April - May, 2015

Social Responsibility & Civic Engagement in Action

“Work on something you’re truly passionate about,” Jason Heo ’15 said. “Look for opportunities to marry your project with your academic work. Consider what other people or organizations (outside of Swarthmore) can offer you or assist you with.”

Full Article
(http://daily.swarthmore.edu/2015/04/03/senior-lang-scholars-reflect-offer-advice/)

Learn about the Lang Opportunity Scholarship Program
(https://www.swarthmore.edu/lang-center-civic-social-responsibility/lang-opportunity-scholarship-los-program)

Listening Closely, Reporting Responsibly

Amy Di Pierro, 2015 Newman Civic Fellow

"War News Radio is such a rare place. I feel lucky to have helped to lead a newsroom so committed to understanding conflicts and helping to resolve them.

I joined War News Radio because I strongly believe journalists can be a part of the solutions to violent conflicts. One of my most important responsibilities as a reporter is to give the people I interview, who have often lived through the trauma of war, a respectful and safe space to tell their stories. Listening to such people is one way journalists can help the healing process and, in the bigger picture, interrupt cycles of violence.

With this in mind, my job as a leader at WNR is to teach our staff to listen closely and to look for solutions to conflicts especially when they cover polarized issues. Within our group, I also work hard to maintain a culture of collective mental health support as we report on weighty subject matter. These facilitation and critical-thinking skills, cultivated in Swarthmore’s classrooms, have followed me into the
WNR newsroom and even to Philadelphia’s public radio station, where I interned for a summer. The values and strategies I have practiced at WNR while serving communities as close as the Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center and as far away as Baghdad will certainly guide me long after I leave campus.

Amy Di Pierro ’15 was nominated by interim President Constance Hungerford to receive the 2015 Campus Compact Newman Civic Fellows Award. Amy joins a group of 201 student leaders from colleges nationwide. This award recognizes Amy’s public involvement and motivation to create lasting change. The Newman Civic Fellows Award is named for Dr. Frank Newman, one of the founders of Campus Compact, who dedicated his life to creating opportunities for student civic learning and engagement. Campus Compact is a national coalition of more than 1,100 college and university presidents—representing some 6 million students—who are committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education to improve community life and to educate students for civic and social responsibility. The Newman Civic Fellows Award is generously sponsored by the KPMG Foundation.

Catalyzing STEM Exploration

Catalyst Conference

Catalyst Conference is a day-long STEM conference for middle school girls hosted by Swarthmore College. Our goal is to encourage the girls to continue to study math and science by letting them participate in fun hands-on workshops led by female professors.

Catalyst Conference student-organizer, Sungwon Ma ’17 reflects, "The most meaningful thing about organizing Catalyst Conference was seeing so many happy faces from everyone who came to the event—middle school girls, their parents and teachers, professors who hosted workshops, and the numerous Swarthmore student volunteers. People excitedly shared with
me stories about cool workshops they attended and fun things that girls did. Many of the participants told us that they are excited to further pursue science after this conference. In particular, one parent shared with us that her daughter wants to be an engineer after attending the conference. Science education and gender disparity are issues that I deeply care about, and it has been my joy to meaningfully contribute to the cause."

Restorative Justice

Chester Youth Court Volunteer Reflection

A Chester Community Fellow in summer 2014, Toby Levy ‘16 writes that through his experience serving Chester Youth Courts, "I realized how fun, effective, and potentially life altering Youth Court can really be. Yes Youth Courts are a great alternative disciplinary system, but they’re also phenomenally educative for the students who are running the court, who get to learn about the law and moral decisions in ways they would never be able to inside the classroom."

_Chester Youth Court Volunteers (CYCV) is an innovative restorative justice program that serves and trains high-school students in law and civics, leadership skills, and youth court procedure. CYCV is the recipient of a grant from the Project Pericles Fund of Swarthmore College. Eugene M. Lang ‘38 and the Board of Managers of Swarthmore College created the Swarthmore Project Pericles Fund in 2005. The purpose of the Fund is to support groups of Swarthmore students who propose and implement social and civic action projects whose scope and sustainability will advance solutions for the issues in question and also promote recognition of students' motivation and capability to address such major issues effectively.

Project Pericles Fund of Swarthmore College (https://www.swarthmore.edu/lang-center-civic-social-responsibility/project-pericles-fund-swarthmore-college)

Summer Internship Support Program

With the support of a Lang Center grant through the Summer Internship Support (https://www.swarthmore.edu/lang-center-civic-social-responsibility/paid-summer-internships) program, Carlo Bruno ’17 served the Village Education Project, a nonprofit organization that provides a comprehensive education program to youth in Ecuador’s rural highlands. There Carlo learned first-hand that "the communal nature of the labor is an engrained part of the local culture. I had read about cabildos [a cabildo is essentially a small governing unit for indigenous communities] and mingas [a minga is a community labor project that occurs around once a month] in Professor Armus’ class, but mostly in the context of how indigenous communities organized themselves in previous centuries. Participating in the minga reinforced my understanding of the vitality of traditional customs and practices in some indigenous communities (of course, defining what practices are “indigenous” can be difficult and problematic, as can be the task of determining how “indigenous” a community is, since both of these tasks invite us to make an essentialist reading of what constitutes “indigenous”).

_Village Education Project (http://www.villageeducation.org/)