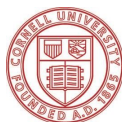
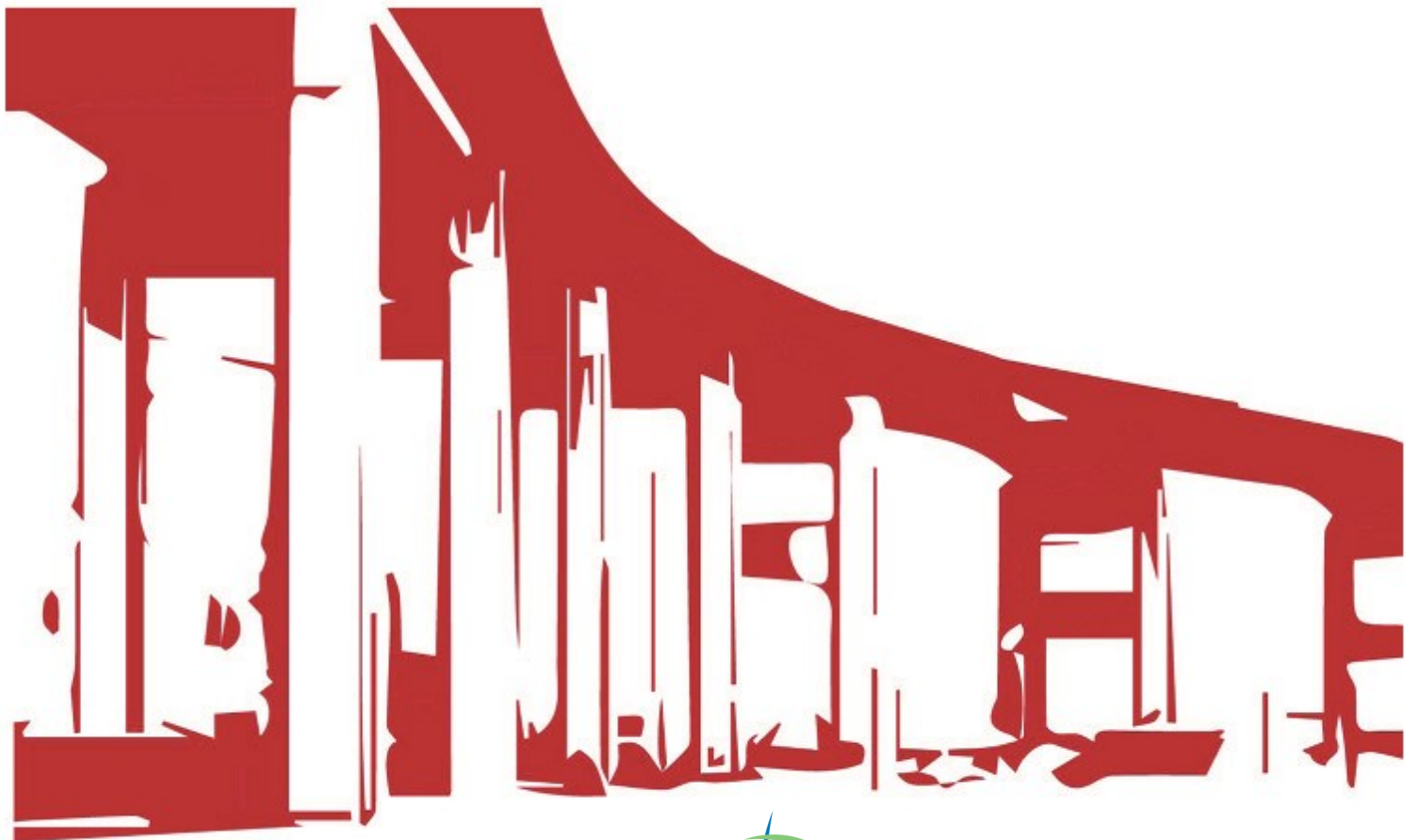


HIGH ROAD FELLOWSHIP

Engagement & Impact, 2015



Cornell University
ILR School



Engagement on the **HIGH ROAD**

Experiential learning & solution-driven research

The summer of 2015 marked the seventh year of the High Road Fellowship program and ushered in an expanded collaboration between the Partnership for the Public Good, Cornell University ILR School and exciting new initiatives of Engaged Cornell. Eighteen Cornell undergraduates joined the ranks of past students, bringing the total number of High Road Fellows to 104 since its inception in 2009.

With an eye toward constant improvement and in light of the emerging Engaged Cornell partnership, the 2015 High Road emphasized community impact through learning, research and service. The final work products of the fellows display a commitment to learning on the job. Many of their work assignments also required the direct application of various action research tools. Outside of the workplace, High Road Fellows were exposed to the City of Buffalo—its challenges and assets—in immersive panel discussions and weekly tours. Fellows engaged directly with community leaders and interacted firsthand with political, economic and cultural institutions. The program also requires fellows to reflect meaningfully on their work week, to tie the High Road experience to coursework on campus, global events and their personal and professional passions.

Engagement through Work. Engagement through Exposure. Engagement through Reflection.

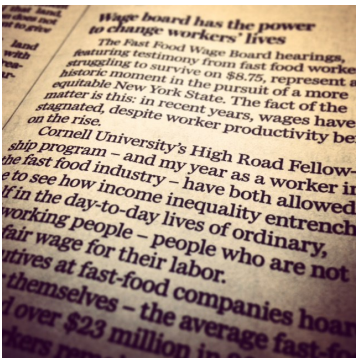
These principles drive the High Road Fellowship program and serve as the foundation of this non-traditional fellowship experience. The remainder of this brief report documents the ways in which these components of learning and research played out during the summer of 2015.



Engagement through **WORK**

The love you liberate in your work is the only love you keep. -Elbert Hubbard

Through placements at 16 non-profit partners of the Partnership for the Public Good, the 18 High Road Fellows produced a wide array of research and capacity-building support to advance the mission of their respective hosts and contribute to ongoing renewal in the Buffalo-Niagara region. The collection of High Road work from the summer of 2015 includes significant contributions toward more than 53 projects.



THE 2015 HIGH ROAD FELLOWS...

AUTHORED 12 PLANNING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING DOCUMENTS

Nabiha Qudsi, ILR '18, drafted a strategic plan for Assembly House 150, to convey the nonprofit's future as a nexus of art, public space, workforce training, and restoration.

CREATED 12 ISSUE & POLICY BRIEFS

Shira Kotz, ILR '18, wrote an 11-page brief about high school graduation rates for the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County, describing trends and detailing best practices.

PLANNED 6 EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Deandra Fike, ILR '18, co-coordinated "Working Successfully with Immigrants and Refugees", an employer training event by PPG to convey the importance of language access.

CONSTRUCTED 8 RESOURCE DATABASES

Daniela Archila, ILR '16, interviewed more than 20 local nonprofit partners of CEO to create a comprehensive map of workforce development resources and programs and gain support for CEO's programming for previously incarcerated individuals.

BUILT 4 CLIENT-BASED INTERNAL DOCUMENTS

Melissa Bravo, ILR '16, constructed a guide for Grassroots Gardens about improving the physical accessibility of the organization's 90+ community gardens.

DESIGNED CURRICULUM OR FACILITATED 4 WORKSHOPS

Kibrett Facey, CALS '16, wrote and presented workshops on civic participation and social change for teenagers at the Massachusetts Avenue Project.

DIRECTLY IMPLEMENTED 3 NON-PROFIT PROGRAMS

Zach de Stefan, ILR '18, coordinated the Pathways to Employment program at the Learning Disabilities Association by matching LDA clients with long-term volunteer opportunities.

COORDINATED 2 CAMPAIGNS FOR WORKER EQUITY

Maria Chak, ILR '18, canvassed nail salons in Buffalo and surrounding municipalities to notify workers of their rights regarding workplace safety and wage theft.

WROTE 2 ADVOCACY LETTERS

Kyle Friend, ILR '17, authored a letter to the Buffalo News, advocating for a higher minimum wage among fast food workers in light of Governor Cuomo's Wage Board hearings.

Engagement through **EXPOSURE**

Don't let schooling interfere with your education. -Mark Twain

Outside of the workplace, High Road Fellows learn about the Buffalo through direct contact with community organizations, public servants, cultural institutions and academics all working on social change in Western New York. Each Friday, local panelists share their experiences with the fellows. Following the panel discussions, High Roaders join PPG on planned tours of Buffalo, revealing through firsthand exposure the challenges and assets facing the city. In addition to Friday programming, this year the fellows meet weekly with **CLINT McMANUS**, the first High Road Graduate Fellow, for intensive research and professional development workshops.



RESEARCH & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

FRAMING & ACCOMPLISHING WORKPLACE DUTIES – JUNE 8

After the first week, the fellows discussed their roles, stated their final deliverable products and devised plans to achieve workplace goals.

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION & ETIQUETTE – JUNE 15

The High Road Fellows reviewed appropriate workplace and email communication, focusing on the merits of being timely, brief, specific and honest.

RESUME CRITIQUE & REHAB – JUNE 22

The fellows received personalized comments on their resumes and discussed strategies for adapting and framing experiences to cater to specific job applications.

DOCUMENT & PRESENTATION DESIGN – JUNE 29

Fellows learned about common principles of design as they pertain to research, display of data and the most effective use of slideshow presentations.

THE NECESSARY ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL CHANGE – JULY 13

As a group, the fellows considered the unique role that they and their sponsor organizations play in advancing social and economic change within the community.

LINKEDIN TUTORIAL – JULY 21

To build upon the resume workshop, the fellows learned the tricks of starting and strengthening an online network for future job and internship searches.

CAREER EXPLORATION

CAREERS IN PUBLIC SERVICE:

WHY LOCAL DEMOCRACY MATTERS – JUNE 26

*This year the High Road Fellowship received funding from **NYS ASSEMBLY MEMBER SEAN RYAN, DISTRICT 149**, to present a daylong program featuring local and state officials—elected, appointed and staff—who shared their paths to public office and offered career advice to aspiring, civic-minded young people.*

CAREERS IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

REGINA DUFFEY MORAVEK – JULY 17

Every year ILR's Career Services Director visits the High Road for a workshop on career trends and opportunities. This year she shared new initiatives in ILR career services to encompass growing interest in careers in the social economy.

LEARNING BY REAL LIFE EXAMPLES

The great diversity of community leaders who meet with High Roaders are asked to introduce themselves by sharing their own personal career paths.

Engagement through REFLECTION

Until one sees with one's own eyes and comes to feel with one's own heart, one will never understand other people.
-Eleanor Roosevelt

At the end of each week, the High Road Fellows reflected upon their work experiences, local issues and global events. In more than 115 journal entries, the fellows most often discussed the challenges and advantages of creating change within the social economy and adjusting to a full-time work schedule. The prevalence of these two themes underscores the reality that the High Road Fellowship serves as an important entrée into nonprofit work and the world of work generally. The fellows' reflections on the nonprofit workplace were also common topics in a weekly questionnaire in which the fellows shared what they learned in their placement.



IN THE 115 JOURNAL ENTRIES...

EVERY FELLOW ANALYZED WORK IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

"After stepping into the office on my first day and beginning my research on the expansive Niagara River Greenway, I began to realize the amount of planning and coordination that goes into operating a nonprofit." – Erin Killian, ILR '17

EACH FELLOW WROTE ABOUT ENGAGEMENT IN & OUT OF THE WORKPLACE

"I understand now, that if I want to be an ally, an advocate, and a friend, then I should learn firsthand from their stories, experiences and hardships because textbooks, films and professors cannot describe even half of what they are going through." – Maria Chak, ILR '18

94% OF FELLOWS DISCUSSED THEIR PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL FUTURE

"The last seven weeks of my experience in [the PUSH] office has had a significant impact on my academic, professional and ultimately career interests moving forward. It has also been awesome to spend four days a week in the presence of such committed, humble, funny, and down-to-earth people." – Cole Norgaarden, URS '17

88% OF FELLOWS WRESTLED WITH ISSUES OF POVERTY & INEQUALITY

"During the trolley tour, seeing how income disparity within Buffalo affects those within the community was eye-opening. Being from NYC I've noticed it, but it is way more obvious in Buffalo. But, I guess we're here to do something about that." – Kelly Bouzi, ILR '18

76% OF FELLOWS GRAPPLED WITH THE TOPICS OF RACE & DIVERSITY

"During my time here in Buffalo I have seen people of all identifications that may, in one context or another, be described as 'in' be unafraid to recognize their privilege and how that privilege obstructs the equitable allocation of justice and opportunity to the 'others.' It is important because Buffalo. . . must remain cognizant that the mistakes of its past—specifically regarding issues of race, class, and gender—are not rendered useless as inaccessible, compartmentalized memories." – Robert Johnson, ILR '17

WHAT IS ONE THING THAT YOU LEARNED THIS WEEK...

"I am learning a lot more about the obstacles facing workforce development for several groups. What is interesting is that many of the barriers that block certain groups are also a hindrance to other groups. For example, for both organizations that serve people with special needs and for the clients of Hispanics United, transportation is a huge hindrance to employment." – Daniela Archila, ILR '16

"I learned that networking is of utmost importance in non-profits. Skills and innovative thinking have a limited impact without valuable partnerships and contacts. Establishing solid relationships results in increased grants, volunteer sources, and reputability."
– Erin Killian, ILR '17

"I learned how to develop an atmosphere where people willingly accept other ideas and build off of them rather than quickly rejecting them." – Lauren Lang, ILR '17

