

Redwood Roots

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REDWOOD ROOTS

**CENTER
FOR
COMMUNITY
BASED
LEARNING**

**SPRING
2021
VOLUME 2
ISSUE 2**

HSU PRESS

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Redwood Roots provides a platform for all involved in community engagement to share their experiences, whether it be from a community-based learning class, a volunteer experience, or another story related to community engagement in some way.

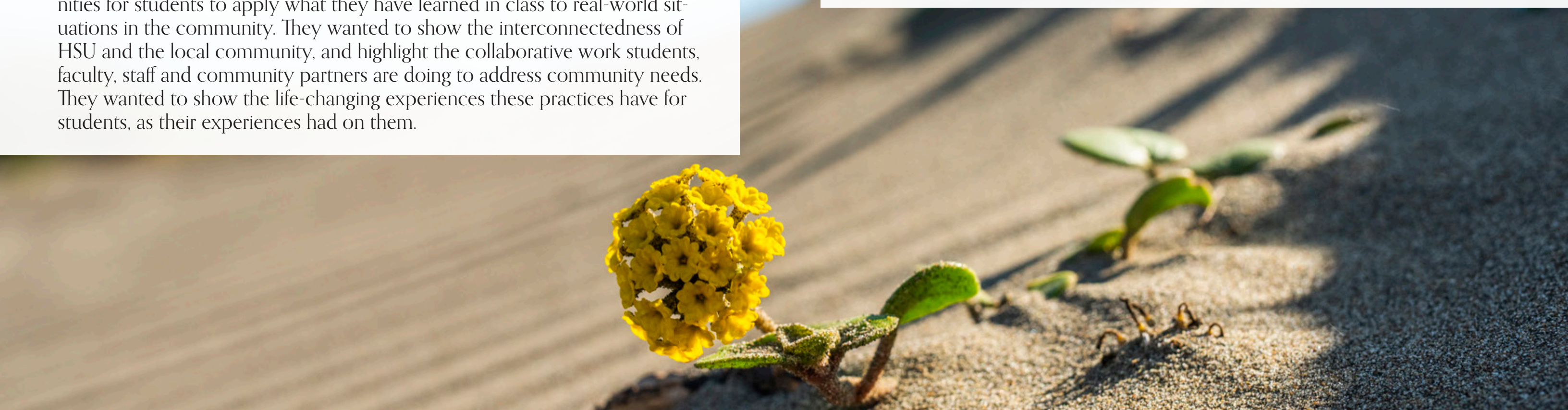
In this, the third edition of Redwood Roots, the articles share insights and reflections from a variety of community-based learning (CBL) participants: HSU students, faculty, staff and community partners. Like the rich variety of experiences and practices in CBL, this magazine has a variety of writing formats and media that share the many perspectives and experiences involved - from in-depth journalistic style articles to personal narratives, to reflective essays and videos showing these dynamic practices at play.

Redwood Roots would not exist if it were not for our students. For it was students who came up with the idea for Redwood Roots magazine and worked tirelessly to create it. They wanted to showcase the amazing work being done by students, faculty, community partners and CCBL staff to create opportunities for students to apply what they have learned in class to real-world situations in the community. They wanted to show the interconnectedness of HSU and the local community, and highlight the collaborative work students, faculty, staff and community partners are doing to address community needs. They wanted to show the life-changing experiences these practices have for students, as their experiences had on them.

In addition to generating the magazine, the students led the development of the magazine in numerous ways. They conceptualized the Land Acknowledgment as well as the statement of purpose and value statements, created and regularly posted on social media to promote the magazine and worked with HSU's student-run marketing group to create a logo for Redwood Roots. Many of the articles were written and/or edited by the students and one student formatted the layout of all three editions of Redwood Roots. They led the meetings, set agendas and created innovative ways for these stories to be told.

We want to take this opportunity to name the students who have been involved in this process. Currently, Mireille Roman, Aaron Laughlin, Kai Cooper and Kyra Skylark, the latter two are graduating in spring 2021. Ruby Joy Garcia, Maya Habis, Shia Streater, Alexis Valtenbergs and Ariel Evans previously graduated and were also instrumental in establishing this magazine.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to our amazing students who inspire and motivate us everyday. We wouldn't be here without you.



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

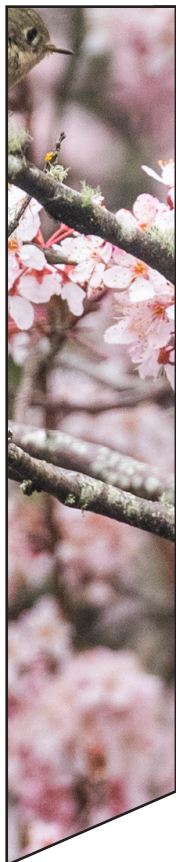
Redwood Roots would like to acknowledge that Humboldt State University sits on the unceded ancestral and current homelands of the many local tribes, such as the Wiyot and Yurok people, who live, and have lived, in this area since time immemorial. We encourage the community to continue to take action to move toward a future where local tribes have sovereignty over their homeland. You can take action to further this vision: take part in efforts to give land back to local tribes and/or pay an [honor tax](#) to the tribe whose land you reside on.

PURPOSE & VALUES

Redwood Roots' purpose is to provide a platform that highlights and shares stories of HSU's community engagement in Humboldt County and beyond. We publish stories that promote deep and enriching connections through learning, to enhance inclusivity and social and environmental justice efforts within the community.

1. Redwood Roots is a community platform that serves to provide a direct, diverse, and transparent narrative that further encourages communal collaborations between students, alumni, faculty, and community partners.
2. Redwood Roots highlights the diverse approaches HSU students engage in by combining learning objectives with community service, providing enriched experiences for personal and professional growth, and meeting the local needs of different communities.
3. Redwood Roots shares stories promoting the welfare of others through an intersectional lens that creates lasting change, with acknowledgment and respect to the past.

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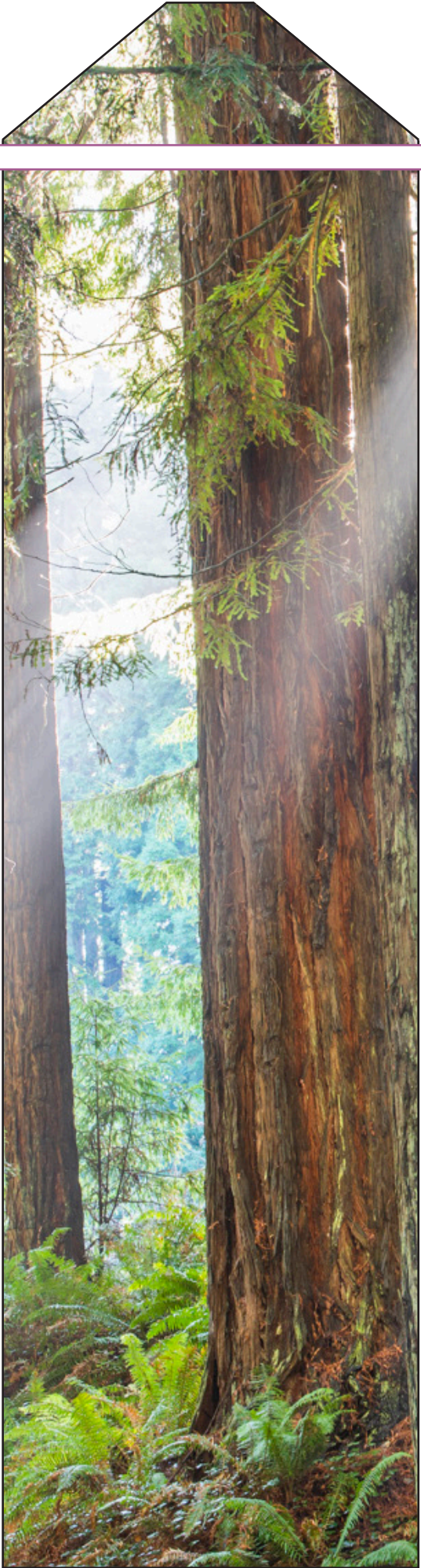
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LEARNING IN ACTION: THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING

By Kai Cooper and
Kelly Fortner

Every year, more than 1,000 HSU students take their learning out of the classroom and into the community through a variety of partnerships with off-campus organizations. These community-based learning courses include Service Learning, Academic Internships, clinical placements, student teaching, and practicums. What connects all of these experiences is the combination of off-campus learning with on-campus academic credit and support.

One student commented, “I would definitely recommend community-based learning to other students because it helps you get involved while doing something good for your career and the community.”

Community-based learning transcends the classroom by providing opportunities to deepen student understanding of curriculum by connecting academic concepts to real world scenarios. These practices foster student academic development as well as professional and personal growth. They not only enhance the classroom experience but also foster relationships between our students, campus, and the community. In many ways, these practices also strive to meet community needs. The American Association of Colleges and Universities designated community-based learning as a High Impact Practice (HIP). HIPs have shown to increase engagement and retention at institutions across the country.

Experience is valued in community-based learning. Cochran-Smith and Lytle¹ discuss three main types of teaching styles: knowledge-for-practice, knowledge-in-practice, and knowledge-of-practice. Community-based learning inhabits the “knowledge-in-practice” space, where knowledge is acquired through experience, reflection and discussion. Students are actively engaged in learning, both in and outside of the classroom. Applying knowledge learned in the classroom to their community experience and reflecting on those experiences reinforces the content and deepens student learning. All while gaining practical experience that enhances students’ marketability upon graduation.

“It is a way to learn outside of the classroom and shape you into a new person. I feel I learned a lot and engaged in the community in a positive way,” another student who took a community-based learning class said.

Humboldt State University offers a growing number of community-based learning classes that encompass a range of activities that meet community needs: from sorting food at the local food bank, to designing curriculum for a local school, to training to become a social worker, nurse or teacher at local organizations. The Center for Community Based Learning supports these practices to foster mutually beneficial relationships between students, community partners, and faculty. Community-based learning can happen within any discipline or across disciplines, providing hands-on experience in the field one wishes to pursue.

When asked what the single most important thing their community-based learning experience did for them, one student responded, “It is a great way to meet other students and get involved at HSU. It is a one of a kind learning opportunity and it prepares you for the real world.”

¹ Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. I. (1999). Relationships of knowledge and practice: Teacher learning in communities. *Review of Research in Education*, 24, 249–305.



FINDING PLACE THROUGH MUSIC AND ARTS: HC BLACK MUSIC & ARTS ASSOCIATION (HCBMAA)

By Kyra Skylark

The work that we do is always with the people, it's where our hearts are - with the people, and we need to meet the people where they're at, financially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually; so all of our programs come from that," said Valletta Molofsky.

"I am a child of the Creator who has followed the path of a leader, teacher, student, and mentor," Molofsky said. "This journey of life that I walk started when I became a daughter, sister, wife and mother. The voices of my ancestors come through me in song, scripture, poetry and articles. I am one of many leaving a legacy for my people to be free in Spirit, Body, Mind and Truth!"

The HC Black Music and Arts Association (HCBMAA) came into being in November, 2019. Founded by Valetta Molofsky, after Molofsky experienced a lack of resources and systems to aid individuals, youth, and families of color in this community. They work to serve and provide offerings for the Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) community within Humboldt County and beyond.

"I started this organization for many reasons, one, because connection to place, that's hard; cultural starvation is real, especially here in Humboldt County and in any rural area," Molofsky said. "I know what it's like to be lost among people, even though people are around you, you still feel starved. You feel starved for connection, not only to place but to those who look like you, to spiritual outlets, to healing modalities, to food, and to culture. A lot of that, when I moved here was taken away, and I didn't have those pieces. When I made this organization I found a lot

of people like me in Humboldt County who struggled. Not just who identified as Black or African American but also as Brown, Indigenous and Latinx."

The HCBMAA was created while Molofsky was completing her Masters in Social Work (MSW) and Pupil Personnel Service Credential (PPSC) requirements at Humboldt State University (HSU). During Molofsky's MSW and PPSC work she researched and centered her thesis on cultural starvation. Molofsky is currently working through her 3,000 required hours to receive her Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) licensure in pursuing her goals to become an Ubuntu trauma therapist. "I worked through the Masters in Social Work program and I had my mind set to be an integrated behavioral health therapist," Molofsky said.

As a first generation graduate, Molosky feels fortunate that she is able to work toward her goals. "Currently I am working towards becoming an Ubuntu trauma therapist because I really love restorative care. I integrate restorative practices into my own work when I'm with the people that I engage with, both youth and families, as well as the relational worldview. I also use the evidence-based practice of cognitive behavior therapy and stress-based practices."

The HCBMAA is centered around Afrocentric practices, the African American experience, and the Pan-African Diaspora, following the seven principles of Nguzo Saba, from southern and eastern Africa. The Nguzo Saba, Swahili for seven guiding principles, promotes connection to African cultures and helps frame values of family, community and heritage. These are 1. Umoja - Unity, 2. Kujichagulia - Determination, 3. Ujima - Collective Work & Responsibility, 4. Ujamaa - Cooperative Economics, 5. Mia - Purpose, 6. Kuumba - Creativity, and 7. Imani - Faith.

"When I started this organization it was already based on Afrocentric methods of relational world views," Molofsky said. "Part of the programs are based on some of my earlier work within the community, such as the Sistahood." Women in Spirit, now known as the Sistahood within the HCBMAA, has been supporting and connecting women for thirteen years. "I started Women in Spirit twelve years ago to help women who were struggling with relationships, depression, intergenerational trauma, or just having a hard time showing themselves love," Molofsky said. "We had one of the sisters whose mom was passing away and we sang at her mom's window while she was in her last few days,"

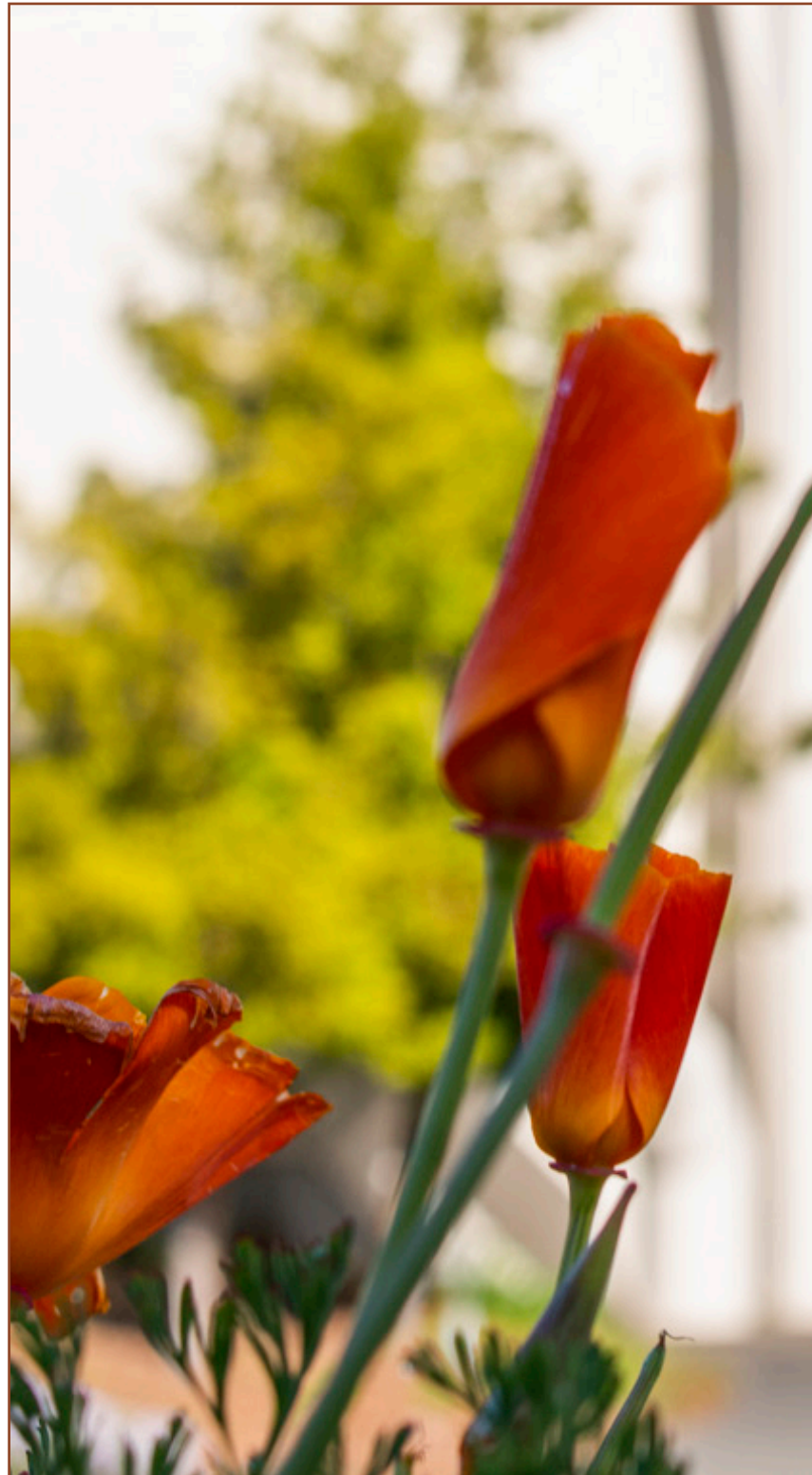
Molofsky said. "That's what we do, we step up; we step up in ways to support our sisters and know that they can always be encouraged."

With the Sistahood meetings adjusting to a Zoom platform due to Covid-19, the structure has also evolved. "I can gain a sister no matter what color, race, or gender; some people come in who identify as women and we get that, we're not here to say you're not welcome," Molofsky said. "This body of space that we have on zoom has really been healing."

The Sistahood community has also expanded beyond those located within Humboldt County. "Allowing these beautiful women of all different races to come together and share their stories, to laugh and cry together, it's just been so beautiful and healing," Molofsky said. "Right now we are going through a four week series, it's called Walk in the Truth. The first week was on intimate partner violence, the second week was on intergenerational trauma, the third on domestic violence, and the last on uncovering unhealthy relationships and targeting ways to find new relationships in a healthy way. Part of the Black Music and Arts Association work is going within ourselves and taking moments to reflect on our inner pain and our inner trauma while we are doing the work with the people in the community as well. We feel that it's very important to unpack and be present."

Molofsky's cousin, Angeletta Dean, joined the virtual group. Dean is a Minister for the United Methodist Church, a Prayer Warrior, and Sista residing in the state of Arizona. In addition to her ministry and fellowship work, Dean works with those who have experienced domestic violence and helps folks to establish "who they are, where they are, and what their purpose is in life" through life coaching. "I was really amazed by the Sistahood group that she invited me to, it's very transparent and resourceful; I received the invitation from Valetta and from that invitation I can't stop going," Dean said.

Dean acknowledged how important it is to have a supportive environment where people are not judged, but rather honored for who they are. "It's a constant reminder of why I am so special and my strength of being a woman in today's time, how special that is. You understand your inner-beauty, you understand your strengths, you understand when you're weak as well. When it comes to Sistahood I feel that it is a blessing to have as a resource in that area."



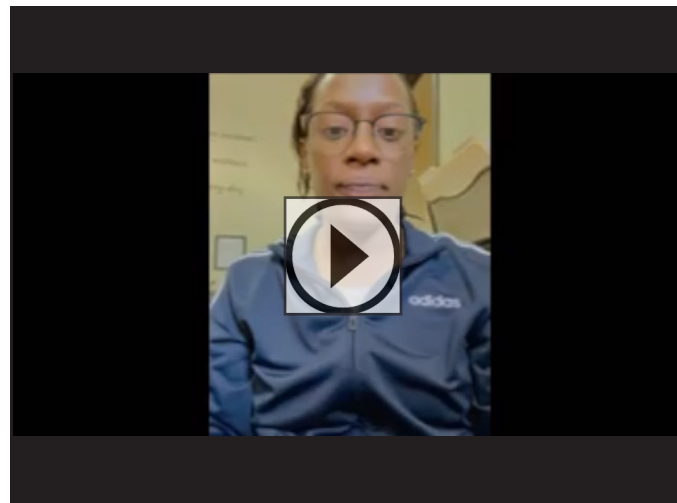
The HCBMAA offers many programs in addition to the Sistahood community, including the Glen Edwards Kumba Literacy program, the Youth Education Support Services (YESS) program: consisting of the Ujima program and the Sister Mentor program, an elder care community, the Prayer Warriors, the Harambee Youth Camp, as well as other youth classes and community offerings.

Molosky explained why she created the literacy program and named it after Glen Edwards. “I started the Glen Edwards Kuumba Literacy program because Glen Edwards dropped out of school at age 14 because he had dyslexia, because he was struggling living with that and he had to hide the fact that he could not read,” Molofsky said. “I’m sure there was some shame around that as he raised his children and he got his GED in his early twenties. His story is like many stories that I found while doing my MSW thesis work on cultural starvation. The United States is the only country that has banned reading literacy for people of color that were slaves. They were going to be punished if they learned to read in so many different ways, whether it was a whip, being killed, or dismemberment. Because of those laws Glen Edward and other families struggled to communicate in a language that was colonized for us to learn.”

The Glen Edwards Kumba Literacy program began in fall 2020, with Andrea Jones, the HCBMAA Literacy Coordinator, reading during the Arcata Farmers Market. Jones is an intern who is pursuing a Bachelors of Social Work at HSU. “I wanted the opportunity to share education, which is why we do it at the park,” Molofsky said. “I am Glen Edwards’ daughter. I know that his story is my story. It’s my siblings’ story and it leads to the community.”

The Kuumba Reading Circle is held each Saturday at 12:00pm with Jones reading on the Arcata Plaza under one of the trees. “Every weekend we’re at the Arcata plaza reading books to all of the community people who want to participate. We read multi-ethnic books; we’re in schools reading books.” Due to the work of Molofsky and Jones, the program was recently added to the National Literacy Directory for Humboldt County.

The newest offering of the HCBMAA is the Youth Education Support Services (YESS) program, which is in collaboration with Humboldt State University. It currently includes the Ujima program and the Sister Mentor program. The Ujima program is a favorite of



A video created by Andrea Jones on her experience reading to the community as the Literacy Coordinator for the Glen Edwards Kuumba Literacy program, as well as her experience as a Sister Mentor with the HCBMAA.

Molofsky’s and one she has been working on for many years. “It’s a parent peer support for parents, grandparents, relatives, and foster parents, who are raising black, brown, and African children that identify as such,” Molofsky said. “It’s really been a blessing to be able to start these classes, a 14-week series where we have conversations with these parents and offer peer support. It’s a restorative practice and it’s really beautiful because we see that we are all just humans trying to do the same thing of parenting, but we parent in different ways.”

The individuals that attend the Ujima program are then able to sign their children up for the YESS Sister Mentor program. The Sister Mentor program is the largest part of YESS, offering a 16-week Sister Mentor from HSU to a youth-mentee between the ages 5-18, from local primary, middle, and high schools; the program piloted in March, 2021.

“What Sister Mentors do is they offer an hour and a half of their weekly time to students of color,” Molofsky said. “They spend thirty minutes doing homework, thirty minutes doing exercise, and thirty minutes offering nutritional lunch with the kids. This is an in-person service. Kids can meet someone in-person safely distancing,” Molofsky elaborated, “because kids these days are already so involved on Zoom.”

“We require these mentors to take mentor training and to attend the Cultural Bearers meetings once a week,” Molofsky explained. “Currently at the Cultural Bearers meetings we are doing what’s called culture engagement, so we offer an olive branch to all Hum-



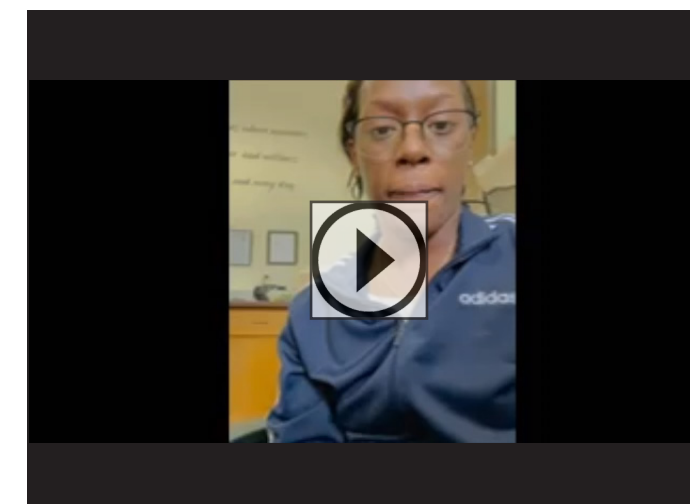
HCBMAA Literacy Coordinator Andrea Jones hosting the Kuumba Reading Circle on the Arcata Plaza from 12:00-12:30 on Saturday April 3, 2021. Photo taken by: Valetta Molofsky

boldt County teachers who are teaching youth of color to come into the space to learn how to communicate and how to work with children that are different; those who learn differently and need support in other ways. The Sister Mentors will be coming to these trainings that we offer every Wednesday for our own teachers of color, just to have that restorative time to do check-ins and make sure that we’re conscious and aware about the language that we give. The language we use can be harmful if we don’t check our actions with our language. We have those conversations and then we check in with the kids to make sure that they’re ok.”

In addition to serving the BIPOC youth of Humboldt County, Miss Alice Barbee facilitates a community elders group on Fridays through the HCBMAA, for people to come together in a safe space. The Prayer Warriors is another community group that Molofsky has worked to cultivate in Humboldt County. “When COVID-19 came we were meeting at the waterfront in Eureka, and it was mostly the prayer warriors that were meeting; not just the Women in Spirit, but the Prayer Warriors,” Molofsky said. “The Prayer Warriors would come to pray, to pray over the nation, for families. These four sisters Lauren, Wilda, Latrice, and myself, we would come once a week and we would sit by the water and pray, we would share and check in. It felt so

good to have that moment by ourselves away from our families to still check in and not lose what we knew.”

“Being a Prayer Warrior, that’s just something that’s in the line of who I am, it’s a blessing to be able to pray for those in need of prayer,” Dean shared. “When it comes to being a Prayer Warrior, it’s having the heart and wanting to intercede for those who are not able to. Those that don’t pray, we still pray for them, we take requests, there’s no limit to anything that is in need of



Andrea Jones’s concluding thoughts on her experience as the Literacy Coordinator and a Sister Mentor with the HCBMAA.

prayer. Prayer just brings everything together, prayer gives healing when it's needed, it gives strength when we are weak, it gives clarification; that's what I received from being a Prayer Warrior in the group, and just being a sister. I like being able to be there for anyone who needs me."

Lorenza Simmons, musician, music teacher, and Youth Coordinator for the HCBMAA, has lived in the area for most of her life and met Molofsky through their mutual love of music. Simmons helped to start the youth program within HCBMAA, alongside Molofsky, and worked to provide services for families, youth, and teens in Humboldt County. She helped create the support that she herself desired from the community in her youth. "I am of mixed race descent and experiencing what this area has been like over the years, what I and other youth like me - Black and Indigenous youth - weren't able to have as children made me want there to be more happening here," Simmons said. "Especially for the youth, but BIPOC people all around."

Simmons went on to describe the program. "The first program that we did that was really successful and really close to our hearts was in August of last year, the Harambee Youth Leadership Camp," Simmons said. "The weather was perfect and we were able to do it outdoors utilizing a couple of parks and beaches to do so safely. We brought in dance teachers, drum

teachers, art teachers, and were also able to do mentorship with the teens for the young ones, as well as rights of passage ceremonies for the teens. It was all centered around our philosophy and how we're operating around Afrocentric practices boosting that up and building that up in them."

The camp spanned two weekends, with the youth ages 6-12 participating in the morning. "We had some butcher paper donated, and we had them trace themselves out and draw themselves just so that they could represent themselves and all their parts, just trying to encourage them," Simmons elaborated. "That's a big issue that can come up, especially with youth of color, not seeing a representation of themselves or not being comfortable in themselves. I'm a music teacher so I did some music and movement classes with them and I have experience with different music from the diaspora so I was doing some songs from the Congo with them and also we did some songs from the African American experience as well. To do this camp and provide some insight for them while doing these songs. It's really a part of the culture to sing, while we're rowing down the river, while we're walking; it was really special for me."

The workshops for the teenagers included reflection, writing, art, dance, and building connections. "Valetta did a series with them called Harriet's Journey, which



Kemetic yoga in the Arcata Redwood park taught by HCBMAA cultural bearer AJ. Photo taken by: Valetta Molofsky on April 10, 2021

was based on Harriet Tubman's journey through the underground railroad, but also just the process of going through hard things and being able to talk and write about it," Simmons said.

"[The older youth] did a lot of journaling and a lot of study of the seven principles," Simmons said. "They were also able to take dance classes and take some of the Afrocentric art classes. But the biggest aspect for the teens was that we also trained them to be mentors for the younger ones, so we paired them with the younger ones and through the camp we trained them on how to interact with the younger ones, how to be a mentor, and how to there for their mentee and also encouraged them to be connected with each other. That was part of our goal too, to bring these youth and these teens together so that they would build friendships and build connections, which did happen."

The members of the teen camp also went through a rite of passage ceremony at the end of the two weeks. "Over those two weeks we had them go through different practices to build up to a ceremony, which we were able to do at Moonstone Beach at the end of the camp," Simmons said. "We had them go through a rite of pas-

sage which was very sacred, we had a fire, we had each teen design masks for themselves, we had them walk across the water, they danced, and we had them find their spirit animals, and that was a part of their ceremony as well, embodying that animal and its principles. We were able to have the parents there and be a part of it as well."

Harambee means community, and the Harambee Youth Program at HCBMAA involves classes beyond the camp, offered by local sages and Cultural Bearers. These include an Afrocentric arts class, a bilingual musical theater class, and a Kemetic Yoga class. "We have an Afrocentric art class with our cultural bearer Nicky who is an amazing artist. She focuses on Afrocentric art practices and building up confidence in youth and teens, helping them to be able to express themselves through art and be the expression of themselves. Then on Saturdays in Redwood Park we are offering a bilingual musical theater class with our cultural bearer, Oliva. They are doing activities centered around theater and movement, but with an emphasis on incorporating Spanish. After that we have Kemetic Yoga with our cultural bearer AJ. Kemetic Yoga is a beautiful practice that comes from eastern and central Africa."





This Theater workshop is offered by the HCBMAA's newest cultural bearer Oscar Nava this April and May 2021. Provided by: Valetta Molofsky

AJ also facilitates open mic sessions each month on a Friday night where folks can present their work, and one individual can win a dinner.

New classes and workshops, both long-term and shorter series are always on the horizon with the HCBMAA. An additional theater workshop has been added to their offerings by their newest Cultural Bearer, Oscar Nava.

The HCBMAA also works to uplift the BIPOC organizations and amplify the desires of BIPOC youth programs in the community. "We've collaborated with schools like the McKinleyville Black Student Union (BSU), the Arcata High School's BSU, and we're supporting St. Bernard's BSU," Molofsky said. "We try to make sure that whatever they've got going on, that we host it in such a way that people can come and hear more about them."

Their programming and support goes beyond the youth to the whole family. "Also part of our philosophy is wrap-around-support, so in supporting the parents and supporting the youth and the teens, that also includes food outreach," Simmons said. "We had a food drive at the end of February where we were able to serve over 300 families. They were thankful for that and we will continue to also provide food drives through our youth services; always making sure that they have a snack or a meal as part of what we are doing in our mission."

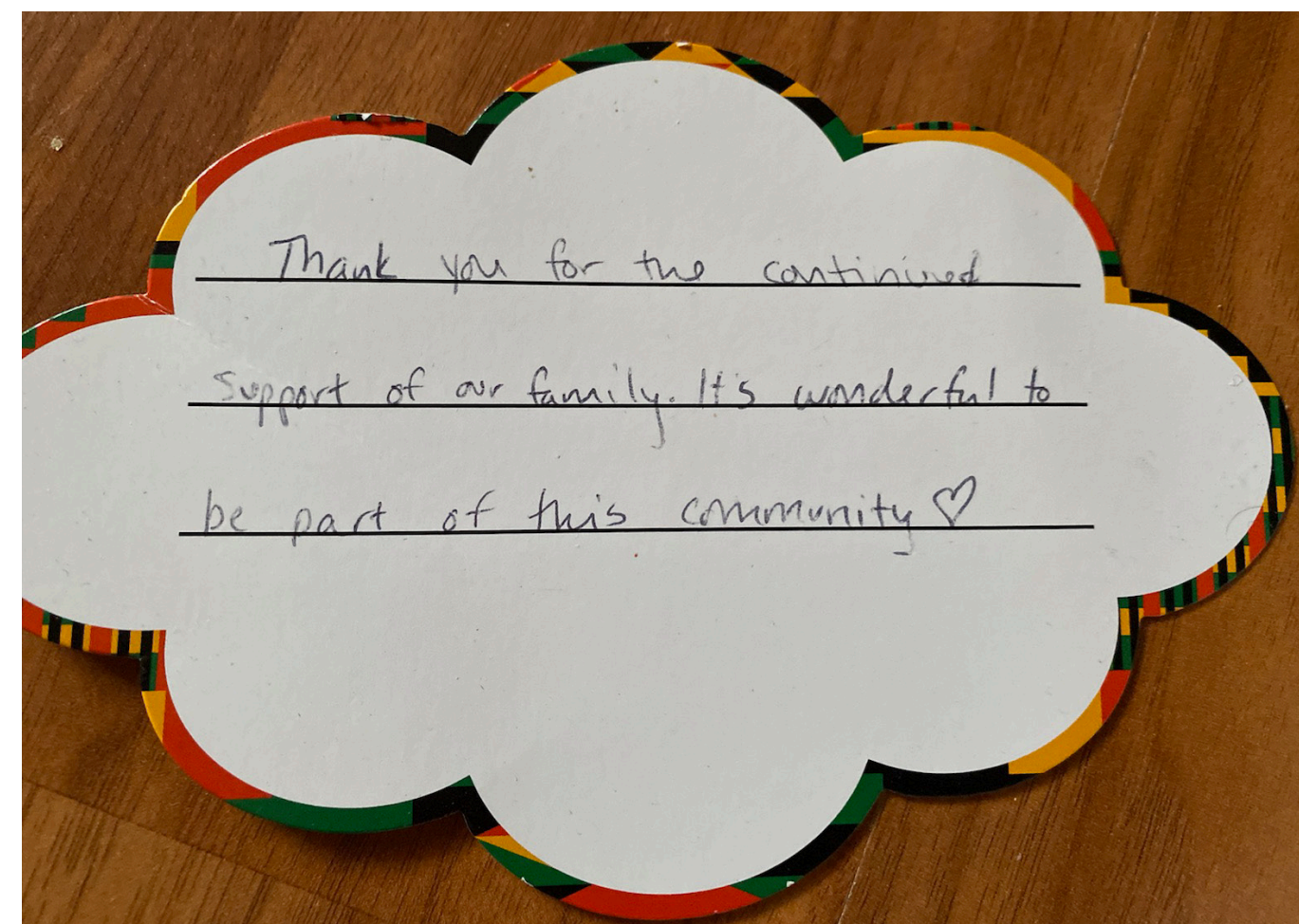
Molofsky shares the importance of giving back to her community. "I also teach other social work students how to become a great Social Worker in Humboldt County and that's my part of giving back, because Harambee is also that part where you give back," Molofsky said. "So in order to have Umoja - which means unity, you have to do some self reflection in yourself and make sure your cup is always filled too. That's what I do, I try to keep a balanced life and continue doing everything in love."

For those interested HCBMAA is currently looking for volunteers. For more information email: info@hc-blackmusicarts.org.

To learn more about the HCBMAA visit their website: <https://www.inkpeople.org/dreammaker-data/hcbmaa>

To stay up-to-date on their events and offerings visit their Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Nonprofit-Organization/HC-Black-Music-Arts-Association-104727504645663/>

Note of correction of error: The name of the HC Black Music and Arts Association was incorrectly written and represented within the original publication of this magazine. It was revised on May 10, 2021 and now accurately represents the name of the organization. We sincerely apologize for the disrespect shown to Valetta Molofsky and the entire HCBMAA community through this error.



Handwritten note from a HCBMAA community member and parent in the YESS program. Provided by: Valetta Molofsky



"I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT "S" WAS, BUT I LEARNED TO LOVE IT."

By Kathy Thornhill

Kai Cooper did not plan to go to HSU. Cooper grew up in Arcata and expected to go to a different school far away from Humboldt. However, for a variety of reasons, HSU was where she went. Now, 4 years later, she cannot picture going anywhere else. HSU was different than she imagined, yet she found a home here in large part because she took a Service Learning course, INTL 100S, in her first semester at HSU. She picked the class because of its name, *Critically Thinking about Globalization*. She believed that it was supposed to be the first class she would take as an International Studies major. She found out later that it is not required for the major, but rather is a General Education course.

The course, taught by Dr. Alison Holmes, opened doors for Cooper through which she enthusiastically walked. "It is funny how that 100 class changed my whole experience at Humboldt State," Cooper said. She did not know that the "S" after INTL100 meant it was a Service Learning class until Dr. Holmes explained how the class was different—that the students would be going out into the community. Cooper was excited and thought that because she had grown up here that she already knew the community; she felt like she had "a leg up." She ended up volunteering at a place she had never heard of before,

U.S. Servas. "I was like, what? This place exists?" Cooper said. "It taught me that the school has connections with the community. I didn't know what "S" was, but I learned to love it."

"I think that [there was] one monumental moment that shifted my perspective...I was going to HSU, not really wanting to go there," Cooper said. "It was my hometown. All my friends moved away to go to college...it was my first class with Dr. Holmes. It was literally my first class, and she walks in and she's all, *Dr. Holmes*. I was like who is this lady? She is so cool and she's in *Humboldt*?"

Dr. Holmes turned out to be Cooper's advisor and has guided her throughout her time at HSU. Cooper acknowledges that having strong connections with faculty and staff at HSU have made a huge difference on how she views HSU. Cooper described Dr. Holmes as having "a spark" when she talked about Service Learning. Cooper found that same passion when she worked with staff from the Center for Community Based Learning (CCBL). "She really cares about her students," Cooper said. "I have found the same thing with CCBL. You are all gung-ho on helping students succeed. It's that passion that I really wanted to surround myself with. And I think that is why I stayed so involved with CCBL, no matter how I could, because I wanted to be surrounded by your passion."

Cooper has been involved with CCBL throughout her time at HSU. She participated in a focus group with CCBL staff and other Service Learning students in her first year. She served as a student representative on the CCBL Advisory Committee and has continued volunteering and/or working with the department. Cooper was instrumental in creating Redwood Roots magazine. She had several conversations with students and CCBL staff and the result was this magazine. "It was a group effort," Cooper said. "I don't take responsibility for that whatsoever. But I definitely feel it was something I pushed for and highlighted the importance of."

Cooper experienced herself how interconnected HSU and the local community are and wanted others to know as well. She felt that there are a lot of opportunities that people do not know about and that these amazing experiences are not being shared widely enough. It was important to her to do what she could to get the word out. She helped develop the magazine's name and scope, conducted interviews, wrote articles

for the magazine, and created a presence for Redwood Roots on Social Media.

A theme throughout Kai's college career and the advice she gives to students is to network and take advantage of the opportunities available. Cooper has always been outgoing and shares that helping her mom with demos and at craft fairs was "training in customer service since I was a kid." She did not recognize this as a skill until college. "I didn't realize I had a knack for networking before I came to HSU," Cooper said. "You just introduce yourself to people and you continue that contact." She went on to say, "Don't be afraid to get yourself out there and network. [HSU] is a lot more interconnected than you think it is. There are faculty who have been here for years and have networks established that you can benefit from by networking with that professor. You never know who you're going to meet and you never know what way experiences are going to go. Just go with it. I was invited to do a small one on one meeting and it resulted in a snowball effect of me here four years later doing an interview for a magazine that I helped start up. It comes full circle and you can learn from your experiences in ways that you have to take a step back and learn."

Dr. Holmes reflected on Kai's experience with Service Learning, CCBL and the creation of this magazine. "That publication would be a sizable achievement in its own right - but it also tells another story," Holmes said. "The story of a local kid who thought of 'here' as a bit small and perhaps constraining - but who literally lit up at the discovery there are so many doors she had never even seen before and even more exciting - that those doors could not only open her to the world out there - but to so many worlds within. She opens each new door with a spirit of adventure and we are all humbled to watch her sense of joy and wonder - and grateful to her for sharing her eyes through which we can see anew the amazing worlds that - perhaps always - have surrounded us."

Cooper graduates in May 2021 with a Political Science major with a concentration in Environment and Sustainability. She is also earning a minor in International Studies. She had been an International Studies major until COVID prevented her from studying abroad, a requirement for the International Studies major. It was a smooth transition for her because she was able to complete the remaining requirements for Political Science and she always had a great interest in the political science arena. For example, she has volunteered to

“I was invited to do a small one on one meeting and it resulted in a snowball effect of me here four years later doing an interview for a magazine that I helped start up.”

participate in Model United Nations, even though it was not required. Cooper plans to work in the public sphere for her career. “As someone who is loud and outgoing, I thought, I could use my voice in support of the environment,” Cooper said.

When asked what she is most proud of in her college career, she replied, “If it is not too cliché, I would say Redwood Roots becoming a real thing. I think that was really important for me being a local community member. I’ve understood the relationship that HSU and the community have with each other and so I really wanted to be able to amplify those voices.” She went on to say that getting the magazine up and running was just the first step. She has a vision for the magazine. “I see big things for the future of Redwood Roots...I hope to see print copies of Redwood Roots at newspaper stands for the entirety of Humboldt County to learn from.”

Kelly Fortner, Student Support Coordinator with CCBL, reflected on her experience working with Cooper, who she has known since the initial planning days of the magazine. “It has been such a joy working with Kai over the past few years. She brings such an energy and enthusiasm to the work we do in the Center for Community Based Learning and with Redwood Roots. She is always thinking about ways to create connections between others, especially between HSU and the local community. I know that after graduating Kai will go on to continue to inspire others and be a leader in whatever she does.”

ZOOMING THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY WITH DAN SEALY

By Kyra Skylark

Dan Sealy is currently the Legislative Analyst for the Northcoast Environmental Center (NEC) as well as the community partner and mentor for the Environmental Policy Internship. “The supervisor Dan is just fantastic, so knowledgeable, helpful, and very informative,” student V Odom said. “He’s been the internship supervisor for a long time, he’s a chief legislative analyst, he went to HSU back in the 70’s, and he’s just a wealth of knowledge. Dan’s a resource, a reference, and a friend that I will hopefully have for the rest of my life.”

Sealy graduated from HSU in 1975 with a BS in Natural Resources Management. Immediately after graduating Sealy began working for the National Park Service. “My work took me to several parts of the country, but my last assignment was in a science office in Washington, DC,” Sealy shared. “When I retired, my husband, Bryan, and I decided we wanted to make Humboldt our home. So we bought a house in Trinidad, but [my] work continues in the DC area, so we live half time in Trinidad and half in a suburb of DC. Since I have access to, and some knowledge about the federal legislative process, I volunteered with the NEC tracking environmental legislation and the work of federal land management agencies like the Park Service, Forest Service, and Fish & Wildlife Service.”

The Environmental Policy Internship is a collaboration between Humboldt State University and Northcoast Environmental Center that Sealy started in 2013 after noticing a lack of collaboration between the two. “The NEC has an amazing membership of scientists and conservation-minded people, but our links to HSU students were not as strong as they had been when I was a



Creator and mentor for the Northcoast Environmental Center (NEC) policy internship, and the (NEC) Legislative Analyst, Dan Sealy. Image provided by: Dan Sealy

student,” Sealy shared. “I wanted to work with students to learn their concerns and skills, and to connect my knowledge with them so they could be as effective as possible in working for environmental protection.”

Sealy organized the internship, before the switch to online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as a virtual learning experience with in person components. “The students and I collaboratively identify legislation that is of interest to them, and to the NEC, and they track that through the legislative process,” Sealy shared. “We review how congress and the Executive (President’s) branch accomplish work and how stakeholders affect change on environmental policy. Students observe Congressional committees in real time, or on an archived video, I join them and we watch what is going on in the background as well as what they see on the screen and how to read the action going on. I teach them how to write ‘briefs,’ which are very short reports on a piece of legislation; this is a skill that has many uses as students progress through their careers. They also attend local conservation committee meetings with NEC board members, and local conservation activists, to learn about local issues that link to federal policy.”

There are many ways for students to get involved, says Sealy, “Some interns conduct presentations to the NEC conservation committee. Some write articles for the EcoNews, the NEC monthly publication. Some attend Town Hall meetings, meet with members of congress when they are in the area, and some meet with congressional staff who work in the local district. We seize on whatever opportunities arise.”

Natalie Vaughan graduated from HSU with a degree in Environmental Science (ES): Environmental Planning and Policy. Vaughan was one of the first interns Sealy ever mentored at HSU as part of the Environmental Policy Internship. “Natalie Vaughn was one of my first interns,” Sealy shared. “Natalie was an Environmental Sciences major, but she was, and is also, a very accomplished professional photographer. She loves nature photography as well as fashion photography, she has a unique style and is committed to help women find their ‘visual branding strategy for women entrepreneurs.’ Her family has a cabin in the Sierras, next to the Bucks Lake Wilderness Area, and her grandfather was a friend of the founder of Friends of the Earth, David Brower. Stories told by her grandfather and experiences at that cabin gave her a deep appreciation for wilderness which she captured in some photographs. [What

inspired me about Natalie was that] her excitement and motivation led her to find opportunities to exhibit some of her photographs at a wilderness exhibit at the Umpqua Bank in Arcata and to apply to be a youth voice at the 50th Anniversary Wilderness Conference in New Mexico, which she was chosen for.”

While Sealy structured the internship within a general framework, he caters the work to each intern’s interests and desires. “I chose what I wanted to do with the internship, I was really in control and free to pick what projects I wanted to work on,” Vaughan said. “I didn’t have as much to do with the legislative side of it. I went on several backpacking trips to capture the beauty and the detail of the wilderness and [the photos were] published in EcoNews. Photography is powerful, it added detail and drew more people in, I think it really emphasized what they were trying to do and their [overall] messages.”

Following her graduation from HSU in 2013, Vaughan got a job with an environmental consulting company and wrote phase one environmental site assessments. “It was absolutely the worst job of my entire life and I was absolutely miserable,” Vaughan said. “So I quit and decided to pursue photography, my other passion. I do fashion and branding photography for different brands, companies and other women entrepreneurs. Now I’m doing photography and seeing what else the world has in store for me. If I’m going to return to the environmental realm, I’ll stick to photography, or combine them and do environmental photography.”

Sealy acknowledged that even though Vaughan is currently in a different field, her impact is still felt. “Natalie is now a wife, mother, and still a fashion photographer, but her direct work with wilderness is taking a pause to experience these other parts of her life,” Sealy shared. “That is a story that does not get told as often: the person who holds their enthusiasm and love for nature as an essential part of who they are, though they will not be the headline activist each year or period of their life. All efforts and abilities at whatever time, add to the success of the whole. Natalie will have time to share her love of nature and wilderness with her daughter, and that is an equal gift.”

“The biggest takeaway [from working with Dan in the NEC internship] was that I can use my unique skills and passions in an impactful way,” Vaughan said.

The Environmental Policy Internship has integrated



Natalie Vaughan with her husband Daniel Zmeu and their son Luca Zmeu. Image provided by: Natalie Vaughan

coursework from HSU and provided applicable long-lasting knowledge for numerous individuals since its inception. Aisha Cissna was a student at HSU from 2012-2016, who also participated in the NEC internship with Sealy. She graduated with a degree in Environmental Science: Planning and Policy and found a job locally based in Eureka. Cissna is currently a Regulatory and Legislative Policy Manager at the Redwood Coast Energy Authority. “Everything from that internship is directly applicable to what I do today,” Cissna said. “In addition to showing me the ropes on how to monitor legislative development, Dan also guided me through preparing legislative briefs for the NEC board, so that they could vote to support or oppose certain legislation. In my current position I do that, I actually just did that. Right now I am focusing on state legislation, which is different, as the scope of the internship was focused on federal legislation.”

Kenny Mort is an Environmental Science and Management (ESM): Environmental Planning and Policy

major at HSU, with a double minor in GIS and Philosophy. Mort is in his final semester at HSU and will be graduating this spring. Mort began working with Dan Sealy two semesters ago, and is currently in his third and final semester working within the NEC internship. Mort has completed his 90 hour internship requirements and is still working within the NEC internship because he appreciates Sealy as a mentor and truly enjoys working with the NEC.

During his internship with Sealy and the NEC, Mort has had the opportunity to write and co-author some articles recently published in EcoNews. EcoNews is the NEC’s publication released monthly, highlighting environmental journalism. “The experience writing the briefs and the articles has been awesome,” Mort said.

Mort plans to volunteer with the NEC upon his completion of the internship after graduating. Mort will be attending various organizational meetings, with the intent to report back what happened within those



NEC interns Kenny Mort, Aspen Stepanek, and V Odom during the fall 2020 semester prior to online schooling due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Image provided by: Dan Sealy

meetings to the NEC conservation committee, and he may write and/or collaborate with Sealy on some more articles in EcoNews.

V Odom is also an ESM: Environmental Planning and Policy major -- they started at HSU in January of 2020 and was an intern alongside Mort. Odom completed their NEC internship during their first year at HSU, utilizing two semesters to fulfill the 90 hour requirement. Odom will be graduating in the spring of 2022. "It was definitely one of those internships that's exactly what you want to do when you are in planning and policy, if you want to enhance your understanding of legislation, how congress works, and what it means to track legislation," Odom said. "Also to understand what really drives party division and to explore the different patterns and trends in environmentally conscious legislation."

While teaching and connecting HSU students to the NEC was a primary goal for Sealy founding the internship, the teachings and perspectives that the students brought to the NEC were also a motivation. "Although

the interns help us track important legislation to make sure we know when we can mobilize our members and the general public to support important legislative decisions in DC, I believe the most important impact the intern has is to provide a fresh perspective to an organization that has been around for 50 years," Sealy shared. "If NEC is to continue for another 50 years and help protect our environment, wildlife, rivers, oceans and public health, we must continue to grow and apply new learning and knowledge. It is a two-way street: interns engage with conservation advocates and scientists, while NEC has young voices at the table. One of my interns, Aisha Cissna is now employed in the area by the Redwood Coast Energy Authority and is now an at-large member of our NEC board."

At Sealy's encouragement, Cissna joined the NEC board in February of 2020. "I got to learn a lot about the organization as an intern and having attended the networking events, have all been very helpful as I acclimate to being a board member," Cissna said. "It's been really engaging work, while I work in the energy and environ-

mental sector, I think right now NEC is going through a growth period where we have seen great strides in emphasizing environmental justice."



Dan Sealy meeting biologist and author E.O. Wilson. "Wilson is signing his book, *Half-Earth*, for the NEC at a wildlife event in the US Capitol," shared Sealy. Image credit: Dan Sealy

For many of the individuals who were mentored by Sealy, it was his passion, kindness, and knowledge that made his mentorship beneficial. "Dan was the reason the internship was so great, whereas the NEC is a great organization and I am sure that no matter who headed it, it would be fantastic, I just genuinely loved my supervisor," Odom said. "Dan's a great guy, kind and understanding, and he just genuinely wants us to succeed. He wants us to come out of the internship with a tactical body of work, like the briefings and the report, that we can use going forward. It was very individualized work but there were constant check-ins and multiple answers whenever I had a question. When I did have questions he would do as much as he could to locate sources, locate people, and other resources for me to use. He just wanted us to succeed so badly, you could feel that, and it was nice to really have that push."

Sealy continues to support his interns even after their internship has ended. "Dan and I have stayed closely connected ever since the internship," Vaughan said. "He's always been a really big support for me and my career, he's always checking in and seeing how he can connect me with people."

Sealy's many years of excellent mentoring as a community partner host for HSU students from community-based learning courses, including his participation on panels and other efforts for HSU students, render him a top-notch community partner. In the words of Stacy Becker, CCBL's Community Partner Coordinator, "Dan has taken the notion of 'community engagement' up another notch to the level of 'civic engagement,'" Becker said. "Even after COVID imposed its limits on community-based learning practices, Dan did not skip a beat with his Environmental Policy Interns program. Not only has he empowered students to build personal and professional skills and experiences on their career paths, but he has given them lifelong skills as citizens to participate in democracy and make the changes - environmental, social, political, legal, and civic - that they wish to see. All told, over the years, he has delivered a particularly potent blend of mentoring, enabling, teaching and participation to HSU students that not only enriches their lives and the curriculum they're studying, but also endeavors to enrich our society and the land we live on."

The internship provides students transferable skills to many fields. "The skills that Dan teaches, while his expertise is in the natural resources world, are applicable to advocacy for any cause one could want to advocate for," Cissna said. "And along the lines of environmental justice, I think at the end of the day it's really about achieving greater intersectionality within the environmental movement."

To learn more about V Odom's experience with their NEC internship under the mentorship of Dan Sealy, we encourage you to read their internship reflection featured within this issue on the following page.

For more on Dan Sealy and the NEC Environmental Policy internship check out these articles written by Sealy and NEC interns Kenny Mort (featured within this article) and Caroline Griffith:

Insurrection and White Privilege by Dan Sealy; Feb. 2021 EcoNews; 1/28/2020 <https://www.yournec.org/insurrection-and-white-privilege/>

Student Focus: Environmental Policy Intern, Kenny Mort by Kenny Mort; Sep. 2020 EcoNews; 9/3/2020 <https://www.yournec.org/student-focus-environmental-policy-intern-kenny-mort/>

Eye On Washington: February 2021 by Kenny Mort; Feb. 2021 EcoNews; 1/28/2021 <https://www.yournec.org/eye-on-washington-february-2021/>

Where Conservation Meets National Politics, NEC Legislative Interns Keep Us Up-To-Date by Caroline Griffith; June 2020 EcoNews; 5/27/2020 <https://www.yournec.org/where-conservation-meets-national-politics-nec-legislative-interns-keep-us-up-to-date>

To check out Natalie Vaughan's current work, go to her photography site here: <https://www.natvonphoto.com/>



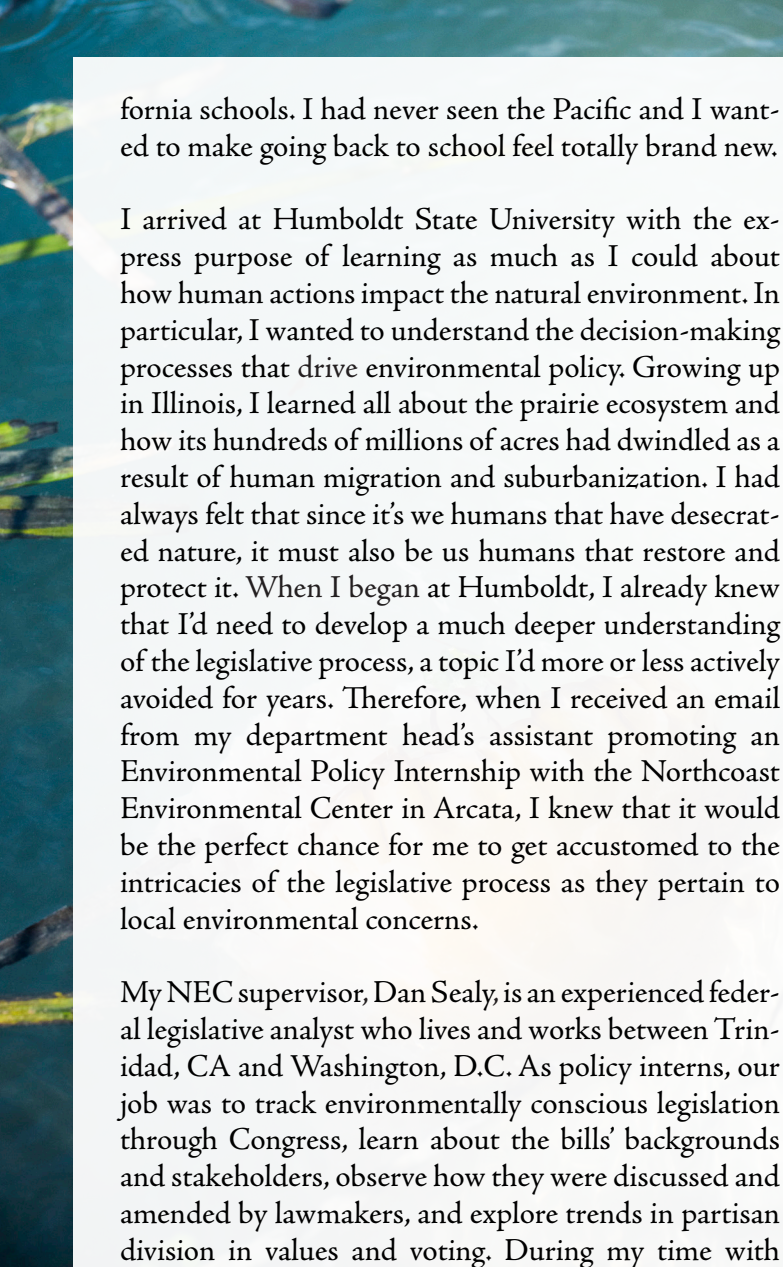
V ODOM INTERNSHIP REFLECTION 16 JANUARY 2021

By V Odom

NEC intern, V Odom, during the spring and fall 2020 semesters at HSU. Image provided by: V Odom

It's never too late to start over. That's what I thought to myself when I made the decision to re-enroll in college after a long, much-needed, break. A few years ago, I obtained my Associates in Arts for Communication at my community college in the northwest suburbs of Chicago, Illinois. I had been working full-time as a server at a sports bar and then as an emergency group home worker at a shelter for at-risk youth. I knew that I liked people, and I wanted to help society, but beyond that I wasn't sure what else I could do. After two years of complacently idling by in the human and food service industries, I decided that it was time to figure something else out.

In February of 2019, I visited my sister and her husband in Palm Coast, Florida. They were living between the Atlantic Ocean and the Intracoastal Waterway, a popular migration route for manatees and porpoises. It was there that I really experienced the coastal ecosystem for myself for the first time. I was fascinated. I had always had a profound appreciation for nature, but that trip made me realize that I wanted to learn as much as I could about different ecosystems, especially marine and aquatic ones, and how to protect their sanctity. To that end, I began thinking about environmental law. It wasn't long after I returned home from Florida that I had completed multiple applications for coastal Cali-



fornia schools. I had never seen the Pacific and I wanted to make going back to school feel totally brand new.

I arrived at Humboldt State University with the express purpose of learning as much as I could about how human actions impact the natural environment. In particular, I wanted to understand the decision-making processes that drive environmental policy. Growing up in Illinois, I learned all about the prairie ecosystem and how its hundreds of millions of acres had dwindled as a result of human migration and suburbanization. I had always felt that since it's we humans that have desecrated nature, it must also be us humans that restore and protect it. When I began at Humboldt, I already knew that I'd need to develop a much deeper understanding of the legislative process, a topic I'd more or less actively avoided for years. Therefore, when I received an email from my department head's assistant promoting an Environmental Policy Internship with the Northcoast Environmental Center in Arcata, I knew that it would be the perfect chance for me to get accustomed to the intricacies of the legislative process as they pertain to local environmental concerns.

My NEC supervisor, Dan Sealy, is an experienced federal legislative analyst who lives and works between Trinidad, CA and Washington, D.C. As policy interns, our job was to track environmentally conscious legislation through Congress, learn about the bills' backgrounds and stakeholders, observe how they were discussed and amended by lawmakers, and explore trends in partisan division in values and voting. During my time with the NEC, Dan taught the other interns and me about the connection between environmentalism and politics – namely that every proposed bill must follow a mostly time-consuming and somewhat inefficient path through Congress in order to become law. Not every bill receives bipartisan support, so oftentimes amendments must be made and approved in various committees before returning to the House or Senate floor. It's a rigorous process that was at times fairly frustrating to track. Some legislation goes nowhere; some is pushed through with tremendous speed. It's very important to note that our elected representatives are just as human as anyone else, and their values will influence the way they respond to a bill. Knowing and contacting our officials is a good way to keep them accountable to, and involved with, their constituency.

A lot of my internship had to be handled remotely, so I watched a number of virtual congressional committee hearings to observe how specific legislation is treated.

For example, one bill I followed closely was the Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act of 2019 (S. 1499, H.R. 2795). The goal of this bill is to provide for the conservation and restoration of habitats that facilitate the movement of certain native or noninvasive species (e.g., fish, wildlife, or plant species) that may be at risk due to habitat loss or fragmentation.

In tracking this bill, I learned that there are certain ideological differences between democrats and republicans that can impede a bill's progress. In the case of S. 1499, land acquisition and financing became the two largest issues. Generally speaking, conservative members of Congress view the purchase of federal land as an example of government overreach. However, in an environmentally conscious sense, more land is needed to be sanctioned off for endangered species and migratory wildlife. Because the congressional subcommittees have been unable to agree on the provisions of the bill, and because COVID-19 has been a large focus for lawmakers, S. 1499 has yet to move any further in its path to becoming law. In May 2020, I wrote a briefing for *EcoNews*, the NEC's own publication, about S. 1499. It was featured in June 2020. In it, I describe the bill's background, relevant controversies, and its current status, which unfortunately hasn't changed at all since late Spring.

My policy internship with the NEC went along extremely well with my HSU courses. Last semester, I took both ESM 325 and ESM 360 - Environmental Law and Environmental Planning. In Law, we went over the powers given to federal agencies as stated in the Constitution. We also discussed why and how federal agencies make decisions and the political pressures that mold the decision-making process. I was very grateful that I'd already been exposed to this sort of material to some degree through working with Dan and the NEC. A lot of the material felt like review, or at the very least, I could easily contextualize it and identify existing power dynamics.

In Planning, we looked at many local problems like sea level rise, wildlife migration corridors, sustainability/walkability, green infrastructure, etc. Many of these topics are brought up at the NEC's virtual monthly Conservation Committee meetings. This again made it easier to contextualize these problems and hear from the people they impact directly. It allowed me to witness the broader scope of the timeline of policy change, from citizen concern and grassroots organization, to involvement with representatives to (potentially) being addressed by Congress. Learning about larger projects

like planning for offshore wind farms and the Klamath River Dam removals seemed a lot more intimate because of my affinity with them through my internship, regular schooling, and genuine general interest.

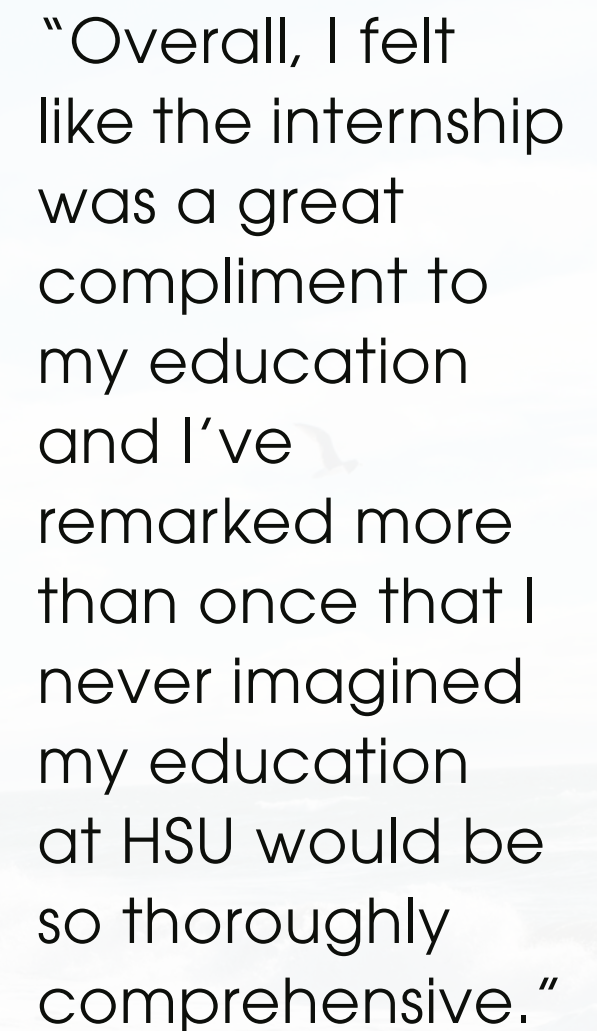
Another key topic that linked my internship with my HSU courses was that of environmental justice. Dan and I decided early on to key in on how equity and equality are addressed through legislation and planning. Luckily, my professors went over this concept in great depth. In many cases, it provided me with an opportunity to speak to my classmates and share resources I'd come across earlier with my professors. It felt really nice to be able to engage so meaningfully with my courses in that way. Overall, I felt like the internship was a great compliment to my education and I've remarked more than once that I never imagined my education at HSU would be so thoroughly comprehensive. Beyond the topics themselves, there are so many intelligent leaders and educators in this community that can act as resources and guides to help me along, and I'm so excited to continue to explore the Planning and Policy concentration with their help.

The spring and fall 2020 semesters have been difficult in that COVID-19 made everything virtual. A lot of what Dan had planned for the internship had to be canceled and reworked to meet the same standards. The same goes for all my classes. It would have been awesome to be able to travel and visit local sites for perspective and context, but ultimately I think we did okay and I still learned a lot despite the circumstances. This has been a tough learning curve for all of us and, at times, I had difficulty meeting the demands of every project I was assigned.

Regarding the future, I'm extremely grateful to Dan and the NEC for giving me the opportunity to explore whether environmental policy is right for me. Right now, I'm still planning on attending law school so that I can enforce environmentally-just planning procedures and standards in federal agencies like the EPA. I would also like to fight on behalf of Indigenous people whose land has been stolen and mistreated since this country's colonization. Especially now, with such a high degree of political unrest and polarization, I think it's important to endeavor in a professional field that does the most good for the most people and ecosystems. In my opinion, it isn't fair that political actors are so fully beholden to corporate interests and lobbying. The good of the land should speak for itself. That said, Dan often pointed out to me that it's never quite so black and white;

a large-scale green energy project will still have some adverse effects on local industry and wildlife. There's a huge degree of planning and research that goes into the implementation of every new idea, and it doesn't work to be misinformed.

I enjoy researching legislation and I do have a deep interest in politics, so it's crucial that I continue to learn as much as I can from my professors and mentors. I am excited to continue to keep Dan as a resource and reference, and I want to continue to learn more about planning and law. I am hopeful that the rest of my time at HSU will be as highly educational and empirically sound as this past year has been.



“Overall, I felt like the internship was a great compliment to my education and I’ve remarked more than once that I never imagined my education at HSU would be so thoroughly comprehensive.”



A LIFELONG COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION: A FACULTY AND PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT WITH YVONNE DOBLE

By Loren Collins

For some, community engagement just seems like a good idea for their class or a pedagogy worth trying, but for Yvonne Doble, it is a way of life and part of who they are. Doble is the Director of Field Education and a lecturer in the Social Work department at Humboldt State University (HSU).

I first met Yvonne Doble on Eureka High School's campus, when we were both students many years ago. Even then, she was known for her commitment to community, equity and inclusion; she consistently looked for ways to make a difference in the communities around her. Fast forward to today and you can see that her passion has not waned in more than 20 years. Rather, Doble's passion for community, equity and inclusion has progressed, and it shows in every aspect of their life and work.

Growing up during the "timber wars" of the 90's in Humboldt County, Doble thought the best way for her to make a difference in the community was to major in

Environmental Science. After graduating high school, she attended Oberlin College, a small Liberal Arts college in rural Ohio. "During my time in Ohio I actually really struggled, because I figured out I didn't want to be a scientist, but then I wasn't sure what I was going to school for," Doble said. "I tried four different majors, and ended up needing to take a semester leave to come home and figure out what was important to me."

During that time off, Doble created their own major in Community-based Education. "Oberlin had a process where you write a proposal, you list all the classes you want to include in your major and you list all of the ways that you're going to use those classes and what your goal is when you finish it," they said. "I basically grabbed every class that involved critical studies, and every class that said practicum. I was really writing about my goal to come home to Humboldt to do something useful -- to create a better community, somehow connected to education and social justice. It's one of those funny things... because, now, what I do so direct-

ly connects to that degree, but I had no idea that this work even existed when I wrote that plan."

Part of Doble's college experience included a job and a scholarship for helping create a Service Learning class for a local high school, where students designed service projects in an effort to get them through their own struggles with education. These experiences led to a position through AmeriCorps at Eureka High School as she considered a possible future as a teacher. Doble's position was focused on school-to-career job shadowing, but also included being a mentor and serving as the advisor for the Youth Educating Against Homophobia Club.

"Being a visible member of the queer community was also important to me - a place to push my one high school to do better. I even advocated to adapt a Healthy Relationships group specifically for queer youth, that wasn't limited by gender identity," Doble said. "A lot of the youth I most connected with were struggling with feelings of belonging, acceptance and mental health challenges - like myself and my friends four years earlier, who also grappled with the death of one of our friends."

Looking to dive deeper into supporting youth one-to-one, and pay down more student loans, Doble signed up for a second AmeriCorps term of service. This time, their work focused on teens in foster care through the local Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) office. CASA was having a hard time finding consistent volunteers for older youth, and Doble suggested a partnership with HSU. Specifically, she recommended they create a Social Work internship program, as well as a volunteer coordinator position. CASA staff secured grant funding for the volunteer coordinator role and Doble was asked to fill the position. Doble spent seven and a half years working with CASA, and supervised up to eleven social work interns from HSU each year, and was eventually encouraged to apply to the Master of Social Work (MSW) program.

Originally, Doble's goal in obtaining a MSW was to become a clinician to help meet the persistent need for clinicians prepared to work with older youth, LGBTQ+ youth and other systems involving youth from a harm reduction framework. During her studies she had the opportunity to work as a teaching assistant for a Child Welfare course and then pursued an independent study class in Teaching Social Work and Social Justice. They also interned with Humboldt County Transition

Aged Youth Collaboration and Open Door Behavioral Health. After graduating, Doble worked with the Senior Action Coalition, continuing her passion for supporting folks most affected by systems, to have a voice into policies shaping their lives. In the long term, however, the seed had already been planted that she would like to help teach and develop social workers at HSU - and that is exactly what she ended up doing.

Since arriving at HSU in 2012, Doble has had the opportunity to build classes in community accountability, restorative justice and community-based practice, as well integrative seminar coursework. "One of the things I love about being part of the team within the Social Work department is the opportunity to seek to shift to systems level practice within the field, sometimes across generations of practice," Doble said. "Now I get to see former students mentoring current students."

Doble still finds their one-to-one work with students incredibly meaningful. "I often feel that the students whom I advise or who reach out to me, are a lot like the youth I worked most passionately with back at Eureka High, except at many different phases of their lives," Doble said. "I've gotten to support students working on criminal record expungement, students navigating lived experience with mental health systems, former foster youth and folks that are figuring out how social work fits into community activism. I love coming alongside folks and seeing them come into their own strengths and skills to continue the ripple of community change."

It was perhaps inevitable that Doble's past work in community-based learning, community organizing, and their passion to support students, would lead to the position of Director of Field Education at HSU. Now Doble is responsible for helping support the social work interns serving with community partners and opening doors for students in places she once worked. In any given year, Doble places approximately 150 students for year-long practicum field experiences.

Doble has worked to create a scaffolded program for students in both the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) and MSW programs where they can explore their strengths and interests and begin to search out their plans for a future career. In preparation for their placements, Doble and the Social Work Department have developed built-in processes where every student creates a resume, cover letter, and practices interviewing. They then submit their resumes and cover letters to potential organizations for their field experiences and

participate in interviews. Students serve as social work interns for dozens of local nonprofits, schools, and government agencies. Once placed, each student is enrolled in a reflective seminar course, with faculty support, while they complete more than 400 hours of field experience over the course of one year.

Doble has taken the lead on many efforts that go beyond the Social Work Department and benefit students across HSU who are serving in the community as well. Doble is always thinking big while simultaneously thinking in a way that supports the individual in need. Doble serves on a committee focused on building a future center in McKinleyville to provide integrated community services in one location. “Because of COVID it has been in sort of a holding pattern, but I’m the Social Work Department’s representative on the leadership committee for that program. Its goal is to be a pilot model integrating services across nonprofit, health, tribal, and county social services to effectively meet the needs of the community. Students will be able to talk with folks who are doing case management in that setting to build an understanding of interdisciplinary teamwork and getting to connect directly. So it’s not just internships but actually doing workshops, training, classes, and other pieces on site when stores are open and it is safe to do so.”

Doble has continued to demonstrate the same commitment and passion toward equity and inclusion that I saw so long ago, leading committees and working groups to find out how HSU can best support our diverse student body as they serve in the local community. Doble has participated in work to train community partners on issues related to equity, helped design rapid response to issues related to equity in the field, and integrated orientations and training on equity in all aspects of preparing

interns for their placement. Doble continues to advocate for the needs of students and the community while taking a holistic approach to learning that deepens ties and support between HSU and the community.

Recently the Social Work Department was presented the opportunity to partner with Eureka City Schools and Del Norte Unified School District for U.S. Department of Education grants focusing on school-based mental health. Doble immediately knew the importance of providing financial support to students completing the MSW. “I know it’s a huge barrier and equity issue for many of our students that the full-time campus MSW program doesn’t allow for time to work while in school, and that the majority of the two day per week practicum placements are unfunded,” Doble said. “So the first thing I said when this grant possibility came up was, ‘Let’s fund stipends for the students making this commitment.’”

These five year grants now provide a \$13,000 stipend for MSW candidates in the Master of Social Work program who do their advanced year internship at local schools and earn their Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) School Social Work credential in the following summer. “We didn’t know at the time that Covid-19 would be what it was and how critical any extra support that we could get into our local schools was going to be this first year in the program, but I am deeply grateful that our students could be part of that effort,” Doble said.

Indeed, Doble’s lifelong commitment to both community engagement and helping students in a holistic way positively impacts students’ lives and the community in which they live. I saw this in high school and I witness it daily through our work together.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

By Christian Boyd
and Kathy Thornhill

Equity Arcata, established in 2017, is a partnership between the City of Arcata, local community members, business leaders, and Humboldt State University. Equity Arcata formed as a joint effort to make Arcata a more inclusive and welcoming community for people of color.

Students can get involved by joining one of Equity Arcata’s [working groups](#) through the City of Arcata. These working groups bring together community members and students to work on specific issues, including housing, bias reporting, arts, diversity and inclusion learning, and welcoming businesses. Several of these working groups focus directly on inclusive practices for HSU students, including the “Home away from Home” group which hosts community-led potlucks for students, and the police and student safety group, led by the Arcata Chief of Police, Brian Ahearn. That group is developing a *Know Your Rights* campaign for students so they have the tools they need to understand their rights in certain situations with law enforcement. Students who participate in any of Equity Arcata’s groups work closely with staff from both the City of Arcata and HSU’s Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Students may also enroll in Political Science 381S - Community Leadership in Action, a Service Learning class. PSCI 381S is taught by Meridith Oram, the Community Development Specialist in HSU’s Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Her role seeks to facilitate equity and inclusion at HSU and in the community by creating systemic change. The class affords the

opportunity for students to be part of that change and get involved with Equity Arcata. According to the HSU Catalog, the class will “promote civic engagement, work towards racial equity in health, housing, education, and employment, and participate in creating a welcoming, safe, and inclusive campus and community for all.”

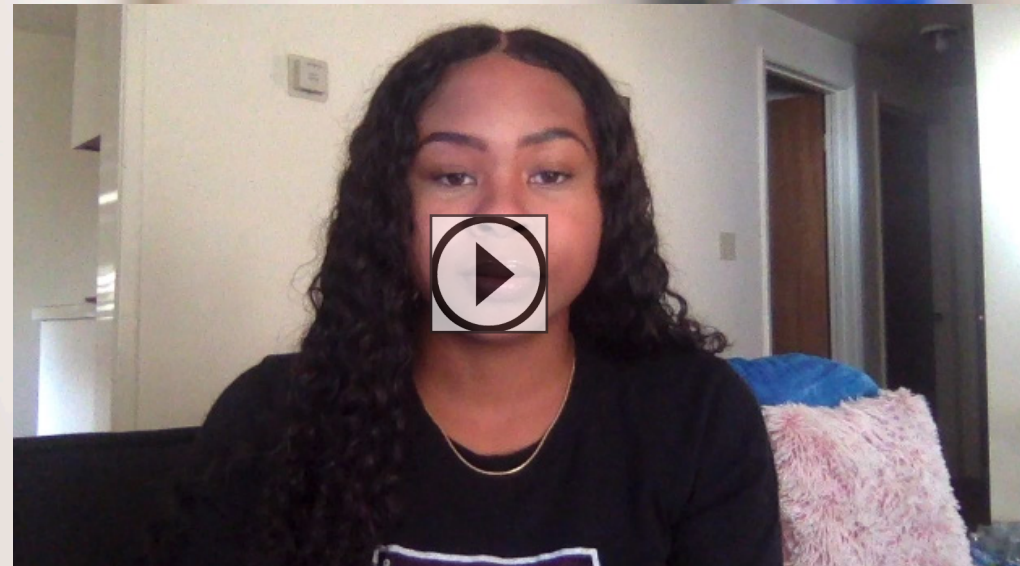
Students who enroll in the class attend Equity Arcata’s working groups and get involved with community efforts that support change and growth. Students are able to make great connections with leaders of institutions, organizations, and businesses in our local community who are committed to creating lasting change.

Equity Arcata and the Service Learning students strive to work together to create solutions that will be effective and durable over time. The members of Equity Arcata recognize and acknowledge the pain and trauma that has occurred for many communities of color at individual and institutional levels. In the face of these challenges, they believe it necessary to take a resiliency-building approach to enhance the strength of individuals and systems to be successful for the long-term. They stand in solidarity with one another while advancing the solutions they design, and remain forward-looking at what they can do next to meet these goals.

The members of Equity Arcata believe this work is bigger than any one of them, and approach it with both deference and determination to transform systems towards racial equity. To make real change, they know they need to build the community’s strength together and that HSU students are integral to this process.

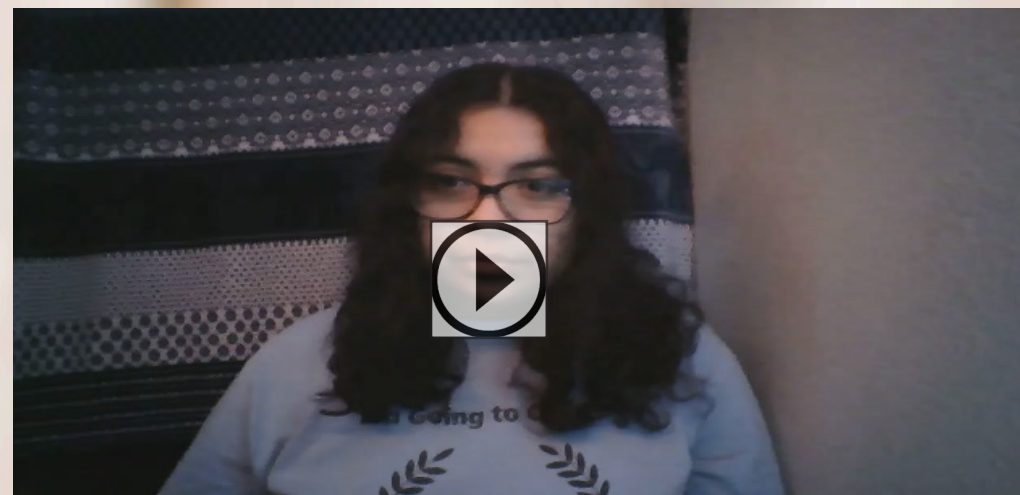


Christian Boyd
Equity Arcata Intern
Previously an intern through PSCI 482

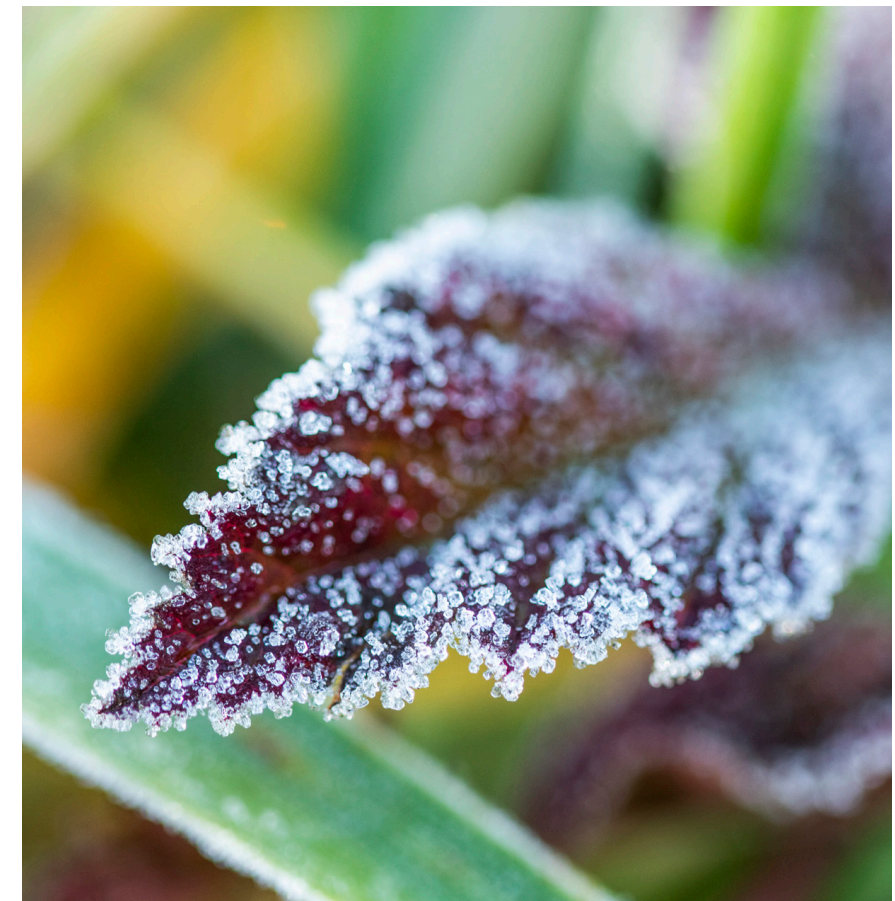


Students share
their highlights

Lisa Borallo
Community Leadership in Action
PSCI 381S and PSCI 482



HUMBOLDT IN THE TIME OF COVID: ARCHIVING HISTORY AS IT'S HAPPENING



By Suzanne Pasztor,
HSU History Professor

Like many faculty members, the shift to online teaching and learning in the Spring Semester of 2020 created a lot of anxiety. My biggest deer-in-the-headlights moment was when I began to realize how difficult it would be to support the History department internship program in a lockdown situation. As COVID began to shut down opportunities for sending HSU students into the community for hands-on educational opportunities became more complex,

those of us who direct internships and supervise Service Learning placements cast about for an alternative in the new virtual environment.

It was in this context that a funding announcement by Jon Parrish Peede, the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, pointed to a solution. "To the extent that healing is to come during and after this pandemic, it will be through humanities fields



from philosophy to literature to history to religious studies—through the act of documenting, preserving, sharing, and reflecting—that our communities will move toward a greater sense of wholeness,” Peede said. It was shortly after reading this quote that I attended a virtual meeting with internship and Service Learning faculty, as well as staff from the Center for Community Based Learning. What had felt like a frantic scramble for a solution was replaced by a sense of excitement, and by the conviction that we had a unique opportunity to engage our students in helping the community weather the pandemic. *Everyone* would have a story of living in this difficult time.

Why not send our students out virtually, to capture those stories? Why not enlist our students in capturing the raw material for a historical archive? And why not use that raw material, as we emerged from the pandemic, to create a museum exhibit called “Humboldt in the Time of COVID”?

As luck would have it, several university libraries, including our own, were also beginning to work on virtual archives that would capture experiences of the pandemic. Thus the two visions came together: internships and Service Learning opportunities for HSU students, and an online historical archive curated by Special Collections Librarian extraordinaire, Carly Marino. Because of relationships fostered over the years through internships, the Clarke Historical Museum in Eureka joined as well.

Our efforts began in earnest in the fall of 2020, when faculty from History, Politics, Religious Studies, Art and Art History, Sociology, Social Work, Business, Journalism, and Kinesiology began sending student interns and Service Learners to conduct virtual interviews. Their work was informed by a wealth of questions generated by the historic moment in which we found ourselves: How had the pandemic affected local businesses, and the local economy? How were faith-based communities

responding? What was the effect of the pandemic on the homeless population and the organizations serving that population? How was Humboldt County’s artistic community responding to the pandemic?

Dr. Berit Potter, a Professor of Art at HSU and the Director of the Museum and Gallery Practices program provided training in how to conduct oral interviews. The Center for Community Based Learning provided virtual space for Internship and Service Learning faculty to meet regularly to exchange ideas and assemble tip sheets and other resources for our students doing work out in the virtual “field.” Each faculty member catered the experience to students in their major field. For me, that meant pushing history interns to reflect not only on the impact of the pandemic, but also on the question of how this time might be remembered by future generations. As my students worked on their interviews, transcribed them, and prepared to submit them to the archive, we met regularly to share experiences, ideas, and impressions. At the end of the semester, as students readied their transcribed interviews for the virtual archive, each intern gave an informal presentation, sharing their findings and attempting to analyze the pandemic as a professional historian might.

From the start, the Humboldt in the Time of COVID project has seen a remarkable level of collaboration across campus. Stacy Becker and Loren Collins of the Center for Community Based Learning (CCBL) have provided invaluable direction to countless students, utilizing community connections that the Center has cultivated for years. Kelly Fortner, the CCBL Student Support Coordinator, served as the coordinator of the Humboldt in the Time of COVID team of faculty and staff. Carly Marino has steadily curated the archive, while herself supervising interns in the work required to bring the archive together.

Students have collaborated across disciplines, working together on interviews and community outreach.

Zayne Nordberg, a history major with an interest in faith-based communities, worked with Religious Studies major Madeleine Wilson to interview Rabbi Naomi Steinberg of Temple Beth El. Both students benefited from each others’ insights as they crafted an “interdisciplinary” set of interview questions.

The Spring 2021 semester has brought a new group of interns and Service Learners to the Humboldt in the Time of COVID project. More stories are being collected and archived, and internship and Service Learning faculty anticipate another group of student participants next fall, perhaps even with the possibility of face-to-face interviews. As our students are learning, the effects of this pandemic will continue to be felt in myriad ways, shaping the experiences of countless individuals and providing a critical reference point for those who have survived. As a historian and director of an internship program, it has been a privilege to watch our students engage with this historic moment. As a member of the HSU community, it has been heartening to collaborate with other faculty across campus, with the Library, and with the Center for Community Based Learning.

It seems to me that Humboldt in the Time of COVID is an example of the best the university has to offer:

students and community engaged with one another, faculty and staff working together, across disciplines to share ideas and provide a quality program.

Link to the Humboldt in the Time of COVID Digital Archive:

[Humboldt in the Time of COVID - Digital Archive | Special Collections](#)

Links to examples of oral histories that students in Academic Internship and Service Learning classes conducted:

[Humboldt in the Time of COVID: Interviews with Rabbi Eli Cowen and Rabbi Naomi Steinberg](#)

[Humboldt in the Time of COVID: Oral Histories with HSU Students and Professors](#)

[Humboldt in the Time of COVID: How COVID Has Changed Coaching for Humboldt State Women’s Rowing](#)

[Trailer for Homeless in Humboldt During COVID-19 documentary](#)

Humboldt in the Time of COVID Partnerships:

Karen August - Faculty, Sociology
Stacy Becker - Staff, Center for Community Based Learning
Kayla Begay - Faculty, Native American Studies
Katie Beusch - Community Partner, Clarke Historical Museum
Brittany Britton - Staff, Art
Michelle Cartier - Faculty, Film
Loren Collins - Staff, Center for Community Based Learning; Faculty, Political Science
Yvonne Doble - Staff/Faculty, Social Work
Kelly Fortner - Staff, Center for Community Based Learning
Sara Hart - Faculty, Religious Studies
Carly Marino - Faculty, HSU Library
Whitney Ogle - Faculty, Kinesiology
Ara Pachmayer - Faculty, Recreation Administration
Suzanne Pasztor - Faculty, History
May Patino - Faculty, Anthropology
Berit Potter - Faculty, Art
Victoria Sama - Faculty, Journalism and Mass Communication
Gordon Ulmer - Faculty, Anthropology
Nancy Vizenor - Faculty, Business
Jim Woglom - Faculty, Art and Teacher Education



CONNECTING EDUCATIONAL DOTS WITH HSU CONNECT•ED

By Stacy Becker

Last spring, as we all sailed into the murky seas of the pandemic, two things became increasingly clear: we would need to get by with help from friends and collaborators, and education needed to continue, from kindergarten to college, to keep students learning and community engagement alive.

HSU program staff recognized that many teachers at all levels, too, were facing a future lacking experience and resources in providing online learning experiences.

In spring 2020, HSU program staff and faculty came together to provide solutions, and began asking the questions such as, how would the hundreds of HSU

students enrolled in community-based learning courses each semester complete their service requirements? What kinds of virtual service would not only make sense and provide enriched learning opportunities for HSU students, but also meet K-12 school needs in these challenging times?

To address these needs, the Center for Community Based Learning, the Academic and Career Advising Center, Youth Educational Services (Y.E.S.), Early Outreach Admissions, and academic departments (including Social Work, Teacher Education, and other departments at HSU) offering Service Learning and Academic Internship courses, continued discussions with the Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE) staff to initiate new efforts to enhance the bridge between K-12 and higher education institutions.

The HCOE Education At Work program developed a virtual College Chat series with local high schools that featured College of the Redwoods and HSU faculty sharing wisdom from their fields, and invited high school students into their virtual courses for the college experience.

“HSU faculty from over twenty different departments have participated in our College Chat series this year. These informal discussions give local high school students a chance to learn about different majors and ask questions directly to professors who teach college classes,” College Chat program lead Jim Ritter shared. “This is a wonderful community partnership between HSU

and Humboldt County high schools that helps students relax and build confidence about their transition from high school to college.”

At HSU the new ConnectED program evolved to further education efforts, and make connections between HSU students, resources, and local K-12 classes.

During the pilot fall 2020 semester, two main ConnectED programs emerged: Pen Pals and Curricular. HSU students from Y.E.S. programs and academic courses such as: Art Education, Environmental Science and Management, Recreation Administration, and Child Development, rallied to provide activities that supported K-12 teacher learning objectives.

In the ConnectED Pen Pal program, HSU students participated in letter-writing experiences, initially with 5th grade classes. The letters provided an opportunity for K-12 students to improve communication skills and learn about the college experience, while allowing HSU students to make community connections and build relationships with K-12 students.

Cuahutemoc Flores, Y.E.S. student and ART Program

Director, highlighted the gifts and challenges that came with virtual activities. “My experience with the letters last semester worked as a friendship check-in with my 10 year-old Pen Pal,” Flores shared. “I don’t know what they look like or sound like, but I know that there’s a ten-year-old out there who rides dirt bikes and watches kung-fu movies. Our letters combine dirt bikes and kung fu with passion for art, recreation, theater and imagination; we try to include as much of that as we can.”

“The most valuable thing I’ve learned about the Pen Pal Program is that education needs to be fun because people are more likely to satisfy their thirst for education and social engagement if they’re presented with clear information that connects the dots and in a form that’s enjoyable,” Flores shared. “In a letter I wrote to my Pen Pal, I was telling them that we can find art tools anywhere. We can use flower seeds so that they sprout a pattern, use rocks to balance on their sides to make towers, or use clay from the ground to do street art and natural paints.”

In the ConnectED Curricular program, HSU students created materials such as educational videos, class activities, lesson plans, and virtual presentations in response

“Despite the age difference between a 5th grader and a college student, there is still so much we can learn from each other. It’s possible to find common ground with just about anybody. Exchanging Pen Pal letters was such a cool way of engaging with and staying connected with youth in the local community.” - Ada Mittelstadt, HSU Y.E.S. ART Program Director (Fall 2020)

to K-12 teacher requests for specific academic, college readiness, personal and professional growth topics.

Carol West, HSU Child Development (CD) faculty member, noted the gap filled by ConnectED offerings. Two of her students had the opportunity to create curricular resources for K-12 classes. "If the students had not had this opportunity to participate virtually in the classroom, they would not have had hands-on experience with teaching, which is the whole point of CD 482 Directed Field Experience/Internship," West shared. "Both of these students will be going into credential programs. In the midst of a pandemic, any kind of hands-on experience with children is quite limited, so this was an invaluable experience in conducting lessons in a virtual environment. Both students are graduating at the end of this semester. This was an amazing way to end their time at HSU, particularly considering the circumstances!"

ConnectED has been building bridges to provide college readiness support to local high school students. Molly Pucillo, member of the HSU Early Outreach staff, and part of the ConnectED organizing team, shared that "the pandemic has forced us to be more collaborative and creative, and the ConnectED initiative and team model these virtues."

"ConnectED has been a powerful partnership for Early Outreach Admissions because it has intentionally and consistently created more opportunities for local students and educators to access college resources and collaborations," Pucillo shared. "It has similarly provided opportunities for HSU faculty and staff to diversify and augment their curriculum through practical application and relationship building efforts. In short, ConnectED has provided stability and connection in a time when it has been greatly needed."

An additional one-time effort was made during fall 2020 by HSU Religious Studies faculty member Sara Hart, who coordinated with the local American Legion to educate youth on veterans' related topics via American Legion Art and Essay Contests for grade schoolers.

The turnout of all constituents for these programs demonstrates the mutually beneficial collaboration succeeding since their inception. In fall 2020, 97 HSU students and six faculty, from six Service Learning, Academic Internship courses, and Y.E.S. programs, served 362 K-12th grade students. These students were from 13 different classes taught by 12 teachers at nine local

schools. The spring 2021 semester is continuing to see HSU students connect with local K-12 students, with 80 HSU students and seven faculty from five majors with the Y.E.S. programs serving students in 12 different K-12 classrooms at ten local schools.

Upon conclusion of the first semester of the ConnectED programs during fall 2020, over 90% of Y.E.S. students agreed that the ConnectED experience helped expand their interpersonal, communication, creative thinking, and mentoring skills. Many of the students felt more connected to both HSU and the local community, and engaged while virtually volunteering.

After participating in the ConnectED experience, Y.E.S. Youth Mentoring Program Director for the fall 2020 semester, Emily Eib recognizes "how important it is to stay connected with youth and provide outlets for them to stay engaged during online learning," Eib shared. "They loved letter writing so much and it made me so happy!"

Jacquelyn R. Matthews, Y.E.S. ART Volunteer during the fall 2020 semester, felt that the ability to mentor and volunteer in a variety of settings was a valuable experience. "This would be something great to include even after covid restrictions are lifted," Matthews shared.

The efforts will continue on in future semesters and beyond the pandemic due to the successes of the program. "The Pen Pal program has been such a bright spot for Y.E.S. volunteers this year," Melea Smith, Y.E.S. Coordinator shared. "It has fostered enjoyment, creativity and connections for college and elementary school participants. While this effort emerged in response to social distancing measures, we hope to continue the Pen Pal program at Y.E.S. beyond the pandemic. The digital letter exchange has created new avenues for building community with local schools, especially those at a greater distance from HSU."

Other HSU faculty were pleased by the efforts as well. Environmental Science & Management (ESM) faculty Jenn Tarlton shared positive outcomes from the experience for all involved. Her ESM 450 Applied Environmental Education and Interpretation course students engaged in a hybrid of Pen Pal and curricular activities: they each exchanged three letters with their middle school partners from Redwood Coast Montessori, and they made video prompts for each letter exchange.

"I'm really glad we did this project," Tarlton shared. "This semester my students really missed out on proj-

ects where they would be making connections with 3rd and 5th graders. This Pen Pal project helped them remember what it's like to be a middle school student as well as make meaningful connections to youth in our community... For me, I actually met two course objectives: 1) connecting with K-12 students in a meaningful way and 2) developing video production skills. Several of my students said this was their favorite project of the semester... The teacher of the middle school students, Sheree Shapiro, expressed how much her students got from the Pen Pal experience and how much they enjoyed the project."

Shapiro agreed that the ConnectEd Pen Pal was beneficial to her students as well. "Because Covid-19 has limited us all from interacting with each other in groups, popular and rewarding programs such as Environmental Education Day have typically been put on hold," Shapiro shared. "On the other hand, Covid-19 has given many of us an opportunity to adapt and find new ways to do our jobs, teach and learn information, and find ways to connect with and support each other in new settings."

"The HSU students provided human connection and offered guidance for ways the adolescents could seek peace and care for their mental, physical, and emotional well-being while learning about the Earth in engaging ways," Shapiro shared. "They sent a Flipgrid video to the middle school students offering relevant lessons, like addressing air quality during the fires and addressing the ocean and moon during the King Tides, and inspired by a popular anime series, Avatar the Last Airbender. Their lessons connected in powerful and entertaining ways with the middle school students. Middle school students eagerly meditated barefoot in the sand, interpreted the air quality index, and used tide and moon data to draw correlations. The adolescents shared in their letters how meditating by a tree or deeply breathing while standing barefoot in the sand affected their mental, physical, and emotional states. Some were motivated to work outside more often and make deep breathing part of their ongoing stress management strategy. HSU students listened to albums recommended by their Pen Pals and wrote back about a favorite song. Students from both schools shared their feelings about being an athlete, an artist, an immigrant, a cook, a tech geek, a son, a sister, a pet owner, a friend,

and more. In the process, everyone involved learned, grew, and enjoyed being part of a stimulating and supportive community."

Check out the following Flipgrid videos created by Tarlton's students (in order to view these flipgrid videos, you will be prompted to join with Google or Microsoft):

<https://flipgrid.com/ba20c575>: created by Amelia Towse, Samantha Mariscal, Sarah Feyers, Emily Ortow. Compares tide charts with phases of the moon to learn about the moon's effects on tides; provides a Pen Pal prompt.

<https://flipgrid.com/025b5a19>: created by Charlotte Maupin, Isabelle Otilio, Mayra Guzman, Natalie Rynne, Lauryn Blottin. Shares information on Air Quality Index (AQI), while providing meditation prompts for dealing anxieties arising from wildfire and pollution events.

Other K-12 teachers shared the positive impacts on their teaching efforts and their students' perspectives. Michelle Butler, 5th Grade Teacher at Pacific Union Elementary stated, "Some of my least active distance-learning students were the first to respond to their Pen Pals. Following this, we did a Secret Pal letter exchange in December among our own students and they were inspired to write for connection in large part, I believe due to their experience with HSU Pen Pals."

Jesse Wheeler, 4th grade Teacher at Cutten Elementary also appreciated the multiple outcomes with her students: "My 4th graders learned about the diverse backgrounds of the HSU students and how they chose their college majors. The HSU students shared insights about what college majors are, what recreation means, and the concepts of Leave No Trace. All together, these lessons exposed my students to the higher education experience while covering topics in their Social Science standards. They also encouraged my students to get outside in a respectful, responsible way."

For more information on ConnectED and more beautiful examples of Pen Pal letter exchanges visit: <https://ccbl.humboldt.edu/ConnectED>.

Oct. 26, 2020

Hi Aliyah,

It's great to hear from you! Thank you for your letter! How are you?

I'm glad to hear that online school is going well for you and it's cool to hear about what you're learning in your classes. Online school is going well for me too, although I much prefer it being in person. I miss walking on campus and seeing everyone face to face. I chose to go to HSU for college because I love this area with all the redwoods and the ocean. It's so beautiful! I wanted to leave the small town I grew up in, but stay in California. I am in my very last semester of college so I am graduating in December! It's hard to believe but I think I am ready for the next step of my life. Do you know what you want to be when you grow up? I still don't know, I'm just figuring my life out as I go.

I mostly go for hikes in the Arcata Community Forest and I also really like the hike up to Strawberry Rock because the view is amazing. Have you been there? Are there any particular places you like to go? What's your favorite beach? I grew up in a small town that is in the foothills of the Sierra Nevadas on the way up to Tahoe, so there are a ton of great hiking trails around there too.

My birthday is in December. I don't have any pets, but I love cats. When I was younger, my family had chickens that laid eggs for us and they were kind of like pets, they all had names. We had a really aggressive rooster too. I like to knit small soft cotton washcloths, but someday I want to learn how to knit hats and socks. I like to play card games and boardgames too. I especially like cards. I used to play cards a lot with my dad when I was younger, sometimes I still do when I am back home. I'm not reading anything at the moment because I have been really busy, but I have been meaning to read a biography about the artist Frida Kahlo.

My sister Annabel goes to HSU too and we like to do all kinds of things together. Sometimes we go on hikes or to the beach, and sometimes we make dinner together, and sometimes we play games, but mostly we just hang out and talk. I think of her as my best friend. Someday I'd love to travel with her. Where would you want to travel to if you could go anywhere in the world?

I hope you are doing well and have a great day!

- Ada

Here are some pictures of some of the art I've made and some washcloths I knitted :)



ConnectED
Pen Pal Letter

from HSU student,
Vanessa Ebbing
(fall 2020 Y.E.S.
Environmental
Education Program
Volunteer), to
student Amara
in Cheryl Paul's
5th grade class
at Pacific Union
Elementary

ConnectED
Pen Pal Letter

from HSU student,
Ada Mittelstadt
(fall 2020 Y.E.S. Art
Program Director),
to student Aliyah
in Cheryl Paul's
5th grade class
at Pacific Union
Elementary

Dear Amara,

It's been a pleasure getting to know you too!

Wow! That sounds almost more fun than normal Halloween. I'm glad you got to spend some time with your friends! In my opinion, that's what holidays are really for. Unfortunately, I didn't get to go home to see my friends for Halloween, but I had a fun party on ZOOM with all of the other YES volunteers. I dressed up like a skeleton and we played Kahoot.

Right now, I have a lot of different projects I'm working on, but I just finished one of my cups for my ceramics class and I'm really proud of it! It's a cup that looks like an eyeball! Spooky! I really love how it turned out. Also since my last in person class for Ceramics was on the 17th I painted my nails.

Again, it's been really fun getting to know you. It was one of my favorite parts of this semester. I loved reading about what you guys were learning. I hope you have a really fun rest of the year! Also, I'm writing this before the zoom meet and greet, so while this is my last letter, I look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,
Vanessa



- ConnectED Partnerships:**
- Jana Ashbrook - Staff, Early Outreach Admissions
 - Stacy Becker - Staff, Center for Community Based Learning
 - Tyler Bradbury - Staff, Teacher Education
 - Loren Collins - Staff, Center for Community Based Learning; Faculty, Political Science
 - Isaac Coppock - Faculty, Child Development
 - Mary Dingle - Faculty, Teacher Education
 - Yvonne Doble - Staff/Faculty, Social Work
 - Kelly Fortner - Staff, Center for Community Based Learning
 - Sara Hart - Faculty, Religious Studies
 - Sei Hee Hwang - Staff, Academic and Career Advising Center
 - Libbi Miller - Faculty, Teacher Education
 - Whitney Ogle - Faculty, Kinesiology
 - Ara Pachmayer - Faculty, Recreation Administration
 - Cyndy Porter - Community Partner, Humboldt County Office of Education
 - Molly Pucillo - Staff, Early Outreach Admissions
 - Meenal Rana - Faculty, Child Development
 - Jim Ritter - Community Partner, Humboldt County Office of Education
 - Karling Skoglund - Community Partner, Humboldt County Office of Education
 - Melea Smith - Staff, Youth Educational Services
 - Sara Sterner - Faculty, Teacher Education
 - Jen Tarlton - Faculty, Environmental Science and Management
 - Julie Van Sickle - Staff, HSU Natural History Museum; Faculty, Environmental Science and Management
 - Carol West - Faculty, Child Development
 - Jim Woglom - Faculty, Art and Teacher Education



PASSION TO PATHWAY: MEET CCBL'S STUDENT SUPPORT COORDINATOR KELLY FORTNER

By Kai Cooper

What does it mean to support students in their community-based learning? For Kelly Fortner it means taking a relational and values-based approach; it means centering students' interests, perspectives, values, needs, and their personal and professional goals; it means meeting students where they are. Fortner is the Student Support Coordinator with the HSU Center for Community Based Learning (CCBL), and she is passionate about doing work that aligns with her values—values that call for social and environmental justice, critical self-examination, developing meaningful relationships, openness, and compassion towards others. As Student Support Coordinator, Fortner does exactly that.

Fortner explains the Student Support Coordinator

position and the main ways that she supports students at HSU. "The primary function of my role is to provide direct and programmatic support for students in community-based learning classes at HSU," Fortner said. "I give class presentations and meet one-on-one with students to connect them with community partners, listen and help to provide solutions if they are having any issues with their community partner such as discrimination or microaggressions, or help them with their risk placement paperwork. I love having one-on-one meetings with students. It's so wonderful to get to know them and their interests, passions, and to have the opportunity to be the person to provide that support. Programmatically, I am in the process of building a student support program that will improve our support services and processes for students who are taking

community-based learning classes. I also lead coordination of Redwood Roots digital magazine."

Some examples of the community-based learning classes that Fortner supports are Academic Internships and Service Learning classes. Often these classes bring with them a number of considerations for students, as they involve branching beyond the classroom and working with folks in the community. With well over a thousand students a year serving in the community, having a person to support the student side of these hands-on experiences has proven both necessary and valuable.

Fortner is an alumni of HSU who has always loved working with people. This passion, along with her experience as a Youth Educational Services (Y.E.S.) director and AmeriCorps VISTA with the Center for Community Based Learning, led her to apply for this position. Fortner explained, "Ruby Joy was CCBL's first AmeriCorps VISTA and then I became the AmeriCorps VISTA the following year. The cool thing about the Student Support Coordinator position is that the work that I do now grew out of the work that Ruby Joy and I did as VISTA's."

Funded through Graduation Initiative (GI) 2025, this position primarily provides support for the student side of CCBL's three main constituencies that CCBL supports—students, faculty, and com-

munity partners. Providing support for students is critical to CCBL and its presence and impact in the community; these constituencies are interconnected and relational, much like a Venn diagram of community. Without the Student Coordinator position, there was a missing piece to the CCBL team and duties were distributed among staff. Fortner discussed how the Student Support Coordinator position filled a missing need through an analogy of a stool. "One way to picture the three different positions is like a stool. So we had two legs of a stool—the Community Partner Coordinator and the Faculty Support Coordinator—but we didn't have a third leg."

Fortner shared her ideas about building the student support program, saying, "Part of building the student support program will also be looking at what are some of the needs of students who are in these classes, and meeting those needs by creating specific programming. So I think we still have more to figure out and discover in that realm, but one example of something that our team has talked about is creating some type of peer classroom support program for students in community-based learning classes. I'm still in the initial stages of building this program. I'd like to send out a survey to students in community-based learning classes to ask what kind of support they would like to have if there was a community-based learning peer classroom support program."



This position provides opportunities for Fortner to mentor students through their community-based learning experiences. Fortner was drawn to this aspect due to positive experiences with her own mentors. Fortner wants to channel that same energy for the students at HSU. “When I was in community college, I was inspired by my geology professor who was an amazing mentor. I had a lot of other professors during my time in community college and at HSU who were mentors to me as well. That is a major reason why I love doing this work – because I have the opportunity to be in a mentorship role, provide support, and have real conversations with students.”

Fortner grew up in suburban Concord, CA, while also spending time with her family in Grass Valley, CA, which fueled her need to live in a rural setting. Fortner decided to attend Humboldt State University after recognizing the similarities between the two communities. “My dad is from Grass Valley, California and we have a big family out there and I would visit pretty regularly. Visiting my family in Grass Valley, I felt a much stronger sense of community than back home in Concord. I think that growing up in Concord, which is pretty suburban, inspired my appreciation for the openness, sheer beauty and sense of community that I felt Grass Valley has and similarly can be found in Humboldt as well.”

With a double major in Geology and Religious Studies, Fortner’s time at HSU led her on a unique and comprehensive path to this position. As an undergraduate at HSU, she became involved in Youth Educational Services (Y.E.S.), another community-based learning program HSU offers. “When I was in my third to last semester as an undergrad at HSU, I started volunteering with Y.E.S. because I knew I wanted to work with people, and I was thinking about going into teaching at the K-12 level after I graduated. I wanted to get some experience working with local youth, and Y.E.S. seemed like a great opportunity,” Fortner reflected.

Fortner talked about the impact of her experience as a co-director with YES on her entire career path. “Near the end of that semester, I was encouraged by the Y.E.S. leader for the program I was in—the Leadership Education Adventure Program [LEAP] to apply to be a director of LEAP that next year. I learned so much in that role. I learned a little bit about community-based learning and Service Learning and some

of the foundational pedagogies of those practices. I also learned how to plan weekly meetings, facilitate those meetings, and plan a retreat. The Y.E.S. director experience then led me to apply for the AmeriCorps VISTA position, and I don’t think I would have had the volunteer experience or the leadership experience if I hadn’t been a Y.E.S. director.”

Regarding the Student Support Coordinator position, “It’s a very dynamic job,” Fortner said. “In this position, I get the wonderful opportunities to work with students one-on-one, present to classes, collaborate on projects with students, staff, faculty, and community partners, and develop programming that will improve support and equitable practices for students taking community-based learning classes at HSU.” It is clear that Fortner loves creating these connections between others and the community, and this passion explains why she fits the Student Support Coordinator position so well.

On top of immersing herself into the HSU community, Fortner also spends time throughout the Humboldt County community. Whether it be spending time at the local beaches with her partner Aaron and their dogs Rhea and Doobie, reading outside, or connecting with family and friends, Fortner has a sense of duty regarding the connections that come from being present in one’s community. She spends time volunteering with the local nonprofit, Zero Waste Humboldt as the Vice President of their board of directors. “It is a really wonderful opportunity to be involved with Zero Waste Humboldt. I love taking part in this cause that I am deeply passionate about on a local level,” Fortner said. “I have also gotten to do work as a community partner—I’ve supervised HSU Service Learners and collaborated with HSU Academic Interns. One of my favorite things about working with Zero Waste Humboldt is getting to work with HSU students, just in a different capacity from the work I do as Student Support Coordinator.”

Fortner is also pursuing a graduate degree in the Environment and Community Program at HSU. This program blends her passions. She described her thesis, “[It is about] seeing how we can improve and support virtual community based learning practices for students, and more generally, about Humboldt in the time of COVID,” Fortner explained.

Fortner sees the Student Support Coordinator role

as an invaluable piece of the CCBL puzzle. “The reason we are all here is to benefit students,” Fortner said enthusiastically. Her belief in fostering strong relationships has transferred into her workplace dubbing it a “relational approach to work.” If you know Kelly Fortner, then you *know* Kelly Fortner. Either as a presence on HSU’s campus or within the surrounding community, Fortner’s positive attitude radiates throughout all she does. Fortner’s dedication to the success of the students, communities, and programs she serves is vital to the success of the Student Support Coordinator role and community-based learning practices at HSU.

If you are interested in learning more about community-based learning opportunities at HSU or you are currently taking a community-based learning class, you can schedule a meeting with Kelly to talk in a one-on-one setting.

Email: kelly.fortner@humboldt.edu

Book a meeting: kellyfortner.youcanbook.me.

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GET INVOLVED!

Whether in-person or virtual, every year over 1000 HSU students participate in community-based learning, reinforcing their understanding of their curriculum by connecting concepts to real world scenarios while serving community needs. We thank you for taking the time to learn about the wonderful ways in which our HSU students, faculty and staff, and local community partners have collaborated to grow deeper connections between classroom and community.

Share Your Story and Get Published

Help us celebrate community engagement at HSU and get published in Redwood Roots Magazine. We are looking for personal reflections, digital stories, creative projects and articles that celebrate your experiences in the community. Submissions can be individual, as a group, or even as a whole class. For more publication information, please visit ccbl.humboldt.edu/redwood-roots.

Learn more about the **Center for Community Based Learning** at Humboldt State University by visiting ccbl.humboldt.edu. Learn more about **Humboldt State University Press** by visiting https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/hsu_press/ or contacting us at hsupress@humboldt.edu

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Thank You to Kellie Jo Brown

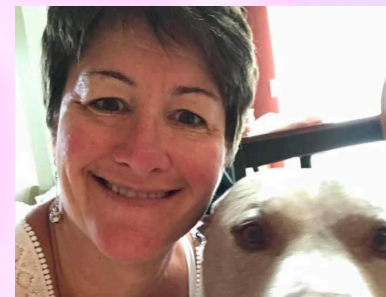
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Thank You to the Student Marketing Center

We thank the [HSU Student Marketing Center](#) (SMC) for their work and communication with our team in creating our new logo. The logo is everything that we desired to represent our magazine due to the care and efforts of the SMC team. Special thanks to Student Marketing Center Coordinator Mona Mazzotti and Graphic Designer Andrew Russell for their work and communication with us. Our team is proud to present our new logo to the campus and community.



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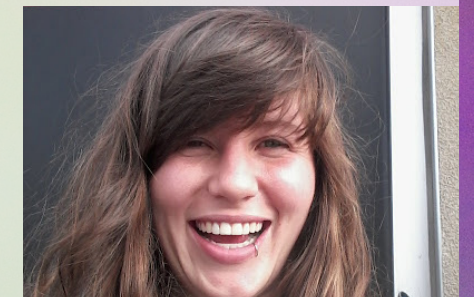
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