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OVCS Newsletter March/April 2013

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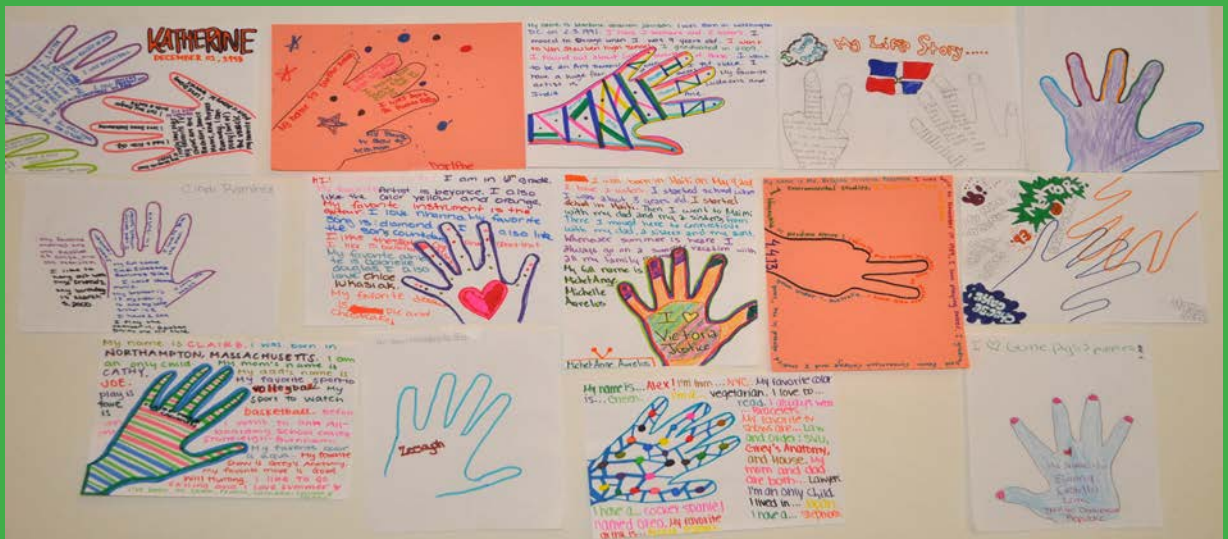
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COMMUNITY LEARNING

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

OVCS NEWSLETTER

March/April 2013



ENRICH mentees create artwork under the guidance of Marline Johnson '13

ENRICH

Alexis Mathison '15



Spring semester has been one wild ride for the Office of Volunteers for Community Service (OVCS), thanks in part to its newest addition, the ENRICH mentor program. The Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School (BDJ) in New London approached OVCS at the very end of fall semester with the hope that Conn would be able to participate in the development of the extended learning pilot program. Four days a week, two different groups of about fifty sixth-graders, one group on Monday and Wednesday and the other on Tuesday and Thursday, come onto campus and are provided with a snack, help with homework, and engagement in educational and fun workshops. The other two days they remain at BDJ for strategic reading classes.

For those of us who were members of the REACH and SISTER mentor programs, when we heard our beloved programs were being added into the new pilot, there were varied emotions. While being a bit hesitant about it, we were all excited and ready to take on this new challenge. What I enjoy most about this new initiative is that the intimate relationships that existed in the mentor programs still continue in ENRICH. We organized the fifty students into five sub-groups, which fosters establishing strong relationships between the middle school and college students.

Diana Barriga '14, REACH student coordinator

says “Its great that OVCS is able to reach out to a larger number of students as opposed to the select 30 that the original programs were built for.” Diana is very personally invested in OVCS programs, as she participated in REACH the first semester it was implemented in the fall of 2010. Such continued involvement shows the kind of dedication Conn students have to OVCS and how they are committed to the ongoing changes in the New London community. Conn’s Dining Services and Athletic Center also are key partners contributing to the program’s success. One of the benefits I have as a team leader of one of the five sub-groups is forming meaningful relationships not just with one mentee, but with all of them. Each child’s personality and interests are so unique and it’s great to get to know all of them in the small group setting ENRICH is forging mutually beneficial relationships between mentors and mentees and these students are teaching the college students and OVCS staff as much as we are teaching them.

The middle school students are accomplishing the goals they outlined at the beginning of the program, such as becoming better readers, writers, and friends. “I have learned how to work as a team and not to be scared of trying new things” one mentee wrote. I can see a change in their overall confidence and abilities to express themselves as they continue to expand their interest in the liberal arts.

VISTA

Volunteers In Service To America



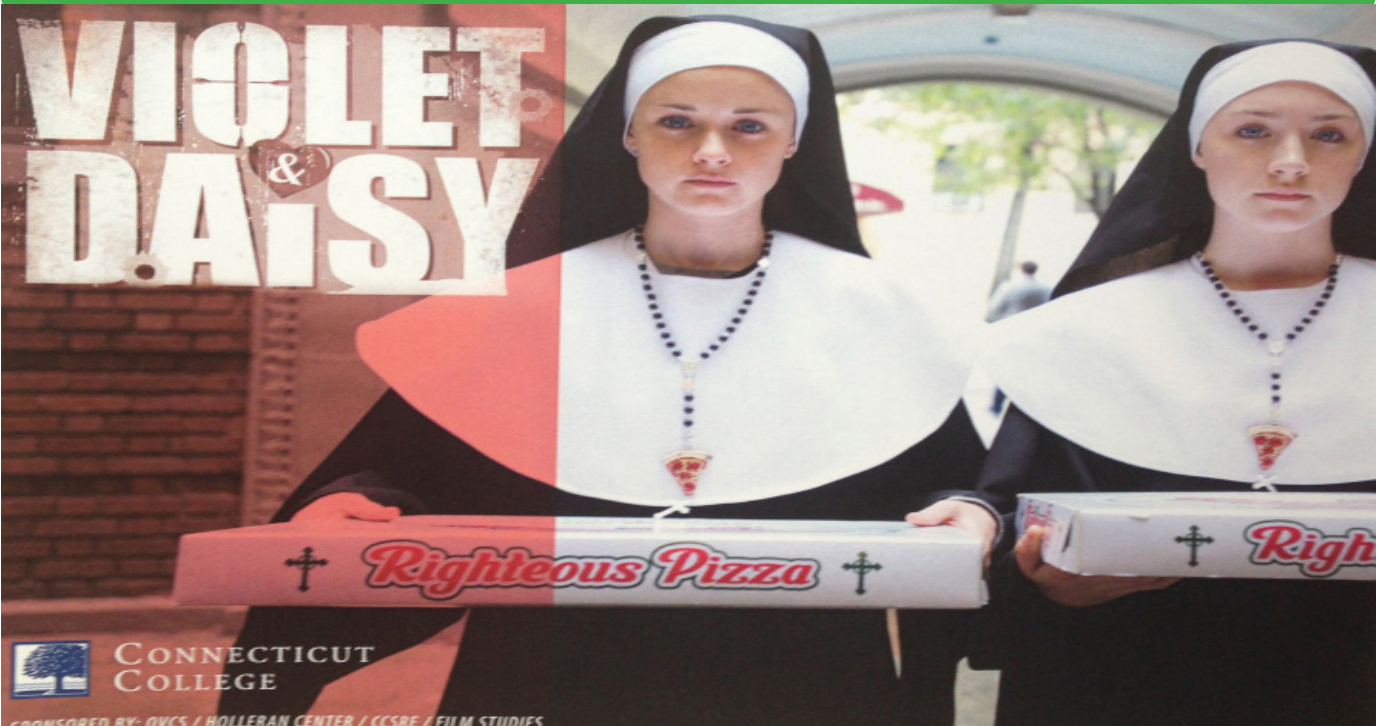
Are you a graduating senior and want to contribute to reducing poverty in the New London community? Are you interested in gaining experience while building a professional network? AmeriCorps VISTA has 2 full-year open positions available at the Office of Volunteers for Community

Service (OVCS) at Connecticut College. Receive an Education Award, monthly living allowance, health coverage, and more! Contact OVCS at x2458 or e-mail us at ovcs@conncoll.edu for more information!

Free screening with Academy Award winning screenwriter & director Geoffrey Fletcher. Q&A after screening!!!

VIOLET
&
DAISY

Thursday, April 18, 2013
4:30pm
Cummings Art Center,
Evans Hall,
Connecticut College



Women in Science



In 2009 Connecticut College OVCS and the Holleran Center built a partnership with the Science & Technology Magnet High School to inspire female high school students to study science and pursue higher education and careers in the sciences. Each year since, the forum takes place in the spring and on April 2nd Connecticut College OVCS arranged for twenty-five female high school students to come to Connecticut College and engage in unique lab experiences with faculty and students. They also completed a tour of the newly reconstructed New London Hall science

building and enjoyed lunch in Harris Dining Hall. Professors Bridget Baird, Ruth Grahn, Tanya Schneider and Doug Thompson, along with Connecticut College students Amanda Crawford, Lauren Holland, Melanie Argerta, Lily Bartlett, Carmen Zazueta-Ramirez, Jyneva Pickel, Meg Robbins and AmeriCorps*VISTA member Brigida Palatino engaged the high school students in the labs and answered questions about their research areas and college experiences. The high school students examined slices of rat brains and the correlation to

anxiety levels; separated and analyzed molecules; worked in the computer lab with graphics and programming and visited the hydraulic flume. On Wednesday, April 3rd Professor Thompson and Connecticut College student and Science Leader Amanda Crawford spoke on a panel at the Science and Technology Magnet High School along with three engineers from Electric Boat. One of the high school students in the audience asked the panelists why they chose to pursue careers in science. All panelists responded saying they truly enjoy their work and especially like the problem solving

dimensions within their fields. Connecticut College junior Amanda Crawford shared with the students, "There are a lot of resources out there that you might not be aware of that can help you to pursue your interests in the sciences. They include educational and financial resources as well as mentorships so that you can achieve whatever it is that you dream of!" Lou Allen, STMHS Director, Professor Thompson and Amanda said the students were engaged, asked a lot of relevant questions, and became inspired to pursue the sciences.

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