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OVCS Newsletter April 2014

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COMMUNITY LEARNING

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

OVCS NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2014

ELT= Extraordinary Learning Time

By Andrea Luna '15

I was extremely honored and humbled when I was asked to be an Extended Learning Time Program (ELT) Team Leader for Jennings Elementary School. ELT offers a unique opportunity for Jennings Elementary kindergarteners, 1st, and 2nd graders to strengthen literacy and oral skills while engaging in lessons on science and civics in a different classroom environment. Team Leaders are Connecticut College OVCS

staff and Conn student mentors. They facilitate the lessons with the students, which enable the students to create a beautiful bonding experience that nourishes learning and provide one on one time. Everyone is different, which means no two

students are alike and ELT offers a different avenue for students to connect with individual mentoring attention which compliments their everyday classroom relationships.

I am currently a junior in the process of obtaining my Elementary Teaching Certificate, and ELT has helped me tremendously in learning how to facilitate my own classroom one day. The 1st graders and mentors that I work with are amazing because together we have been able to create a fun loving classroom environment based on respect. My students know that I am not only their

“teacher” but also a student like them because we are all learning together. Some days are more challenging than others, but I have learned to go with the flow because we have to respond to what that student(s) need on that day. I am happy to say that wonderful bonds between my students and me have flourished because of the conversations and reflections we have been able to have. Being bilingual in Spanish has helped me be effective in code switching with



my students. They are predominately Latin@s like myself, which has allowed for beautiful dynamical relationships to flourish into trust and respect. It has been amazing to see how much the students have learned and grown

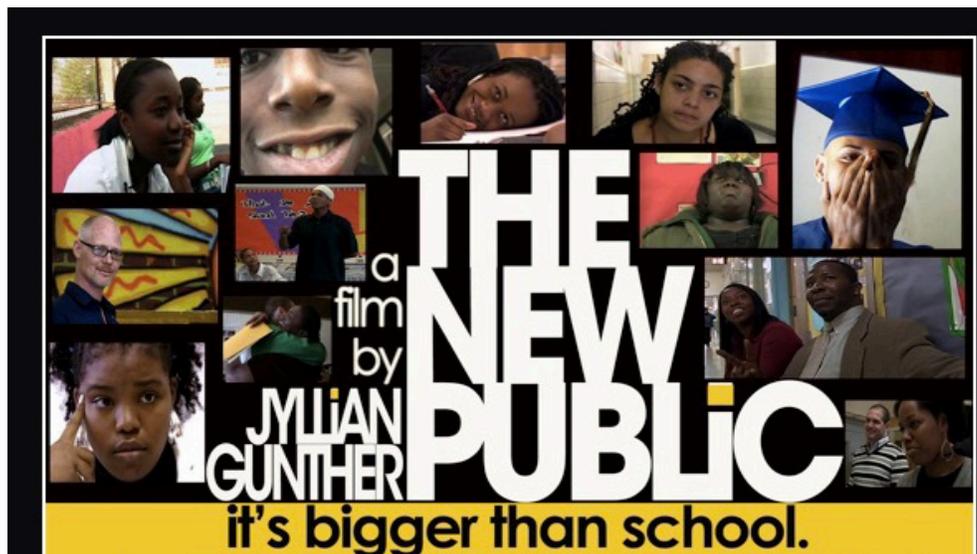
throughout these three months of ELT.

My experience with ELT has been extraordinary because I have learned so much about what it really means to be an educator and student. It is important to remember that ELT is not solely about teaching the course materials but also about creating meaningful relationships with the students. Every student is different and unique, and taking that time to validate the students' feelings and experiences makes a huge difference because it nourishes growth and confidence within them.

“The New Public” Screening

By John Dargon '14

As a Connecticut College senior I applied for and received a Holleran Center Social Entrepreneurial Initiative Grant. These grants are available each year to Connecticut College students to highlight and address community challenges. I focused on educational inequities in low-income communities. I wanted to provide a forum to demonstrate one response a group of educators and parents are implementing in



New York City. I worked with OVCS and Kevin Zavallo, a Connecticut College sophomore and Floor Governor to organize a screening of The New Public which took place in Blaustein 210 at the end of February. We showed the educational documentary The New Public to over 100 attendees including many Connecticut College students who are working in local schools. The film tells the story of the Brooklyn Community Arts & Media High School (BCAM), which is a small high school created during the 2006 New York City Small Schools Movement. I was one of the students who entered the new school as a first year high school student and then graduated from the school four years later. Following the film, I joined the filmmaker Jyllian Gunther, Connecticut College Chaplain and instructor Arcelis Vasquez-Haye to lead a lively discussion of the film including strategies to address educational inequities. The Office of College Relations & the Office of Residential Education & Living and the REF program also supported the event. OVCS has a DVD copy of The New Public and interested faculty, students, staff and faculty can view the documentary by contacting OVCS in CRO 216.

African American Affairs Commission

Connecticut College OVCS hosted the April meeting of the African-American Affairs Commission in the College Center. The mission of the African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC) is to improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut. The AAAC accomplishes these goals through information sharing, promoting cultural awareness, community networking, and legislation. Community members, college students and staff attended the meeting and dialogued with the Commissioners regarding issues related

to access to higher education; racism within the judicial system and police profiling; under-resourced public schools and the precarious health status of particular groups. The Commissioners and their staff detailed work they are doing with the Connecticut Legislature. Connecticut College student Chakena Sims said “The meeting was very informative and I met some dynamic community people. I was able to do some networking that might result in an internship.” For more information about the Commission go to <http://www.cga.ct.gov/aaac/>

CREC High School Visit

Alumnae Jean LaVecchia Class of 1973 invited Connecticut College OVCS to host two visits to campus from high school students attending the CREC Medical Professions and Teacher Prep Magnet High School in Hartford. Jean's daughter, Lauren Lavecchia, teaches 9th and 10th grade at this innovative school. College students Amanda Crawford, Miguel Salcedo, Jobari Adams, David Rojas, Gabriella Silva, Chakena Simms, Alysia Mattson, and JJ Ramos inspired the high school students with their stories about getting to college and succeeding. After the dialogue, they toured campus and shared lunch in Harris. "I'm applying to Connecticut College" said many of the high school students.



Women in Sciences: STMHS/OVCS Partnership

By Jennifer Cunningham '13 AmeriCorps VISTA

The 7th annual Women in Sciences forum took place on March 27th. The two day event was an amazing opportunity to expose 31 first year students from the Science and Technology Magnet High School to the STEM field. STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and math which are areas that lack adequate female representation. I enlisted the help of several faculty members and students from Connecticut College to facilitate interactive mini-labs that would engage the group of students. The students were eager to learn about how amylase breaks down food and how to apply Tollen's reagent to create silver mirrors. Having been a Science



Leader at Connecticut College I was excited to be the one introducing them to hands-on experiments in the hopes that they would take an interest in science. The next day several Connecticut College faculty and

students went to the high school to participate in a panel where the students from the high school had an opportunity to ask questions about education, courses of interest and what led them to their profession. The forum was a success and this event will

continue each year with

dedicated OVCS, students, staff and faculty.

Research Trip to France

By Jennifer Rodriguez '14

Jennifer Rodriguez is a current senior majoring in psychology and minoring in history. She is a CISLA scholar and is working on a Senior Intensive Project (SIP) where she has found a way to combine her major and minor. Her SIP entails her to study Marie-Antoinette's daughter, Marie-Thérèse Charlotte de Borbon, as a case study to understand teenage girls perception of death, war, and treason during revolutionary times. She was awarded a travel grant, by a generous donor and alum named



Barbara Snow Delaney '44, which she used to go to France this past Spring Break to conduct research on Marie-Thérèse at the Museum of the French Revolution in Vizille. By reading her personal

journals, Jennifer plans to conduct personality tests to further understand Marie-Thérèse and see how her experiences during the French Revolution impacted her after her rescue from prison.

Save The Date!

Contact OVCS for more info!

April 19- Neighborhood Alliance Egg Hunt at Ocean Beach

April 22- Application deadline for an AmeriCorps VISTA position through OVCS

April 24- 2013-2014 ELT Celebration Dinner. 5pm-7pm Cro's Nest

April 25- Senior Prom- New London Senior Center

April 25- Fundraiser for Field of Greens, Crocker House, New London

April 27- Holleran Center Walk to End Homelessness

May 1-2- Tunnel of Oppression
Lambdin-Morrison basement

May 7- Unity House & OVCS End of the Year BBQ. 4pm-6pm Cro's Pit

May 8- Last day of OVCS rides

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