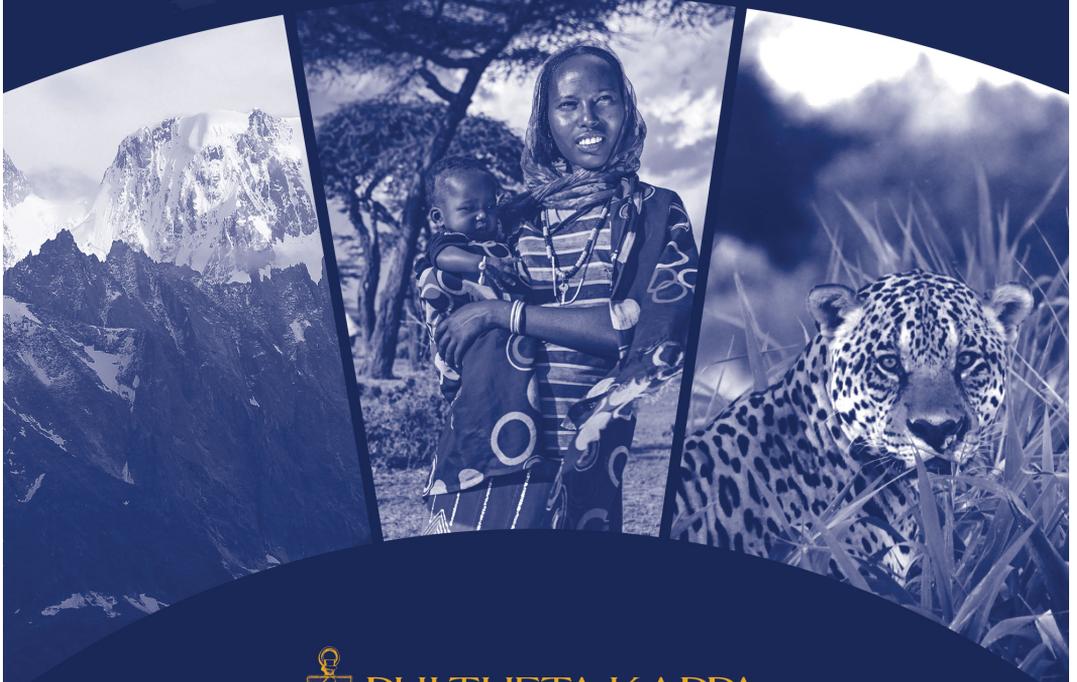


civic scholar

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Phi Theta Kappa
Journal of Undergraduate Research



PHI THETA KAPPA
HONOR SOCIETY

ABOUT PHI THETA KAPPA

Phi Theta Kappa is the premier honor society recognizing the academic achievement of students at associate degree-granting colleges and helping them grow as scholars and leaders. The Society is made up of more than 3.5 million members and nearly 1,300 chapters in nine nations.

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Phi Theta Kappa is proud to present the inaugural edition of *Civic Scholar: Phi Theta Kappa Journal of Undergraduate Research*. Our mission is to recognize academic achievement of college students and to help them grow as scholars and leaders. By publishing the first research journal dedicated exclusively to community college students, we emphasize both aspects of that mission.

As our title indicates, the work published here includes both substantive research and community engagement. These projects began as investigations into Phi Theta Kappa's 2016-2017 Honors Study Topic, *How the World Works: Global Perspectives*. Chapters eventually narrowed their focus to one of eight themes and developed research questions related to their chosen theme. Ultimately, they turned their research into action by using their findings to fill specific community needs. The results are impressive and worthy of consideration by a broad community of scholars.

We received 467 submissions for possible inclusion in this journal. We are thrilled to publish 15 of those submissions. Each of them reflects an interdisciplinary focus, which sets this journal apart from many others. Because the projects aligned with our Honors Study Topic, we have included an explanation of the themes in the pages that follow. While chapters submitted entries of 2,600 words or fewer, we have edited the submissions to match our journal's format and to make the projects' contributions clear.

In publishing this journal, we hope to demonstrate something we have always known to be true: community college students are innovative scholars. They are conducting research that matters, drawing conclusions that reshape our understanding of the world, and taking action that leaves a lasting impact. Congratulations to the chapters whose work is published in these pages. Your words will enlighten and inspire our readers, while reminding us that community college students are central to the production of new knowledge and meaningful scholarship.

With pride,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Blake A. Ellis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Blake A. Ellis, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President of Outreach and Engagement
Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

ABOUT OUR HONORS PROGRAM

The Phi Theta Kappa Honors Program is designed to engage students in informed action that fosters student success and helps fulfill our mission to provide college students opportunities to grow as scholars and leaders.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participation in the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Program contributes to personal, academic, and career development and affords students opportunities to have an impact on their campuses and in their communities by addressing challenges related to their Honors Study Topic research. Members who participate in the development and implementation of a project will be able to:

1. Evaluate multiple, global perspectives of a theme as it relates to the Honors Study Topic.
2. Demonstrate undergraduate research fundamentals by identifying sources, appraising their credibility, and formulating conclusions based on evidence.
3. Demonstrate critical thinking and reflective skills throughout the research process.
4. Design, organize, and implement a plan of action that solves a real-world problem related to the Honors Study Topic.
5. Form and develop teams that collaborate and communicate with college and community partners to enhance the impact of the project.
6. Provide evidence of project impact through the use of quantitative and/or qualitative assessments.
7. Compile a report using clear, correct, and effective language.

Achievement of these learning outcomes builds the analytic and collaborative problem-solving and leadership skills necessary and valued in advanced academic pursuits, work places, and communities.

HONORS PROGRAM COUNCIL

The Phi Theta Kappa Honors Program Council is responsible for making recommendations to Phi Theta Kappa Headquarters staff about the new Honors Study Topic and Honors in Action Program and for assisting with the compilation of the Honors Program Guide. Made up of Phi Theta Kappa advisors, Headquarters staff, and consultants, the Honors Program Council is selected for its broad knowledge of the Honors Study Topic and Phi Theta Kappa's integrated approach to the Hallmarks of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Fellowship, as well as its balance in academic disciplines. The Honors Study Topic on which these projects were based was created by the 2015-2016 Honors Program Council. The members who worked on that topic are listed below.

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2016-2017 HONORS STUDY TOPIC

HOW THE WORLD WORKS: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

THEME 1: Myth and Reality

How have myths shaped our global reality?

THEME 2: Individualism and Collectivism

How are the principles of individualism and collectivism manifested differently across the world?

THEME 3: Rights and Responsibilities

What roles do rights and responsibilities play in shaping ways in which the world works?

THEME 4: Peace and War

How does conflict impact people and the way in which the world works?

THEME 5: Beauty and Vulgarly

How do changing classifications of beauty and vulgarity reflect evolving global perspectives?

THEME 6: Natural and Engineered

How does the use of science, medicine, or engineering to reproduce, recreate, or modify elements that are natural to our environment impact how the world works?

THEME 7: Innovation and Replication

How do we either replicate ideas or create new ones that have an impact on the way the world works?

THEME 8: Nostalgia and Pathos

How does the construction of memory and assumptions about others' histories shape the truth of how the world works?

OYSTER SHELL RECYCLING AND RE-HABITATION: NATURAL AND ENGINEERED LOCATIONS ON THE MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST

OMICRON ALPHA CHAPTER

*Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Jefferson Davis Campus
Gulfport, Mississippi*

ABSTRACT

Our team members worked to find a theme that would relate directly to our community. The Mississippi Gulf Coast has many engineered locations that were created to appear natural. Thus, we agreed that “Natural and Engineered” would be the best theme to pursue. After further research, we narrowed our topic to oyster shell recycling and re-habitation. Our team leaders worked with members of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Director of the Marine Sciences Division of the University of Southern Mississippi to gain enough information to start researching our project. We conducted research, carried out planning meetings, coordinated oyster shell collection through communication with local restaurants, and presented our data to the city councils of Biloxi and Gulfport, Mississippi. After reflecting on our action, we realized that the large-scale ecological footprint of oyster shells has become a topic of broad interest to the denizens — people, animals, and plants — of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

OBJECTIVES

Our primary objective was to bring awareness to the lack of oyster shell recycling. Our secondary objective was to prove the viability of recycling the shells.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

Because we are located on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, we wanted to focus our work on the region’s environment. We selected “Natural and Engineered” as our theme and focused on the environmental issues our community faces. Oil spills, releasing of dammed river water, and overfishing contribute to the depopulation of oysters in the Mississippi Sound. These issues, as well as the rise of *Vibrio Vulnificus*, are causing unprecedented damage to our local environment. Therefore, we decided the preservation of our coastline and natural resources is a high ecological priority.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on our research, we concluded that (1) the oyster population in the Mississippi Sound has decreased by 95% since 2005; (2) restored oyster populations lead to enhanced water quality; (3) large oyster populations create natural sea walls that mitigate storm surge; and (4) the majority of restaurants on the Mississippi Gulf Coast have been throwing their shells away, rather than recycling them.

ACTION

Our research findings led to our action: assessing the feasibility of oyster recycling by collecting oyster shells from local seafood restaurants to create a better alternative to discarding; calculating water purity projections from our collected shells; and presenting our research and projections to the city councils of Gulfport and Biloxi, Mississippi. To get started, we collaborated with four restaurants on the Mississippi Gulf Coast to collect their discarded oyster shells. Our first step in completing our action was to contact local restaurants to determine what they

were currently doing with their discarded oyster shells. Once we learned that they were simply throwing them away, we offered to collect them. After completing our oyster shell collections, we calculated how much we collected and compiled and analyzed this data. We then organized a meeting to discuss our next step. We decided that the best option to achieve a positive change would be to present our findings to the cities of our community.

Our presentation highlighted the importance of oysters to the Mississippi Gulf Coast, including their economic and ecological significance to the region. After introducing our work, we detailed every step that our team took to gather our findings. They included our collaboration with restaurants and the collection of their discarded shells. We also presented our projections based on research data cross-referenced with our own findings and the future implications of our research. We stressed the viability of oyster shell recycling, using our work as an example. A reporter from a local news station interviewed one of our team members immediately following the presentation. When the other delegate from our committee presented to the city of Gulfport, he covered the same information.

IMPACT

Oyster population plays a vital role in the ecology and economy of the Mississippi Gulf Coast. In recent years, a drastic reduction in the area's oyster population has occurred. Oyster fishermen harvested around 400,000 sacks of oysters in 2004; in 2015, they harvested around five percent of that amount. Although our state's governor has set a goal to harvest roughly 1 million sacks of oysters by 2025, in 2017 the oyster population was still declining. Despite this fact, no oyster shell recycling programs currently exist on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Our project's goal was to prove the viability of an oyster shell recycling program in our community. Our research demonstrated that recycling oysters can be done easily, and there are numerous benefits to doing so. Our chapter collected 1,280 pounds of oyster shells on three collection dates. Based on our projections, that number could be increased tenfold if the private sector took up the challenge. Baby oysters, spat, have a higher survival rate than any other substrate. Recycling shells would aid in restoring the population in the Mississippi Sound. Our findings were aired on a local news station, which broadcasts from Slidell, Louisiana, to Mobile, Alabama. Approximately 500,000 people in the viewing area had access to the results of our project. This information was also published on the news site's website, increasing the visibility of our findings. Qualitatively, the findings of our research could serve as a baseline for future oyster recycling projects. Local governments' and private businesses' attempts at oyster recycling could be strengthened by our example.

RESOURCES

Broussard, K., Breland, S., Brochard, M., et al. (2013). *Oystermen's guide to Mississippi gulf coast oyster reefs* (Broussard, N., Burris, R., Diaz, D., Lucas, K., Perkins, S., Perret, C., & Scallan, M., Eds.). Biloxi, Mississippi: Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.

This overview of Mississippi Gulf Coast oyster reefs contains 65 pages of information about Mississippi oysters. The information provided in this guide helped direct us toward a feasible and meaningful action.

Farmer, J., Ph.D. (2017). Interview with Professor of Biology, Microbiology. Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. james.farmer@mgccc.edu.

Dr. James Farmer is a microbiology instructor at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College who has more than 20 years of experience sampling water with the United States Geological Survey. He assisted in the narrowing of our research topic, directing our focus to oyster population decline.

Frederick, J. (2015). *CRCL's Oyster Shell Recycling Program Officially Largest in the Nation*, 1-4. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana.

Published by the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana (CRCL), this article describes the oyster shell recycling program instituted by the CRCL. It provides insight into the process of creating and effectively maintaining an oyster shell recycling program.

Graham, M., Ph.D. (2017). Interview with Professor and Director, School of Ocean Science & Technology Research Interests. University of Southern Mississippi. Monty.Graham@usm.edu.

Dr. Graham is the Director of the School of Ocean Science and Technology in the Division of Marine Science at the University of Southern Mississippi. His research specialties include marine zooplankton with an emphasis in gelatinous plankton ecology, ecological implications of fishing and climate change in river-dominated systems, and long-term ecosystem dynamics in pulsed river coastal environments. Dr. Graham helped guide our methodology by suggesting actions to take based on our research on oyster depopulation.

Maghan, B. W. (1967). *The Mississippi Oyster Industry*. United States Department of the Interior, 1-11.

Published by the United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Commercial Fisheries in 1967, this document details pertinent information regarding the oysters native to the Mississippi (MS) Sound/Gulf of Mexico. It provided insight into how the oyster reefs of the past functioned and gave a basis for comparison to the current oyster reefs.

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources. (2007, March). Rebuilding Mississippi's Oyster Reefs. *DMR puts Mississippi oyster harvesters to work*, 1-2.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR) reports on the oyster reef rehabilitation five-year plan in this newsletter. This source provided more information about the process of oyster rehabilitation, which helped to further specify the goals of our project.

Our Story: Billion Oyster Project. (2017). Billionoysterproject.org. Retrieved 26 October 2017, from <https://billionoysterproject.org/about/our-story/>.

The Billion Oyster Project (BOP) was a valuable source of information since our project was a similar, micro-scale version of what the BOP is accomplishing. An ecosystem restoration project aimed at restoring 1 billion live oysters to the New York Harbor, the BOP details the process by which they collected and recycled the shells.

Pierce, T., Ph.D. (2017). Interview with Chief Scientist, Environmental Analyst. Environmental Protection Agency Region IV Gulf of Mexico Program. pierce.troy@att.net.

Dr. Pierce is the leader for science priorities in the Environmental Protection Agency's Gulf of Mexico Program. He has worked for the EPA since 1998, and since then has been directly involved with water quality monitoring, adoption of agricultural best management practices, and prevention of pesticide misuse. Dr. Pierce provided valuable insight into the current state of oyster populations in the Gulf of Mexico, as well as the status of oyster recycling on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

PRIVILEGE, INTERNET ACCESS, NET NEUTRALITY, AND HOW THE WORLD WORKS

OMICRON PSI CHAPTER

Grayson College

Denison, Texas

ABSTRACT

Privilege exists in several forms, but many fail to recognize the role it plays in how the world works. After exploring forms of privilege, members identified Internet access as being worthy of more scrutiny. Teams were created to conduct research on barriers to Internet access and information, identify critical resources, and enact the action component of their project. Team members received training on conducting effective academic research, facilitating a roundtable discussion, and creating educational videos. The team collaborated with Grayson College professors and staff to successfully create videos related to their research, launch a letter writing campaign, and host a roundtable discussion. Upon reflection, team members learned that while people may not understand access as a form of privilege, barriers exist in the United States and abroad that need to be removed to ensure access as a human right.

OBJECTIVES

Our first objective was to conduct independent research into the issue of privilege to identify possible themes and questions for investigation. Our second objective was to provide opportunities for regular reflection on research during regularly scheduled meetings. Our third objective was to review and use the research to inform an action item. Our final objective was to share the results of the project with the Grayson College campus community and beyond.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

The team explored the theme of Rights and Responsibilities, which led to an in-depth investigation into the issue of privilege. Different forms of privilege such as race, sexual orientation, and geography prompted investigation into the effects of societal roles, labels, and stereotypes. The discussion then shifted to the role the media plays in perpetuating labels and stereotypes and the subsequent impact of labels and stereotypes on privilege. A Gabonese team member shared that in Gabon it is common for the government to remove Internet and media access during elections, causing the Gabonese people to question the legitimacy of the election results. This discussion led team members to recognize access to the Internet and media as a form of privilege and to examine the right to information. The team then began further exploration of Internet access as an issue of privilege.

Further research on access to the Internet and net neutrality provided tremendous insight into how the world works. Issues related to Internet access are global, affecting developed and developing nations alike. Efforts to share research results with the community were explored and, ultimately, a series of videos related to Internet access was developed. Videos were shared through social media and other platforms, and the team hosted a roundtable discussion with international students to provide a global perspective on access to the Internet.

CONCLUSIONS

In their research, team members learned that Internet access is a significant privilege in the 21st century. Access is limited in many parts of the world due to differences in the availability of fixed broadband connections. Many countries experience disruptions to service due to poor communications networks or from purposeful manipulation, as with China's firewall blocking all

but government-approved information. What surprised many members, though, were limitations to broadband access within the United States, particularly in the South.

Understanding issues related to Internet access led the team to conclude that not everyone can seek information, which runs contrary to democratic principles. We ultimately concluded that Internet access should be considered a human right. Team members also realized the significance of this argument to net neutrality debates. Net neutrality is the regulation of Internet service providers to ensure that there is no limitation to access to content based on differentiated pricing or for ideological reasons. If Internet access is to be a right, then it also comes with the responsibility to ensure that things shared online are factual and do not bring harm to others.

ACTION

Academic investigation provided a new perspective on global barriers to Internet access as an issue of privilege. A seven-part video series was created to increase awareness about the issues related to global Internet access. The video topics included outlining the barriers to global Internet access, Internet access as a human right, net neutrality, fact checking, identifying false or misleading news stories, and acting responsibly on social media. The seventh video included interviews with 14 international students from Grayson College about issues related to Internet access in their native countries. These videos were shared on social media via YouTube. To encourage video sharing, a challenge week was launched during which one video was posted daily to social media channels with a challenge for others to share the videos with a broader global audience. Team members were challenged to abstain from Internet usage for a 24-hour period and then share their experience via video on social media. Names of individuals participating in the social media reflection or challenge week experience were entered into a drawing for a \$100 Amazon gift card.

To further broaden the reach of the project, a roundtable discussion was hosted featuring 10 international students addressing information about Internet access in their native countries. This event raised awareness of the issues and allowed for reflection about individual rights, as well as responsibilities to one another. Finally, in response to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulation changes that eliminated net neutrality protections, a letter-writing campaign was launched to call upon members of the U.S. Congress to enact net neutrality legislation. A general letter was drafted outlining arguments and a call for action, and members of the campus and community were petitioned to sign the letters. Signed letters were mailed to the two Texas Senators and the U.S Representative who represents the Congressional district in which Grayson College is located.

IMPACT

Team members grew as scholars and leaders through their academic investigation process, learning to set aside preconceived notions and investigate multiple perspectives. Approximately 30 members worked together to accomplish the project. The video series included participation from 23 members and attracted 1,000 views from the United States, Gabon, Morocco, France, and South Africa. Two Grayson College professors shared the videos with their classes. Although there were initial difficulties motivating people to share the videos and participate in the 24-hour “no Internet” challenge, team members learned to be creative and flexible in their marketing. Approximately 20 people attended the roundtable discussion, allowing participants to dive deeper into questions of Internet access and net neutrality on a global scale. Team members collected a total of 102 signed letters during the letter-writing campaign and mailed them to our House member and Texas Senators. Having the opportunity to work closely with international students during the interviews and the roundtable discussion allowed for an exchange of cultures and knowledge that would not have otherwise taken place.

RESOURCES

Black, L., & Stone, D. (2005). "Expanding the Definition of Privilege: The Concept of Social Privilege." *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development*, Wiley Online Library.

This article argues that privilege is granted and exercised for the benefit of the recipient and to the detriment of others. Privilege is often outside the awareness of the individual possessing it.

Cauthen, N., Robinson, I., & Krauss, H. (1977). "The Effect of Context on Stereotype Traits." *Journal of Social Psychology*, Taylor and Francis Online.

This article shared research about ethnicity and its relationship to labeling cultures. Stereotypes translate prejudices into socially recognized symbols. The authors' work illustrates that stereotypes make cultural myths a reality for many people.

Gainous, J., Wagner, K., & Gray, T. (2016). "Internet Freedom and Social Media Effects: Democracy and Citizen Attitudes in Latin America." *Online Information Review*, 40(5), 712-738.

This article examines how Internet access results in citizens being more critical of their country's political conditions. Social media increases the likelihood of exposure to dissident information. Furthermore, the authors argue that the degree to which Internet access is limited is inversely related to the level of citizens' political engagement.

Has, D. (2007). "The never-was-neutral net and why informed end users can end the net neutrality debates." *Berkeley Technology Law Journal*, PDF: Berkley.edu.

This article addresses net neutrality regulations. The author argues that Internet access providers threaten the Internet and that government action is necessary to prevent the destruction of the global network's benefits. Opponents tend to believe that regulations would ruin innovation, fail in practice, or be doomed in principle.

Loertscher, D.V. (2017). "Fake news, a rant, and new standards." *Teacher Librarian*, www.highbean.com.

This article details the importance of recognizing fake news websites and the danger they present to society. The author also addresses how social media sites have responded to this threat and have adopted measures to control the spread of fake news.

"Net Neutrality." (2016). In *Opposing Viewpoints Online Collection*. Detroit: Galegroup.com.

This article details the debate over net neutrality, explaining its 2002 origins. This background information is important for understanding the current political environment regarding net neutrality.

Tanner, S. J. (2012). "Encouraging responsibility among contributors to mainstream media sites: A personal reflection." *Social Alternatives*, PDF: University of Wollongong, Australia, Scholars. uow.edu.au.

This article addresses the power of online media coverage and how it leads to user-generated content, including ill-informed conversations that have detrimental impacts. The author argues that those who contribute commentary on news posts have an ethical responsibility to share factual content.

Winter, J. S. (2013). "Is Internet access a human right? Linking information and communication technology development with global human rights efforts." *Global Studies Journal*.

This article analyzes how universal Internet access is essential for the preservation of democracy and human rights. It explores ongoing debates regarding access, thus clarifying the distinction between universal service and the right to communicate. The authors conclude that a basic right to communicate should include Internet and social media access, as these are increasingly enabling active citizen participation.

DACA AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

CHI THETA CHAPTER

*Community College of Baltimore County, Essex Campus
Baltimore, Maryland*

ABSTRACT

We explored the themes in the Honors Program Guide and settled on Theme 1: Myth and Reality. After researching the different perspectives of experts and scholars, our team developed a research question: How has the myth of the American Dream shaped the reality of immigration with respect to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program? We investigated the theoretical and practical outcomes of the DACA program. Research team members saw this topic as a real-world, complex topic that would challenge us intellectually. To better lead this project, the team consulted Maryland Delegate Mark Chang to facilitate a leadership development workshop. We learned that in the 50 years since the passage of the landmark law that rewrote U.S. immigration policy, nearly 59 million immigrants have arrived in the United States, pushing the country's foreign-born residents to a near-record 14% of the population. We facilitated a meeting with the college registrar and president to determine how many students were immigrants and DACA students on our campus. From this consultation, we found that DACA students are an underserved group both within the Baltimore community and our college. This knowledge motivated us to choose the action piece of the project. We decided to collaborate with an Associate Professor at the University of Maryland School of Law and the college's Student Government Association to facilitate a panel discussion and awareness event about the DACA program. A discussion with the college's administration led us to enhance the project by creating resources for DACA students at our college. These resources have now been used to serve over 300 students on campus, which helped all of us increase our understanding of the Honors Study Topic. Team members used a qualitative survey to evaluate the effectiveness of our project with the goal of asking participants what impact the American dream had on them.

OBJECTIVES

Our team's first objective was to select stakeholders who were experts in conducting research to assist us in planning our investigation. Our second objective was to develop a research question and a response to that question. Our third objective was to broaden our global perspectives on our Honors Study Topic theme, educating ourselves as scholars and leaders. Finally, we aimed to create an impact by building connections with campus and community groups.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

After reviewing the Honors Program Guide, we facilitated three brainstorming sessions with the college research librarian, our advisor, a humanities professor, a sociology and service learning professor, and the campus director that resulted in our selection of a theme on which to focus. An officer revealed her stories as an El Salvadoran immigrant and DACA recipient. She expressed that her family's reason for migrating was the desire to live the American dream. Her strong passion and story helped our team in narrowing down our theme choices. We found that issues related to the DACA program and President Trump's Executive Order on Immigration restrictions interested students on campus. We also learned from the National Academies Press that "more than 40 million people living in the United States were born in other countries, and almost an equal number have at least one foreign-born parent." We sought to find different points of view on our topic as well as wide-ranging experts to help us with our chosen theme.

CONCLUSIONS

Our team analyzed our research and concluded that we needed to help people see that “we are a nation of immigrants.” Members came to that conclusion when textual research revealed that after several decades of decline, “the share of immigrants in the U.S. population grew from 5% in 1990 to 12% in 2016. With these findings, we decided to host an awareness event and a panel discussion that would educate participants on the Honors Study Topic and this global issue of immigration.

ACTION

Though we had seen DACA mentioned in recent scholarly articles, we knew little about how it shaped the global perspectives of immigrants. The *Journal of Public Affairs Education* (2014) revealed that the decision to end the DACA program has put the future of thousands of individuals and students across the country in limbo — to keep dreaming of a better future! Based on our research conclusions and understanding of state and federal laws, we determined a need for awareness to engage students and community members in continuous advocacy. Team members hosted a panel discussion and awareness event to discuss the topic in collaboration with instructors and the college’s Student Government Association. The college administration and several participants challenged us to come up with a plan of action that would directly benefit students and community members who are DACA recipients. We worked with the college president on our new plan. She stated that, “Inclusiveness is one of our college’s most dearly held core values. No matter our individual politics or points of view on this matter, we are all members of a Community College of Baltimore County community.” Based on meetings with college administrators, we started referring students to the college’s Success Navigators to provide guidance and to connect them to helpful services outside the college. Collaborating with the Student Government Association, we reflected on our action piece and founded a new student-led organization: Students for Social Justice (SSJ).

IMPACT

We reviewed the outcomes of the panel discussion and awareness event, and we analyzed responses from the evaluation survey that offered us feedback from project participants’ points of view. Twenty-five people attended the panel discussion, and 204 participants attended the awareness event. Attendees included students, faculty, administrators, and community members. Team members learned to look at the world from a global perspective as we investigated the ways immigrants and DACA recipients from El Salvador, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru, South Korea, and Brazil are motivated by the myth of the American Dream without always understanding what the reality may be.

RESOURCES

Abdul-Alim, J. (2016). “Undocumented abroad: DACA students face the legal ramifications and challenges of studying in other countries”. *Diverse Issues In Higher Education*, 33(8), 14.

Abdul-Alim explains that whenever students study abroad, there is always a legitimate concern about what might go wrong in whatever country they plan to visit.

Blau, F. D. & Mackie, C. (2016). “The economic and fiscal consequences of immigration.” Washington, DC: The National Academies Press doi: 10.17226/23550.

Blau and Mackie explore the geographic settlement patterns that have changed since the 1990s, with immigrants increasingly moving to states and communities that historically had few immigrants. They explained that as time spent in the United States lengthens, immigrants’ wages increase relative to those of natives and the initial wage gap narrows. We also learned that approximately 60% of the children of immigrants continue to pick up English language skills very quickly.

Dinnerstein, L., & Reimers, D. M. (2012). *The world comes to America: immigration to the United States since 1945*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dinnerstein and Reimers examine the groups who came to America, explaining their reasons for immigrating, noting where they settled, and discussing how they fared once they arrived. The authors cover conflicting American attitudes toward welcoming strangers and the different policies that Congress pursued to aid — or to delay — the entry of foreigners to America.

Eastman, C. S. (2017). "Examining the facts of immigration." Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO.

Eastman asked the question, "What are the myths and truths regarding immigration in the United States?" This book provided us with an impartial understanding of the true state of immigration and immigration policy in the United States by refuting falsehoods, misinformation, and exaggerations surrounding this topic — and confirming the validity of other assertions. With the information, we conveyed the myths and reality of the American dream during our workshop.

Gonzales, R. (2016). *Lives in limbo: Undocumented and coming of age in America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Gonzales introduces us to two groups: the college-goers, like Ricardo, who had good grades and a strong network of community support that propelled him to college and DREAM Act organizing but still landed in a factory job a few short years after graduation; and the early exiters, like Gabriel, who failed to make meaningful connections in high school and started navigating dead-end jobs, immigration checkpoints, and a world narrowly circumscribed by legal limitations.

Hanson, Gordon H. (2005). "Why does immigration divide America?: Public finance and political opposition to open borders." The Center for Comparative Immigration Studies: University of California, San Diego Press.

Hanson illustrates the interplay between public finance and U.S. immigration policy. Hanson explains how immigration is making the U.S. population larger and more ethnically diverse and the U.S. labor force more abundant in low-skilled labor.

Mellone, J. (2016). "Vile, John R.: American immigration and citizenship: a documentary history." *CHOICE: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, (8), 1153.

Mellone concludes that a highly interconnected world presents no easy answers and offers no single immigration policy that will work for all time. The book includes a mix of laws, constitutional provisions, speeches, and judicial decisions from each period. Mellone explains the interconnections between issues of citizenship and immigration, indicating that public opinion and legislation have often contained contradictory strains.

Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. G. (2014). *Immigrant America — A portrait*. Oakland, California: University of California Press, (4th ed.).

Portes and Rumbaut explore the economic, political, spatial, and linguistic aspects of immigration; the role of religion in the acculturation and social integration of foreign minorities; and the adaptation process for the second generation. They explained that making it in America requires an immigrant to have an education and occupation.

MYTH AND REALITY OF THE BALD KNOBBERS AND VIGILANTE JUSTICE IN MISSOURI

ALPHA PSI TAU CHAPTER

Ozarks Technical Community College

Springfield, Missouri

ABSTRACT

Our project examined the Bald Knobbers, a vigilante group in Southwest Missouri often portrayed as dim-witted hillbillies terrorizing the post-Civil War countryside. The Bald Knobbers are depicted across the region, perhaps most famously at Silver Dollar City, a 19th century-themed amusement park in Branson. But who were they really? What do we know about our own cultural history and the part that they played in developing it? As we explored the theme "Myth and Reality," we discovered the identities of the Bald Knobbers and the atrocities they committed in the name of justice. We discovered the origins of their mythology and how it has been used to promote financial gain and tourism. We learned of vigilantism, its key characteristics, and its role in our nation's expansion westward. Our research uncovered truths about American cultural beliefs and the willingness to take the law into our own hands. We found the parallels of the Bald Knobbers in modern superheroes like Batman and discovered a new generation of real-life superheroes inspired by Marvel and D.C. comics. Determined to bring awareness of the historical truths of the Bald Knobbers and their modern-day counterparts, we worked with historians and content experts to create a reader's theater performance and historical lecture highlighting the role vigilantism plays in our cultural history and the superhero mystique.

OBJECTIVES

Our first objective was to research the superhero phenomenon and real-life "superheroes." Our second objective was to raise awareness of the historical truth of the Bald Knobbers. Finally, we sought to develop a platform to compare the historical and modern concepts of vigilante justice focusing on modern-day superheroes.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

Our team developed the research question, "What are the myths versus the realities of the Bald Knobbers, and what impact has the concept of vigilante justice had in Southwest Missouri?" Our research found that the reality of the Bald Knobbers is very different than their portrayal in folklore. Recognized by criminal journals as the definitive example of vigilantism, they are considered the most vicious in history. Originally dedicated to serving justice and keeping order in the area due to a perceived lack of governmental oversight, the group became a means for personal vendetta and monetary gain. We discovered that their mythology began with Harold Bell Wright in his novel, *The Shepherd of the Hills*. He needed an antagonist for his novel and the Bald Knobber name fit perfectly. Bastardizing their true nature, he portrayed them as a local gang of hillbillies rather than an organized vigilante group. This characterization was later adopted by musical and theatrical performers and attractions in the Branson area to promote tourism. Thus, the Bald Knobber myth was born. In addition, we discovered that vigilante justice is a cultural phenomenon specific to the United States and was prominent in our country's early frontier exploration. Over time, the concept of "taking the law into our own hands" has become an underlying American ideal, particularly in Southwest Missouri. The Bald Knobbers are considered the definitive example of vigilante justice, yet the historical reality of their actions is lost in the overpowering myth originating with Harold Bell Wright. Therefore, the historical truth of the Bald Knobbers needs to be taught and the concept of vigilante justice in modern society should be explored.

We continued our research by speaking with local experts, living relatives of original Bald Knobbers, and exploring modern concepts of vigilantism. We discovered further evidence that the Bald Knobber myth presented in tourism is the predominate belief in our region and that the reality has been lost. Additionally, we discovered what has become known as the vigilante mystique. Vigilantism is now glamorized through superhero personas via comic books and movies, the classic example being Batman. We were surprised to learn that the superhero phenomenon is an American creation that is now worldwide. The mystique is now internationally pervasive with private citizens dressing and acting as real-life vigilante superheroes.

CONCLUSIONS

Our research led us to the following conclusions: 1) vigilantism is a uniquely American concept, ingrained in our cultural beliefs; 2) the Bald Knobbers are the definitive example of vigilantism; 3) the reality of the Bald Knobbers was originally distorted for artistic gain; 4) Bald Knobber mythology was further warped for economic development; 5) the myth of the Bald Knobbers is firmly ensconced in the history of Southwest Missouri; 6) the historical reality of the Bald Knobbers is eclipsed by the myth; 7) vigilante justice continues in American society.

ACTION

To meet our first objective of researching the superhero phenomenon and real-life superheroes, we created a second research team. Through that research we discovered the existence of multiple “real-life” superheroes operating in various countries. We also discovered “The Real Life Super Hero Project” that provides support for these real-life do-gooders. We explored the superhero phenomenon through comics and film and discovered that the vigilante superhero originated in the United States through Marvel and D.C. comics and has gained worldwide fame. In fact, Batman is considered the classic example of the real-life vigilante superhero. He possesses no powers of his own, only his desire for justice.

To meet our second and third objectives of raising awareness of the historical truth of the Bald Knobbers and developing a platform to compare the historical and modern concepts, we considered possibilities and settled on a public event that would include an expert historical lecture and an original reader’s theater performance. We identified our speaker and created an original reader’s theater script that presented historical representations of the Bald Knobbers and contrasted them with the pervasive myths surrounding them. Additionally, the piece synthesized the modern-day superhero phenomenon with the academic parameters of vigilante justice and the historical actions of the Bald Knobbers.

Budgetary issues were considered for training, venues, speakers, catering, advertising, staffing, and miscellaneous expenditures, and a budget of \$1,500 was set. We raised \$2,100 in funds to support the development of the action piece of our project.

The team invited an acknowledged expert in the creation and performance of reader’s theater to present a workshop in script creation and performance. After seeing the reader’s theater script, our historical expert suggested an open Q&A after the performance to guide his lecture. The event was entitled “The Bald Knobbers: Myth vs. Reality with a Q&A by Dr. Matthew Hernando.” After several weeks of edits, casting and rehearsals began. The final cast of 10 performers included experienced actors, rookies, and members with cognitive disabilities. A venue was secured at a local historical society, and the event was paired with our community Art Walk to reach a wider audience. Set design was planned with the university theater department as consultant, and team members designed and created a poster display that served as both set and Art Walk display highlighting the content of the script. Promotion for the event was managed through collaboration with the historical society, the venue, and local businesses and their social media outlets.

IMPACT

As we prepared to take action, we were nervous about potential attendance, and the performers were anxious. Eight of the performers had never performed on stage. We had strong support in the end. Throughout the project, 43 team members participated. At the event, we had an audience of 61 attendees, 10 performers, and 10 ushers. We were surprised at the emotional response to the production and lecture. Several audience members commented on their lack of knowledge about the Bald Knobbers. During the Q&A, one gentleman shared that this event gave him a new understanding of his ancestors who were members of the Bald Knobbers. Dr. Hernando commented on the scholarly nature of the script and requested a signed copy of his own. He was impressed with the team's ability to synthesize the essence of the Bald Knobbers and the superheroes, as well as the professionalism of the production. A faculty member praised the set design team for their juxtaposition of the Bald Knobber imagery with that of Batman, both using black masks with pointed ears. A member of the Historical Society praised the director for allowing students of all experience levels and abilities to perform.

RESOURCES

Anderson, V. S. (2013). *Bald knobbers: Chronicles of vigilante justice*. Charleston, SC: The History Press.

The author detailed Bald Knobber history and distinguished folklore from reality. This text was vital for understanding the group's role in the cultural development of the Ozarks and their place in defining vigilantism in the field of criminal justice.

Hartman, M., and Ingenthron, E. (1998). *Bald knobbers: Vigilantes on the Ozarks frontier*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Co.

This work is considered the first comprehensive history of the Bald Knobbers. It details the justifications for their actions following the unrest of the Civil War and is important in understanding the evolution of the research and how our historical perspective of them has changed.

Hernando, M. (2015). *Faces like devils: The Bald Knobber vigilantes in the Ozarks*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press.

This book is recognized by historians as the most comprehensive history of the Bald Knobbers. It provides a linkage between vigilantism and the culture of the Ozarks. It includes clarification between myth and reality documenting the origins and the effect of the myth on the region.

Hernando, M., personal communication (September 15, 2017). Columbia, MO.

This personal interview with the author of *Faces Like Devils* provided background and additional history on the Bald Knobbers and their impact on local tourism and the mechanisms that perpetuated their mythology.

Hix, L. (2017). "Were the Bald Knobbers law-and-order folk heroes or murderous thugs?" From <http://www.whatitmeanstobeamerican.org>. Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

This document examines the role of the Bald Knobbers in the economic and cultural development of the Ozarks. It provides an examination of the distortion of historical fact to create tourism and personal gain.

Johnston, J. (2014). *Necessary evil: Settling Missouri with a rope and a gun*. St. Louis, MO: The History Museum of Missouri Press.

This book details the history of Missouri and the use of vigilante justice as a necessary tool in the settlement of the new frontier. It demonstrates a clear linkage of vigilante concepts to the culture and behavioral attitudes of Americans.

Johnston, L. (1996). "What is vigilantism?" *British Journal of Criminology*, 36(2), 220-236.

This book defines vigilantism and its six necessary features. It documents the Bald Knobbers as the definitive example of vigilante justice, recognizing them as the most vicious in history. It provides an understanding of the parameters and scope of vigilantism in academic research and linking the concept of vigilante justice to American cultural beliefs.

Upton, L. M. (1970). *Bald Knobbers*. 2nd ed. Point Lookout Mo.: The S of O Press.

This work is the first documented history of the Bald Knobbers. It is based on 10 years of research and interviews, including original photos and news articles.

HIV AND HOW THE WORLD WORKS IN JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

GAMMA LAMBDA CHAPTER

Hinds Community College

Raymond, Mississippi

ABSTRACT

“The City of Jackson has the fourth-highest rate of HIV infection in the nation,” reported our local NBC news anchor. We had been discussing our honors research, and we knew immediately that we had found our focus. Globally, 36.7 million people are living with HIV, and 1.8 million new diagnoses were made in 2016. We had read about the problem in sub-Saharan Africa and with IV drug users in the United States. However, this crisis was in our home town.

Our team conducted extensive research to determine how much people in our community understood about the crisis and reasons for the continuing stigma surrounding HIV. Our team presented an HIV informational honors forum and set up presentations on HIV transmission with a nursing instructor and HIV testing with a local HIV crisis center. We partnered with My Brother’s Keeper, a local organization providing high-impact HIV prevention programs, to organize a Fight the Fear Sexual Health Fair. Finally, a team researched books for a Lunch and Learn event on World AIDS Day.

As a result of our projects, many students on our campus and people in our communities have learned to fight the fear of an HIV diagnosis by getting tested, become more educated about HIV, and carefully considered sexual rights and responsibilities.

OBJECTIVES

Our primary objectives were to raise awareness about the HIV crisis in Hinds County, Mississippi, disseminate accurate information about HIV transmission and treatments, provide confidential testing on campus, and increase awareness about local organizations providing support to people who are HIV positive.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

To begin our research, the Dean of Learning Resources taught us how to find academic sources that explored reasons for the high infection rate at Hinds Community College in Jackson, Mississippi. An exhaustive literature review showed us that the stigma associated with an HIV diagnosis and a lack of education were the two primary reasons people in our age group were part of these national statistics. To gauge what our members already knew about HIV, we developed a survey to examine their knowledge about the topic. Guidance from our Institutional Research Office helped us refine the survey, so our team could also gauge the impact of the action events we were beginning to develop. We also explored the stigma facing those living with HIV and those considering getting tested. A sociology professor pointed us toward a memoir, *The Naked Truth: Young Beautiful and (HIV) Positive*. Just about the age of Hinds students when she was diagnosed, Marvelyn Brown helped the many students and faculty who read her book with us to think about HIV in very personal terms instead of statistics.

CONCLUSIONS

We confirmed the HIV crisis in our home state was real and not restricted to the gay community in Jackson, Mississippi. Hinds Community College bears the name of the place that the Center for Disease Control’s latest HIV Surveillance Report (2015) determined was number one in the

nation for new AIDS diagnoses. People who are HIV positive but avoid testing allow their lack of knowledge and fear to create this statistic. Mississippi is in the heart of the Bible Belt, and many groups advocate abstinence-only education. Many of our students had some form of sex education in high school, yet our survey revealed an astounding lack of knowledge about HIV transmission and treatments. Our survey also showed that many students are reluctant to come forward for testing or even admit that they are sexually active. Our challenge was to get students to engage in frank conversations that, combined with dissemination of specific, direct information, would be vital in stopping the stigma associated with HIV testing.

ACTION

The Hinds Community College Counseling Office, in the final year of a grant from the National Center for Unplanned Pregnancy, asked our chapter to assist with their Back Off Baby health fair. Members created two display boards and shared STD/STI statistics, myths, and realities. When only 26 students out of the 500 who attended that day were tested, we determined privacy would be essential in getting students to agree to HIV testing. We also realized that giveaways would attract students. In our first step toward our goal of spreading knowledge about HIV, we organized our research into a presentation for members. It included scenarios like those on the television show "What Would You Do?" to help members recognize prejudice and stigma while encouraging acceptance and respect for HIV positive individuals. Follow-up presentations over the next few weeks included a nursing instructor who informed us about HIV transmission and professionals from Care4Me and The SPOT providing information about HIV care centers in our community.

To spread our research across the wider campus and community, we planned a sexual health fair, which was inspired by a similar fair at the University of Texas. We designed this event with the goals of educating students about HIV and destroying the stigma associated with testing and the fear of HIV-positive individuals. We named the event Fight the Fear. We wanted a fun atmosphere that would attract students walking across the college, so we set it for Halloween. Everyone participating wore costumes, and students trick-or-treated for candy, freebies like condoms and t-shirts, and sexual health information at booths brightly decorated in orange and black. My Brother's Keeper partnered with us and provided free HIV testing in a very private room in the campus library, an arrangement accomplished through connections established during our training with the Dean of Learning Resources. With the support of many campus and community organizations, Fight the Fear was a tremendous success.

The day before our final event, we wore red and posted a photo on Instagram with an appeal to our region to wear red and to fight HIV stigma with testing. Friends across Mississippi and even England and Costa Rica responded. Our team purchased and donated 25 books to help students be part of our Lunch and Learn event. We also sent special invitations to faculty who agreed to read with us. On World AIDS Day, 42 participants enjoyed chili provided by our advisors before examining Marvelyn Brown's "The Naked Truth." Moderated by an English professor, the discussion helped us explore the rights HIV positive individuals have to seek healthcare and the responsibility that we all have to protect our health. Immediately after our event, one of our team members joined a panel of health care professionals sponsored by the Student Government Association in a question-and-answer session about HIV. Another group provided free HIV testing to attendees. To conclude our projects, our team delivered a wrap-up presentation for members and a follow-up survey.

IMPACT

In five different informational sessions, many students received information on HIV and testing. In response to this barrage of information and effective advertising, more than 600 students attended our Fight the Fear event, and 117 students took advantage of free HIV testing. Our surveys revealed that 76% of respondents learned new facts about HIV transmission and 95% felt reduced stigma associated with testing. We especially felt the impact of our education and

advocacy efforts in feedback from students. One said, "I am convinced to have protected sex no matter what. I'll insist on testing for partners to ensure my own safety." Another concluded, "I have learned that HIV is not something to be ashamed of and that we need to support those infected, not condemn them."

RESOURCES

Ahgriti, P., Collins, C., Morris, S. F., & Summers, T. (2002). "Abstinence only vs. comprehensive sex education: What are the arguments? What is the evidence?" AIDS Policy Research Center & Center for AIDS Prevention Studies and the UCSF AIDS Research Institute.

This article included a research review concluding abstinence-only programs are ineffective in stopping the spread of HIV. Reading this strengthened our resolve to work on prevention and education.

Brown, M., & Martin, C. E. (2008). *The Naked Truth: Young, Beautiful, and (HIV) Positive*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Our officer team felt this memoir of a 19-year-old from Tennessee who contracted HIV through unprotected sex with her boyfriend would influence other students who are near her age to adopt responsible sexual behaviors. Brown uses her voice to empower others and spread awareness.

Fehr, S., Vidourek, R., & King, K. (2015). "Intra- and Inter-personal barriers to condom use among college students: A review of the literature." *Sexuality and Culture*, 19(1), 103-121.

This research review concludes that many college students do not feel a sense of risk when engaging in unprotected sexual relationships. It led us to conclude that condom usage must be included in our education efforts.

Heller, J. (2015). "Rumors and realities: Making sense of HIV/AIDS conspiracy narratives and contemporary legends." *American Journal of Public Health*, 105(1), e43-e50.

This article links HIV treatment issues to the Tuskegee Airmen syphilis study and helped us understand HIV stigmas. As a result, we decided to focus our first HIA activity on debunking common myths about the virus.

Opt, S., and Loffredo, D. (2004). "College students and HIV/AIDS: More insights on knowledge, testing, and sexual practices." *Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied*, 138(5), 389-403.

This article provides research that reiterated the value of starting a public discourse about HIV on our campus.

Smith, M. L., Menn, M., Dorsett, L., & Wilson, K. L. (2012). "College students' perceptions of HIV risk, importance of protective behaviors, and intentions to change behavior after attending an HIV/AIDS awareness event." *Texas Public Health Journal*, 64(4), 23-29.

The University of Texas event described in this article inspired us to create a sexual health fair.

Villarosa, L. (2017). "America's hidden HIV epidemic." *New York Times Magazine*.

Featuring individuals from Hinds County, Mississippi, this article provides a human face to the crisis, and helped us identify health partners in our community.

Zeiler, A. (2014). "Abstinence education." *Linacre Quarterly*, 81(4), 372-77.

This Catholic Medical Association journal article helped us consider arguments opposing sex education.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS AND THEIR IMPACT ON HOW THE WORLD WORKS

ALPHA LAMBDA ZETA CHAPTER

Asnuntuck Community College

Enfield, Connecticut

ABSTRACT

Dan Glickman, past U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, said, "One of the trends we're seeing in food and agriculture is more and more consumers wanting to know things about their food and where and how it's grown and what's in it." Our team researched the Natural and Engineered theme with a focus on genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Initial investigations into GMOs and the American food industry led to the discovery that research into GMO safety was lacking. Studies claiming that GMOs are safe for consumption are often affiliated with major companies that profit from the sale of genetically modified (GM) food products.

Research prompted questions and concerns regarding the prevalence of GM food that Americans eat. Due to these concerns, we created a survey to measure the student body's acceptance of GMOs. After receiving 133 responses out of the 315 surveys sent, students indicated there was a lack of confidence in GMOs. Thus, we wanted to provide healthier produce to the students by creating a non-GMO vegetable garden. They also wanted to teach others how to grow their own organic produce garden at home. This would benefit the on-campus food pantry that combats food insecurities of our students. Several collaborative meetings with the campus president and various administrators were arranged and conducted by chapter officers. As a result, approval was granted by the Dean of Academic Affairs, Dean of Students, Dean of Continuing Education, and President of Asnuntuck Community College (ACC).

Our chapter next sought gardening expertise from current chapter members, individuals in the Asnuntuck Community College (ACC) community, and outside professionals. Through their instruction the chapter acquired necessary skills in budgeting, securing sponsorship, greenhouse arrangement, and seeding options. Specific chapter members took leadership roles over the varied action steps within the project, and a position was created for Vice President of the Greenhouse. Under this leadership and with newly acquired skills, the group assembled two interior grow houses to begin producing GMO-free vegetables, displayed a trifold poster with GMO information, held an event at the on-campus day care center with the goal of inspiring children to grow their own non-GMO organic produce, and conducted surveys of students at ACC. Such actions required collaborating with faculty, daycare center staff, and the maintenance department.

OBJECTIVES

Our initial objective was to measure the students' knowledge about and interest in GMOs. Our research into GMOs led to two more objectives: to share information with the college regarding the pros and cons of GMOs and to provide fresh produce to the food pantry through establishment of an organic non-GMO campus garden.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

While studying the Natural and Engineered theme, our team analyzed the issue of GMOs and the topic of heirloom vs. hybrid seeds. Through discussion and shared research, we determined the chapter's interest aligned most with the GMO topic. Members who were unable to attend the meetings received a survey to capture their feedback before the topic of GMOs was officially selected. We assessed a wide body of research to determine whether a scientific consensus

existed on the safety of GMOs. We also analyzed potential risks for consumers and our community's assessment of those risks. Finally, we examined how much our own community knew about GMOs and whether their knowledge could inform our actions.

CONCLUSIONS

Our research revealed that GM food safety research is not consistent and that some risks for consumers may exist. While many scientists have vouched for the safety of GMO food, others have called those conclusions into question. Significantly, many consumers do not agree with the assessment that GMO food is universally safe, and that knowledge informed our action items.

ACTION

The first action generated by our objectives was the development of surveys assessing the knowledge base and opinions of ACC students regarding GMOs. These were meant to capture the level of awareness both before and after the chapter's educational efforts.

Next, research indicated the need for education on GMOs in the general population, so the chapter took a two-tiered approach to spreading academic information. Action one involved an event at the on-campus day care center to teach children about GMOs and growing their own vegetables. Chapter members read the book *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss and illustrated by Crockett Johnson to the children. We created and handed out a child-friendly brochure to help the children understand the difference between GMO and non-GMO food. Lastly, the children were guided to plant their own carrot seeds. Action two involved the creation and presentation of a trifold poster on the myths and realities of GMOs. The target audience was the ACC student body, and the poster was presented in the main hallway of the school.

To further meet the objective of GMO awareness and to work toward the objective of having organic produce available for the school community (helping to reduce food insecurities on campus), the chapter took a public step toward establishing an ACC non-GMO organic greenhouse. The chapter members assembled two interior grow houses, filled them with seeded vegetables, and positioned them prominently at the campus main entrance. A sign was commissioned from the manufacturing department to draw attention to the ongoing mission of our chapter.

IMPACT

The surveys we developed, distributed, and analyzed assessed student knowledge and opinion of GMOs. Quantitative data showed that the majority of students surveyed were familiar with the term Genetically Modified Organisms (95.45%). In addition, 65% of the students surveyed did not support the use of GMOs, and 93% indicated a strong desire for clear labels on packaging. The qualitative data from open-ended questions demonstrated a lack of student understanding about GMOs. Many students echoed these statements: "I am concerned about GMOs because I want to know what I am putting inside my body and care about my nutrition," "I am concerned about the health effects GMOs can cause as well as the effects GMOs have on our environment," and "Are they safe?"

To measure our objective of educating the college community, a follow-up survey captured data to see if ACC students saw our trifold poster and gained additional knowledge about GMOs. Results indicated that the majority of students surveyed (85%) did not see the display presented in the hallway. For those students who saw the poster (15%), qualitative data from open-ended questions reflected the sentiment that consumers need to be made aware of GMOs and what they contain. Fifty-seven percent of students surveyed reported that they were not in support of GMOs compared to the 65% in our initial survey. The Z-Score was calculated to be 1.3938 with a P-value of .16452; therefore, this proportion difference between the first and second survey is not statistically significant. Given these results and the finding that many students were not able to view our information, we came to the conclusion that the display needed to be in a higher traffic area.

Through this process, we found that children are open to learning about GMOs and interested in growing their own produce. The entire ACC community is excited by the prospect of a non-GMO organic greenhouse on campus. There has been an outpouring of support and offers to participate in and sustain the project.

RESOURCES

Antoniou, M., Fagan, J., & Robinson, C. (2014). *GMO myths and truths* 2nd ed. London: Earth Open Source.

Dr. John Fagan, Dean of the College of Sustainable Living at Maharishi University of Management, Dr. Michael Antoniou, Head of the Gene Expression and Therapy Group at King's College London, and Claire Robinson, Managing Editor, seek to educate the public about genetic modification and worked together to create this source of information about GMOs. *GMO Myths and Truths* was a highly researched book that clarified questions our chapter had about the nature of GMOs and the inconsistency of the research into GMO safety. Information provided by this source helped develop our research questions and action project. This source inspired us to include a myth vs. fact section on our trifold poster.

Lynas, M. & Tudge, C. (2014). *GMOS: A solution or a problem? A debate between Mark Lynas and Colin Tudge*, *Journal of International Affairs*, 67(2), 131.

Mark Lynas, environmental writer and GMO supporter, argues that studies conclude there is no definite health concern derived from consuming GMOs. He explains that GM foods can improve a farmer's yield by alternating traits of the crop. Colin Tudge, biologist and GMO critic, asserts that agriculture is not exempt from the competitive spirit of our culture. He points out that a select few companies control GM technology. Tudge states that non-GMO methods can be as effective and productive as GM technology. After reading this debate, our chapter concluded there are valid arguments for the support and criticism of GM foods, and it inspired us to take a closer look at the GMO issue.

Porterfield, A. (2016). "Differences between non-GMO and organic: More profits for farmer, more costs for consumers." Retrieved from Genetic Literacy Project: <https://geneticliteracyproject.org/2016/04/27/differences-non-gmo-organic-profitsfarmer-costs-consumers/>.

This article focused on the prices associated with non-GMO foods. A survey taken revealed that 67% of the consumers surveyed are not willing to pay more money for GMO-free food. This article provides insight into one of the challenges of sustaining a non-GMO diet. We decided to donate the produce from our non-GMO vegetable garden to the ACC food pantry.

Ronald, P. (2015). What genetic engineering and organic farming have in common. Retrieved from Ideas.Ted.Com: <https://ideas.ted.com/what-genetic-engineering-and-organic-farming-have-in-common/>.

This plant geneticist claims miscommunication is the culprit for negative stigma attached to GM foods. According to Ronald, large companies publicly denounce GM foods, yet have no valid reasoning to support their claims. She concludes her argument by stating, "I don't know how far the world needs to be pushed in terms of crop loss due to climate change or having billions of more mouths to feed before the public starts to see the value in this new technology" (Ronald, 2015). From this, we learned to pay attention to the credibility of organizations making claims about GMOs.

Saik, R. (2015, January 27). TEDx talk: How the organic movement became anti-GMO. Retrieved from Genetic Literacy Project: <https://geneticliteracyproject.org/2015/01/27/tedx-talk-how-the-organic-movement-became-anti-gmo/>.

Rob Saik, agronomy consultant, performed Ted Talks urging people to examine the advantages and possibilities of GM foods. He said, "I believe the anti-science movement is the biggest threat to global food security today. The voices of science are being drowned out by the voices of fear and paranoia," (Saik, 2015). He states GM foods are the solution to our world's hunger problem. Two examples of the possible impacts of GM foods are decreased deforestation and increased crop yield demonstrated in Brazil. This source encouraged our chapter to acknowledge the widespread advantages of GMOs.

Sax, J. K., & Doran, N. (2016). "Food labeling and consumer associations with health, safety, and environment." *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*, 44(4), 630-638 doi:10.1177/1073110516684805.

This article examines current labeling laws and the effect labeling has on consumer perception of product safety. One conclusion from the study was that foods labeled as organic were considered healthier, safer, and more environmentally friendly by participants than foods labeled as GMO. Participants associated GMO-labeled foods with being less safe, while organizations such as the FDA and AMA deny that genetically engineered foods are any less safe than naturally grown foods. Several questions from our survey that were sent out to the student population derived from this study, including "Which foods that contain GMOs would you eat?"

Smith, J. M. (n.d.). "The fight against GMOs." Retrieved from Share Guide: <http://www.shareguide.com/GMOs.html>.

This article presents some of the dangers of GM foods. One statement Smith made was, "More than 70% of the foods on supermarket shelves contain derivatives of the eight GM foods on the market." Our chapter was shocked by this statistic and learned that GM foods are more prevalent than we expected. We wondered whether the general population knew most foods they are buying are GM. This statistic prompted us to set up a trifold presentation labeled "Do you Know What Is in Your Food?"

Van Rijssen, F. J., Eloff, J. N., & Morris, E. J. (2015). "The precautionary principle: Making managerial decisions on GMOs is difficult." *South African Journal of Science*, 111(3/4), 1. doi:10.17159/sajs.2015/20130255.

This article observed the lack of consistency across governments regarding the safety and use of GM foods. Some experts consider them to have irreversible damage, while others believe them to be an extension of nature. The authors suggest experts should be in the discussion to develop effective policies and determine potential harm of GM foods. After reading this article, our chapter learned that while the United States allows GM foods, some African countries reject donations of GMOs, citing the potential unintended effects. This article prompted us to reevaluate the acceptance of GM foods and look further into long-term consequences.

DETAINED IN TACOMA: A SYMPOSIUM ON IMMIGRANT RIGHTS IN OUR COMMUNITY

CHI GAMMA CHAPTER

Tacoma Community College

Tacoma, Washington

ABSTRACT

In the context of *How the World Works: Global Perspectives*, we chose the theme of “Rights and Responsibilities” to explore an issue with local and global implications: the rights of detained immigrants. Our city, Tacoma, Washington, is home to the fourth-largest immigrant detention center in the U.S., a fact that is in jarring contrast to our large immigrant population. We felt we had a responsibility to our community to learn more and spread awareness of the issues detainees face. Our research focused on how the immigration system works, how citizens’ and non-citizens’ rights differ, and how enforcement affects immigrants from legal, historical, and sociological perspectives. We listened to former detainees’ stories and learned from community advocates. We researched a variety of academic and expert sources, including articles, books, legal cases, legislation, and statistical reports, from multiple disciplines and ideological approaches. To ensure a global perspective, we intentionally included sources written by immigrants. Our action component involved an on-campus symposium on immigrant rights, including an expert panel of community organizers and a presentation by our team.

OBJECTIVES

Our first objective was to narrow our focus and choose a theme. Our second objective was to develop a strong team and encourage member involvement in our project. Our third objective was to research our theme using varying methodologies. Our fourth objective was to develop an action plan for the project. Finally, we wanted to reflect upon the experience as a whole.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

We focused specifically on the rights of detained immigrants, examining our responsibility as community members in a city with the country’s fourth-largest detention center. Given the city’s high immigrant population compared to the U.S. overall, we asked, “How do we change what seems unacceptable and horrific?” Silence, we decided, was unacceptable; we felt compelled to share what we learned with our community.

Our interest in immigrant rights began after hearing on public radio that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials do not always communicate to detainees in their native language, preventing them from knowing what their rights are. We also discovered immigrants do not have the right to Miranda warnings when arrested. We began to question what universal rights are. If the United States’ Bill of Rights is based on the idea that all people are born with inalienable rights, why do we treat immigrants like aliens, denying them constitutional rights?

With our academic research, we dove deeper into how the world of immigration law works and why. We conducted interviews with former detainees, one of whom had been released that day. We also interviewed volunteers with Advocates for Immigrants in Detention Northwest (AID NW), and we scheduled an interview with Congressman Adam Smith, who introduced a bill to improve detention centers nationwide.

CONCLUSIONS

Through research exploring the inequality of rights from a global perspective, we discovered that the Northwest Detention Center (NWDC) in our city is run by a for-profit corporation, GEO Group. That corporation is being sued by Washington State for paying workers \$1 a day. At an event hosted outside the detention center, we learned detainees went on hunger strikes to protest inhumane conditions.

ACTION

We resolved to host an event with an expert panel on immigration detaining in Tacoma. Because ICE had targeted a resource fair for undocumented immigrants on campus in the past, we did not want to risk harming the very people we wanted to help. Therefore, our event's target audience was both immigrants and non-immigrants. We took on the responsibility of informing our community how enforcement works and showing what rights look like for people emigrating from other parts of the globe.

The event was titled, "Detained in Tacoma: A Symposium on Immigrant Rights in Our Community." The three-hour event included an audience exercise, a presentation by the project team, a short documentary screening, and a panel of community immigration advocates. One objective of the event was to make what can seem like a distant issue feel personally relevant. The audience exercise was a questionnaire letting attendees see if they would qualify to immigrate under President Trump's endorsed immigration plan, the RAISE Act, which sets very high standards for prospective immigrants. The team-led presentation aimed to challenge the audience's preconceived notions about undocumented immigrants and highlight how immigrants' rights differ. A short documentary by NWDC Resistance about the hunger strikes at the NWDC was aired. The expert panel was moderated by a Tacoma Community College communications professor and included an array of perspectives reflecting the research we conducted. The panel included an immigration lawyer from AID Northwest and the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, executives from Tacoma Community House, and an immigrant organizer from NWDC Resistance. Although the panelists agreed about much, there were areas of hot debate, including whether the NWDC should remain in Tacoma.

IMPACT

Marketing of "Detained in Tacoma: A Symposium on Immigrant Rights in Our Community" was conducted on Facebook with 782 views, 32 RSVPs, and 282 people indicating an interest. The event drew over 100 attendees, and only one member of the audience passed the immigration questionnaire.

The Tacoma Community College co-president attended, and panelists reported that expectations were exceeded. Students provided positive feedback, and Facebook contained many posts after the event, including posts by individuals from outside Tacoma Community College.

RESOURCES

25 I&N Dec. 580 (BIA 2011). <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/eoir/legacy/2014/07/25/3725.pdf>.

This decision by the Board of Immigration Appeals from the U.S. Department of Justice found that detained immigrants do not have the right to Miranda-like warnings before arrest and interrogation. Miranda warnings include being notified of the right to remain silent and the right to seek legal counsel. This ruling alerted us to one way that legal rights significantly differ for non-citizens.

Cházaro, Angélica. (2015). "Beyond respectability: new principles for immigration reform." *Harvard Journal on Legislation*, 52(2), 355-418.

Cházaro, a visiting professor at the University of Washington School of Law, offers an alternative approach to immigration public policy. Instead of focusing on the "legality" of an immigrant, she argues immigration reform in the U.S. should focus on addressing the needs of the most marginalized immigrants who often cannot legally immigrate.

This article, which combined elements of sociology, law, and public policy, inspired us to consider solutions outside the conventional narrative of immigration reform.

Fan, M. (2013). "The case for crimmigration reform." *North Carolina Law Review*, 92(1), 101-69.

Fan, an associate professor at the University of Washington School of Law, critiques the "crimmigration complex." Crimmigration is the utilization of criminal justice tactics for immigration enforcement, as well as immigration policies that come out of the psychological notion that immigrants are inherently criminal. This article helped us understand why immigration law enforcement looks much like criminal law. Also, her analysis integrated both conservative and liberal ideas.

United States Census Bureau. "2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Selected Characteristics of the Native and Foreign-Born Populations." Census.gov, American FactFinder. Web. 10 October 2017. https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_1YR_S0501&prodType=table.

This table from the U.S. Census Bureau shows estimated data on populations in Tacoma, Washington, for 2016. There were a lot of revealing statistics, but one stuck out in particular. Only 26.8% of all Tacoma residents were enrolled in college, while 46.4% of non-citizens were enrolled, highlighting how greatly immigration policy affects college students in our community.

United States. Cong. House. "Dignity for detained immigrants act of 2017." 115th Cong. 1st sess. H.R. 3923. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Congress, 2017. Congress.gov. Web. 13 December 2017. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/3923>.

This bill, written by U.S. Representative Adam Smith, calls for the end of privately run immigrant detention centers nationwide, as well as improvements in conditions. Although a bill is not a traditional academic source, we felt Rep. Smith qualified as an expert in public policy given his long tenure of 20 years. This bill was crucial in getting a national perspective, helping us realize the issues we uncovered are systemic.

United States. Cong. Sen. "RAISE Act." 115th Cong. 1st sess. S.354. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Congress, 2017. Congress.gov. Web. 13 October 2017. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/354>.

The RAISE Act, introduced by Senator Tom Cotton, is an immigration reform bill endorsed by President Donald Trump. The bill would institute a shift from family orientated immigration policy to a purely merit-based one. This bill gave us a stark look at the national political climate and what the future could hold for immigrants. It was also valuable for contrasting with Rep. Smith's bill.

Vigdor, J. (2009). *From immigrants to Americans: The rise and fall of fitting in*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

In this book, Vigdor, a professor of public policy at Duke University and research fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research, offers comprehensive historical, economic, and sociological analyses by compiling data on U.S. immigration over the past 150 years. This source was important, because it provided the most comprehensive synthesis of historical data on U.S. immigration we could find, helping us get a "big picture" perspective from multiple disciplinary approaches.

Warren, R. & Kerwin, D. (2017). "The 2,000-mile wall in search of a purpose: Since 2007 visa overstays have outnumbered undocumented border crossers by half a million." *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 5(1), 124-136.

In our research, we wanted to include the various reasons why people immigrate and what conditions lead to being undocumented. This report opened our eyes to the inaccuracy of the stereotype of the undocumented border crosser, as most undocumented immigrants in the past 10 years initially came into the U.S. legally. Also, this report gave us locally relevant statistics. In 2014, there were approximately 234 undocumented immigrants in Washington state, and 44% of those overstayed visas (p. 130).

BRIDGING GENERATIONAL GAPS: MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN HOW THE WORLD WORKS

SIGMA PHI CHAPTER

*Arapahoe Community College
Littleton, Colorado*

ABSTRACT

An interest in intergenerational conflicts prompted research beginning with local college psychology and sociology professors. Preliminary research revealed the alarming and silent issue of suicide among the elderly, which was later confirmed by official data. We decided to direct our research and investigation into the social isolation brought about by the intergenerational conflicts at the root of the problem. Research showed that seniors are a more vulnerable population than teenagers; while teens have many opportunities for social interactions, the elderly have the opposite and often experience isolation. We ultimately decided to partner with Bessie's Hope, an organization that focuses on bridging generations by bringing at-risk youth into the lives of the elderly, to initiate opportunities for training, volunteering, and fundraising. Additionally, we created the Bridging Generations Association (BGA), an organization designed to reach seniors and create intergenerational relationships that will also positively influence Arapahoe Community College students.

OBJECTIVES

Our first objective was to investigate the myths surrounding the generational clash. It is important to understand how psychosocial changes influence the process of aging and to determine how generations tend to behave. Our second objective was to find positive ways to integrate the elderly population into our community in a way that maintains their autonomy and respects their wishes and capabilities. Our third objective was to contact organizations that are already involved in this kind of work. We decided to work with organizations connected with seniors, so we could learn from good examples and minimize struggles. Our fourth objective was to decide what kind of project would ensure continuity and have real impact on suicide rates. Finally, we sought to bring awareness to our community by organizing a kickoff event for our Bridging Generations Association, Trick-Or-Treat with a Senior.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

Our preliminary investigation suggested that we view specific themes within the Honors Study Topic in unique ways. Our team was particularly interested in a topic that seemed to have urgency: "generational war." We learned from a psychology professor that while it is a reality that millennials and seniors criticize one another's values and practices, it is a myth that they clash more than previous generations. An interview of a sociology professor revealed a shocking consequence of that clash: Due to social isolation, seniors are killing themselves at an alarming rate. This revelation led us to research suicide, which brought up another sad reality: Colorado has historically seen its suicide rates climbing among all age groups, including the elderly. At this point, many myths started being debunked, like the fact that depression is not a normal part of aging. Our research led us to choose the theme of "Myth and Reality" and to decide that our project would focus on sharing our research with the community.

Over a dozen students, including officers, members, and prospective Phi Theta Kappa members at Arapahoe Community College, engaged in the research process by identifying two articles that were related to generational conflicts. This action resulted in over 24 academic articles that were used to launch our research. After narrowing the research focus to the issue of senior suicide, 15 students continued analyzing research and made presentations to our group.

CONCLUSIONS

Our research led us to five main discoveries. The clash between millennials and seniors is not a “war” unique to our times. Generational clash is a typical aspect of aging. Our cognitive reactions are more simplistic when we are younger and become more refined as the brain develops. As a result, we tend to exaggerate positive memories from the past and believe they are better than what we currently live. Nationwide, seniors commit suicide almost four times more than teenagers. Even though suicide is alarming at any age, little attention is directed to the problem among seniors. Colorado holds the second-highest suicide rate in the country for those between the ages of 15 and 44. Generational differences and the treatment of the elderly is a relevant global issue. We interviewed international students between the ages of 19-35 years old, representing four different continents. We learned how their societies tend to value their elderly differently, with kids usually growing up closer to their grandparents. However, American habits, like putting parents in senior homes when they reach certain ages, are slowly influencing other cultures. Depression as a common part of the aging process is a myth; it is not natural and is mostly caused by losses that tend to happen later in life. A psychology professor we interviewed affirms that these losses can be related to retirement, health, or death of spouse. Showing seniors that they can still contribute to our communities could help minimize that sense of loss.

ACTION

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, people commit suicide due to social isolation. Suicide rates in Colorado are the second highest in the country for those between the ages of 15 and 44, which is the age range of many of our community college students. Our action plan considered those numbers, and we created a project to promote meaningful interactions between senior citizens and community college students. Because we had many different interventions and events in mind, we founded the Bridging Generations Association (BGA), an organization designed to spread the idea that everyone wins when generations come together. For the kickoff event, seniors from a nearby assisted-living facility were invited to trick or treat with students at candy stations around our campus. When they arrived, we realized they had low mobility, so we adapted our plan to sitting and sharing their memories of Halloween. That event led to a second one on Thanksgiving week. Students from two English Composition courses at Arapahoe Community College interviewed and wrote biographies of the senior members of their family. We found that the mission of Bessie’s Hope aligned with our goals, so we assisted with its annual fundraising event, “Bowl-a-Rama.” Participants not only helped the organization raise funds, but also provided an opportunity for students and seniors to bowl together.

IMPACT

After the research was concluded and we founded the Bridging Generations Association, we hosted the Halloween event at which a dozen students interviewed seniors about their Halloween memories. We gained extremely positive feedback from those who attended the event. One of the attendees wrote in an email that the visitors “truly enjoyed themselves” and described the students as “precious,” “sweet,” and “thoughtful.” The students were also surveyed, and 100% of them affirmed that they felt better after the event than before it; 100% of them also said they would like to attend a second event planned by the BGA.

Bessie’s Hope staff, who helped to intermeditate the interactions, wrote in a letter that they were “thankful to have met our students,” and they were “looking forward” to having more partnerships with us. In a second event, focused on fundraising for Bessie’s Hope, we raised \$500 and became one of the biggest sponsors of that event; 10 team members from Arapahoe Community College participated. The third event, on Thanksgiving week, included 18 participating students, each of whom recorded stories from their grandparents. One participant learned that her grandmother became a human rights activist after watching members of the Black Panther Party being violently murdered and reported that “[g]etting the chance to sit with her [grandmother], hear her story, and then write it was very eye opening” and that she now hopes to “become a woman as strong and

dedicated to helping people as [her grandmother]." Other students also described the event as "life changing." A second portion of the interviews, audio recorded, was archived in the StoryCorps project, which is the largest online human voices collection.

RESOURCES

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. "Suicide Statistics — AFSP. 2017." AFSP, 2018, <https://afsp.org/aboutsuicide/suicide-statistics>.

This webpage brings consistent, updated, and trusted data on suicide throughout the country and by state.

Bacon, T. (20 November 2017). Personal interview.

Dr. Tracy Bacon holds a Ph.D. from the University of Arizona and a BA from the University of Denver. Dr. Bacon was a key in our research on the social consequences of generation clash, and it was through her we first heard the alarming suicide rates among the elderly.

Beutell, N. (2013). "Generational Differences in Work-Family Conflict and Synergy." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 10(6), 2544-2559. MDPI AG, doi:10.3390/ijerph10062544. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3717751/>.

The article defines the different generations and their influences on personal and professional environments, giving us a broader understanding of the generations.

Carstensen, L. (2016). "Hidden in plain sight: How intergenerational relationships can transform our future." *Longevity3.Stanford.Edu*. http://longevity3.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Monograph_web_07_11_2016.pdf.

This report discusses how intergenerational interactions benefit the individuals involved in them and, ultimately, the society that incentivizes intergenerational relationships.

Hagood, A. (29 August 2017). Personal interview.

Professor Hagood holds an M.A. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Colorado and an A.B. (Artium Baccalaureus) in Psychology and Social Relations from Harvard University. Professor Hagood, an expert on mind development, helped us understand the biological reasons why people commit suicide and made sure we were correctly interpreting data.

Kumar, S., Anish, P.K., & George, B. (2015). "Risk factors for suicide in elderly in comparison to younger age groups." *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 57(3), 249. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4623642/>.

This article enlightened us on the reasons why the elderly are an "at-risk" group and in need of attention.

Novak, M. (2016). *The Issues of Aging*. New York: Routledge.

This book brings light to the challenges that individuals face when they enter the "senior generation," exploring how aging changes the brain.

Trzesniewski, K. H., & Donnellan, M. B. (2010). "Rethinking 'Generation Me': A Study of Cohort Effects from 1976-2006." *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5(1), 58-75. doi:10.1177/1745691609356789. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1745691609356789>.

This article helped us understand how the clash of generations is not exclusive of our times, confirming how teens today are not much different from those of past decades.

TEEN PREGNANCY RATES, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES, AND HOW THE WORLD WORKS IN MISSISSIPPI

NU UPSILON CHAPTER

Meridian Community College

Meridian, Mississippi

ABSTRACT

Our team began the research process by identifying global and local problems related to the Rights and Responsibilities theme of the Honors Study Topic. Through our research and experiences as former K-12 students in our local school district, we concluded that there was a lack of sexual education in local schools and that the abstinence-only curriculum was not enough to prevent unplanned pregnancy among teens. Our findings led us to partner with local experts and to host a sexual education seminar. The education program broadly influenced the entire community of local middle and high school students, and follow-up survey evaluations determined that program learning outcomes were achieved.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of our project was to reduce teen pregnancy in our local community by effectively teaching sexual education. We first had to understand the problem and its causes through collaboration with local health and community organizations. We then determined curriculum and resources that demonstrated an effective impact on teaching sexual education. Evaluation of our team's efforts was another important objective of our project — we wanted to make certain we made a meaningful, research-based impact on an important problem in our local community.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

Mississippi's near- or dead-last rankings in health, poverty, and unplanned pregnancy spurred our initial interest in this problem. Team members candidly discussed the lack of sexual education in their high schools. Local schools claimed to teach sexual education, but Mississippi's strict laws made teachers apprehensive to fully teach sexual education. This fact was painfully evident in our investigation of statistical data from the Mississippi Department of Health, which found that our state had an unintended pregnancy rate of 65 percent, the nation's highest. Mississippi also ranked third in the nation in highest number of people with gonorrhea, 187.9 diagnoses per 100,000 people. Mississippi also has a national rank of four in highest number of chlamydia cases contracted, with 654.8 people out of 100,000 diagnosed with the disease.

Further research indicated that because Mississippi is in the "Bible Belt," social stigmas concerning sexual education result in fruitless teaching techniques. Therefore, teenage women become pregnant. We found it to be a consistent opinion of local counselors, healthcare professionals, and educators of sexual education that Mississippi's abstinence-only curriculum was responsible for the state's high rate of teen pregnancy in the population.

From a review of the literature for effective sexual education methods, we determined that curricula teaching both abstinence and the use of contraceptives have the most beneficial outcomes for reducing teen pregnancy. We also discovered a direct and positive correlation between poverty and teen pregnancy. It was not surprising to learn that in addition to having the highest teen pregnancy rates, Mississippi also had the highest poverty rate in the nation at 21.8%. Research on teen pregnancy recommends the most effective programs for teen pregnancy prevention are the ones that teach "comprehensive sexuality education or HIV prevention strategies."

CONCLUSIONS

The first major conclusion of our research was that effective curricula for teaching sexual education contained both abstinence and contraceptive uses. More specifically, teaching sexual education in a comprehensive way that includes HIV prevention strategies achieves positive results. Also, we had to think about overcoming access issues to sexual education and contraceptive due to the direct correlation between poverty and teen pregnancy.

ACTION

Our research into how the world works led us to brainstorm ways to raise awareness and decrease rates of teen and unplanned pregnancy locally. We hosted an on-campus seminar about unplanned pregnancy risks and statistics. We invited students on campus by informing professors of the event and reaching out to local high schools. Instructors gave additional credit to students who attended the seminar on teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. We hosted information tables, and one collaborating organization provided food for the event. At the end of the seminar, attendees completed a survey, which revealed insightful feedback.

Sandra Cross was the keynote speaker for teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases seminars. After investigating the law regarding sexual education in Mississippi, we contacted Louis King at the Mississippi Department of Education to participate in the seminar. We also contacted and arranged for both Susan Boatner, preventive health nurse at the District Health Department Office in Decatur, Mississippi, and Beth Sharp, Director of the Center for Pregnancy Choices in Meridian, Mississippi, to exhibit an information booth at the event. Moreover, we contacted Weems Mental Health Center to exhibit at the event. We marketed the seminar by contacting our district education superintendent, nearby PTK chapters, and students and faculty at Meridian Community College with an informational flyer.

In addition to hosting a guest speaker, our team organized a seminar on our campus that highlighted teen pregnancy statistics and what students could do to help with this issue. We had an expert speaker talk about Mississippi statistics and sexual education and hosted informational booths on campus. We invited our local school districts, college faculty and students, district superintendents, and nearby PTK chapters to participate in the seminar and information booths. The program was established as a professional development opportunity for local teachers, and Continuing Education Units (CEUs) were given for attendance.

IMPACT

Our seminar project brought the Meridian community closer to solving the problem of teen pregnancy by starting an open conversation and promoting awareness and education about the issue. Thirteen high school students and 74 Meridian Community College students participated in our seminar and were informed of pregnancy prevention methods, "the long- and short-term bodily and social effects of teenage pregnancy." Participants learned about available information and resource outlets through the information booths set up as part of our seminar event. An evaluation survey of our action project showed that attendees acquired new learning on the issue of teen pregnancy and the risk factors involved in unprotected sex.

RESOURCES

"Abstinence-only education: Are abstinence-only sex education courses effective?" (2014 *Issues & Controversies*, Infobase Learning, 14 Apr. <http://icof.infobaselearning.com/recordurl.aspx?ID=14177>. Retrieved 10 Sept. 2017.

This source informed us how teaching abstinence-only education exhibited drawbacks if students were to become sexually active. Ellen Goodman, a columnist for Boston Globe, reports, "Abstinence-only education has become emblematic of the rule of ideology over science...[Parents] want to delay sex and to have honest information about sexuality, including contraception."

Cross, S. Interview. (7 September 2017). National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy Campus Coordinator. Meridian Community College. 601.694.2205.

Specialist Sandra Cross, NP, shared her perspectives of the prevalence of teen pregnancy on the campus of Meridian Community College (MCC) and the community of Meridian. Her information revealed a high occurrence of teen pregnancy locally, and we focused our action toward MCC and local high school students. She also informed us of the social consequences of teen pregnancy and preventive measures of teen pregnancy.

Marx, J. D., and Hopper, F. (2005). "Faith-based versus fact-based social policy: The case of teenage pregnancy prevention." *Social Work*, 50(3), 280-282. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=18141370&site=ehost-live.

Single abstinence-only-until-marriage programs were unscientific and not highly reviewed. We need to use methods of teaching that are effective rather than religious preferences.

McCullough, A. (n.d.) "Mississippi poverty grows with single mom rate." *Mississippi Business Journal*, EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f6h&AN=L54722497MBJ&site=eds-live.

Mississippi's poverty is at 29.8%, and its unintended pregnancy rate is 65%, both of which are the nation's highest. Approximately 20% of Mississippians are not self-sufficient. We concurred a correlation between teen pregnancy and poverty.

Odom, C. (2017). "The state of STDs in Mississippi." Phi Theta Kappa Meeting, 30 Oct Meridian Community College Chapel Room, Meridian, MS. Guest Lecture.

Odom informed the officers about the risks of sexual intercourse, such as STDs/HIV. She gave insightful statistics about Mississippi. She addressed the ways that both abstinence and contraceptives can prevent pregnancy.

Personal Responsibility Education Program. Mississippi Department of Health, 10 Nov. 2017. msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/handlers/printcontent.cfm?ContentID=11790&ThisPageURL=http%3A%2F%2Fmsdh%2Ems%2Egov%2Fmsdhsite%2Findex%2Ecfm%2F44%2C0%2C36%2%2Chtml&EntryCode=11790&GroupID=44.

This study showed that 54% of high school students have sexual intercourse and 39% of those students did not use contraceptives. About four-fifths of Mississippi's spending on teen births goes to mothers under the age of 18.

Stranger-Hall, K. F. & Hall, D. W. (2011). "Abstinence-only education and teen pregnancy rates: Why we need comprehensive sex education in the U.S." *Plos ONE*, 6(10): 1-11. EBSCOhost, doi:10.1371/journal.pone.002658.

Sexual education, including comprehensive sex and HIV education, abstinence, and contraception and condom use, show the lowest teen pregnancy rate, but states teaching only abstinence until marriage were significantly less successful.

Young, T. (2004). "Examining external and internal poverty as antecedents of teen pregnancy." *American Journal of Health Behavior*, 28(4), 361-373. EBSCOhost, doi:10.5993/ajhb.28.4.8.

Sex and STD/HIV education focusing only on abstinence failed to have significant impact on sexual activity. An all-inclusive program that directly addresses students who have sex is needed. Findings from studies revealed such programs largely have positive impacts.

HOW THE WORLD WORKS: BREATHABLE AIR AND RESPIRATORY HEALTH

ALPHA ZETA ETA CHAPTER

North Lake College

Irving, Texas

ABSTRACT

In researching how the world works, our team investigated the problem of air pollution. Through the lens of Theme 5 of the Honors Study Topic, "Natural and Engineered," we focused on how our national environment could heal damage caused by air pollution. We conducted extensive research on air quality within the Dallas Fort Worth (DFW) area. We surveyed DFW residents to determine lack of knowledge of the link between respiratory illnesses and poor air quality. Our response to our findings was to create "Breathe," an education program to inform and advocate for better air quality. Our curriculum was developed through partnerships with DFW Airport's Environmental Affairs Department, Asthma Chasers Organization (ACO), North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCG), and the American Lung Association (ALA). Our work also received national attention through our collaboration with National Geographic and the creation of a media campaign to improve knowledge of respiratory illnesses from unhealthy air.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this research was to educate our community on air quality, interpretation of air quality index, and the causal relationship of air quality and respiratory illness. To achieve this objective, we set a goal to certify a minimum of 25 team members in the "Asthma Basics Course" and made plans to reach a minimum of 2,000 people on campus and in the community education forums on air quality.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

The DFW area is surrounded by industrial areas resulting in the eleventh-worst air quality in the nation. High asthma rates (including death), large trucks, and vehicles contribute to poor air quality. We have few organizations that advocate for a healthier environment based on air quality. For example, the only active air quality index monitoring site remaining in DFW is a private site at the airport.

Our initial research findings suggested that Americans, specifically people in the DFW area, lacked knowledge on air quality, its index, its relationship to respiratory illnesses, and the warning signs of an asthma attack. To investigate further and to determine the baseline level of education of our community on air quality, we administered a survey, *Honors in Action: Air Quality Survey*, to a statistically valid sample of DFW residents.

The survey results strongly suggested that an advocacy program for air quality was needed, with over 85% of the 505 respondents lacking the knowledge of air quality and over half (52%) stating they wanted more information.

CONCLUSIONS

Our research confirmed that many Americans lacked knowledge on air quality, its index, its relationship to respiratory illnesses, and the warning signs of an asthma attack. Our survey confirmed that this was also true, if not more so, in the DFW area. The results of our survey showed strong support for creating an air quality education program within the DFW area. Eighty-five% of those surveyed lacked knowledge of air quality and how to interpret air quality index information;

52% stated they wanted information on air quality; and 39% of respondents requested phone alerts for monitoring air quality within the DFW area. The results of our survey showed very strong support for creating an air quality education program within the DFW area. Emissions from vehicles, oil and gas industry pollution (including high particle pollution), and sick building syndrome all affect air quality and respiratory health. While the earth provides what we need, we consume more than it supplies, causing harm. After looking at these ideas from our partnering organizations perspectives, we were determined to balance the advancement of science and engineering to our community's needs.

ACTION

Our advocacy program, *Breathe*, included understanding air quality when reading the air quality index and how it relates to respiratory illnesses. We used a variety of venues and opportunities to inform DFW residents through this air quality advocacy and education program. We targeted events around our city to maximize exposure, in addition to presenting workshops to local middle schools. We spoke with oil and gas companies, demonstrating for them how their pollution affects overall air quality and health. With partnering agencies, we spoke to veterans and car enthusiasts, providing information and teaching them how they can help. The Going Green Conference allowed our poster project to showcase information in DFW. The State Fair of Texas offered a new venue for *Breathe*. We hosted presentations on air quality and health, educating those passing through the Women's Museum. Technology provided other avenues: social media campaigns and our partnerships with National Geographic and the *Chasing Genius* program.

IMPACT

The response to *Breathe* was overwhelming, both locally and nationally. Students, faculty, and members of our community voted and shared their feedback for our National Geographic *Chasing Genius* entry. We were 15th out of 3,000 entries and third in our category, bringing national recognition to our college. Thousands viewed our project and learned about the connections between air quality and respiratory health.

Through *Breathe*, we engaged 832 middle school students, over 200 campus students and employees, and over 1,000 others throughout our community. We presented at the National Airports Going Green Conference and spoke to over 500 industry professionals about our project and partnership with DFW airport. We discussed reducing pollution, directly affecting air quality at the airport. We addressed nearly 800 people at the State Fair of Texas and through our education booth in the Women's Museum. Ultimately, we reached 6,136 people on campus, in our community, in our state, and globally.

RESOURCES

Cherni, J. A., Olalde, R., & Urbina, A. (2016). "Systematic Assessment of Carbon Emissions from Renewable Energy Access to Improve Rural Livelihoods." *Energies* (19961073), 9(12), 1-19.

This peer-reviewed journal explained that DFW houses are the nation's largest polluting companies, leading us to question how much air pollution directly affects the air quality index, asthma, and our overall health.

"Honors in Action: Air Quality Survey." (30 Sept. 2017). North Lake College. Raw data.

We created and conducted a statistically balanced national survey with Institutional Research and research faculty to ensure our questions were valid and unbiased.

Our survey's results showed a lack of air quality knowledge, numbers suffering from respiratory illnesses, and a request for more information.

Norris, S. (14 Aug. 2017). Personal Interview.

Dr. Norris, Respiratory Therapist and Director of the Asthma Chasers Organization, explained correlations between asthma and air quality awareness. We looked at ages, genders, and socioeconomic status along with air quality and asthma care.

Olaguer, E. P. (2017). Atmospheric impacts of the oil and gas industry. *Science Direct*. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780128018835000012>.

Dr. Olaguer, with a Ph.D. in Meteorology from MIT and over 25 years of environmental research on energy, explains in this book about particle pollution defining that DFW is home to the nation's largest oil and gas companies, leading us to question how much air pollution directly affects us.

"The state of the air 2017." (2017). American Lung Association. <http://www.lung.org/>.

This annual report revealed that poor air quality in DFW has a direct correlation to resident's health and respiratory illnesses, asthma being the most prevalent leading us to the Asthma Basics Course certification.

"Today's Texas air quality forecast." (2017). Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/>.

This forecast showed us that most of the air quality monitoring stations had been closed in DFW. This led us to wonder how air quality is monitored, what our air quality is, and where active monitors are located.

Turcios, L. (28 June 2017). Telephone interview.

Turcios provided a different viewpoint, suggesting we look at geography in addition to demographics. Although being in Santa Rosa, she had worked in Houston and gave different perspectives for Irving as well. She also led us to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality website, moving us forward.

University of North Texas Zero Emission's Lab (25 July 2017). University of North Texas, Denton. Tour and Presentation.

Our chapter toured the ZOE Lab and learned that they were one of two sites monitoring air quality. The ZOE lab gave us a perspective related to indoor air quality circulation and ventilation related to health, something we had not considered.

DISASTER AND TRAUMA: NOSTALGIA, PATHOS, AND HOW THE WORLD WORKS

BETA ZETA MU CHAPTER

*Western Iowa Tech Community College
Sioux City, Iowa*

ABSTRACT

Exploring the nostalgia and pathos of disaster and trauma led our team to focus on helping others facing the traumatic impact of disasters — those dealing with pathos after a traumatic event. Our research involved a broad scan of disasters and their impact on the communities in which they occur. Through partnerships with local experts and first-responders, we conducted disaster education and recovery within our college and community. We successfully held fundraising activities and events to benefit organizations that aid in disaster relief and became deeply involved in facilitating education for our own campus disaster plans and preparation.

OBJECTIVES

The primary purpose of this project was to have a safer campus where we work and learn. We accomplished this objective by raising awareness of the trauma of disasters and by working with local and national experts on disaster and recovery. We also sought to channel the energy of this awareness to provide support and help to those affected by disaster and to organizations that provide disaster relief.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

The definitions of nostalgia ("a sentimental longing or wistful affection for the past, typically for a period or place with happy personal associations") and pathos ("a quality that evokes pity or sadness") drove our intellectual curiosity to study disaster and trauma. Disaster victims feel a sense of nostalgia when reminiscing about their lives prior to catastrophic events that affected them. Likewise, when reading or hearing about victims of a disaster, those not directly involved can have feelings of pathos. The results of trauma, its pathos, led us to raise awareness and promote disaster preparedness on our campus and within our community.

CONCLUSIONS

Disaster and the trauma it brings can have far-reaching effects. There are many types of disaster, from natural disasters that affect a large proportion of the population to the small disasters that are common occurrences in many lives. The traumas from such disasters can have a lasting effect on everyone involved, from those who experience the disaster firsthand to those who respond to disasters. Disaster is a global problem that recognizes no political, economic, or social boundaries. Through our research, the chapter realized that awareness was the first step in alleviating the traumatic effects of disasters. The research also indicated that awareness was also the first step in effective disaster planning and preparedness.

ACTION

The project's action was multifaceted. Our team co-hosted a presentation with the Western Iowa Tech Community College Police Science Club and the Siouxland Chamber of Commerce. At the event, the Boston Police Commissioner who was in place at the time of the Boston Marathon Bombing spoke. This event was attended by students and faculty, local law enforcement, military, and business leaders. The hour-long presentation gave those in attendance a firsthand look at what happens during a disaster such as the Boston Marathon Bombing.

We convened an open forum of experts to hold a discussion on disaster and trauma. Panelists included the Sioux City Chief of Police; the Executive Director of the Siouxland Chapter of the Red Cross; a Western Iowa Tech Community College faculty member who is a current member of the Civil Air Patrol and trained in emergency services, search and rescue, and FEMA incident command systems; and the Executive Director of Global Trauma Project, a disaster relief organization based in Sudan and Nairobi.

We held a silent auction to benefit charities involved in disaster relief. Team members collected donations from local businesses and held a silent auction to benefit the Food Bank of Siouxland, the Siouxland Warming Shelter, the American Red Cross, and the Global Trauma Project.

Our team members met with the Western Iowa Tech Head of Security about the campus disaster plans and preparation. The Security Staff at Western Iowa Tech is currently updating its disaster plan as mandated by the federal government. The Western Iowa Security Staff and Beta Zeta Mu have planned a tabling event for the spring semester to inform students and staff at Western Iowa Tech of disaster plans and protocols in place on campus.

IMPACT

Over 400 individuals from the community and college attended and participated in our Honors in Action project. These events also received local media coverage, resulting in an impact to over 100,000 people in Siouxland. Our fundraising efforts resulted in \$2,800, which was distributed among the Food Bank of Siouxland, the American Red Cross, the Siouxland Warming Shelter, and the Global Trauma project. Volunteers also collected over 800 articles of clothing and non-perishable food items.

Our chapter received a large amount of publicity and positive feedback from both the community and the college in personal notes and through social media. Our members and students learned the realities of disaster and trauma and that preparedness is the first step to ameliorating the pathos of disaster and trauma.

RESOURCES

Ayazi, T., Lien, L., Eide, A., Swartz, L., & Hauff, E. (2014). "Association between exposure to traumatic events and anxiety disorders in a post-conflict setting: A cross-sectional community study in South Sudan." *BMC Psychiatry*, 14(6). Retrieved from <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-244X/14/6>.

This journal article examined the effects of trauma in a post-conflict setting from a global perspective.

Fullerton, C. S., Ursano, R. J., & Wang, M. (2004). "Acute stress disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and depression in disaster or rescue workers." *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 161(8), 1370-1376.

This journal article highlighted the effects of disaster trauma in those who are involved in rescue and care of disaster victims.

Green, J.G., Xaun, Z., Kwong, L., Holt, M. K., & Comer, J. S. (2016). "Teachers' report of outreach to school-based providers of mental health services following the 2013 Boston marathon attack." *Children and Schools*, 38(4), 227-234.

This journal article discussed the importance of mental health services for children following a disaster.

Henstra, D. (2010). "Evaluating local government emergency management programs: What framework should public managers adopt?" *Public Administration Review*, 70(2), 236-246.

This journal article discussed the steps local public officials should take to minimize the damage done by disasters.

King, L. S., Osofsky, J.D., Osofsky, H. J., Weems, C. F., Hansel, T. C., & Fassnacht, G. M. (2015). "Perceptions of trauma and loss among children and adolescents exposed to disasters a mixed-methods study." *Current Psychology*, 34, 524-536.

This journal article showed the effects of the adversity faced by children and adolescents who were impacted by multiple disasters.

McCarroll, J. E., Ursano, R. J., Fullerton, C. S., & Wright, K. M. (1992). "Community consultation following a major air disaster." *Journal of Community Psychology*, (20), 271-275.

This journal article was selected because it examines a disaster that occurred in our community and the importance of communication within a community following a disaster.

Stover, H. (2007). "Understanding the chain of communication during a disaster." *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 43(1), 4-14.

This journal article explores the chain of command during a disaster from local, state, and national responders.

Tasci, O. F., & Oguz, U. A. (2017). Broad-based participatory inquiry into the definition and scope of disaster. *Journal of Education in Science, Environment, and Health*, 3(2), 165-182.

This journal article explores the definition of disaster. In order to understand disaster preparedness and the traumas caused by a disaster, one must first be able to define disaster.

HUMAN MICROBIOMES AND HOW THE EARTH WORKS

BETA THETA OMICRON CHAPTER

*Skyline College
San Bruno, California*

ABSTRACT

Life on Earth is dependent on a myriad of microorganisms. Bacteria in soil and water, the Earth microbiome, provide nutrients for plants through decomposition. A growing body of research indicates bacteria living in the human body, the human microbiome, are essential for good health. We explored the Earth and human microbiomes to add new findings to these areas. In addition to our discoveries, we actively involved our team members in the scientific process. Collaborating with college and community leaders, our leadership team identified projects and monitored their progress. The projects involved literature reviews, campus and community awareness, laboratory and field research, and teaching over 500 pre-college students. We collected human microbiome samples from attendees at the Phi Theta Kappa regional leadership conference, in the community, and at an event on campus called "Honors in Action (HIA) Day." We explored aquatic microbiomes and published our original research on the Earth microbiome. Our team shared the sentiment that "you don't need to be a scientist to understand the concept of microbiomes. Science can be fun for everyone."

OBJECTIVES

The project's primary goal was to raise awareness about our natural environment and the importance of the microbiome to our health and to the Earth. Our efforts included original laboratory and field research to determine the role of the microbiome in specific environments. Throughout this project, we maintained our desire to be citizen scientists and to do a technically challenging project so that we could enhance our skills and knowledge.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

In 2016, President Obama announced an initiative to research microbiomes that shape life on Earth — including those in plants, animals, water, soil, and air. And a *New York Times* article, "Gut Makeover for the New Year," suggested engineering one's microbes could lead to good health. We were inspired by these current events that natural microbial populations could be engineered to combat diseases, grow more food, and even reduce greenhouse gases. Social science, business, and science majors wanted to learn more about this.

As we learned about microbiomes, we wanted to contribute to scientific knowledge as citizen scientists and include the community as citizen scientists to encourage consumers to look at the science behind advertising claims.

CONCLUSIONS

Natural services are the processes carried out by living organisms that support all life. Humans cannot survive without the natural services provided by many other species, including microorganisms. In 1885, Louis Pasteur said, "Life would not long remain possible in the absence of microbes" because microbial decomposition recycles chemical elements. The microbes that live in a specific environment are called the microbiome. Microbes that live in the soil, on plants, in insects, and in the most widely varied habitats on Earth make up the Earth microbiome. With the recognition that environmental change resulting from human activities is causing a decline in biodiversity, attention is being given to understanding how changes in biodiversity alter

natural services (e.g., decomposition, detoxification, nutrient availability) provided by microbes. The importance of the microbiome was demonstrated when fallow farmland was engineered to become grassland by adding grassland microbiome. The National Microbiome Initiative was launched in 2016 to expand our understanding of the role microbes play in different ecosystems, including soil, plants, water, and the human body. Microbial nitrogen cycling in agriculture is well known, but very little is known about the overall function of the Earth microbiome.

An adult human is composed of about 30 trillion body cells and harbors another 40 trillion bacterial cells — the human microbiome. We read scores of articles on the human microbiome. An imbalance in the microbiome, especially in the intestine, may contribute to obesity, diabetes, and allergies. Probiotics are live microorganisms that provide a health benefit when administered to the host. Probiotics have been studied in recent decades as a way to engineer a person's microbiome to promote health and prevent or manage diseases. Engineering the gut microbiome by transplanting fecal bacteria is being used to treat ulcerative colitis and intestinal infections. In 2013, the FDA recognized fecal transplantation as a new drug, leading to a surge in the sales of probiotics. Probiotics are advertised to improve one's health, cognition, and even beauty. Crawford concluded that consumers choose probiotics for their health-giving qualities rather than taste or sustenance. However, even with encouraging research regarding the human microbiome and health, a great deal is still unknown. Experts caution that there is not enough evidence to recommend that consumers engineer their microbiomes with probiotics.

ACTION

Throughout the year, we collected nasal swabs to determine the presence of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria (MRSA) in the population. We collected 217 samples from community groups. The collecting was always preceded by a presentation on the human microbiome. We presented our research numerous times. Members prepared and presented several workshops for middle-school children. Preparing the workshops required developing hands-on activities and holding several practice sessions.

Our Earth microbiome testing included determining the metabolic capabilities of microbes in environmental samples. In this process, Community Level Physiological Profiling, we grew bacteria to determine what they metabolize. The breadth of metabolic capabilities is an indication of how much pollution or disturbance an environment can handle. During the spring semester, soil microbiome teams collected soil samples from the roots of invasive plants and compared the microbiomes with that of native plants. Another team collected 25 samples along an urban stream that flowed through a city. We analyzed the samples to determine the effects of urbanization on the stream microbiome. In the fall, another team analyzed a stream that flowed through a different watershed.

In the spring, the air team investigated the effect of human habitation on room-air microbiomes. The team collected and analyzed 75 air samples from a variety of campus rooms, before and after occupancy. During the summer, an ocean team collected 12 samples at different depths in the Pacific Ocean and analyzed the microbiome. We contributed our information on the microbiome to the Pier Project.

IMPACT

We found that 3.7% of those surveyed carry MRSA. Our findings were presented to nearly 4,000 attendees at the National Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) conference in October. At this science conference, we won the Microbiology Award.

We also presented to 100 attendees at the College Research Symposium in May of 2017. And chapter officers shared the HIA-Microbiome project with the 125 attendees at the Phi Theta Kappa Regional Fall Leadership Conference. Additionally, 32 conference attendees contributed

their nasal swabs to our MRSA survey. Nearly 100 students visited our HIA Day on campus and throughout the school year; and, we led 20 hands-on teaching labs for over 500 middle-school students. This involved nearly 30 members going to middle schools. We prepared and brought all the necessary supplies. The workshops “Are all bacteria bad for you?” and “Marvelous Microbiology” were rated 4.2 on a scale of 1-dull to 5-fantastic.

The chapter is identified in the “College’s Communities of Practice Initiative,” and the college president in her newsletter recognized our work as servant leaders. We were one of only three presenters that the SSF Literacy Coordinator invited to present at the Fall Family STEM night. The City of South San Francisco nominated the chapter for the 2018 California Park and Recreation Society Service Award.

RESOURCES

Crawford, P., Brown, B. J., Nerlich, B., & Koteyko, N. (2010). “Nutritional altruism and functional food: lay discourses on probiotics.” *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 32(5):45-760.

This article made us aware that consumers do not agree on whether probiotics are natural or engineered foods.

Duranti, S. (2017). “Obesity and microbiota: an example of an intricate relationship.” *Genes & Nutrition*, 12(8). DOI: 10.1186/s12263-017-0566-2.

Duranti’s article taught us about the complexities of human genetics, microbes, and nutrition.

Garbarino, J. and Mason, C. (2016). “The power of engaging citizen scientists for scientific progress.” *Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education*, 17(1), 7-12.

Gabarino and Mason Informed our plan for engaging the community in our project.

Kowalski, K., Bacon, C., Bickford, W. A., and Wilcox, D. A. (2015). “Advancing the science of microbial symbiosis to support invasive species management: a case study on phragmites in the Great Lakes.” *Frontiers in Microbiology*, 6. doi.org/10.3389/fmicb.2015.00095.

This article gave us ideas for investigating the microbiomes of invasive species in our area.

Lagenheder, S. (2010). “Bacterial biodiversity-ecosystem functioning relations are modified by environmental complexity.” *PLoS One*, 5(5). DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0010834.

Lagenheder taught us how to determine diversity, which we applied to our Earth microbiome research.

Miller, L. (2015). “Probiotic claims for gastrointestinal conditions: Stretching the truth?” *Journal of Dietary Supplements*, 12(3):251-264.

This is one of several articles that provided insight into the unregulated probiotic industry.

Moran, M. (2015). “The global ocean microbiome.” *Science*, 350(6266). DOI: 10.1126/science.aac8455.

The article describes the need to investigate metabolic relationships between microbes in the ocean; encouraged us to do field research on the ocean microbiome.

Thomas, S., Izard, J., Walsh, E., Batich, K. Chongsathidkiet, P., et al. (2017). "The host microbiome regulates and maintains human health: A primer and perspective for non-Microbiologists." *Cancer Research*, 77(8), 1783-1812.

This article introduced us to the essential contributions of microorganisms to human health.

UPHOLDING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

IOTA ZETA CHAPTER

Northeast Mississippi Community College

Booneville, Mississippi

ABSTRACT

Researching the theme of "Rights and Responsibilities" sparked our interest in society's responsibility to children unable to live with their biological families. We narrowed our research from the rights of children and the responsibilities of families to provide those rights to the disturbing fact that approximately 3% of foster children actually graduate from college. In a foster home, they often feel a sense of alienation. Therefore, we conceived the goals of encouraging academic ambition in area foster children and supporting those who work on their behalf. We worked with numerous organizations to host a Halloween-themed college fair ("College Isn't Scary"), inviting 415 foster children. Focused on college orientation, the event included food and entertainment. Motivated by distressing research that children are often removed from their homes with their belongings in garbage bags, we also sought to supply personal needs by launching a luggage and toy drive ("Bags & Bears"). Finally, we provided the Prentiss County Mississippi Department of Child Protective Services (MDCPS) with a Christmas celebration and paid for non-profit status for a foster parent support group. Through this process, we let our research guide our actions and evaluated our actions accordingly.

OBJECTIVES

Our first objective was to use our scholarly findings to develop specific resources for furthering children's rights and assisting foster and adoptive families. Our second objective was to seek partnerships with community organizations and local government entities to better understand foster care in our state and to identify, develop, and implement resources for furthering children's rights. Our final objective was to contribute to the local segment of MDCPS to support foster children, parents, and social workers.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

As we began our project, we knew we wanted to focus on adoption. It was clear to us that a child's place in the family is central to how the world works. In the first week of research, the team discovered two investigative articles in the *New York Times* and the *Biloxi Sun Herald* that mentioned *Olivia Y. v. Barbour*, a 2004 class-action lawsuit against the Mississippi Division of Family and Children's Services for "failing in its duty" to protect its children. Additional revelations of the widespread dysfunction of MDCPS raised questions about children's rights and society's responsibilities toward them. We realized we needed to shift our focus. While changing themes created an obstacle, Theme 3: Rights and Responsibilities led us to a more relevant question: "What are the responsibilities of society in ensuring a child's rights when basic needs are not provided by his or her biological family?"

CONCLUSIONS

We concluded that one of the key ways the world works is through the family providing for child development. "Convention on the Rights of the Child," a human rights treaty, states that children's basic rights include a stable and secure environment. Without stability, how the world works for both the child and the parents is detrimental. When a family and the community fail a child because of their neglect, it is the government and private agencies' responsibility to step in and provide for the child's welfare. When we took a deeper look at foster care family dynamics,

we found that foster children and foster parents need secure attachments to each other just like biological families. Children in foster care desire a sense of permanence, but normally lack this. Scholars found that parents who provide enrichment for foster children, such as tutoring, therapy, and other extracurricular activities, can fulfill this need and create a positive impact. Along with the initial discrepancies foster children experience, we learned that children can suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), neurological damage, delayed physical growth, and delayed psychological growth. The listed health effects forced our research team to recognize the crucial role foster parents and social workers play in child development.

While government agencies have made requirements for foster parents practical, a severe shortage of foster homes and adopting families still exists. Research for Mississippi reveals further shortages in the number of experienced, qualified social workers, which results in very high caseloads. Our research revealed a need for communities and individuals to support all people involved because of several factors: the overload workers endure, the PTSD foster parents can encounter, and the abuse some foster children undergo. Our team learned specifics on the condition of our state's foster care system from studying the Olivia Y. lawsuit and our interviews with social workers. Our research demonstrated that the Mississippi Department of Child Protective Services' funding has improved, but that it still has areas to correct and further develop. One daunting fact about the MDCPS is its negligence in generating qualitative data concerning the people groups within the foster care programs. We concluded that investigating areas to assist all three people groups involved with the foster care system would honorably fulfill our goals and objectives. Learning about serious deficiencies, we concluded that society bears some responsibility for improving foster children's lives. We designed actions to mitigate the challenges foster care children in our area face. From primary research, we concluded that outreach should embrace multiple constituencies: children, parents, and caseworkers.

ACTION

Discovering how few foster children complete college prompted our primary action. According to the national foster care fact sheet, "Fostering Success in Education," only 2-9% of foster children earn a degree. Consulting a state adoption supervisor motivated us to improve children's academic expectations by demystifying the college experience. We created a college fair for foster care children (ages K-12) called "College Isn't Scary," held during Halloween season. We designed the event to encourage these students, make them feel special, and provide feasible information that might inspire them to attend college. We provided a variety of services at "College Isn't Scary," including campus tours, a college information fair featuring four area schools, games, and a meal. To ensure these children and families believed they were special, we provided professional family portraits free of charge.

The college fair was financed through a grant from the Modern Woodmen of the World. This event presented our most substantial obstacles, as we had to deal with conflicts, inclement weather, and working with foster families with whom we could not communicate directly. We successfully moved the event indoors, and we issued invitations through MDCPS social workers.

After learning that Mississippi social workers frequently use garbage bags to move children's belongings, we developed a drive to collect more humane forms of luggage. We conducted a campus-wide "Bags 'N Bears" drive for foster children to provide duffel bags, backpacks, and stuffed animals for our five-county region. We used a general chapter meeting to educate our members and publicized the event through our Learning Management System.

Our chapter members played a key role through our semiannual cheese sale. Raising over \$10,000, the chapter was able to extend this project beyond its original goals and into the holiday season. We provided Christmas gifts for Prentiss County foster children, including a swing set, tablets, bicycles, and other major items they requested. We also hosted a Christmas party for the families. Knowing the demands foster parents and social workers face, we provided gift certificates to area restaurants for them to make their lives a little bit easier.

To help foster families in the future, we created a Facebook group for our region's foster care support group, F.A.S.T. (Foster Adoptive Support Team). The funds we raised also helped this organization gain non-profit status to guarantee the continuation of its service to foster children and their caretakers.

IMPACT

We raised \$10,867 and received a \$2,000 grant to fund our action components. Fifty-five volunteers hosted 18 attendees at "College Isn't Scary." "Bags N Bears" netted 88 bags and 220 toys. Of those surveyed at the college fair, on a scale of 1-4, with 1 being the least likely, a weighted average of 3.5 children, upon entering, considered college a future possibility. Upon exiting, the average was 3.83. On the same scale of 1-4, 100% rated their experience a 4. Thirty-six children, 20 social workers, and 18 parents received Christmas gifts.

We learned to confront uncomfortable issues that affect those whose voice would not otherwise be heard. Overall, this project has influenced our officer team and all the collaborators in a positive way, teaching us how to use research and action to create awareness and actions.

RESOURCES

"Convention on the Rights of the Child." *OHCHR | Convention on the Rights of the Child*, www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx.

Learning the universal rights of children guided us in assessing the extent of local violations of those rights.

Dauids, E. L., and Roman, N. V. "Does Family Structure Matter? Comparing the Life Goals and Aspirations of Learners in Secondary Schools." *South African Journal of Education*, no. 3, 2013, p. 00. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edssci&AN=edssci.S0256.01002013000300006&site=eds-live.

Learning that the family is critical to nurturing children's academic perseverance throughout the world, we inferred that family instability could stunt children's scholastic ambitions.

Murati, R. "Family in Contemporary Society." 2016. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsbas&AN=edsbas.ftjjjhs.oai.ojs.j.umansciences.com.article.3531&site=eds-live.

By asserting that families are not isolated entities, the article enlightened us about the societally influential role of family in child development.

"PRESS RELEASE: New Agreement Reached in Olivia Y. Settlement." *MDCPS, NSPARC*, 19 Dec. 2016, www.mdcps.ms.gov/2016/12/press-release-new-agreement-reached-in-olivia-y-settlement/. Accessed 30 May 2017.

Reading about improvements to the system boosted our optimism about governmental agencies' commitment to their responsibilities and gave us insight into how society tries to meet its responsibilities towards children without stable families.

Rhodes-Courter, A. *Three Little Words*. Simon & Schuster, 2008.

Reading the author's vivid first-person account of her psychologically damaging foster care experiences inspired our empathy.

Rivera, M., and Sullivan, R. "Rethinking Child Welfare to Keep Families Safe and Together: Effective Housing-Based Supports to Reduce Child Trauma, Maltreatment Recidivism, and Re-Entry to Foster Care." *Child Welfare*, vol. 94, no. 4, 2015, pp. 185-204. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=cmedm&AN=26827482&site=eds-live.

Learning about alternatives to traditional foster care structures implied the importance of innovative problem-solving, giving us different perspectives on the issue.

Shackelford, K. K. Ph.D., LSCW, Mississippi Department of Human Services, former Deputy Administrator Division of Family and Children's Services (CPS), Personal Interview, 12 June 2017.

This interview gave us insight into the Olivia Y. case and the burdens social workers bear in the flawed MDCPS system.

Sinkkonen, H., and Kyttälä, M. "Supportive Housing in Foster Care." *Child Care in Practice*, vol. 21, no. 4, 01 Jan. 2015, pp. 408-424. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1084964&site=eds-live.

Reading this approach to helping foster children transition to independent adulthood gave implicit insights into the probable needs of foster children everywhere.

CREATING PARTNERSHIPS TO ENSURE PHI THETA KAPPA MEMBERSHIP INCLUSION AND EQUITY

ALPHA RHO LAMBDA CHAPTER

Jackson College, Central Campus

Jackson, Michigan

ABSTRACT

Concerned with the rights and responsibilities of prisoners and the institutions that serve them, we investigated the activities of the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC), Jackson College (JC) and its Prison Education Initiative (PEI), and Phi Theta Kappa (PTK). We discovered that prison reform is a controversial issue in the United States. We wrestled with issues regarding incarcerated students' access to educational programs and PTK's responsibility in providing full membership programming to incarcerated students. We challenged our concepts of prisoner equity and inclusion, respected each other's research findings, and learned new language as we became advocates and activists in speaking to Jackson College students and community members. All of us heightened our communication, collaboration, research, and writing skills throughout each phase of the project. We now understand how making change within multiple systems requires resourcefulness, persistence, and tenacity.

OBJECTIVES

Our first objective was to increase our understanding and that of our community concerning prisoner rights and our responsibilities. To accomplish that, we sought to ensure that our PTK chapter and MDOC, JC/PEI, and PTK partners worked together to recognize prisoners' access to all PTK programming. During the research and action phases of our project, our objectives grew to include conducting research to investigate issues of justice and ethics in MDOC and federal prison reform. We set a goal to become prison reform advocates and to continue dialogue with Jackson College faculty, staff, administrators, students, and community members to better support our college's role in prisoner education and PTK membership. Our final objective was to share our processes and results beyond our college. Our desire was to understand the requisites needed for PTK/PEI membership (because of Internet access prohibition and limited research materials). Our thoughtful decision-making and actions would not just benefit incarcerated Michigan students, but would serve as a template for other chapters, community colleges, and perhaps even the broader Phi Theta Kappa community.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

As the project began, we set team goals. Those included broadening our perspectives, educating and advocating for stakeholder influence and impact, creating an effective team by building connections with each other, gaining knowledge, and increasing personal empathy. We wanted to challenge the depth of our research. We examined the meanings implicit in "How the World Works." We carefully read the Honors Program Guide and discussed how and under what conditions the world works well or not so well. We discussed factors of uncivil and inhumane actions, the influence of myth and power, and differing leadership paradigms. Two team members were passionate advocates for prisoner rights, due to the incarcerations of family members. They presented compelling rationales for studying our responsibilities for prison reform. Another team member had participated in a previous chapter project on prison border theory and recalled that a letter to PTK's Board of Directors requested changes in policy granting membership to prison-eligible members. The experiences and insights of these three officers led us to adopt prisoner rights and responsibilities as our research topic.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on our research and concurrent discussions, we discerned our own biases about prisoners' rights. We recognized that the incarcerated are marginalized. Even after serving their sentences, the parolees experience job discrimination and encounter many related problems. We learned about prisoner rights activism through organizations like the Vera Institute of Justice, Equal Justice Initiative, and the American Civil Liberties Union. We needed ways to increase empathy and awareness of discrimination against prisoners, their struggles, and the difficulties they face upon their return to society. All three of the institutions that serve our PEI students — Michigan Department of Corrections, Jackson College, and PTK — have missions, visions, value statements, and strategic plans that support our PEI students' equitable treatment. The MDOC's vision states, "We establish meaningful partnerships with public and private entities to create a safer Michigan by holding offenders accountable while promoting their success." JC's mission states, "Together we inspire and transform lives." Its value of inclusion further strengthens this commitment: "We demonstrate inclusion by seeking involvement and providing access for those with diverse backgrounds to work toward a culture of equality." PTK's strategic plan also calls for "increased access to membership by closing equity and inclusion gaps." Thus, in February of 2017, when PTK extended its participation criteria to students who are incarcerated or serving probation, we decided to be part of this commitment to provide PTK membership access. We were excited to propose strategies for ensuring full membership benefits to PEI students who chose PTK membership.

ACTION

Following the announcement of PTK's policy change granting eligibility to incarcerated students, a new list of eligible students (including PEI students) was provided by the JC Registrar. The PEI Assistant Director and our team worked together to create paper application forms. We produced a PowerPoint handout to use for orientations at MDOC locations. The presentation explained PTK's purpose/mission — recognition of academic excellence and support of students' continued leadership and scholarship; highlighted benefits; and detailed how to accept membership through their sponsors. We needed to design new PTK recruitment information — handouts, posters, and brochures— since PTK materials did not meet MDOC regulations. Membership acceptance, including processing membership fees from sponsors, required detailed conversations with PTK, our business office, PEI staff, and incarcerated students to ensure smooth transactions. New business office procedures for accepting membership fees from prison sponsors were also implemented. We redirected the new membership packets to be sent to Jackson College rather than to prison sites, due to membership pins (contraband) accompanying these packets. We received approval by the MDOC Director to hold Induction ceremonies by adapting them to comply with MDOC standards. We also transcribed and distributed Competitive Edge Level 1 online materials, videos, and URL links for PEI/PTK members to provide access prohibited by lack of Internet access.

IMPACT

At this writing, 98 PEI students have accepted PTK membership since May 2017. Eleven induction ceremonies were held during summer and fall terms at five MDOC facilities. One induction ceremony was held at the Federal Penitentiary. During November inductions, eligible members were invited and received information about PTK. Honorary Membership was bestowed to the Assistant PEI Director during our August Central Campus Induction Ceremony for support of the project. A PEI student and JC graduate's remarks help convey qualitative outcomes: "Becoming a PTK member validates all of the hard work that I've put into my studies each semester. I have never been a member of an honor society . . . I have mostly associated with the opposite end of the spectrum. I cannot describe the feeling of hearing the pride in the voices of my family and the renewed belief they now have in me. I believe that PTK will open so many doors for me and assist me in continuing my education and, ultimately, attaining my educational goals. I now feel

as if I am a part of something much larger than myself, and I am committed to doing all that I can to represent PTK." This student will be inducted as our VP of Service during a Prison Induction Ceremony in 2018.

We continue to create Competitive Edge packets, articulate College Project as Warden's Project, redesign Honors in Action as an Honors Case Study Challenge project, use televised documentaries and newscasts, and communicate the results to JC Trustees and stakeholders. The most pressing opportunities are helping PEI/PTK graduates continue their education by providing information about correspondence courses, PTK transfer scholarships, and Jackson Foundation Prison scholarships for parolees. Posted in PEI classrooms is this quotation by Victor Hugo that continues to inspire us: "He who opens a school door, closes a prison."

RESOURCES

American Civil Liberties Union. (2017). *Prisoners' Rights*.

A culture of punishment, combined with race- and class-based animus, has led the United States to rely on incarceration more heavily than any other country in the world. The human and financial costs of mass incarceration are staggering, and the burden falls disproportionately on the poor and people of color. Prisoner education through high school and college programming offers the best remediation of recidivism.

Hartnett, S. J., ed. (2011). *Challenging the Prison Industrial Complex: Activism, Arts, and Educational Alternatives*. University of Illinois Press, 2010.

The opening series of articles discusses the fear factor (promulgated by local vigilantes, news articles, and broadcasts) of why prisoners should remain incarcerated. The collection also includes successful prison arts and education programs in Michigan that provide resources typically denied to citizens living behind bars.

Jaishankar, K. (2009). *International Perspectives on Crime and Justice. In a world of growing interdependence, the necessity to understand criminological developments across the globe becomes imperative*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.

This book offered cross-cultural perspectives of different criminological issues and criminal justice systems operating worldwide. We learned that many regard the American system of imprisonment as ideal in contrast to the brutal isolation and treatment of prisoners throughout many parts of the world.

Seaburg, K. (Asst. Director of Prison Education Initiative). (Feb. 2017). Personal Interviews. seaburgkimberly@jccmi.edu.

The VERA Institute of Justice awarded Jackson College an initial grant to offer college classes to eligible prisoners. Starting with 15 students in 2014, students paid for their education through sponsors until June 2016, when up to 1,305 JC Pell-eligible prisoners received Second Chance Pell Awards in a pilot program. There are now 650+ students currently enrolled in JC's PEI program. Seaburg's explanation of JC/PEI history was instrumental in our theme selection. When Seaburg learned PTK membership would be offered to PEI students, she reached out to our chapter for more information.

Stevenson, B. (2014). *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*. Spiegel & Grau, 2015.

All team members read Stevenson's story about the redeeming potential of mercy within the American justice system. Stevenson's testimony helped dissuade some of our members' attitudes that prisoners should be provided no education and have no rights.

United Nations General Assembly. (1948). "Universal Declaration of Human Rights." <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declarationhuman-rights/>.

Article 26 states, "Everyone has the right to education...higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit," and Article 6 grants "the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law." Reading "The Universal Declaration" inspires us to continue working to ensure prisoners receive educational equality and dignity.

United States Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Rights and Labor. (2012), "Report on International Prison Conditions."

There are three broad categories of human rights and humanitarian concerns regarding 10.1 million people imprisoned worldwide: 1) unsafe prison conditions, including overcrowding, poor sanitation, inadequate access to food, and poor medical care; 2) mistreatment of prisoners by prison staff or other authorities; and 3) inadequate legal protections leading to prisoners' incarceration, as well as failure to respect the right to legal redress while in prison. In 25 developed and underdeveloped countries, these issues continue due to repressive governments.

Vollan, Marianne (Feb. 10, 2015). "Keep 'Em Off the Streets and Behind Bars: Tough Prison Sentences Mean a Safer Society." Video streamed on IntelligenceSquared.com.

"Lock them up. That's the way we've always dealt with offenders. Criminals deserve to be put away for their crimes. Prison works because it keeps those criminals out of circulation and acts as society's most effective deterrent. People have believed that by separating them from society that society would be safer. Because we cannot manage criminals, prison becomes a place of managed exile." This is the predominate viewpoint.

HOW THE WORLD WORKS: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION, AND THE POLITICS OF IMMIGRATION

ALPHA ETA PSI CHAPTER

Suffolk County Community College

Selden, New York

ABSTRACT

Research conducted on “Rights and Responsibilities” led to the organization of a discussion panel addressing the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) termination. Research efforts were guided by the question, “How do social politics affect performance and perception, and how do they shape an individual’s experience?” Research ultimately led us to draw the correlation between social development and politics: that a law can favor an ideology, and the consequences are culturally and psychologically embedded. In September 2017, DACA became at risk for termination, and there was a significant community response. It was through this rising controversy that our team sought to contribute to the movement with research gathered at that time. We formed a task force with the Student Trustee, the Center for Social Justice and Human Understanding, college faculty, and team members from Suffolk County Community College. Task force meetings entailed networking with potential speakers, forming a panel, and rallying support as research continued. The final program, “In the Eyes of Education,” targeted the college and local communities with the objective of breaking down misconceptions, showing the local and global impact of DACA termination, and providing resources for any individual to act in protecting potential targets of deportation. A major aspect of this program was asking two Phi Theta Kappa members who had undocumented status to share their stories anonymously. It was the student testimonies that humanized DACA termination and demonstrated how closely it affects our community. Our efforts and testimonies have been documented in the amicus brief of both the New York State United Teachers coalition and The National Education Association that will challenge DACA termination.

OBJECTIVES

The team specifically wanted to engage in advocacy and to break stigma through education. Using the Student Trustee’s networking and previous experience with immigration panels, objectives expanded into bringing awareness, providing introspection through student narratives, emphasizing why this is a critical issue, and equipping the average citizen with accurate information to act. We also sought to encourage all students involved to commit beyond the panel to being active as ambassadors for the students around them. Leaders would be encouraged to actively practice their civic duties by being a voice for the underrepresented. Additionally, we wanted to empower undocumented students through telling their own stories in hopes that they would attain the efficacy to advocate for themselves — to know they are protected, supported, and welcomed in our college and global community.

ACADEMIC INVESTIGATION

Academic investigation began with presentations concerning the Honors Study Topic and an introduction by our local librarian to a customized guide produced to aid in research. Our resources perpetuated the message of an information deficit and a model necessary to counter that deficit through leadership. This provided a clear direction for the action component of the project: advocacy and educational efforts. By educating team members about the platform of undocumented students, we saw potential to develop student advocates who can champion the disenfranchised population and their rights in hopes of echoing in the aggregate community. Our objectives included encouraging these leaders to actively practice their civic duties by

being a voice for the underrepresented; and empowering the non-status students through their own stories in hopes they attain the efficacy to advocate for themselves — to know they are protected, supported, and welcomed in our college and global community.

CONCLUSIONS

Our research led us to several conclusions: human rights are intrinsically molded by a cultural framework; some issues are visibly more humanitarian than political; certain judgments are reliant on inclination and can be based on misinformation; legal repression is psychologically detrimental to those affected and can lead to the negative perceptions of their place in society; and, change is proactive, however, it requires synergy and equal passion under a cause.

ACTION

In tandem with resources that pointed to social activism, an information and advocacy panel was hosted entitled “In the Eyes of Education.” The panel was scheduled just before the Suffolk County Community College Town Hall meeting to boost attendance at the meeting from significant college figures. Team members presented research and statistical data to the audience. Anonymous student testimonies from DACA recipients recounted how this citizenship category has and will affect them. A structured panel included the Director of the Center for Social Justice and Human Understanding and the Long Island Director of Intergovernmental Affairs. Audience members and volunteer attendees asked questions that examined DACA’s impact on students, families, and surrounding communities. One team member spoke on behalf of the undocumented student population of the college and elaborated on how the college has acted to serve them wherever applicable, including pairing them with immigration lawyers, providing counseling services, and assisting with job searches. One panelist spoke about the Dream Act and what will happen if DACA is terminated.

IMPACT

With an audience of 20 people, the presentation reached the Undocumented Task Force staff and the Suffolk County Community College Association. It has been included in an amicus brief on the state level. In the surveys handed out after the program, nearly all respondents noted that they felt the need to advocate on behalf of their peers. Survey comments included the following quotations: “We need to be a voice for those who might otherwise not be heard,” and “As a community, we need to be the face of change.” A clear message of awareness and civic responsibility was shared in the feedback from the audience members after the program, and a dozen new members signed up for the Undocumented Task Force. The anonymous student narratives were presented in a college Board of Trustees meeting and are now added to the amicus brief led by the New York State United Teachers coalition and The National Education Association. A professor at our college has invited team members to attend a training through Jobs for Justice that will equip trainees accompanying individuals to court to support them. For everyone involved, this was a growing experience that we believe will continue to bring our campus and community closer together.

RESOURCES

Astin, H. S., & Astin, A. W. (1996). “A social change model of leadership development guidebook.” Version III. The National Clearinghouse of Leadership Programs.

This guidebook describes the necessary aspects to achieve social change through leadership. Ultimately, change is accessible in consideration of the leader, individual, and society. Collective leadership proves to be the most effective in reaching goals and productivity, and empowerment is a product of the group’s shared passion for their causes and shared synergy. This process requires a catalyst — someone to provoke the change in others. The Social Change Model is one that the chapter can feasibly utilize in practice.

George, A. (2007). *What would Socrates say?* New York: Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 112-116.

The source also explains how laws such as the historical policies on slave-owning and laws concerning slaves provide examples on how legality and morality come apart. A law can prohibit one from helping someone of another race, despite any moral obligation. Morality and law are frangible in that one can violate the law without being immoral, yet one can also take a morally right route and not break the law. We need to remain unbiased and model values of equality for society to progress without abuse of one's rights. The respect of inalienable human rights is necessary to prevent perpetuating a discriminatory system founded on idea over consideration of the other individual.

Graham, J., Meindl, P., Beall, E., Johnson, K. M., & Zhang, L. (2016). "Cultural differences in moral judgment and behavior, across and within societies." *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 8(April 1), 125-130.

This article addresses how the moral judgments between societies vary. Three factors attributed to these differences, according to Graham, consider religion, social ecology, and social institutions. In this, the connection between judgments and perceptions to morality is bonded by culture.

Heeren, Geoffrey. (June 2015). "The status of nonstatus." *American University Law Review*, 64(5), 1115.

Geoffrey Heeren discusses the differences in trends and in social experience of being a "nonstatus" individual as opposed to a citizen with immigrant status. Heeren addresses how undocumented individuals undergo the same profiling, information disclosure, and surveillance processes as those of immigrant status but do not have nearly as many rights and cannot hold hearings or appeal in the event their "nonstatus" is revoked. This notion implies that the stigma on this cohort is perpetuated in tandem with their absence of opportunity for social prosperity.

Kahneman, D. (2013). *Thinking fast and slow*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 89-96.

This source explains how the basic assessment of making intuitive judgments is a biological reaction aided by mass misconceptions of collective society and media portrayal. Distinguishing a friend from a foe happens almost instinctively through facial features and/or expression, then aided by popular culture of villainous figures, and then by public perception through media portrayal. Such portrayals of a specific demographic affect the collective perception by association. We drew the conclusion that this is what leads to extreme biases affecting groups in the United States that are looking to thrive and prosper, and government and society are challenged with doing what is humanely correct in implementing policies that will help ensure the safety of our nation.

Stacy, H. (2009). *Human rights for the 21st Century: Sovereignty, civil society, culture*. Stanford Studies in Human Rights. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Helen Stacy analyzes the exploitations of human rights from an international perspective. Stacy proposes that legal institutions around the globe must assume the prerogative in enforcing the notions of improved human rights for the future. It is this approach that perpetuates the idea that the overarching law and its enforcement are responsible for the well-being of society globally.

Swan, R. S. & Clark-Ibáñez, M. (2017). "Perceptions of shifting legal ground: DACA and the legal consciousness of undocumented students and graduates." *Thomas Jefferson Law Review*, 39(2), 67-92.

This article analyzed the psychological burden placed upon non-status individuals under the law and in their surrounding social landscape. Despite the greater likelihood of these students doing exceptionally well in school, they are subject to social ostracization due to lost opportunity and feel the need to be especially cautious in public settings due to the potential deportation from minor legal infractions. The law affects the lives of these individuals in an intricate manner — so much so that their main sources of anxiety are what would be considered white noise by a documented citizen.

Tsai, W. & Lui, Q. (2017). "Reciprocal relations between social self-efficacy and loneliness among Chinese international students." *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, 8(2), 94-102.

Tsai et al. analyzed a positive correlation between self-efficacy in social settings and loneliness in a study of 409 Chinese international students. Moreover, students who felt they had more American friendships had scored higher on social self-efficacy. This raises the implication of how international students undergo the assimilation process, and how negatively reinforced social perceptions can be detrimental to adapting to life in a new setting. Adversely, a productive and welcoming community could prove to be beneficial to an international student's self-efficacy and alleviate any potential feelings of loneliness.



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