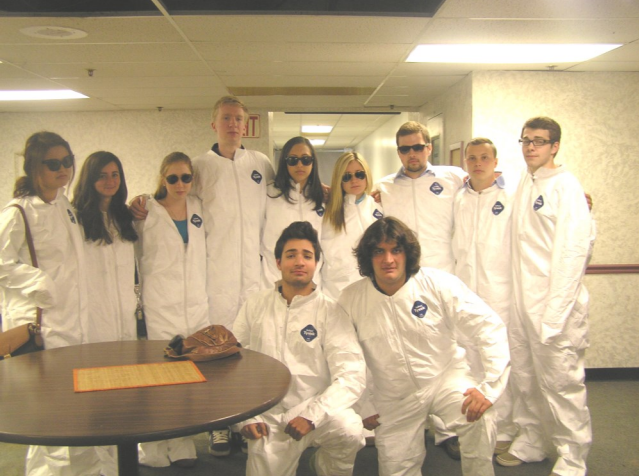




The High Road Runs Through the City

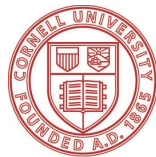
Cornell ILR Summer Fellowships

Buffalo, NY | Summer 2013



*You got to look outside – your eyes
You got to think outside – your brain
You got to walk outside – your life
To where the neighborhoods change*

~Ani DiFranco
'Willing to Fight'
from the album *Puddle Dive*



Cornell University
ILR School



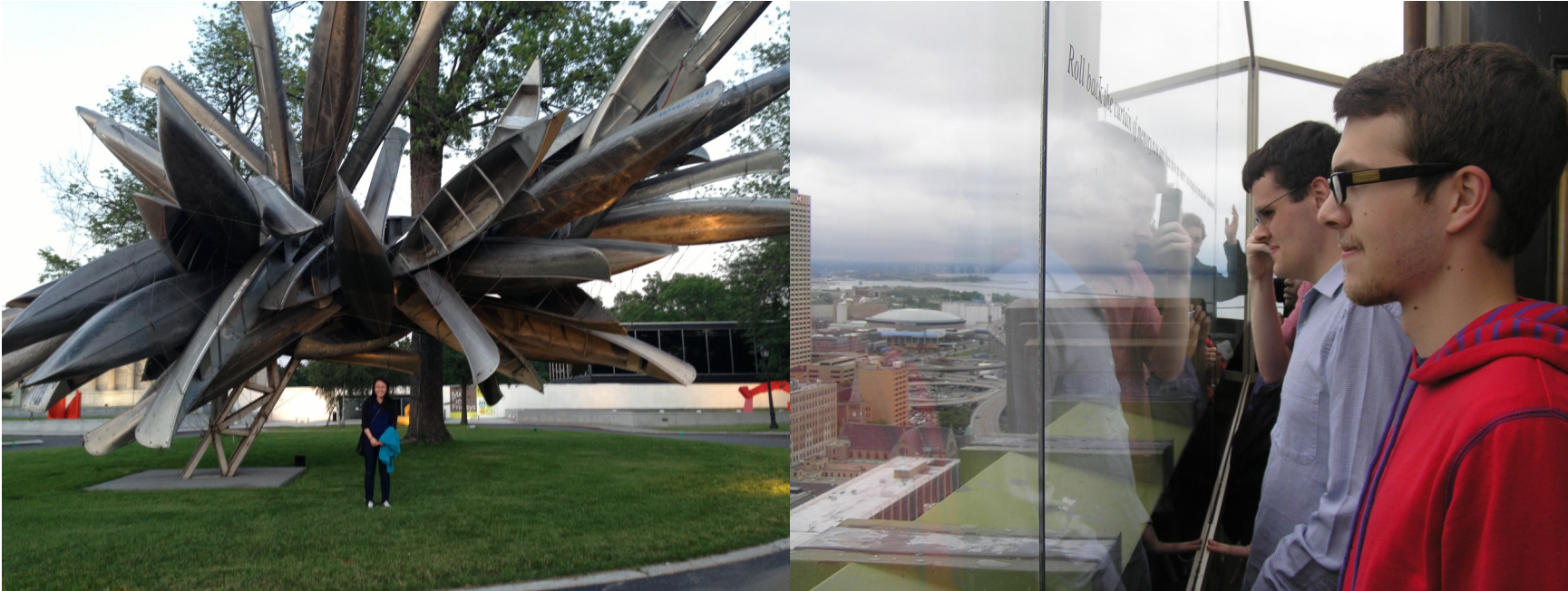
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WELCOME TO THE HIGH ROAD





The High Road Runs Through the City summer fellowship program gives ILR students a unique opportunity to explore the rich variety of creative organizations and enterprises that are working to transform Greater Buffalo from rust belt to a new, green, high road economy.

Since 2009, this fellowship program has provided opportunities for ILR students to participate as a group in research, active learning and service in community-based economic development in Buffalo. Every year is unique as the High Road is a journey through current events, new development projects, evolving challenges, and everyday innovation and change. Students' projects are coordinated through the Partnership for the Public Good (PPG), a community-based think tank with a growing number of over 140 richly networked partners, each of which is eligible to apply for a High Road Fellow.

High Roaders, as the student fellows have come to be called, explore the city through the lens of the public good. Their work and study reveal the linkages between the worlds of policy and practice, the profit and nonprofit sectors of the economy, and academia and the "real" world. They meet with public officials, testify in public hearings, write for online publications, speak with the press, participate in civic events and live democracy in action.

The High Road thrives on collaboration, and we are grateful for support from Dean Harry C. Katz , ILR faculty and staff, and for assistance from Cornell's Center for Community Engaged Learning and Research.



Jacob Barnes, '14

When I began my studies at Cornell, I came with deeply-rooted interests in both economics and sociology. As I progressed through my first two years at ILR, I was able to narrow my originally broad interests in the social sciences into a passion for public policy and community action and engagement. After attending an informational session for the High Road, I felt that the program was very tailored to those interests.

This summer, I'm working with the Partnership for the Public Good (PPG), an organization committed to action-oriented research and policy development. PPG has over 140 partner organizations, and its ranks are growing. I've learned that language accessibility is a big issue for Buffalo, which has become one of the top resettlement sites for refugees in New York State. I'm thrilled to be conducting my own research and developing a policy plan on language accessibility in government organizations. I'm excited to come out of this summer with real, hands-on experience in policy research and insight into the day-to-day functioning of community-oriented, nonprofit organizations.

Partnership for the Public Good

237 Main Street, Suite 1200 | Buffalo, NY 14203
716.852.4191 | www.ppgbuffalo.org



The Partnership for the Public Good is a “think and do tank” providing research and advocacy support to over 140 partner organizations who share a community oriented vision of a revitalized Greater Buffalo. PPG promotes civic involvement so citizens and the nonprofit community have stronger voices in public policy and are better able to promote the public good.

Jake's Work Highlights:

- Conducted research and performed data analysis showing testing outcomes correlated to poverty rates in the Buffalo Public School District.
- Collected community input for the Open Buffalo project and compiled a database used to analyze trends of the most pressing issues.
- Researched the Limited English Proficiency plans of the City and County to improve language access to government services.
- Created marketing materials and formulated database for PPG's annual fundraiser, Shakespearean Idol, which was its most successful yet.



“Both my involvement with PPG and Open Buffalo have helped me to better understand policy development and citizen engagement. My work this summer has given me a deep understanding of the inner-workings of nonprofits and their role in both the community and local politics.”

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Lexi's Work Highlights:

- Contributed to a policy brief on how best to incorporate high road principles into the development of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, a consortium of the region's premier health care, life sciences research, and medical education institutions and largest public/private investment in the region.
- Crafted recommendations of how to enhance economic development links between the Campus and adjoining, low-income neighborhoods.
- Researched City law regarding the funding of public art for capital projects of over \$1 millions dollars. Met with City Officials and Council Members to improve implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of the law.



“My placement focuses on increasing the transparency and public participation of economic development. In this organization, I don't feel like the stereotypical intern whose only job is to get coffee and make copies; I actually feel like I'm helping to make a difference.”



Alexis Leonard, '16

When I first started looking into what my post-freshman summer plans would entail, I didn't really have a clear idea of how to make the most of my summer, but when I stumbled upon the High Road Fellowship, I knew I had the opportunity to make my summer mean something. I found that the program works exclusively with nonprofit organizations that work toward the common goal of making Buffalo a better, more sustainable environment for its residents.

Dedicated to academic service learning and skill building, the High Road is providing me with experience working with organizations that are devoted to transforming Buffalo. Urban revitalization is presently one of the greatest focuses among the Buffalo community. At the Partnership for the Public Good, I'm working to help develop, enhance, and analyze policies to revitalize downtrodden neighborhoods that would ultimately improve quality of life for Buffalo's residents.

Taking the High Road is the ethically superior choice, but it also means advancing the world around us. The High Road Fellowship has opened up a world of opportunity not only for me, but hopefully for the people of Buffalo as well.



Justine Brennan, '16

When I found out about the High Road Program, I was immediately intrigued. Being from the greater Buffalo area, I was excited about the opportunity to give back to and improve my community while also gaining valuable experience for my future career endeavors. By working with the Arts Services Initiative, I am able to be a part of work that addresses pressing issues for this community and to contribute to cultural revitalization projects, such as Buffalo River, as well as gain valuable knowledge about economic development, local business, and finance.

Taking the High Road means choosing the moral path, even when it's not easy or convenient. Revitalization and activation of a city is not something that happens easily or without struggle; rather, it takes patience, time, perseverance, and incorporates the needs and wishes of the people actually in the community. Through this program I have met amazing, intelligent people with incredible passion for their work. Their energy and drive has shown me the power an individual can have when she sets her mind to accomplish something. With the right plan and the right people, change really can happen.

Arts Services Initiative of WNY

95 Perry Street, Suite 402 | Buffalo, NY 14213
716.846.8270 | www.asiwny.org



Arts Services Initiative of WNY fosters capacity building, collaboration, and advocacy efforts, for the region's cultural center, an integral part of the community. ASI works closely with the Greater Buffalo Cultural Alliance and New York Council on the Arts, and provides a broad range of services to the arts community.

Justine's Work Highlights:

- Conducted research to help further the economic development of the Buffalo waterfront. This research will help guide ASI's Erie and Niagara County Cultural Plan, which will be integrated with existing government and economic development plans including waterfront development, tourism initiatives, and related job creation and smart growth regional plans.
- Oversaw the grant allocation process for arts and cultural programming along the Buffalo waters with the goal being for these programs to spur economic and cultural activity.
- Worked on the NYS Cultural Data Project in order to trace the economic impact that the arts and cultural sector has on the overall economy of the city.



"The High Road program is an excellent program for those interested in service learning, civic engagement or social justice. The program met my expectations in providing us valuable experiences where we could explore these areas of study and interact with others currently working in these fields. My favorite experience of the summer was being able to hear about all of the amazing things that other fellows were working on throughout the week and seeing the difference our program was making in Buffalo."

Belmont Housing Resources

1195 Main Street | Buffalo, NY 14209
716.884.7791 | www.belmonthousingwny.org



Belmont Housing Resources for WNY, a leading advocate for quality affordable housing, assists low and moderate income households to obtain housing by producing and preserving housing units and by professionally managing affordable housing.

Wes's Work Highlights:

- Conducted research for an evaluation of Belmont's Family Self-Sufficiency Program which helps Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher participants increase their earned income. Created, administered and analyzed a survey to determine what factors motivated or facilitated successful completion of the program and conversely, what inhibited some from completing.
- Interviewed program participants and graduates to better understand barriers to economic self-sufficiency and the effects of gender, family size, race and housing location on achievement of self-sufficiency.
- Represented Belmont at a meeting hosted by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau where discussion focused on local examples of predatory practices and community-driven solutions.



"Belmont was dealing directly with the across the board cuts from the sequester as well. It was the first time in my life I saw direct impacts of public policy on the lives of everyday people. I loved my project. I talked directly with residents of Buffalo and they often talked to me about more than just my survey. I learned a lot too. And at the end I got to feel like I was truly helping Buffalo become a better place."



Frederick Turner, '16

Some people are focused on getting into the top law school, or working for an investment bank, but I chose the High Road because I wanted to do something different—to get involved in a community on a grassroots level. This summer, I am working for the Family Self-Sufficiency Program at Belmont Housing Resources. Even in my first week there, I could see first-hand the real difference Belmont is making in the lives of its clients: people getting their GEDs, or buying their first house when they otherwise might not have been able to.

To me, the High Road method means doing the right thing and for the right reasons. One of my supervisors at Belmont told me that she had only expected to work there for a few years, and then move on to helping people through a career in government or law. Fifteen years later, she is still at Belmont, because she now thinks that there is no better way to help people. I am not sure where the High Road will take me, but I know that it has already given me new priorities—meaningful work that has a tangible, positive impact on the quality of life for individuals and communities.



William Larkin, '15

The High Road program was attractive to me because it provides a great model to improve the overall quality of the City of Buffalo, which has suffered greatly from past practices and policies. My organization, GObike Buffalo, has been involved in creating a sustainable transportation policy called "Complete Streets," which acknowledges not just cars but also cyclists and pedestrians during infrastructure remodeling, so that those who cannot afford to drive a car have other options of transportation. I'm putting theory into practice by teaching the advantages of cycling through Recycle-a-Bike programs at schools throughout Buffalo. By encouraging bike use at a young age one may never need to buy a car and can make better investments in the long run.

The High Road method to me is the most positive and ethical actions one can make in order to maximize the potential of others and create a more efficient society. Because bicycling is a healthy activity, creating a more bicycle friendly environment will improve the overall health of the City of Buffalo greatly. By showing me the realities of urban life, the High Road is also exposing me to new ideas and concepts, helping me to develop the skills for a future career that will hopefully facilitate economic improvement and social equality.

GObike Buffalo

640 Ellicott Street | Buffalo, NY 14213
716.852.4191 | www.gobikebuffalo.org



GObike Buffalo works to create healthy, environmentally sustainable, community friendly transportation options in the City of Buffalo. Through an array of advocacy efforts and various community programs, GObike Buffalo is working to make Buffalo a bicycle friendly city and enhance quality of life to attract others to Buffalo to live, work and play.

Will's Work Highlights:

- Facilitated the Recycle-a-Bicycle program where at-risk youth learn about bicycle repair and maintenance, as well as safety, health and the environment, while building their own bicycles from refurbished parts.
- Served as a mentor to youth program participants, teaching young students basic mechanics and the environmental impacts of transportation.
- Worked in the Community Bicycle Workshop Community where community members can find affordable options to purchase a bicycle or go and learn to repair and maintain their bicycles.



"When I graduated high school and left for college I planned on never moving back. I thought that Buffalo could never become the city it once was. But after being exposed to the tremendous effort made by nonprofit groups and the noticeable progress they have made, I see great potential for Buffalo the following decades and now I can see myself moving back."

Community Action Organization: Green Entrepreneurial Center

70 Harvard Place | Buffalo, NY 14209

716.881.5150 | www.caoec.org



For more than 40 years, the Community Action Organization of Erie County has helped low-income people and working poor families gain access to opportunities, resources, education and training, and a range of services from housing and employment to child care. The Green Entrepreneurial Center is the largest urban commercial farm in Buffalo.

Kathleen's Work Highlights:

- Researched and wrote the Green Agricultural Practices plan for Center which will help improve the farm practices and produce safer food.
- Learned about planting, growing, and harvesting crops in greenhouses and outdoor raised beds.
- Oversaw volunteers and the City Youth Program participants on the farm, teaching them about urban agriculture, planting and harvesting, and healthy eating.



Kathleen Huffman, '16

I chose the High Road to learn about the various ways people and organizations are working together to bring Buffalo back to life. The High Road method, to me, is working together to create positive change. As High Road Fellows, we get the opportunity to work together with other students, to learn about what they are doing in Buffalo, and to witness how these great organizations collaborate with each other to improve Buffalo.

I am interested in careers in either law or the nonprofit sector, so the High Road was the perfect opportunity for me to explore exactly what it takes to run a nonprofit and the many aspects of work in such organizations. I'm passionate about sustainability and earth-friendly development. Working at Community Action Organization's (CAO) urban farm allows me to combine these interests. I'm learning about every aspect of urban farming, from planting seeds, through harvesting crops, and finally selling produce. I am also learning how CAO works with other organizations, teaching them the benefits of urban farming. My work with CAO is also providing me with a window into the Buffalo community, through the volunteers that visit, my colleagues at the farm, and CAO's partner organizations.



"The interaction with other fellows is one of the biggest benefits of this program. It was valuable to have them with me to explore Buffalo and learn what their placement is doing. I think it was also beneficial to get to know other students with similar goals who are studying what I am studying and learn from their knowledge of ILR."



Renée Wall, '15

As a Buffalo native, I grew up with a front-row seat to the struggles this city has faced. The High Road program has provided me with the opportunity to help out a community whose spirit has persevered through such difficult times.

The High Road method requires an honest, holistic approach to the issues facing communities. It demands that we treat not just the symptoms of a problem, but its root causes as well. At Everywoman Opportunity Center, I'm taking a very hands-on approach to helping the people of this city who need it most. I'm providing education, workshops, and other services to help underserved women attain the skills that they need to become financially independent.

This program has shown me the things about Buffalo that I never stopped to see before—the poverty, urban blight, food deserts, and other economic issues, but it also showed us the cultural, artistic, and creative side of Buffalo, so I think the program does a good job of giving students the whole picture.

Everywoman Opportunity Center

237 Main Street, Suite 330 | Buffalo, NY 14203
716.796.5008 | www.everywoman.org

Everywoman Opportunity Center, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation committed to helping women in Greater Western New York achieve economic and personal self-sufficiency. Throughout its history, Everywoman has reached out to diverse communities to provide comprehensive employment-related services. All programs and services are designed to be holistic and address all the barriers a woman may face in seeking economic and personal self-sufficiency.



Renée's Work Highlights:

- Assisted agency to research and craft a strategy to adjust and implement needed modifications as the national GED program changes in 2014.
- Conducted small business development workshops including skills for utilizing social media and new marketing techniques as tools for finding employment.
- Performed outreach to participants who have left the program to learn about the barriers they faced.
- Reviewed and assisted Everywoman participants with: cover letters, resumes, computer skills, interviewing techniques, job searches, job applications, professional image.



"I thoroughly enjoyed working with the Everywoman Opportunity Center. My favorite part was teaching the small business workshops because I got to draw from what I've learned in ILR classes. I was able to see my work have direct impact when I heard that some of the women that I helped to create resumes were able to get jobs because of our work at the Everywoman Opportunity Center."

Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site

671 Delaware Avenue | Buffalo, NY 14202
716.884.0095 | www.trsite.org



The Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site is the former home of Ansley Wilcox, where Theodore Roosevelt took the oath of office as the 26th President of the United States on September 14, 1901, after the assassination of President McKinley in Buffalo. A national historic site and national park, the TR Site is a unique historical museum and vibrant education center focused on the remarkable life and progressive policies of Theodore Roosevelt.

Kevin's Work Highlights:

- Conducted research and writing on themes of Theodore Roosevelt's presidency and their relevance for America today focusing particularly on big business and labor.
- Created and edited materials to be used in public education and tourism development.
- The research was conducted in preparation for and to be presented at the national Theodore Roosevelt Association's 94th Annual Meeting held in Buffalo during September 2013.



"Researching historical issues of business and labor in Buffalo and the results of progressive prerogatives at both local and national levels helped me better understand how economies and issues of public policy function in large cities. This experience was especially useful in framing how we perceive these issues present-day with the natural progression of these same issues throughout the city's history – allowing me to grasp not only the modern economic and political condition of Buffalo, but how it arrived to that position."



Kevin Mollica, '16

When seeking summer work, most students choose to either stick close to home or move to big cities like New York or Washington, D.C. By coming to Buffalo, the High Road program is giving me the chance to be fully immersed in one of the most progressive cultures on the East Coast. This summer, I am interning with the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site, the historical mansion where Roosevelt was inaugurated after the assassination of President McKinley. This placement is allowing me to gain valuable experience while indulging in my interests in research and history.

When I first applied to work at the Theodore Roosevelt Site, I knew that it was exactly what I wanted to spend my summer doing. During my first semester at Cornell, I took Professor Salvatore's Labor History course. Despite its rigor, or maybe because of it, the classroom experience was memorable, immediately enhancing both my reading abilities and analytical comprehension. My classroom experience at Ithaca has given me a strong foundation for the work that I am doing in Buffalo, and I know that my research will be stronger because of it.



Daniel Powers, '15

I chose the High Road Program because I wanted real-world experience working for a nonprofit organization, and to help me determine what I want to do after college.

For me, the High Road method is people acting together to transform the conditions and institutions that govern our lives. Through my work at the Coalition for Economic Justice, I've been helping to do that. I'm tracking the money spent by local Industrial Development Agencies (IDAs) to hold these government agencies accountable to the public. I've also been researching the backgrounds and developing biographies of IDA members and comparing state legislation that CEJ is supporting with the policy adopted by the Erie County IDA. My favorite task so far has been comparing CEJ-backed legislation for local hiring with the Erie County IDA's policy. It's giving me the opportunity to think critically about implications of language and how differences in wording can affect policy implementation.

Among other things, I gained a better understanding of government failure, refugee issues, the impact of legislation, and participatory budgeting through my research.

Coalition for Economic Justice

237 Main Street, Suite 1200 | Buffalo, NY 14203
716.892.5877 | www.buffalोजwj.org



The Coalition for Economic Justice (CEJ) is an ongoing coalition of labor, faith, community, academic and student activists engaged in dynamic campaigns for living wages, rights at work, accountable economic development, and health care for all. CEJ is the Buffalo affiliate of Jobs with Justice.

Dan's Work Highlights:

- Worked on the statewide "Getting Our Money's Worth" campaign and wrote two op-eds to the Buffalo News regarding the need to reform economic development practices in Buffalo focusing on Industrial Development Agencies (IDAs). Researched and compiled a database of subsidies handed out by local IDAs to track job creation and waste.
- Participated in the campaign on immigration reform by assisting with a photo project and engaging labor groups and prominent local clergy with the cause.
- Improved social media practices of CEJ and managed accounts.



"My experience exceeded expectations. The internship provided me with more autonomy in my work and more interesting work than I expected. The social element of the program was fantastic. I hope that my research and meeting contributions are helpful to the community and nonprofit organizations that are trying to make changes around the subjects I researched."

Buffalo CarShare

14 Allen Street | Buffalo, NY 14202
716.898.0850 | www.buffalocarshare.org



Buffalo CarShare provides affordable, community-based car sharing services that benefit the environment through practical innovation in urban transportation, providing fuel-efficient vehicles from ten hub locations throughout the city. A nonprofit organization, Buffalo CarShare has a growing and diverse membership and has partnered with the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus to expand transportation options especially for low-income residents.

Jake's Work Highlights:

- Researched potential carsharing sites and localities for investment nationally using census data and qualitative factors modeled after Buffalo.
- Organized a meeting of statewide carsharing organizations to have a dialogue about opening up car-sharing beyond large cities to new markets and new demographics.
- Assisted with launch of Social Bicycles, an affordable bike-sharing program offering the use of 75 bicycles, all equipped with GPS systems.



"As someone with a background working with for-profit companies, I gained a great deal of knowledge about how community-based organizations function. I assumed that merely dropping the "nonprofit" title would automatically lead to public and peer support and this was simply not the case. However, developing strong personal connections with other organizations and the people that run them, as my supervisor has done, makes the process much easier, and more fun!"



Jacob Reichert, '15

I chose the High Road because Buffalo CarShare offered me a chance to participate in marketing and promotion, something I had never done before but was very interested in. At the same time, this internship also allowed me to support economic and environmental justice, two topics which I am experienced in and passionate about.

I think that taking the High Road means ethically and efficiently working toward positive, lasting changes in a community. My experiences are teaching me to look at communities in a different way, with a greater sense of what they can be. Seeing the possibilities instead of just seeing what is lacking or accepting the status quo decreases complacency, and helps to inspire people to work toward change. The High Road program is putting me on a path toward a career that I can be proud of.



Rebeka Tannenbaum, '16

I came to Buffalo and the High Road because I wanted something richer than the typical intern experience. I knew through the High Road I would be immersed in the community, culture, and people of Buffalo, while giving me the opportunity to really find out what I could contribute to an organization.

I'm now interning at the Massachusetts Avenue Project (MAP), an organization dedicated to addressing food disparities. Since I began my studies at Cornell, I became very interested in issues related to food and healthy eating. When I read MAP's mission statement, I knew it was the perfect fit for me. MAP works to provide fresh, organic produce to areas of Buffalo with limited access to such food.

To me, the High Road method is working together to make a community a better place, using natural, local, and democratic means. It is involving the community in change and making a lasting impact. Seeing the impact that MAP is making in Buffalo has definitely inspired me to bring home what I've learned and work to make a difference in the Ithaca community.

Massachusetts Avenue Project

271 Grant Street | Buffalo, NY 14213
716.882.5327 | www.mass-ave.org

The Massachusetts Avenue Project nurtures the growth of a diverse, equitable community food system to promote local economic opportunities, access to affordable and nutritious food, and social-change education. MAP hosts the Growing Green Program, a youth development and urban agriculture program about increasing healthy food access.



Rebeka's Work Highlights:

- Staffed the mobile market farm stand to provide fresh produce to communities lacking access to healthy eating.
- Monitored inventory and sales to ensure supply met demand, including planting and harvesting.
- Created and taught a lesson on food justice and the importance of food and culture to a group of local Buffalo teenagers.



"Working at MAP provided me with a greater understanding of the economy and civic participation. At MAP, I watched "The Story of Stuff" and learned a lot about food systems and how a nonprofit interacts with the city and its economy. Some youth at MAP are involved in a youth food council, where they work firsthand on policy. This has really shown me that civic participation is possible and can in fact make a difference."

Buffalo First!

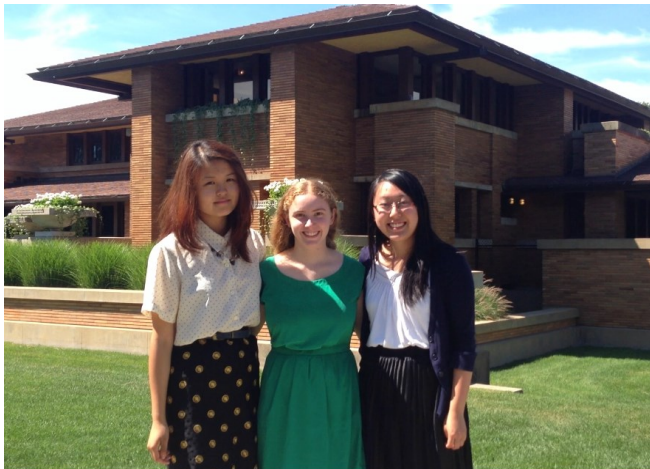
910 Main Street | Buffalo, NY 14202
716.725.6100 | www.buffalofirst.org

Buffalo First! is a growing nonprofit that focuses on building a fair, green, and local economy in the Buffalo-Niagara region by encouraging people to shop locally, assisting independent businesses to access local goods/services, and giving independent businesses a united voice to shape policies for local independent and green businesses.



Luise's Work Highlights:

- Handled all social media for the 2013 national conference of the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE). Helped with events and networking of organizations and experts within the new economy/localist movement with local stakeholders.
- Responsible for establishing sustainable practices at the BALLE conference including implementing a recycling plan to reduce waste for the entire conference at multiple events and venues.
- Facilitated partnership with Squeaky Wheel's Youth Media Institute to produce a documentary where youth were able to explore the region's up-and-coming West Side community and learn about some of the unique grassroots businesses flourishing on the West Side.



"I think this fellowship did an excellent job of showing me the positive and negative aspects of working with a nonprofit. I am definitely interested in the social justice aspect of the experience and I wish to pursue it further in my academic studies in graduate school and in my career as well."



Luise Yang, '15

When finalizing my summer plans, I knew that I wanted a richer experience than spending my days just sitting in a cubicle. I knew that choosing the High Road would provide me with a unique opportunity to actually become an integral part of my sponsor organization.

I see the High Road method as one that emphasizes cooperation, creativity, and commitment as the keys to solving problems. At Buffalo First!, I get to apply the knowledge I obtained from courses such as *Work, Labor, and Capital in the Global Economy* and *Governing Economic Development: The U.S. Experience* to the projects that I'm working on. Although I was nervous my first day, Sarah Bishop, the Executive Director, and the rest of the staff immediately put me at ease and made me feel like part of the staff. Working for a grassroots nonprofit organization like Buffalo First! is giving me a deeper understanding of localism and the ways in which it benefits individuals, communities, and businesses.



Abigail Frey, '16

I chose the High Road because I wanted direct experience working in a nonprofit organization or public aid office. I was excited about the diversity of projects and organizations offered, so I decided to come to Buffalo. What I really like about this program is that we're not just average interns. I was able to choose a project that pertained to my own interests and goals, allowing me to really engage in the work. Prior to this summer, I had no idea how politics really worked, how laws were passed. Working in the WNYLC and doing research on Buffalo Water definitely highlighted different aspects and the importance of public policy.

Another aspect of the program that appealed to me was the chance to connect with a group of ILR students. I really liked being able to spend so much time with other ILR students. It's an easy ice breaker because we all either know each other, recognize each other or can easily start a conversation. I learned a lot from hearing other people talk about their workdays.

WNY Law Center

237 Main Street, Suite 1130 | Buffalo, NY 14203
716.855.0203 | www.wnylc.net



The WNY Law Center is a nonprofit legal services organization of legal professionals representing low-income people in a full range of civil matters. They engage in direct representation of homeowners facing foreclosure as well as in fair lending advocacy and education. They also maintain the Online Resource Center with the Empire Justice Center.

Abbie's Work Highlights:

- Researched issues of mortgage foreclosures and service shut-offs due to problems low-income residents face with water bills and costs of service and repairs.
- Collected personal stories through community-based organizations and individual meeting with clients.
- Compiled a memo with policy recommendations regarding consumer protections for customers dealing with water bill and water access issues.



"Many community-based organizations do more good than I realized. I've never really spent a lot of time in an area that needs nonprofits to ensure that kids have recess, the air is breathable and things like that. There are a lot of people who are willing to do good, it just takes a lot of time and effort to make a substantial change."

WNY Law Center

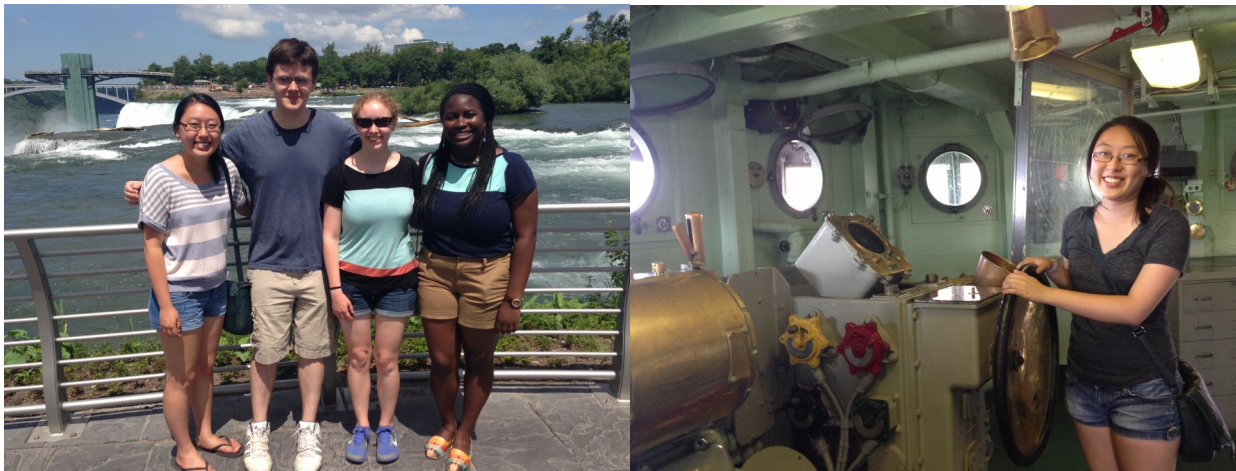
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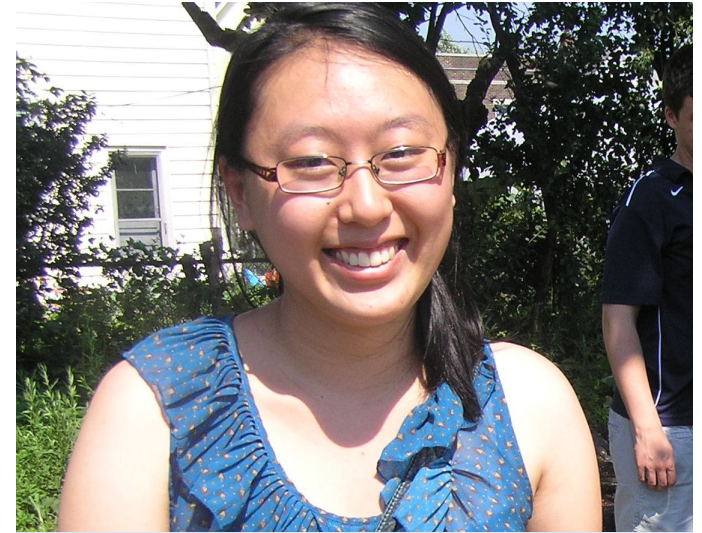
The WNY Law Center is a nonprofit legal services organization of legal professionals representing low-income people in a full range of civil matters. They engage in direct representation of homeowners facing foreclosure as well as in fair lending advocacy and education. They also maintain the Online Resource Center with the Empire Justice Center.

Di's Work Highlights:

- Explored the mortgage foreclosure process in Erie County.
- Compiled and analyzed data on the amount of time it took for the average foreclosure case in 2012 to be resolved, along with other characteristics of the cases, such as where the foreclosure cases originated and who originated the loans.
- Contributed to a report of policy recommendations with supporting data evidence of how to address the issue of how long it takes cases to move through the foreclosure process.
- Through the Center's CLARO project, which provides one-on-one consultation for people with debt problems so that they can represent themselves in court, met with clients to capture their experience with the foreclosure process to better understand barriers and opportunities for intervention.



"This is a great program. I feel like I learned so much about nonprofits, the economy, and Buffalo. I wish every city had a similar program. People always complain about how no one is engaged with politics, and I feel like programs like the High Road Fellowship would do so much to boost civic engagement by exposing citizens to the problems of their city, along with potential solutions."



Di Wu, '16

Initially, I was interested in the High Road program because of my interest in research, and a desire to learn how research could be used to promote policy. I'm excited to work with the Western New York Law Center (WNYLC) because they're using both quantitative and qualitative data to support causes, for example by combining statistics with storytelling.

While my classes at Cornell have provided a clear picture of the outcomes of social justice movements, I'm more interested in the nitty-gritty of how such movements begin and grow. Throughout my Cornell career, I've honed my research and critical analysis skills, which I know will serve me well in my work at the WNYLC.

I think that the High Road method means devoting oneself to the task at hand, using our vision of the end result to push past the low points and setbacks. It's about drawing strength and positivity from knowing that the work we do promotes the public good. What is most satisfying about my work at WNYLC is knowing that it will have a real, positive impact on someone's life.



Zachary Benfanti, '16

I chose the High Road because, as a Buffalo native, I have a vested interest in making a substantial difference to this city. From my perspective, the High Road values human capital and the desire to work toward collective good. I wanted to bring these principles to Buffalo, working with this community of hardworking people to turn the promise of this city into reality.

This summer, I'm interning with the Learning Disabilities Association (LDA). The LDA is giving me the opportunity to leverage my knowledge and experiences, in a way that will hopefully integrate more marginalized people into society. I'm working directly with the learning disabled, helping them to increase their upward mobility; for example, right now I'm trying to help them obtain employment.

As I sit here now evaluating it all, I feel everything I did served a strong and valuable purpose. I told my supervisors on the first day that I wanted to be on the front line and work directly with the individuals they serve, but also to see some of the policy initiatives that exist as the linchpin to the work that is done behind closed doors. Everything that I sought was accommodated in more ways than I could have anticipated, so I am very thankful for that.

Learning Disabilities Association of WNY

2555 Elmwood Avenue | Kenmore, NY 14217
716.874.7200 | www.ldaofwny.org



The Learning Disabilities Association of WNY is a parent and client led, professionally managed organization that assists individuals in gaining as much independence as their abilities allow. LDA provides an array of supports to individuals with learning disabilities, neurological impairments and other such disabilities. LDA programming includes service coordination (case management), leisure skill building, job coaching, residential services, and an art studio and gallery.

Zach's Work Highlights:

- Performed one-on-one case management to help clients hone interview skills and enhance resumes.
- Served as an advocate for clients by actively approaching local employers on behalf of the individuals.
- Organized first annual WNY Business Mingle, where upwards of thirty (30) local businesses and corporations came to hear how LDA clients could make a tremendous impact if given the right opportunity.
- Utilized and implemented technology developments to enhance communication and information systems.



"The High Road Fellowship is, in every sense of the description, a 'service learning and action research fellowship.' By being a truly living laboratory where students can leverage their skills and prior experiences in a constructively defined atmosphere and timetable, change is undoubtedly due to spring."

International Institute of Buffalo

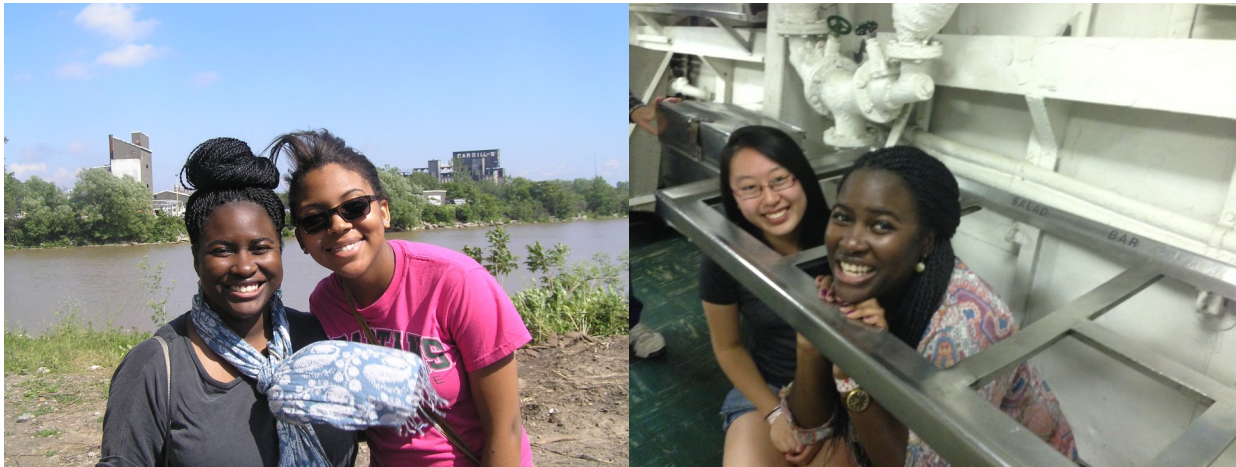
864 Delaware Avenue | Buffalo, NY 14209
716.883.1900 | www.iibuff.org



Since 1918, the International Institute of Buffalo has assisted immigrants, refugees, and others who face linguistic and cultural barriers to become self-sufficient, active members of our community. Today, the Institute serves as a dynamic international center, providing critical services to refugees and immigrants and promoting global understanding and connections in Western New York.

Manny's Work Highlights:

- Conducted research on local companies with employment opportunities for refugees and compiled into a usable database for staff and clients.
- Created a library of vocational/educational training programs for occupations available in Buffalo to help the clients further their career goals by getting the skills and certification necessary to access better jobs.
- Assisted clients with aspects of the resettlement process such as accessing public transportation and language issues.
- Worked on a marketing plan for the Institute's services to the corporate sector.



"My goal for the summer was to do something that would be very beneficial to the Institute and the clients especially. With the resource library, it will be easy for the employment specialists and case managers at the Institute to make referrals based on the requirements of each vocational/educational program. I really enjoyed the opportunity to visit the Department of Labor and meet with the employment specialist there to get her insight on the vocational opportunities available to refugees and immigrants."



Manuela Monjimbo, '14

The High Road program appealed to me because of the opportunity it presented to gain experience in a nonprofit setting and to apply classroom theory in a practical setting. I was also excited about the chance to gain cultural awareness through immersion in a new community.

I believe that the High Road method involves discovering what you are truly passionate about, and incorporating those passions into your daily life and work. My own history as an immigrant has made the challenges faced by this population very important to me. My favorite courses at Cornell have been those that those that combined immigration issues with those of employment and law. This summer, I'm interning at the International Institute, an organization that provides services to immigrant and refugee communities, allowing me to explore my interest in these issues, gain valuable experience, and contribute to the community.



Christopher McGinn, '14

I chose the High Road because I wanted to spend the summer making a valuable contribution to a social cause while gaining work experience that will help me pursue a career involving social justice. I am working with the WNY Council on Occupational Safety and Health (WNYCOSH). WNYCOSH is currently engaged in an effort to launch the Western New York Worker Center, a non-traditional labor organization seeking to improve working conditions and ensure the protection of workers' rights in the region. My role is to help WNYCOSH with its advocacy, education, and organization efforts. Right now, I'm canvassing working class neighborhoods to identify the most pertinent issues that the Worker Center should address. I'm also planning an event to educate Buffalo about the new Worker Center, the process of organizing, and the rights on the job to which they are entitled.

The High Road method is all about accomplishing economic development through grassroots initiatives and ethically conscious methods. In my studies at ILR in Ithaca, I have learned about how members of the working class can come together to obtain justice. I am thrilled to have the opportunity to put this knowledge into practice by reaching out to real workers who will tangibly benefit from my help. I truly feel that I have my own valuable role to play in the larger initiative of building a better Buffalo, and that is a wonderful feeling.

WNY Council on Occupational Safety & Health

2495 Main Street, Suite 438 | Buffalo, NY 14214
716.833.5416 | www.wnycosh.org



WNYCOSH is a nonprofit membership organization established in 1979 by labor unions, labor educators, and health professionals, to provide educational and technical assistance to workers on occupational safety and health. WNYCOSH also provides access to safety trainers and experts in toxicology, industrial hygiene, epidemiology, and occupational medicine, and is coordinating the new Worker Center in Buffalo, founded to address the needs of immigrant/refugee workers, unemployed or underemployed youth, and low-wage workers in many sectors.

Chris's Work Highlights:

- Conducted a survey to identify prominent worker issues in Buffalo and to gauge where WNYCOSH should focus its advocacy efforts. Trained people to conduct the survey, participated in canvassing and entered all data. This information will be very valuable in maximizing the impact of the worker center.
- Helped to conduct workers' rights trainings and planned Organizing for Power event – an hour and a half long event intended to motivate working class Buffalonians to adopt an attitude of standing up for their rights and pushing for change rather than an attitude of dormancy.
- Established social media accounts and strategy to strengthen organization's publicity, communications, advocacy efforts.



"I have thought more critically than ever about the labor movement, income inequality, and the oppression of the working class. I felt very immersed in the nonprofit community in Buffalo. It is very clear that these organizations are very collaborative, and it was a wonderful experience to interact with so many wonderful people who are so genuinely committed to good causes. Overall, I feel like I have further adopted the mentality of an activist and that will stick with me for the rest of my life."

Clean Air Coalition of WNY

341 Delaware Avenue, Upper | Buffalo, NY 14202
716.852.3813 | www.cacwny.org



The Clean Air Coalition of Western New York is a community-based organization that informs and organizes residents to prevent and reduce pollution, providing residents the information, skills and desire to make their communities healthy, sustainable and green, and holding leaders accountable for the community's health.

Courtney's Work Highlights

- Conducted outreach to community members to inform them about participatory budgeting to engage them in the process resulting from an environmental justice campaign victory and legal settlement. Helped to facilitate process by assisting groups craft ideas and staffing voting stations.
- Organized protest outside NYS Department of Transportation regarding an expansion of the Peace Bridge which would negatively impact the public health of the local community.
- Developed voter guides that have been distributed to political candidates throughout the greater Buffalo region.



Courtney Sokol, '15

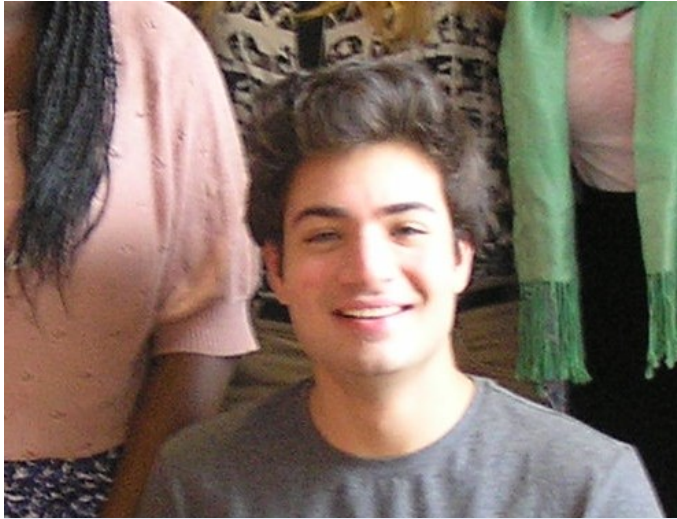
I chose the High Road to gain a better understanding of community organizing at a grass-roots level. I wanted to work for an organization where I would be able to make direct positive impact.

Working with the Clean Air Coalition is allowing me to develop skills unique to community organizing. I am able to contribute both on the streets and in the office. I make phone calls, send mailings, attend rallies and meetings, and communicate with residents in order to protect the health of those living in Western New York.

The High Road Method is ensuring that genuine change is gained through solidarity and partnerships at a local level. It is keeping development in the hands of the residents of a given area. Interning with the Clean Air Coalition has allowed me to recognize the process of change in a city. I have learned the hard work that goes into mobilizing social movements. I came at a busy time when Clean Air was using the model of Participatory Budgeting to give residents a say in the use of resources. I am sure that I will use the skills and model that Clean Air uses in the future.



"This affected the way I saw nonprofits as a partnership and a community. Many organizations worked together, which fostered work and social relationships. I really appreciated that aspect. I felt as if I was able to see the direct impact by my organization throughout the greater Buffalo area."



Armin Behroozi, '14

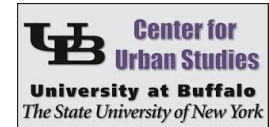
I chose the High Road because I wanted to supplement my interest in cities with firsthand experience in “re-evolving” one. I wanted exposure to the philosophies of design and urban planning, learning how the designs of buildings, neighborhoods, and communities can impact public welfare.

This summer, I'm interning at the Center for Urban Studies at the University at Buffalo, where I get to work side-by-side with people who truly care about Buffalo. The Center's redevelopment plan focuses on overhauling the local health care and education systems, teaching people important health maintenance skills, as well as providing meaningful job training. Right now, I'm putting theory into practice through community engagement and education about the project.

My organization is tasked with taking 30 million federal dollars in grants and using it to make the Perry Choice neighborhood a better place. Through our planned initiatives, we hope to see safer streets, newer high quality mixed-income housing, better schools, and healthier citizens.

Center for Urban Studies (University at Buffalo)

33 Hayes Hall, Building 1 | 3435 Main Street | Buffalo, NY 14214
716.829.2714 | www.centerforurbanstudies.com



The Center for Urban Studies is a research and community development unit of UB School of Architecture and Planning. Its mission is to engage in research which contributes to building a sustainable urban metropolis, develop a model for transforming distressed urban neighborhoods into socially functional communities, and train students in urban and regional planning with the ability to recreate a sustainable metropolis based on socioeconomic justice.

Armin's Work Highlights:

- Conducted research on corporate social responsibility. Developed empirical measures to determine effectiveness of corporate social responsibility programs.
- Explored the efficacy of Supplier Diversity Programs and their effect on the inner city.
- Worked side by side with architects, planners, educators, artists and academics to develop comprehensive plans and programs that can improve quality of life for residents East Buffalo neighborhood of Perry through a thirty million dollar HUD Choice Neighborhood grant.



"I loved every part of the summer. I loved the Fridays we had where we toured different places in Buffalo, I loved the downtime with peers at the dorms, and I loved my coworkers and what I was doing."

CWA & Health Sciences Charter School

1140 Ellicott Street | Buffalo, NY 14209
716.402.1872 | www.healthsciencescharterschool.org



The Health Sciences Charter School is the only school-to-work charter high school in New York focused on providing traditionally underserved students with real world work experience, state of the art technology and specialized curriculum to prepare them for careers in the health care industry. The school was created by progressive labor leaders representing health care workers and employers in the local health industry.

Gabrielle's Work Highlights:

- Expanded the program development of internships and employment opportunities for HSCS students and graduates by creating marketing materials for employers. Honed presentation and marketing skills.
- Met with potential internship placements in the healthcare field to successfully recruit them for the program.
- Researched the impact of internship programs and academic success for urban youth.



Gabrielle Hickmon, '15

I chose the High Road because this program allows us to make a tangible change in the city of Buffalo. As an African-American, my heritage is big part of my identity, and I am extremely passionate addressing inequality, especially as it relates to income and education. The High Road Method to me involves getting directly involved in these issues and working to solve them in a way that is fair, democratic, and participatory.

I'm putting theory into practice by working at Health Sciences Charter School. HSCS is an urban school that is dedicated to preparing its students for college and their eventually career. I am working on HSCS's internship program which directly helps students understand, explore, and prepare for their future career. This program and the work I am doing directly aligns with my philosophy about education and giving back which is why it is so important to me.

The High Road is taking me along a journey of deeper understanding about the inner-city and what happens there. I am enjoying observing the students and learning about their lives. The High Road is reinvigorating my passions and refueling my drive to solve what I believe is one of America's most pressing problems.



"The best part of the program was going through this experience as a group. Observing and learning from the other Fellows was very valuable to me. I did not know any of the Fellows before starting the program, and I know feel that I have 19 new friends in ILR."



Fellowship Fridays & Forums

The city of Buffalo is an ideal living laboratory. It is home to the very first ILR extension office, which opened in 1946. Buffalo is a culturally rich city and has lots of different types of experiences to offer such as museums, historic architecture, theater, music, festivals, food, and sporting events. Every Friday the students as a group are immersed in the city life of Buffalo, with neighborhood walking tours, field trips and cultural experiences; meetings with guest experts and civic leaders; and sharing their week-in-review project experiences and research.

7 June 2013

Asset-Based Development

Lou Jean Fleron and Megan Connelly

High Road Luncheon

Lowell Turner, *Director, Cornell ILR Worker Institute*

Mary Catt, *Staff Writer, Cornell ILR Communications Department*

High Road Supervisors

14 June 2013

BALLE Conference Panel

Better Together: The Relationship Economy

Aaron Bartley, *Executive Director and Co-Founder, PUSH Buffalo*

Billy Parish, *President and Co-Founder, Mosaic*

India Pierce Lee, *Program Director, Cleveland Foundation*

Mike Pearson, *CEO and President, Union Packaging*

Nikki Henderson, *Executive Director, People's Grocery, 2013 BALLE Local Economy Fellow*

After Cornell: One Career in Buffalo

Lunch with ILR alum Matt Nagowski, *M & T Bank, Buffalo State Adjunct Professor, PPG Board, Artist*

Buffalo's Second Skyline: Tour of Silo City on the Buffalo River

Jim Watkins, *Silo City Site Manager*

21 June 2013

JOBS, JOBS, JOBS: Troubles Trying to Work for a Living

Erin Hatton, *Assistant Professor, UB Department of Sociology;*

Author of The Temp Economy: From Kelly Girls to Permatemps in Postwar America

Franchelle Hart, *1199 SEIU, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists*

Tour Aurubis Buffalo, American Brass Plant

28 June 2013

Economic Development: Workforce First

Maria Whyte, *Commissioner of Environment and Planning, Erie County*

Antoine Thompson, *Director, Buffalo Education and Training Center*

Tour Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus

Patrick Whalen, *Chief Operating Officer, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus*

1 July 2013

E-Portfolio Training

Richard Kiely, *Director, Community-Engaged Learning and Research, Cornell University*

11 July 2013

University-Economy Connections: How Cornell ILR is Meeting Current Challenges and Preparing Tomorrow's Leaders

Harry Katz, *Dean, Cornell ILR School*

Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site

12 July 2013

Education and Economic Development

Jaison Abel, *Economist, The Federal Reserve Bank of New York*

Harry Katz, *Dean, Cornell ILR School*

Stories and Social Change

Lunch with Karima Amin and Baba Eng, *Prisoners are People Too*

18 July 2013

Evening

PPG Fundraiser: Shakespearean Idol

19 July 2013

Economic Development in Buffalo: What is the State's Role

Lunch with Sean Ryan, *Assemblyman, NYS Assembly*

Green Development Zone Tour

24 July 2013

Afternoon picnic in Eden, hosted by Sam Magavern

25 July 2013

Evening

Cornell Night Sailing

Sean Ryan, *Assemblyman, NYS Assembly*

26 July 2013

The High Road: Records and Reflections

Final presentations by fellows for sponsors and ILR representatives, with Professor Ron Applegate, *Cornell ILR*

City of Buffalo's Future, Strategically Speaking

Lunch with Brendan Mehaffy, *Executive Director, Office of Strategic Planning, City of Buffalo*

Tours: Darwin Martin House and Albright Knox Art Gallery

Janne Sirén, *Director, Albright Knox Art Gallery*



The High Road Runs Through the City Fellowship reflects Cornell ILR School's visible commitment to public and community service. Established in 2008 by Dean Harry Katz and Extension Faculty Emeritus Lou Jean Fleron, the Fellowship provides a way for Cornell ILR students to authentically connect their academic and service lives. Students' projects are coordinated through the Partnership for the Public Good (PPG), a community-based think tank with over 140 richly networked partners, each of which is eligible to apply for a High Road Fellow. Partner organizations rave about the students' contributions to economic development activities ranging from youth participation in the arts to urban farming and local business.

2009



2009 marked the first official summer of the High Road Runs Through the City Fellowship program.

"The High Road Program is still the best, most intellectually and personally rewarding experience I've had in my adult life so far."

*~Nathan Horrell '10, 2009 High Road Fellow
Written in 2012*

2010



In 2010, 10 fellows made their way to Buffalo on the High Road.

High Road impact included:

- Western New Yorker J.C. Tretter '12 prepared a marketing plan to showcase Hispanics United of Buffalo's Pre-Employment Program as well as the candidates for placements to employers.
- Thom Barnes '11 organized a candidates forum for New York State Legislature races.

"The Fellowship has strengthened the concepts I have learned in my classes and given them a real-world application."

~Mary Anne Finn '12, International Institute of Buffalo

2011 saw 14 students, six from the area and eight from outside WNY, participate in the program. High Roaders were the initial occupants of Buffalo's first net-zero (energy neutral) rehabbed house on Buffalo's west side.

High Road impact included:

- Derya Akbaba '12 of Westford, MA, worked at Urban Roots where she researched current trends in urban gardening services for refugees and implemented a local program through a coalition of nonprofits.
- Buffalo native Tom Wasko '14 expanded service of Buffalo CarShare to low-income residents and students.

"This fellowship was quite simply amazing. I've learned so much and gained a much more professional and educated perspective. The opportunity to be such an essential part of an organization can never be replaced or forgotten; I never thought I would be able to do such satisfying work!"

~ Sahil Jain '14, Prisoners are People Too

2011



2012



18 Fellows from nine different states were a part of the 2012 class.

High Road impact included:

- Michelle Lim '14, from Phoenix, Ariz., was a fellow with the Health Sciences Charter School, a partnership between the city's public schools and health care industry unions and employers. Lim worked with employers to develop the framework for an internship program for the school and conducted an employment forecast of the local health services labor market.
- Carolyn Krupski '15 of Clifton Park, N.Y., drafted a policy brief on a ballot initiative for dedicated funding for public transit.
- Chris Bain '14 from Dallas worked at GO Bike Buffalo, to engage local businesses in a bike share initiative.

"Knowing that my research is promoting the well-being of the city of Buffalo and its residents makes going out on a construction site on a hot Wednesday morning not only fathomable, but a rewarding experience."

~Deanna Hall '15, Habitat for Humanity – Buffalo

2013



2013 was the largest High Road class yet, as 20 ILR students participated in the fellowship program. Students came from eight different states and Canada. Their impact goes beyond the work that they did at their placements. During their time in Buffalo, High Roaders' contributions included:

- Attended Buffalo's Juneteenth celebration to get the community's input on how to make a more open Buffalo.
- Served as Recycling Rangers at the Allentown Art Festival, the Elmwood Festival of the Arts and the Taste of Buffalo to promote public education about sustainability issues and practices.
- Lived in the community at Buffalo State College as a group and contributed to the local economy by frequenting local and independent shops and arts and cultural attractions.
- Continued to build a great foundation for future fellows to explore the High Road in Buffalo!



Staff Profiles

Lou Jean Fleron

High Road Program Director

Now ILR emeritus, Lou Jean (pictured, top right) directs the High Road program. A Cornell ILR Extension faculty member since 1977, her research and teaching areas are public economic policy, industry and community development, and labor management relations. She served as director of ILR Western Region and is the author of studies on regional economic development, including *Champions @ Work: Employment, Workplace Practices and Labor-Management Relations in Western New York*, and *Buffalo Child Care Means Business*. Prior to working at ILR, she taught political science at SUNY Buffalo and the University of Kentucky. Lou Jean was chair of Buffalo Living Wage Commission from 2003 to 2010 and is currently co-director of the Partnership for the Public Good.

Megan Connelly

High Road Program Coordinator

Megan (pictured, top left and bottom right) serves a dual role as program coordinator for the High Road Fellowship Program as well as director of programs and development for the Partnership for the Public Good. Megan is a graduate of the University at Buffalo Law School. She previously worked at Neighborhood Legal Services on the Homeless Task Force in Buffalo, at the Youth Justice Project in South Bend, Indiana, and for the University at Buffalo's Office of Civic Engagement and the Regional Institute. She believes that her own service experiences as an undergraduate at the University of Notre Dame helped to shape her values, interests and ultimately, her career path and she likes to provide similar transformative opportunities for students to engage with and learn from the community.

Jackie MacKellar

High Road Resident Advisor

Jackie transitioned to a staff position with the High Road Fellowship program after receiving her Masters in Social Work from University at Buffalo School of Social Work. Prior to graduation, she served as an intern with the Partnership for the Public Good (PPG). While at PPG, she gathered research on issues relevant to the region, such as health care, politics, and education, synthesizing information into clear, concise policy briefs and fact sheets. She also provided administrative support for various programs and events, audited and participated in community forums and planning meetings.

Sam Magavern

Adjunct Faculty, Cornell ILR

Sam (pictured, bottom right) is adjunct faculty of Cornell ILR, also teaches at the University at Buffalo Law School. He joined the clinical law faculty in 2007 after a year as compliance coordinator for the City of Buffalo Living Wage Commission. His classes focus on the policy aspects of affordable housing and community economic development and offer students experience in action-oriented research and policy advocacy. He practiced for twelve years with the Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis, specializing in housing litigation, community legal education, and public policy advocacy. Sam is currently co-director of the Partnership for the Public Good. He grew up in Buffalo and graduated from Harvard College and UCLA Law School. When not teaching, he writes fiction, non-fiction, and poetry.

Ron Applegate

Lecturer, Cornell ILR

An economic and labor historian, Ron (pictured, top left) is a lecturer at Cornell ILR in the Department of Labor Relations, Law and History. Previously, he devoted two decades to community and labor organizing. He also coordinated community-based economic development programs for Over-the-Rhine Housing Network in Cincinnati, Ohio and Coalition for a Better Acre in Lowell, Massachusetts. His current teaching and research on the history of U.S. political economy focuses on collective action to increase public control over economic development.



