian - American Pacific Islander Heritage Month 2015

## Asian - American Pacific Islander Heritage Month (API)

API kicked off with a panel discussion on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Asian/Asian Americans. Panelists shared personal stories and experiences around their identity being Asian/Asian American.



## Calligraphy Workshop

Students, staff and faculty gathered to learn the significance of Calligraphy. Facilitated by Professor Tek-Wah King.



## College Prep Program Visits Unity House

A few times a year College Prep Programs stop by Unity House to speak with our current Conn students. They answer questions around housing, social/academic life, and their leadership involvement on campus. Our students inspire and motivate high school students to attend college.





# Student Highlight: Jasmine Linnea Kelekay

Thirteen Connecticut College seniors have been named Winthrop Scholars, the highest academic honor bestowed by the College. Among the thirteen seniors, Jasmine Linnea Kelekay, a triple major in Philosophy, Psychology, and Sociology from Helsinki, Finland received this honor.

During Jasmine's college application process, she knew she wanted to explore higher education outside of Finland. She looked at universities and colleges in the U.S. and the U.K. As a first-generation and international student, Jasmine was driven to complete one of her goals of going to college. Connecticut College offered her a scholarship and provided the opportunity for a liberal arts education to successfully complete her goal.

Her drive and commitment motivated Jasmine to maintain her GPA throughout her four years at Conn. One of the biggest learning moments in Jasmine's years at Conn was having the opportunity to combine her passion for research and exploring concepts of race and racism. She expressed that in her home country, race and racism wasn't discussed. People viewed themselves as color blind, but as one of few women of color in Finland she experienced discrimination and oppression because of her mix race identity. Coming to Connecticut College, she knew she wanted to learn more about her own identities. She joined organizations such as SOAR and the DPE program and worked closely with Unity House to learn more about the construct of race and how to contextualize it within her multiple identities. This passion soon became a big part of her life intellectually and personally.

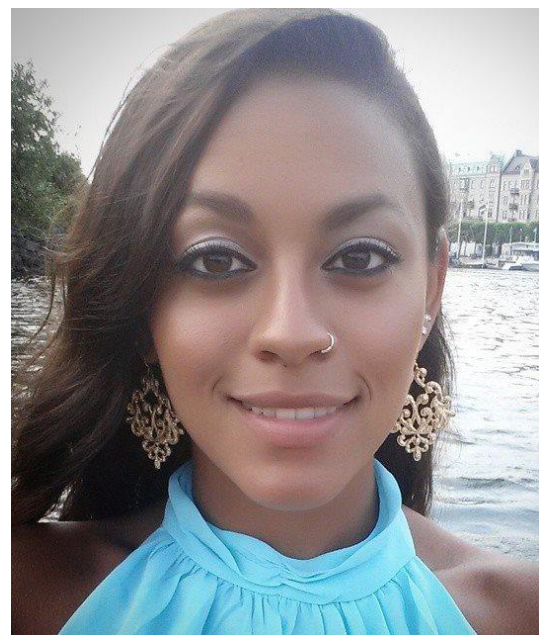
Jasmine also built strong relationships with her faculty members allowing them to shape the scholar she is today. She shared that Professor Canton and Professor Campos-Holland, among others, have been instrumental in her development over the past four years. They helped her make a graduate school plan, empowered her to see herself as a scholar, and gave her the necessary skills and techniques to be successful in graduate school. She also shared that her CELS advisor has had a huge impact in her success at Conn by being invested in her development and believing in her.

One of her favorite moments at Connecticut College was during sophomore year fall weekend. Jasmine and other students attended the alumni of color luncheon and received the opportunity to meet alumni of color and a few board of trustees members. For the first time, she understood her place at Conn and the legacy she was a part of. Through talking with them, hearing their stories, and gaining their advice, Jasmine expressed she felt less alone and finally felt she had a sense of community at the College.

One of her goals is to receive her PhD and to find work that will allow her to be impactful, both through research and through programming and policy work. She wants to implement programs that will help elevate marginalized populations, including students of color in higher education, and she will continue to do research around race and racism.

As a senior, her advice to those coming after her is: **“Do what you are passionate about. The biggest key to doing something well is to do something you are passionate about.”**

Jasmine will be pursuing her Ph.D. in Sociology at University of California, Santa Barbara this fall.





# Unity House Recognition Dinner



Congratulations Seniors!!

