

# Redwood Roots

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Article 1

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May 2020

## Redwood Roots: Stories of Community Engagement at HSU

HSU Center for Community Based Learning  
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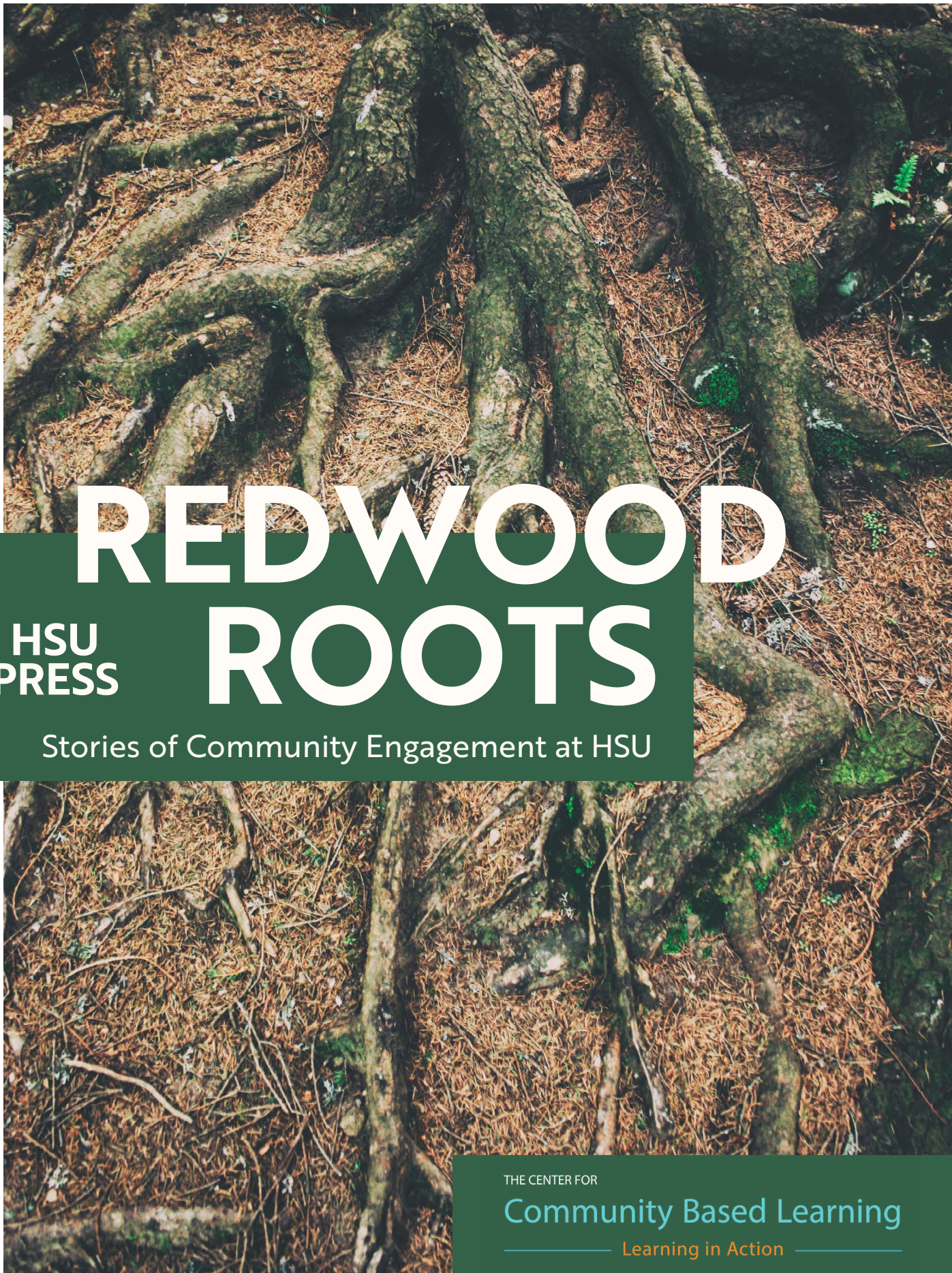
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# REDWOOD ROOTS

HSU  
PRESS

Stories of Community Engagement at HSU

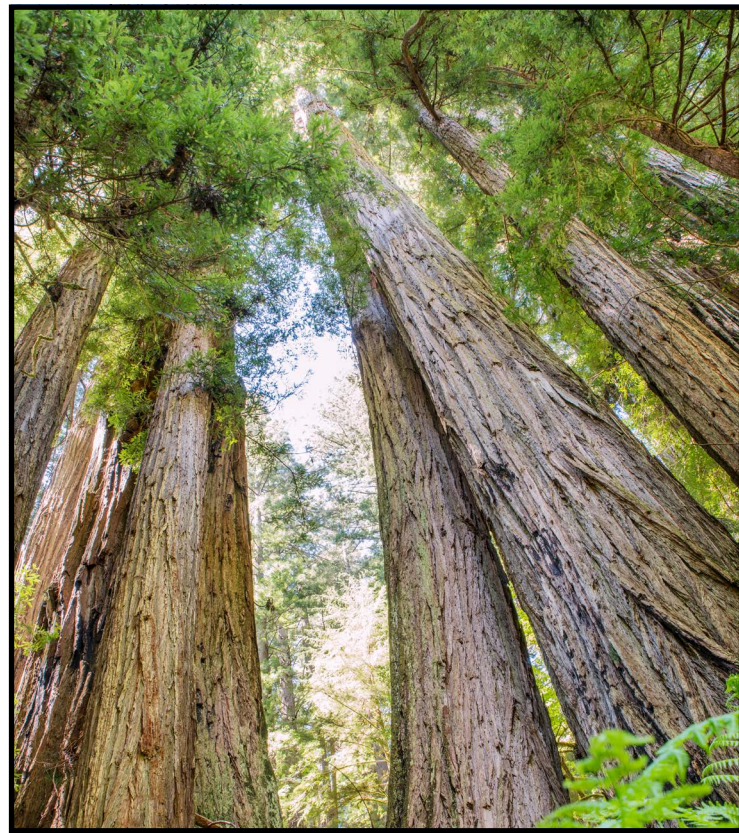
THE CENTER FOR

Community Based Learning

Learning in Action



Welcome to the inaugural edition of Humboldt State University's Redwood Roots magazine. When we came up with the idea for this magazine, we wanted to highlight the many wonderful ways that students, faculty and community partners are engaging in community-based learning practices in and around Humboldt County. This project was a huge endeavor and we are grateful to our partners, both ongoing, such as the HSU Library Press team and the shorter term partners that donated their time to submit articles, develop the concept and layout for this magazine, and their many other contributions. We began this project in the fall of 2018 and are extremely proud to have it launch in the spring of 2020.



# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

– Kathy Thornhill, Ph.D.



In the last year and a half, we have had numerous discussions about the format, purpose, content, and direction of the magazine. What we could not have envisioned was that our target timeframe to launch would be amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. We briefly discussed transitioning this edition to relay what was happening during COVID-19. We decided, however, to continue with our original plan for this spring and focus our fall 2020 edition on the many creative ways that community-based learning practices were able to continue in a remote and rapidly changing environment. So, enjoy this original edition and look for our fall edition that will highlight HSU's amazing students, faculty and community partners and how they came together (virtually) in a time of crisis to positively impact the students' education and the community we live in and love.

We acknowledge that this work is being done on the unceded ancestral, and current, homelands of the many local tribes who live, and have lived, in this area since time immemorial. We encourage you to take action to move toward a future where local tribes have sovereignty over their homelands—a future that is centered around justice and equity for all people. Take part in efforts to give land back to local tribes; pay an honor tax to the tribe whose land you reside on.

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Engage

Your Community

# Introduction

Written by: Dr. Sara Hart, Kelly Fortner  
Stacy Becker, Kathy Thornhill

**Redwood Roots** is a magazine of place and of community. Our mission is inspired by the overwhelming natural beauty of our region and the great human potential that it fosters. In this magazine, we honor the impassioned and dedicated work of people from all around Humboldt County: from local tribes, to community partners, students, faculty, and residents who volunteer and advocate for change. Bringing together the stories of students, community leaders, faculty, and staff, we will—in this and future issues—highlight a wide array of community-based learning opportunities available here at HSU.

**What is community-based learning?** A student once said it all: “Instead of walking in the world of ideas, I’m walking those ideas out into the world!” Here at HSU, innovative students, faculty, and staff have, for decades, worked alongside community partners to develop a robust set of class offerings that focus on a variety of community-engaged learning practices. These include **Academic Internships, Service Learning**, experiential workshops, field experience, community-based projects, and more.

Empower  
Yourself

The common shared benefits of community-based learning practices are manifold. Research demonstrates that connecting the classroom to the community augments the experience for all involved:

**Students** not only earn higher grade point averages but also have higher retention rates and are more likely to complete their college degrees. They demonstrate improved academic content knowledge, critical thinking skills, written and verbal communication, and leadership skills. Finally, these students show increased interest in becoming personally and professionally involved in future community enhancement projects.

Enrich  
Your Potential

**Community Partner** organizations benefit from the infusion of energy and enthusiasm that HSU students bring to work, for which there are often simply not enough hands. HSU students are an important recruiting pool for a region in need of employees with related professional skills. Many students in service via these courses have also become future employees.

**Faculty** enjoy the experiential sense of hands-in-the-dirt, boots-on-the-ground relevance that students bring back into the classroom curriculum.

**All constituents** share the joy and satisfaction of applying their efforts to real world community needs and roles.

Here, we engage. We innovate. We have found ways to prepare students to more confidently and successfully meet the challenges of a changing professional world. Here, we place students with community partners, supplementing classroom experience with hands-on opportunities to practice networking, to learn from experts in the field, and to make tangible contributions to our shared community. At the center of it all are the students. As a university, we concentrate first on student success. We want our students to thrive, in their

scholarly and extra-curricular lives here at HSU, and in their personal and professional futures. Student success is the litmus test for valuable programs, but it is not a stable target reached by way of an unchanging path. Our student body is ever changing, the world we face is constantly changing, and these changes effect what students need from HSU.

**Faculty and Community Partners:** we salute you for the many additional steps you take to provide these stimulating experiences for HSU students. This magazine will highlight your successes, challenges, insights and humor all along the way.

**Students:** this magazine is dedicated to you. It is an invitation to engage in your community, empower yourself, and enrich your potential. Our mission is to increase your sense of connection and community, to show you some of the many, many ways that you might become involved during your time here at HSU. Involve yourself—in projects of social and environmental justice, in direct discourse with diverse groups, in professional skill-building. Involve yourself in your community, and in your future. In the pages that follow, we'll share examples of how students, with faculty and community partners, have done just that.



# Equity in, and through, Community Engagement

— Written by Yvonne Doble, Kelly Fortner and Loren Collins —



## Advancing equity through community-based learning partnerships:

At HSU, over 1000 students a year participate in Service Learning, Academic Internships, Field Placements, and other community-based learning practices. These experiences often bring new connections and changing perspectives in the community, healing, and a new sense of home for our students in Humboldt. At the heart of many of these stories is a passion for social and environmental justice shared by students, faculty and their community partners.

Over the years, as concerns for equity have come to the forefront at HSU, in our community, and across the nation, many of our partnerships have become prominent places for students to engage in equity-related work on campus and in our community. Student interns, Service Learners, and students in their field placements have served local schools, nonprofits, government agencies and businesses in a variety of ways to tackle issues around equity and build inclusive practices. Some of these partners include: [Humboldt Area Foundation - Equity Alliance](#), [City of Arcata - Equity Arcata](#), the [HSU Cultural Centers for Academic Excellence](#), [Centro Del Pueblo](#), [Humboldt Center for Constitutional Rights](#),

[HSU Scholars without Borders](#), [Humboldt County Office of Education](#), [Planned Parenthood Northern California](#), [HSU Health and Well-Being Services](#), [Potawot Community Food Garden](#), [Jefferson Community Center](#), [Humboldt Area Center for Harm Reduction](#), [Court Appointed Special Advocates \(CASA\)](#), [Boys and Girls Club of the Redwoods](#), [Co-operation Humboldt](#), [True North Organizing Network](#), and [Food for People - the Humboldt County Food Bank](#).

Students have served as Racial Equity Interns for the City of Arcata and as representatives on joint task forces between the city and HSU; researched the history of race and racism in Humboldt County for the Humboldt Area Foundation; served at the Jefferson Community Center to meet needs of the local community; interpreted parent-teacher conferences at local schools for Spanish-speaking families; served as Court Appointed Special Advocates for CASA; and served our local immigrant communities through El Centro Académico Cultural, True North Organizing Network, Scholars Without Borders, and Centro Del Pueblo.

There are so many ways to get involved at the ground level to dismantle racism, build equity and inclusivity, and strengthen our campus and surrounding communities. These experiences allow our students to learn from community builders, activists, and organizers who have been doing this work for decades.

## Equity Arcata and the Equity Alliance:

Meridith Oram, the Community Development Specialist in HSU's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, teaches Political Science 381S, a Service Learning class that supports Equity Arcata, a partnership between the City of Arcata and HSU. This course focuses on building skills in equity-related work, civic engagement, leadership, community organizing, and investigating power and privilege.

Students explore these concepts in the classroom and apply them by serving on one or more of seven different working groups consisting of HSU students,

community members, local businesses and City of Arcata staff. These working groups are organized around community issues including housing, bias reporting, helping to make businesses more inviting and welcoming to HSU's diverse student body. These efforts are also supported by a Racial Equity Intern from HSU who is hired by the City annually. A full feature article about this work will be featured in the Fall 2020 edition of Redwood Roots. The following videos, produced by the City of Arcata, highlight the value of these partnerships.



## Placing equity at the center of the community-based learning experience:

For the past two years, the Center for Community Based Learning and the Department of Social Work have partnered, with support from the Center for Teaching and Learning, to put equity at the heart of our community-based learning practices at HSU. Advancing equity, creating valuable learning experiences in the community, and supporting our students requires strong collaborations and a willingness to tackle difficult issues when partnerships directly address or reveal inequities and disparities.

In an effort to increase equitable access, gain connections and learn about experiences in our local community, staff and faculty facilitated four information gathering sessions. These sessions, which had



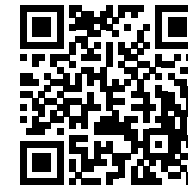
more than 40 total participants, collected qualitative data on equity and community-based learning practices at HSU.

During each world cafe session on Equity in Community Engagement at HSU, participants were asked the following questions:

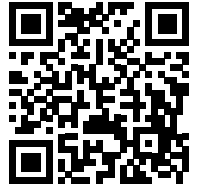
- What do community hosts need to know to support student success?
- What do students need to know prior to serving/community engagement?
- What do facilitators/faculty need to know to better support equitable engagement?
- What systems need to work together?

These sessions identified barriers in community-based learning practices at HSU for students, faculty, and community partners. Following these sessions, an Equity in Community Engagement Action Group was formed. The committee has been working since Spring 2019 to use the data collected to determine how best to remove those barriers. The group is currently developing resources and processes for on- and off-campus student placements, including drafting a student-focused Rights and Responsibilities document.

Facing issues and working together begin to move us toward a more equitable region and a society that is more inclusive and welcoming for HSU students and everyone living in this area. As James Baldwin once stated, "Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced."



## Environmental Education: A Celebration of Shared Learning



Every fall semester, Jenn Tarlton's Applied Environmental Education & Interpretation class puts together Environmental Education Day at Freshwater Elementary school. These future educators create lesson plans and activities, then join forces with elementary students to celebrate the learning about the environment and how they can make a positive impact. Educators and students, from both HSU and Freshwater Elementary school, love the unique experience that Environmental Education Day brings. To tell this story, Tarlton's Spring 2019, ESM 353 Environmental Education & Interpretation Graphics class, interviewed students from the previous semester about their experience planning for, and leading, Freshwater Elementary school students in exciting, environmentally-related educational activities.







## The Gift of Art and Teaching for HSU and Humboldt County

Featuring James Woglom and Art Education Students

Written by Loren Collins

A key component of Service Learning is the idea of reciprocity; everyone gives and everyone benefits through these partnerships. In Dr. James Woglom's Art Education courses, everyone benefits through partnerships that span two years, four scaffolded courses, and serve anywhere from eight to ten local schools and youth programs. His students gain valuable mentorship and experience working with HSU faculty, local professionals, fellow majors and hundreds of elementary school students—while designing and implementing art curriculum. The community partners benefit by having outstanding art programs offered in places where tight budgets and lack of resources would otherwise deny our local youth these opportunities. Dr. Woglom and HSU's Art department benefit by having a rich, diverse program with excellent curriculum and outstanding hands-on experiences for their students.

Every year, students complete the final stretch of their two years of courses and Service Learning with Dr. Woglom in ART 498S. During this time, they have designed and delivered curriculum in real classrooms and programs to account for 70-80 hours of direct service. Simultaneously, they will have developed their teaching philosophies, curriculum vitae and resumes, and practiced interviewing skills. These students leave HSU with the education, experience, and references they need to compete with the best for entrance into credential programs, and eventually, their own full-time teaching positions. At the end of their last semester, Dr. Woglom invites these students to celebrate the culmination of their experience in an entirely artistic fashion, through a mixed medium art show presenting their own, original works. We are excited to share with you a sample of these amazing pieces, with special thanks to Shia Streator, who visited the 2018-2019 cohort's show and captured the spirit of their experiences.

### Art student Elizabeth Cao Truong shared the following:

#### What led you to engage in community-based learning?

Art Education. This program taught me how to get involved with my community through Service Learning, curriculum development, ethnography, and community outreach.

#### What did you do during your time?

I learned a lot about art education and personal development. I learned in a number of ways; from facilitating inclusive learning and creative environments, to aiding in hanging shows and assisting as a docent for museums and galleries. I also organized and assisted with art classes, fairs, and murals, led workshops at a non-profit organization, curated my first art show event, participated in art exhibitions, and promoted art opportunities and events. I became an artist, an art activist!

#### What about community-based learning is interesting to you?

Community-based practices are interesting to me because I get to learn about the uniqueness that each individual has to bring to the table, along with building and bridging community relationships between diverse groups and gaining new skills while sharing my own at the same time, and creatively collaborating with others.

#### How did your experience compare to your initial expectations?

My experience does not compare to my initial expectations because this experience has been everything and more. The initial feelings that I had from when I first started to attend school here remain and are consistently evolving, encouraging, and exciting. I love every aspect of this program.

#### What are the benefits of community-based learning and how might you advocate for them?

Community-based learning support healthy relationships, further self-awareness and an awareness of others and our environment. I advocate for this by investing in, and prioritizing, safe spaces for creativity, learning, and development.







Left: Kero Katto - Right: Patches

Maya Strauss  
Kero Katto  
Spring 2019

For this piece I decided to do a direct reflection of my time teaching at Pacific Union. While my cohort and I taught, we helped the students create a collection of animal mask/hats. Through the process of working together with our students, I was able to learn so many valuable skills about process, management, and collaboration. Kerro Katto is my expression of this learning experience.

Elizabeth Gordon  
Patches  
Spring 2019

The time that I have spent in my Service Learning program I have found not only ways that I can be involved in my community but also in ways that I can challenge myself as an artist. My experiences at Canvas and Clay brought me to realize that the way people experience art is beyond just visual but also through touch, because of this I chose to create a sculpture that would emulate this. I find comfort in the texture of knit so I chose to bring that into a sculpture of a dog, which was the subject of the lesson plans that we created. I encourage people to “feed” the dog what they believe makes a good teacher, or what is something that they want to learn at some point in their lifetime. Dogs are clever and curious, and the old saying is incorrect. You can always teach a dog new tricks.



Students of Pacific Union School



Danielle Baca

Danielle Baca  
CaN yOu seE thIs NOise?  
Spring 2019

Throughout my art education undergrad experience, I have developed an understanding of the interrelatedness of visual and auditory aesthetics. In this installation, I chose to highlight the synergistic nature of art and music. By using art as a technique to create percussion instruments, it allows the creativity within the construction on the instrument while demonstrating the problem solving aspects of arts and crafts.



Danielle Baca

Molly McKaig  
Healer  
Fall 2019

Throughout my time at Humboldt State, clay has been the main medium keeping me motivated. It has been an incredible tool for my healing, my changing, and my growth. It has taught me the reality of impermanence and has provided me a method of translation between my brain and my hands. I believe that it is effective and nurturing to use creative processes to work through internal matters. As an art educator, I hope to help people find their own way of communicating through creation of art.



Danielle Baca



Molly McKaig - Healer





Dr. Zhong and the Fall 2019 PreMed Biology 482 Internship class students.

## Rural PreMed Partnerships: Medical Professionals Emerging

Featuring Dr. Jianmin Zhong, Brooke Reyes, and Biology 482 Students

Written by Stacy Becker

There are times when community-based learning practices take on added synergy due to the efforts of a team of planners striving to meet the multiple needs of constituents. One dynamic example is the recent development of Biology 482 Supervised Internship: PreMed Shadowing, offered for the first time in the Fall of 2019.

Regionally, as with many rural communities across America, Humboldt and Del Norte Counties have been federally listed as Physician Shortage Designated Areas. A recent *Lost Coast Outpost* article, "[Paging More Doctors: California's Worsening Physician](#)

[Shortage](#)," states that "California is facing a growing shortage of primary care physicians, one that is already afflicting rural areas and low-income inner city areas, and is forecasted to impact millions of people within ten years. Not enough newly minted doctors are going into primary care, and a third of the doctors in the state are over 55 and looking to retire soon, according to a study by the Healthforce Center at UC-San Francisco." Locally, our aging physician population average is over 55 years.

Enter the HSU Biology Department. The PreMed Shadowing course will provide a conduit of young



professionals to be mentored by local medical practitioners, with the hope that HSU students will ultimately return to serve in the area.

The HSU Department of Biological Sciences and the HSU PreMed Society (student club), with support from the HSU Center for Community Based Learning and the regional professional Humboldt-Del Norte County Medical Society (HDNCMS), began planning for this course in Spring 2019, now offered to HSU students for the first time in Fall 2019.

Clinical shadowing and observation hours are a vital way to expose students to the possibilities of a medical career. However, in past years, HSU students have struggled to arrange clinical shadowing experiences on their own. Between the impacted work of local medical practitioners and the typical Biology student's hefty schedule, finding common ground and making connections for professional shadowing can be daunting.

**"I never would have thought that in the first semester of the program I would be shadowing four medical professionals in one semester."**

— Brooke Reyes

Dr. Jianmin Zhong shared the scope of the program: "Our goal is to increase community involvement, which ultimately strengthens support for HSU PreMed students to find more opportunities for them to shadow with local physicians and healthcare professionals. We strive to reach as many physicians and medical professionals as possible to ensure that HSU PreMed students witness first-hand what they are getting into and decide if a career in healthcare is right for them. Specifically, we'd like to invite physicians and healthcare professionals to be a part of the community supporting a team by hosting clinical shadowing for more HSU PreMed students, doing mock medical school interviews for PreMed, or giving a talk at the weekly HSU PreMed meeting."

HSU PreMed Society students Brooke Reyes and Alexis Walker jumpstarted the new course efforts and have played critical roles in helping develop the course syllabus, recruit students, promote the program, act as liaison to HDNCMS efforts, and secure presenters to prepare enrolled students for the realities of shadowing in medical clinics.



Brooke Reyes and Dr. Jianmin Zhong

Brooke Reyes, a cellular-molecular biology major with a minor in chemistry, shared that "the goal of the Biology 482 Medical Internship class is to give students the opportunity to shadow medical professionals, whether that be doctors, nurse practitioners, physician assistants—anything that interests them—and get more experience that they can use to determine if this is the right profession for them or see if they'd like to go into something else."

Ms. Reyes participated in the pilot course last spring. She acknowledged how positive her own shadowing efforts were. "I have been able to see so many amazing things, had so many opportunities. I find it funny because initially when we started, I'd had a few doctors in mind whom I wanted to shadow, but I never





Dr. Caroline Connor, M.D., MPH shares professional insights with the Fall 2019 Pre-Med class.

would have thought that in the first semester of the program I would be shadowing four medical professionals in one semester. It was just very surprising to me to see how many medical professionals were actually interested in allowing students to shadow.”

Two key community players who helped shepherd the efforts and build community connections for the students are Penny Figas, Executive Director of the Humboldt-Del Norte County Medical Society (HD-NCMS), and Dr. Caroline Connor, MD, MPH, and chair for the newly formed HDNCMS PreMedical Education Committee.

Ms. Figas shared their long history with HSU: “HD-NCMS has worked with the HSU PreMedical Society and Dr. Zhong (and prior Dr. Varkey) for over 35+ years, working with the officers of the PreMedical Society to provide professional guidance, the annual Physician Membership Resource Directory to help students make connections in the local medical community for shadowing, find resource speakers for the HSU club and classes, and share

opportunities for students to get involved in programs, health fairs, and grant opportunities—i.e., ‘Walk With A Doc’ Program.” In efforts to support the new credit-bearing PreMed Shadowing course, Ms. Figas and Dr. Connor formalized their physician survey process to help develop a list of local medical practitioners they will maintain for shadowing opportunities and presentations on campus, while providing a crucial pipeline to the local medical community and essential advice to HSU stakeholders.

HSU PreMed student Brooke Reyes graduated in the fall of 2019, and while she plans to pursue her master’s in Physician Assistant (PA) studies elsewhere, she plans to return to Humboldt County. “This experience has been amazing and I think that it has helped me discover that I do think the Physician Assistant profession is for me. I’ve shadowed in numerous specialties and I don’t want to say that I’ve picked a specialty, but I know that it will be something in the operating room. I just think that’s where my heart is... After PA school, I want to come back to Humboldt, I love it here.”



## Finding Community on Campus: African American Center for Academic Excellence

Interview conducted by Shia Streator

Written by Kelly Fortner, Aaron Laughlin and Kathy Thornhill

Central to the underlying values of this magazine is a commitment to the well-being of the whole community. One vital aspect is connecting students with the cultural support they need inside, and outside, of the classroom. Significant on-campus examples include the Cultural Centers for Academic Excellence, which include the African American Center for Academic Excellence (AACAE), El Centro Académico Cultural, the MultiCultural Center (MCC), and the Native American Center for Academic Excellence (ITEPP or the Indian Tribal and Educational Personnel Program). These Centers are great places to find community and conduct service for a Service Learning or Academic Internship class,

or as a way to engage with the campus community outside of class. For more information on the Centers, visit their website at <https://ccae.humboldt.edu/>.

In this issue, we highlight some of the important work being done by the African American Center for Academic Excellence and the ways that the Center supports students at HSU. The AACAE mission is “to cultivate, coordinate, and contribute to institutional efforts to support Humboldt State University students that identify as African American, Black, and/or of African descent. Through social and academic programming, campus collaborations, and a commitment to advancing the





rich cultural and intellectual heritage of the Black community and the African diaspora, the AACAE provides students with institutional knowledge and advocacy, quality support services, as well as opportunities for leadership and identity development.”

In the Spring semester, 2019, Shia Streator, one of Redwood Roots’ student developers, interviewed Janaee Sykes, who was, at the time, the Lead Student Assistant for the [African American Center for Academic Excellence](#) and the Secretary for [Legacy](#), a club for women of color at HSU that creates change through student service, support, and sisterhood. Janaee shared with Shia a bit about her experience working with the AACAE and the support that the Center provides to students. Janaee expressed that “The Center is like a home for me. It is somewhere I find a lot of comfort, somewhere I feel like I can put a lot of my own personal beliefs into a space, and a place where I can help and mentor others and students who look like me.”

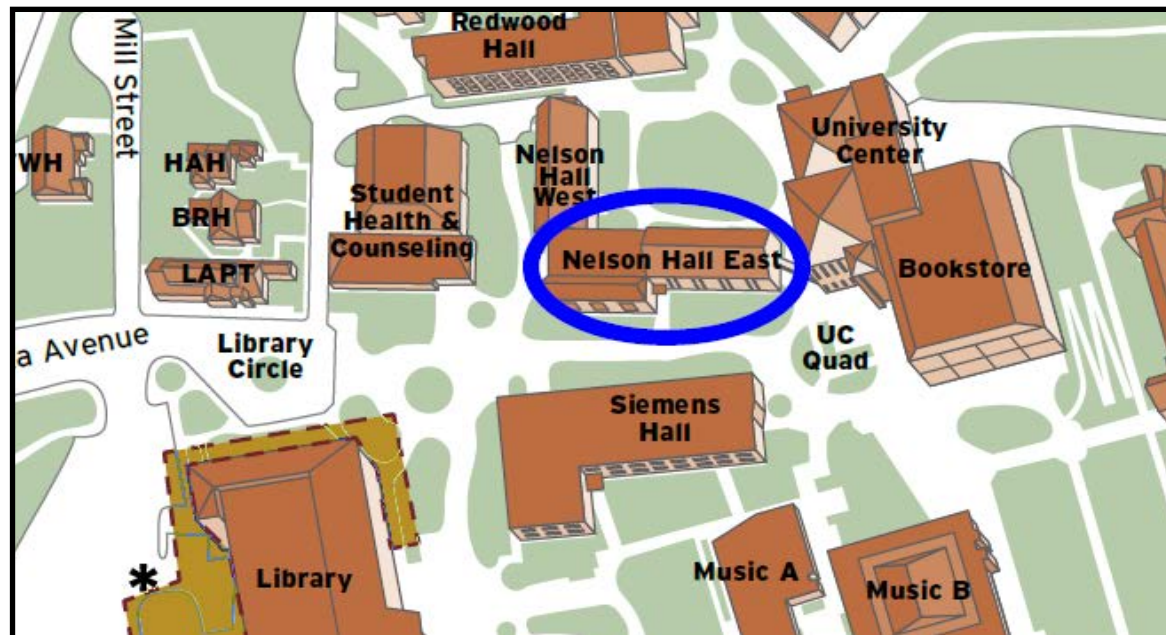
When asked what she thought the Center means to students, Janaee replied, “I think a lot of black students find the Center to be a safe space. This is somewhere black students are comfortable, they feel they can be themselves, talk how they want, and talk about things going on back home. Since a lot of us come from SoCal, like East L.A., South Central,

and San Diego, we find a lot of commonalities and we’ve gone through a lot of similar childhood tribulations. A lot of us have made a home here and are trying to see how we can use the resources in this space to navigate through this campus.”

One of the signature events the AACAE hosts is Black Grad, held annually, which offers an opportunity for graduates to celebrate with friends and family and honor the academic achievements of students who identify as Black, African American, or of African descent. Janaee explained how important this event is for her and other students. “It is very difficult for us to navigate and move through this journey while being very far from home, so to have something that is just for me, for my family, and a space that is very comfortable where people look like me is very awesome to have.”

The AACAE is developing an Academic Internship opportunity for Fall 2020. For more information on this opportunity, contact AACAE Coordinator, Doug Smith at [douglas.smith@humboldt.edu](mailto:douglas.smith@humboldt.edu).

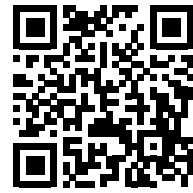
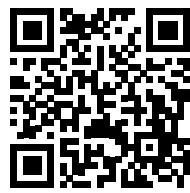
The Center is located in Nelson Hall East, room 206. If you would like to get in contact with the Center, their email is [aacae@humboldt.edu](mailto:aacae@humboldt.edu). And for more information, visit [the AACAE website](#).



The AACAE is located in Nelson Hall East, room 206.



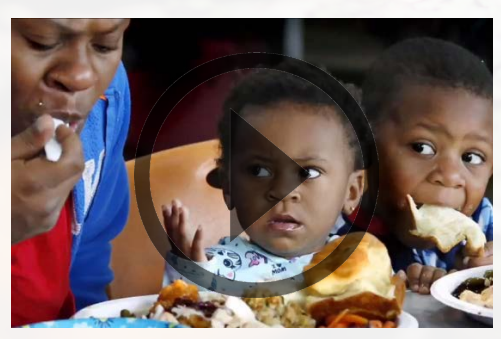




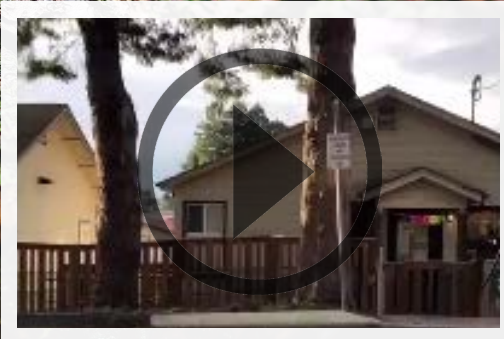
# The Perfect Match: Sociology and Criminology in Action

Every semester Dr. Karen August teaches the Service Learning component of SOC 225S: Social Issues and Action, and CRIM 225S: Inequalities and Criminalization. The Sociology and Criminology and Justice Studies programs offer the perfect blend between theory and action in these courses, by connecting their students' classroom experiences with real-world service in our community. Dr. August helps between 30-90 students find hands-on experience with organizations such as Planned Parenthood, Boys and Girls Club, California Highway Patrol, Food for People, and many more each semester. Students then reflect upon their experiences through a digital video assignment, made possible with help from the Center for Community Based Learning and Tim Miller in the HSU Library.

**Nicholas Benoit**  
Calvary Baptist Church,  
Vallejo, CA



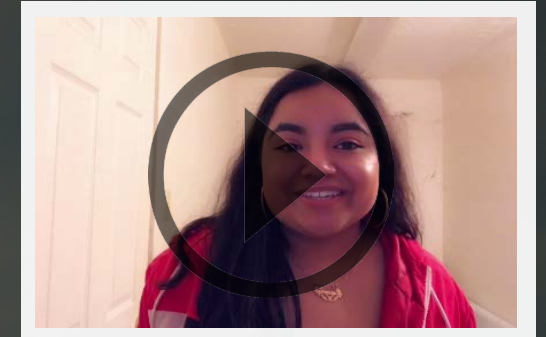
**Natalie Martinez**  
HSU Children's Learning  
Center



**Bryan Gilmore**  
Alice Birney Elementary  
School



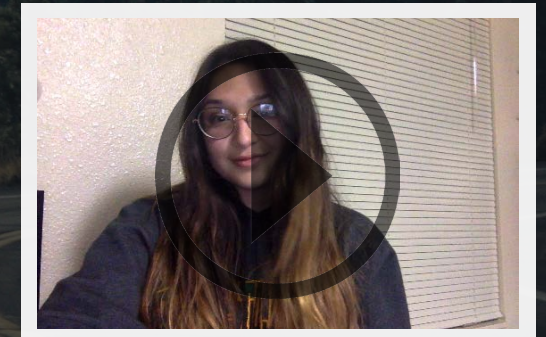
**Berenice Roman**  
Y.E.S. House: Juvenile Hall  
Recreation Program



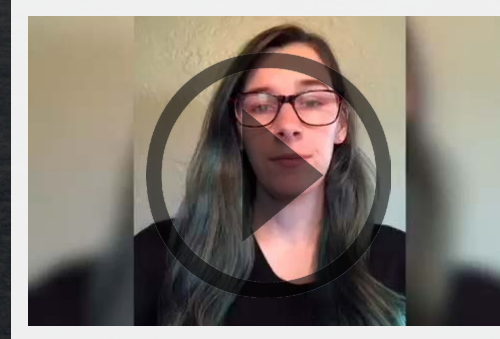
**Andrew Kramer**  
Patrick's Point State Park



**Kaily Gomez**  
Centro del Pueblo



**Sabrina Grandia**  
Planned Parenthood



**Mikayla Martin**  
Patrick's Point State Park







## Community Partner Highlights: Nezzie Wade and Ray Watson

Interviews conducted by Stacy Becker

**N**ezzie Wade is President of the Board for Affordable Homeless Housing Alternatives, Inc. (AHHA), and has hosted students from many community-based learning courses over the years, including Political Science, Criminology, Sociology, Environmental Studies, Psychology, Engineering, and Social Work. She worked at HSU for 26 years, as a Sociology faculty member, and continues to work with HSU in various capacities. She was involved with developing the Applied Sociology Internship Program for undergraduates, later elevated to a Masters Program—the first Applied Sociology Internship Program at a Masters level in the country.

Nezzie was among the first HSU Service Learning Faculty Fellows and practiced Service Learning long before it was a university program. AHHA has also worked with Youth Educational Services (YES) students on fundraisers and “considers AHHA fortunate to have university staff and faculty that not only foster visions for a just and better world but also cultivate the relationships and character to make it so.” Nezzie states, “I enjoy working with students and community—a great match for these kinds of experiences and programs.”

### Nezzie shared the following recent experiences hosting HSU students:

There are so many good stories and successes! I believe two particularly successful experiences continue to have far-reaching impacts. One was an internship with Chant’e Catt, who helped us compile our board manual. She became very excited about affordable housing alternatives because of her family’s experience of homelessness when she transferred to Humboldt State from the Redding area. Chant’e got quite fired up and created the Humboldt Student Advocate Alliance which did its own incorporation, with AHHA’s help, and it is now known as the Student Housing Advocate Alliance, a 501(c)(3). Chant’e went on to become the Housing Liaison to the Community for HSU and has helped approximately 500 students with housing and food insecurity related issues and more. We continue to work together. One other student’s internship was a joy! He chronicled in video and poster formats AHHA’s history and that of the houseless former Eureka Palco Marsh residents in their plight of nowhere to go. He continues to volunteer with AHHA post-graduation.

### Did you observe any “aha!” moments with the students?

I often gave students articles and materials to read or to reference. With AHHA there are many “aha!” moments. Most students are expressive about the expansion of their scope and appreciation of the depth of their experience. The range of activities have spanned the mundane routine work of day-to-day operations, to the excitement of important public events and participating with AHHA through direct action, written, spoken, and graphic artistry in some manner.



Nezzie Wade

### What community impacts were made due to student efforts in this service?

Definitely consciousness-raising and helping to inform the community about criminalization, issues around fair housing and poverty, and especially

developing a sensitivity to, and understanding of, homelessness and the alternatives that are possible. AHHA has worked hard to bring affordable alternatives to the forefront. And now the 2019-2027 Humboldt County Housing element reflects these options! This is a significant accomplishment for AHHA, our County Planners, and our entire Humboldt County community.

### What do you love most about working with HSU students?

Their willingness to do what we need and their talents. They are mostly eager and they are used to working hard for the most part. And we all work very hard here. So they fit right in.

### Would you recommend hosting HSU students to other organizational leaders. Why?

Yes. It does take a lot of time to be there for a student who is in an internship, but the benefits to all are most often more than worth it. It also builds community.

**R**ay Watson, Director of Detention Services-Humboldt County Probation, attended HSU from 1996 until 2000. He studied Sociology and was also a member of the football team where he started at middle linebacker for all four years. While attending HSU he was involved with the athletic mentorship program. He was assigned to several court community schools in the area and taught sports and other life lessons to local at-risk youth.

“I did this for three years and it was very rewarding work. It was also one of the major reasons I started working at Juvenile Hall. I enjoyed working with the youth. I noticed right away when you get them out of their element, most of them are really good kids.” In his current position with County Probation, Ray has hosted and mentored many HSU students from







Ray Watson

Social Work, Sociology, Criminal Justice, Psychology and YES house programs over the years.”

**“Students are able to see how things they read about in class are actually handled in the real world.”**

**– Ray Watson**

“Our department has hosted a wide array of students from HSU. All of the students who are placed with our agency seem eager to learn and have a general interest in the justice system. It really makes me proud to see the students gain real life experience working with the population we serve in Probation. To do well in the classroom is important, but to gain real life experience by actually working with people they learn about in class is far more valuable. We had an intern a few years back who really engaged in this process and was able to see the benefits probation services offers to our community. There are a lot of people who think Probation is out to punish folks for the crimes that they have been convicted of. In actuality, as stated by this particular student, probation tries to keep offenders out of jails and

on a good track in life. That’s what Probation is all about.”

**What growth did you observe in the students’ learning?**

When students first come to our department they have no idea what it’s like to work in Juvenile Hall. Most people think about what they see on TV or in the movies. Seeing students get a better understanding of what it’s like to really be in Juvenile Hall is encouraging. Students are able to see how things they read about in class are actually handled in the real world. I believe this benefits not only the student, but it also benefits our organization and the community as a whole.

**What community impacts were made due to student efforts in this service?**

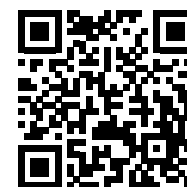
Having HSU students intern in Juvenile Hall gets the message out to the community about what kind of work we are doing in our facilities. The youth we work with will be released back into our community, so having an opportunity to work with college students while they are detained in Juvenile Hall will hopefully show youth that they can be productive members of our community and use education as a way to better their situation.

**What do you love most about working with HSU students?**

The energy and attitudes! Every single student that I’ve hosted here at Probation has been engaged in their learning and has a genuine interest in working with youth. That is good to see.

**Would you recommend hosting HSU students to other organizational leaders. Why?**

Yes, it’s a great way to expose students, who are getting ready to enter the workforce, to the organization. It also gives organizations a way to train and evaluate potential applicants to the agency.

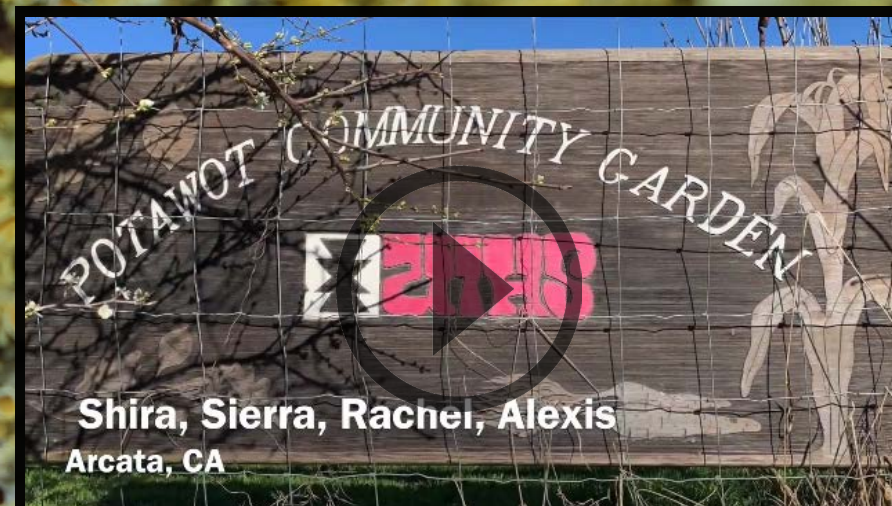


# Religion in America: Students Share Their Experience

Humboldt  
Unitarian  
Universalist  
Fellowship



Potawot  
Village



Food  
For  
People







## Religious Studies through Experience

Written by Aaron Laughlin and Dr. Sara Hart

There is a pervasive rhetoric in the contemporary world that religion is a major polarizing force. Yet, from a perspective that considers the value of religious literacy, it is hard to shake the question: are people polarized by religion, or by our understanding—or perhaps misunderstanding—of it?

Frequently, religion is paired with politics as a topic not fit for the dinner table; it is out of bounds and potentially offensive, and for some, best left undiscussed. Yet, by avoiding religion we contribute to a polarized world where misunderstandings and preconceptions rule our discourse with our fellow humans. Experience and literacy of different religions can help us learn to suspend judgement and open the lines of communication and discussion, enabling a more informed conversation of the issues involved. Professor Laurent of the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church in Eureka tells us that “Encounter with an actual community of faith is essential to see how the knowledge acquired in the classroom relates to the lived experience of people in their communities. I think that sometimes, the encounter with the local group can change preconceptions.”

When we seek to gain literacy of the many spiritual traditions of the world, we contextualize people in relation to other people, and discover the myriad ways people (including ourselves) make meaning and

decide to live their lives. How do we foster literacy towards different worldviews, and gain experience interacting with people from a diverse range of cultural and social backgrounds? Religious Studies 394 Experiential Workshops provide an opportunity to do so.

At HSU, whether you are a freshman in Biology, a senior in English or anything in between, you can go directly into our local community and experience various religions—and the people who practice them—first hand. When discussing a weekend experience at the Tibetan Buddhist community, Rigdzin Ling, Psychology major Sierra Longman remarked, “I will not forget this weekend because I believe I am walking away a better version of myself. I honestly learned more than I ever would have in a classroom and feel nothing but gratitude and love.”

These Experiential Workshops grant access to a world that is so often closed; closed by the rules, closed by social comfort. Not only is access generally limited—by mores, by money—access is also self-limited. We don’t normally feel comfortable stepping into another’s sacred space. Student Britney Morettini tells us what this was like for her, “I think that these workshops are invaluable! The process of learning about these different spiritualities through hands-on experience helped me immensely

in my college career; I feel like I got just as much out of each weekend workshop as I did in a semester of in-class learning. It is so much easier for me to understand and to learn by doing, and I think that many students feel this way!” We don’t usually get to see behind the curtain, and without the proper introduction, we might not want to because it is uncomfortable, out of bounds and undiscussed. HSU’s Experiential Workshops provide this introduction and more.

**“I will not forget this weekend because I believe I am walking away a better version of myself.” - Sierra Longman**

These workshops are an area in which HSU is an innovator. For approximately 30 years, they have grown into a diverse array of high impact, community-based learning opportunities. Reverend Eugene Bush, Head Teacher of the Arcata Zen Group shares his perspective, “The Experiential Weekend not only strengthens students’ own commitments, but also widens their perspectives, allowing all to be welcoming and inclusive in the many facets of life.”

For students, it is a one unit course earned within a weekend that will change their lives forever. With faculty preparation and guidance, students get a valuable introduction to many communities such as the Wiyot Tribe, Eastern Orthodox Christianity, City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, Tibetan Buddhism, Evangelical Christianity, Yoga Vedanta on the Eel River, Jewish Spirituality at Temple Beth-El, Universal Sufism and more. Students can become immersed in parts of the community they don’t normally get to see, through a unique access point geared towards community-based, experiential learning. Students have gained inspiration from these experiences that has brought them, along with their knowledge and skills, across the world. Environmental Studies major Joey Hajduk says, “Going to the Temple of 10,000 Buddhists helped me understand the peoples of Nepal. I did a month long trip into the Himalayas to

help with earthquake reconstruction.” Experiential Workshops are an intermeshed, reciprocally immersive experience; they are the meeting of communities outside of the expectations of the classroom where one doesn’t quite know what’s going to happen, or how each person will respond to it. Students like Joey have responded in a manner that is inspirational to us all. There can be little question that this experience is paramount to furthering a vision of inclusivity and promoting an understanding of differences.

These differences are what help to give our world its vibrancy. In order to celebrate and promote diversity and inclusion, perhaps we must begin with developing an understanding of how diverse people view the world, and religions are worldviews. They are integral lenses through which humans emplace themselves in the world every day. Quinn Hermon, a Philosophy major of the class of 2019, says his experience showed him “that the mundane tasks of everyday life need not be void of meaning. The inclusion of mindfulness and even reverence for activities I would usually regard as mere means to an end suggests to me that there need not be a clear dichotomy between philosophy and everyday life. This embodied aspect of wisdom was demonstrated to me in a way it never had been before.”

In Religious Studies, we seek to understand our identities not as isolated incidents but as interrelated in a multitude of identities in concert with one another; we seek an applied understanding that helps us deal with the complex realities of life. The Experiential Workshops give students the rare opportunity to experience religious diversity directly. With this education one can sit down at the dinner table with more assurance in contributing something stimulating and helpful to those who have not been as fortunate to experience religious communities so directly and openly. Instead of polarizing fellow humans with religion and creating a dehumanized other, we can reclaim the word religion as a humanizing idea that shows us just how human we really are.





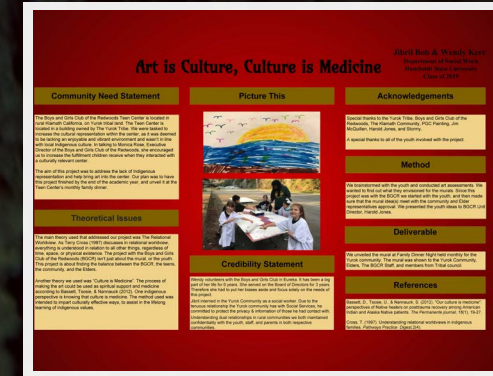


# Community-Based Learning Highlighted at ideaFest



Every year in the HSU Library, HSU's Sponsored Programs Foundation collaborates with campus departments to provide an interdisciplinary conference showcasing research and creative projects: ideaFest. Three years ago, the Center for Community Based Learning joined this team of partners and began offering general workshops on designing academic posters, that highlight community-based learning experiences. Service Learners and Interns from Social Work, Child Development, Environmental Studies, and Political Science are among the many that have made this partnership a great success. Every year, 25-40% of the hundreds of amazing academic experiences celebrated at ideaFest come from community-based learning experiences.

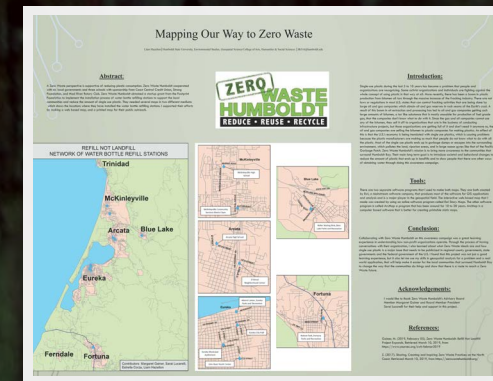
## Jibril Bob Wendy Kerr Art is Culture, Culture is Medicine



## Luke Tygar McCarthy More Than a Store: Culture and Food in Hoopa Valley



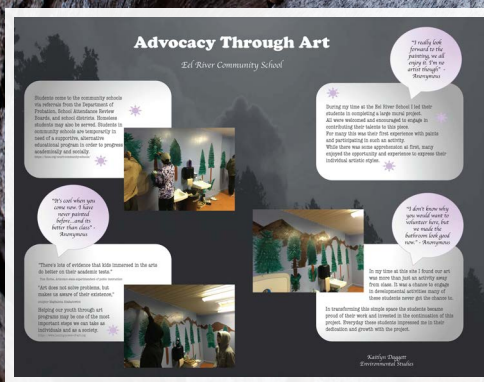
## Liam Hazelton Mapping Our Way to Zero Waste



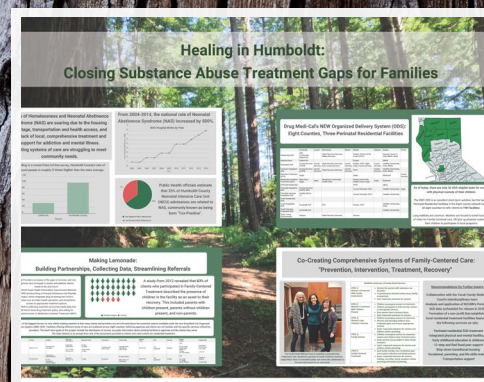
## Rachel Medina Reusables for Waste Prevention



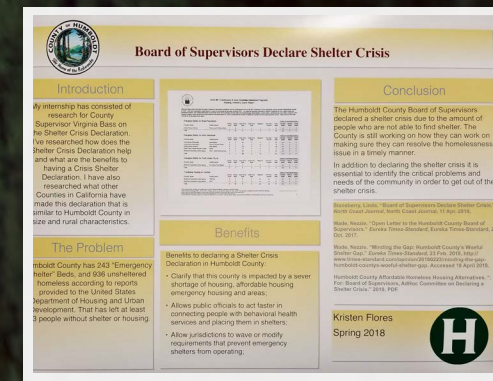
## Kaitlyn Dagget Advocacy Through Art



## Sophie Araneo Healing in Humboldt



## Kristen Flores Shelter Crisis Declaration



## Courtney Greene Friends of the Dunes







## Elizabeth Osuna Arleeth Torres

### Service Learning at Sunny Brae Afterschool Program

## Bailey Boyd

### Community Connection: Becoming a CASA and the Relation to Political Science

## Danilo Mullins

### Relapse Prevention/ Substance Use Disorder

## Eugene Williams

### System Barriers to LGBTQIA2-S Transition Age Youth

## Brown, Duarte, Assumma, Freeman

### Service Learning in the Community through Y.E.S. House Programs

## Ana Puga

### Cultivating Environmental Education through School Gardens

# Faculty Highlights: Dr. Meenal Rana and Dr. Alison Holmes

Interviews conducted by Loren Collins

Written by Loren Collins and Kathy Thornhill

**D**r. Meenal Rana came to HSU seven years ago from Providence, Rhode Island where she taught at Brown University for one year. Dr. Rana earned her M.A. in Child Development in India and her Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies at Michigan State University. As a Ph.D. student, Dr. Rana taught her first community-based learning course. She now teaches courses in HSU's Child Development Department that incorporate Service Learning and Field Placements. The Child Development department has a long history of strong partnerships with the local community, Service Learning as a pedagogy, and giving students a strong combination of curriculum and hands-on practice. For Dr. Rana, this was a perfect fit for both her passion and her background.

Dr. Rana's dissertation brought her into the field working with community partners for eleven months conducting an ethnographic study to understand parents' socialization practices. During her dissertation data collection, she worked at the University Outreach and Engagement in the Center for Evaluation Research doing program reviews and needs assessments. These experiences not only deepened her commitment to community-based

learning, but changed her approach to community partnerships. "I went in with a mindset that I was going to do this awesome research and support the community, with a little bit of a 'savior complex,' but after 11 months I was humbled to the ground. I started looking more at strengths than needs, and learned that they were there to support me rather than me being the support. I realized I was there to learn from them. Those were important lessons."

The Child Development department offers community-based learning classes that give students the opportunity to learn from practitioners who have years of expertise and experience. In Service Learning, students see their fields of interest first hand, conduct research, and present their experiences to their classmates at the end of the semester. In their Field Placements, students receive evaluations from their partners and set goals for improvement and work with their partners along the way. They even take their midterms with their site supervisors so they can ask questions and rely on their expertise.

These partnerships enhance the learning and discussions that take place in the class. The goal is for students to apply their knowledge while learning





from their partners. There can be some positive change for both students and community partners during that process. All of Dr. Rana's classes integrate strong communication, evaluation, feedback, site visits, professional development, alumni talks, and most importantly, a deep trust about which her students and her partners are capable.

The challenges are finding student placements on time, especially those within walking distance, helping them find experiences they will really invest in, and coordinating in a way so as to not impact community partners that may be working with a growing number of Service Learning and Academic Internship courses.



Dr. Meenal Rana

When asked what she would tell faculty, students and community partners interested in Community-Based Learning, Dr. Rana replied the following:

**To students:** "Observation is the key. Like I always tell my students, use your first week as observation... ask questions, observe and make yourself available if your community partner is asking for help. Be respectful and know your goals, what you want to get out of this experience."

**To faculty:** "Be kind and put more trust in your students. If you have scaffolded support while keeping high expectations, your students will thrive. Build relationships and strong communication with your

partners. Show your gratitude - handwritten thank you cards are appreciated."

**To community partners:** "I would like to say thank you and would like to show my gratitude because that's a lot of work and commitment, even though we try to minimize the impact. Sometimes students need a gentle nudge...to be nurtured and guided by the community partners, based on their personalities—that would be something that I would like to see."

**"I started looking more at strengths than needs, and learned that [community partners] were there to support me rather than me being the support. I realized I was there to learn from them. Those were important lessons."**

**– Meenal Rana**

Dr. Rana led a grant-funded project in India with student groups working within rural communities and with community directors to learn and assist with their needs. "India is a patriarchal society where there is a lot of leadership among men, and women are still catching up, especially in rural communities... and one community director was particularly skeptical of our abilities." Dr. Rana and her co-director told their team to be patient and learn from the community what their needs were, rather than imposing what they thought they needed.

Dr. Rana relayed that eight weeks later, so many wonderful things happened based on those relationships. "There was a party to say farewell as the teams were preparing to leave. This same community director spoke and was in tears when he told me that he had been trying to make these positive changes for 14 years... and that eight women came and mobilized the community so much, and he was so grateful." Dr. Rana spoke with the community leader a year and a half later and found that the work was still happening.

**O**riginally from Oklahoma, Dr. Alison Holmes went to Northwestern University at the age of 16 then stayed in Chicago to earn a Master's Degree in Social Policy from the University of Chicago. She then moved to London where she spent the next 23 years working, including time spent with the House of Commons, the BBC, and serving as the speech writer for the U.S. Ambassador to London. She earned her Ph.D. at the London School of Economics in International Relations. She has taught at both Oxford and Yale. Life brought Dr. Holmes to Humboldt where she became the Program Leader for International Studies at HSU. She cites her long history in careers outside academia as to why she places so much value on hands-on, community-based learning experiences and professional development for her students.



Dr. Alison Holmes

Dr. Holmes is very interested in the early college experience and opportunities for first-year students to connect their education to their career. "I started a critical thinking class for freshmen and that's where the intersection between things like career and Service Learning really happened for me. Helping students connect what they learn in the classroom to their real life and what they want to do after college, made Service Learning a natural extension of that."

Dr. Holmes teaches International Studies 100S every fall, which focuses on the connections between local and global issues. Recognizing that most of her students are from out of the area, she educates them about the local community in the same way she does for students who are planning an international experience. "We have so many students who come here from other places and it is up to us to help them understand what this place is about. It is an intercultural experience. In the same way I encourage international students to read the newspapers, learn the language, and learn the issues of the places they are going to go before they study abroad, I have my students who have just arrived here do the same for our local community."

Her students research and select their partnerships from local businesses and organizations that are networked into global markets, policies, or affected by global issues. Throughout the semester, students reflect on the connections between their service projects, the content of the class, the skills they've developed, and how that all fits into their potential futures. She hopes that "all these kinds of experiences, the skills they gain, and what they learn from their exploration will come together to help them say 'this is who I am' by the time they walk out the door."

When asked about how Service Learning impacts her courses, Dr. Holmes replied, "It is the illustration, the demonstration, the evidence that everything we're talking about is connected and that everything affects everything else. The world out there is present in our everyday lives here, and everything we do here has a consequence out there. If social and environmental justice on campus is our mission, I think you have to understand the globality of that. This is about being aware of the impact of our actions on the world and how our actions can help change the world. Students meet their community partners, serve in their programs, and interact with the wider community. They encounter different perspectives and gain insight as to how the local and the global connect."



These partnerships all have an international component to them and through Service Learning we are making it accessible to the students. I want to help them think about, 'How am I connected to the world and how is the world connected to us?'"

Regarding the challenges, Dr. Holmes relayed that the real-world situations are more complicated than in the classroom and one cannot control all of the factors influencing the experience. She has to trust the process. "I'm relying on students to do what they say they are going to do and I'm counting on partners to support our students, often in the face of lots of complicating factors."

**“This is about being aware of the impact of our actions on the world and how our actions can help change the world. Students meet their community partners, serve in their programs, and interact with the wider community. They encounter different perspectives and gain insight as to how the local and the global connect.”**

**– Alison Holmes**

When asked what she would tell faculty, students and community partners interested in community-based learning, Dr. Holmes replied the following:

**To students:** "I would tell students nearly the same thing. You will never understand the place you are in until you spend some time out there in the community. If you want to find out about something, go out and find out. It's not enough to read about it. It's not enough to write about it. It's not enough to talk about it. It's not enough until you go out and see it for yourself. We tell forestry majors to go out into the woods so why would I expect any other major

not to try and experience the thing they are trying to study - communities, languages, foreign countries. It just makes sense. People make all kinds of assumptions about places and until you actually see for yourself, it's just talk."

**To faculty:** "You will gain an insight into your students and what they want to do when they leave this place in a way you would never otherwise have and that is vital to helping them feel that you understand them a little better. The more you can understand what they're trying to do, the better and more effective you are at connecting them to the resources and the classes and the people and the experiences that they want and need to be successful."

**To community partners:** "It is so easy for students and faculty to sit on campus and look out and think that they understand because we know a bunch of stuff about a bunch of stuff, but I would like to think that by working with each other, we can create a more coherent, sincere, and accurate understanding of each other. For our partners, I hope that we can help them achieve their goals in our community by lending them our students as a resource and that, in that give and take exchange, our students will gain new insights and a resilience that will help us all engage and build a better, stronger relationship to the community."

Holmes acknowledges how impactful teaching these courses is for her as well. "I am always humbled and impressed when I read student essays about what they learned over the semester. I can never get through them without getting choked up when students talk about what they found out about the community and about themselves."

One student experience stands out to Dr. Holmes. A student shared that she chose a site specifically because she knew she had grown up with a world-view that would be challenged by her experience at that site. "The bravery and self awareness she showed, and the way she grew through the experience will always stand out as a highlight."







**KAI COOPER**  
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES



**ARIEL EVANS**  
STUDIO ART



**MAYA HABIS**  
ETHNIC STUDIES



**STACY BECKER**  
COMMUNITY  
PARTNER  
COORDINATOR



**SHANNON BERGE**  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
SUPPORT  
COORDINATOR



**LOREN COLLINS**  
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COORDINATOR



**SHIA STREATOR**  
PSYCHOLOGY



**ALEXIS VALTENBERGS**  
JOURNALISM

## Student Staff



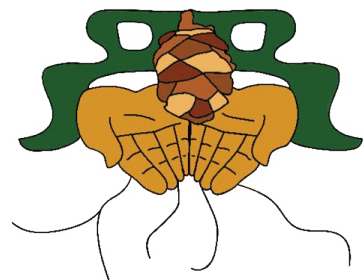
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STUDENT SUPPORT  
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THE CENTER FOR  
**Community Based Learning**  
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# Meet



**KATHY THORNHILL**  
DIRECTOR



## HSU Press

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MANAGING EDITOR



**KYLE MORGAN**  
SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATIONS  
& DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP  
LIBRARIAN



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THE ART DEPARTMENT IS A CREATIVE COMMUNITY OF  
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RIGOROUS SKILL-BUILDING, INTELLECTUAL GROWTH,  
AND CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING.



**JIM WOGLOM**  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,  
DEPARTMENT OF ART



**W**e hope your experience exploring the first edition of Redwood Roots has been inspiring. Please stay tuned for the second edition in Fall 2020; which will feature the adjustments students, community partners, and faculty made to engage in these practices and meet the demands of life during COVID-19.

### **SHARE YOUR STORY**

Do you have a story or photos to share? Please contact us at [ccbl@humboldt.edu](mailto:ccbl@humboldt.edu) to share your experience with community-based learning practices. We would love to include your story in future editions!



*“We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”*

**- Martin Luther King, Jr.**

*“We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.”*

**- Cesar Chavez**

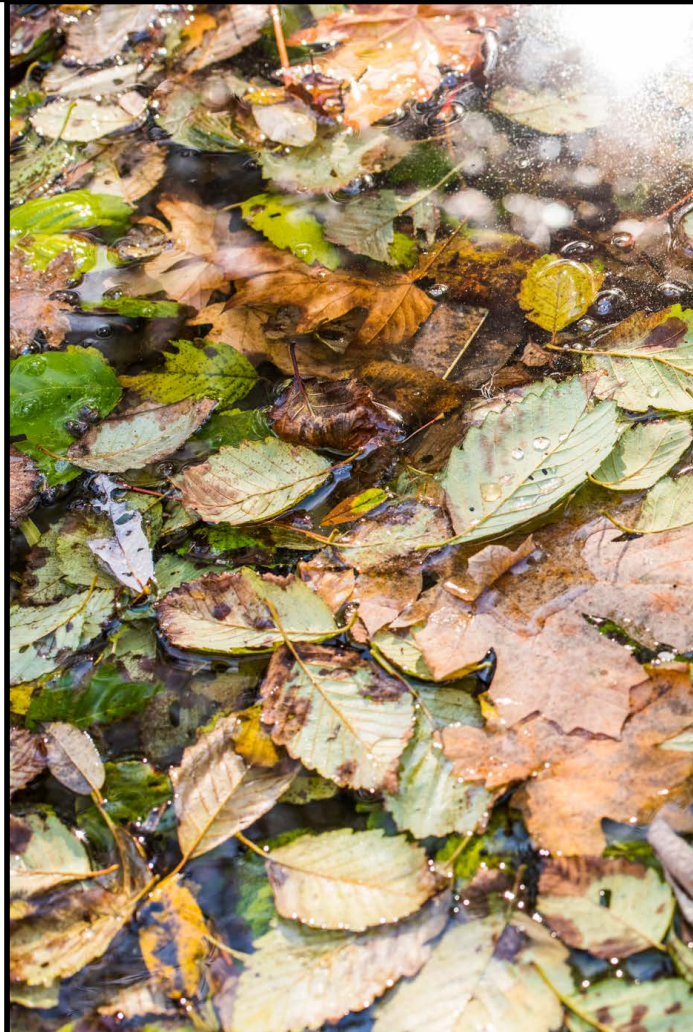


### **THANK YOU TO OUR STUDENT STAFF**

We would like to acknowledge the many hours of work that our amazing team of student staff put into this magazine, from the conceptualization and brainstorming, to conducting interviews and beginning the design process of the magazine. The students who participated in the development and design were key to making this magazine happen. The perspectives that they all brought were an invaluable part of this process. Thank you all so much for your time, energy, and inspiration!

### **JOIN THE TEAM!**

Please contact CCBL Student Support Coordinator Kelly Fortner, at [kelly.fortner@humboldt.edu](mailto:kelly.fortner@humboldt.edu), if you are interested in volunteering or serving with the Redwood Roots Digital Magazine Team for your Service Learning or Academic Internship class.



*“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, things aren't going to get better, they're NOT!”* - **Dr. Seuss, The Lorax**

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”* - **Margaret Mead**

