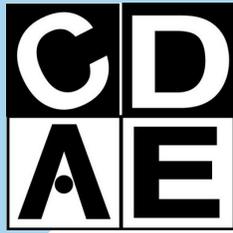


DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND APPLIED ECONOMICS



NEWSLETTER

Fall 2019

FROM THE CHAIR, DR. JANE KOLODINSKY



Time flies! Our St. Lucia international service learning course is celebrating 15 years. CDAE's project based approach works. Our community partners benefit, our students benefit, and our faculty benefit. Our international programs set the stage for service learning at UVM and we continue to be ahead of the curve in international project based education. Developing and sustaining a relationship with a specific place enhances continuity and continued growth for all involved. And, students leave UVM with a set of skills that go beyond information they studied about; our students leave with experience, and are ready to apply it after graduation.

Student internships accomplish the same things, mostly here in the U.S. Sophie Emery is linking community development, food systems and communication in her internship at the Intervale Food Hub. Hannah Albert is putting her public communication knowledge and toolkit to work at Commando LLC. Social media, on-line merchandising, and photography expertise have allowed her to add value to Commando's marketing team. Ditto for Ben Johnson and Jess Taylor, who are utilizing both communication and entrepreneurship expertise in for- and non-profit organizations. The knowledge, skills and experiences of one of our CDAE majors is a formula for success in the job market. Laura Beth Saaman calls her position at the Vermont Association of Business Industry and Rehabilitation, "everything she could hope for." Morgan Dewey says, "CDAE taught me to find strength in partnerships, and to face work in a community-based way." From faculty to students and alums, CDAE offers hands-on, transdisciplinary learning and experience that empowers graduates to make professional contributions to their communities and the world. The proof is in the pudding, so they say.

CDAE'S ST. LUCIA STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF SERVICE LEARNING

By Zack Pittel, '19

The year marks the fifteen-year anniversary for CDAE's St. Lucia study abroad program. Since 2004, UVM students and faculty have traveled to the Caribbean island state of St. Lucia to collaborate with the St. Lucian government and community partners on development projects.

CDAE Senior Lecturer Thomas DeSisto, who co-teaches the course with Lecturer Kevin Stapleton, explained that much of the success and the longevity of the program is based on the strong connection with St. Lucian community partners. He said, "It's amazing how each year we gain so much extra ground to build with them."

(Continued on p. 6)



2018 CDAE students at the Sulphur Springs in the Piton Management Area, St. Lucia. (Photo by Thomas DeSisto)

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CDAE INTERNS IN ACTION

By Alie Sarhanis

CDAE is a pioneer of UVM internship opportunities and our connections run deep. Our network is rooted locally and extends beyond the state. The CDAE Internship Program provides support for students interested in finding career-related internship experiences. Here are some profiles of CDAE interns at work in the field.

Sophie Emery (CID '20) interned at The Intervale Food Hub creating recipes and developing digital content to share with customers. "This internship program offers an amazing way to see first-hand how the Burlington community is making strides to help local farmers support themselves and integrate themselves into an urban community. I found the creative aspect of this internship to be a real highlight. I got to put my creative side to use in a way I haven't done in a long time through creating videos and content for Instagram."



Sophie Emery, CID '20

"As a Community and International Development major, there's a lot of paths my major can take me down. This internship helped me to see ways in which the community can support urban agriculture movements and developed my interest in urban planning and urban development."

- **Sophie Emery, Community and International Development '20**



Hannah Albert, PCOM '19

Hannah Albert (PCOM '19) secured an internship at Commando LLC in South Burlington. Commando is a Vermont based apparel company that has presence in New York Fashion Week among celebrities and stylists. She assisted with online merchandising, participated in social media management, aided in the release of new product photos, collaborated in project management and execution, and helped support the marketing team to achieve project deadlines.

"Internships have allowed me to try out different fields and discover what

I truly love. I have taken close to 15 credits worth of internships and I am so grateful for this experience to basically adopt a co-op into my major. It has allowed me to have experiences to talk about on job applications and interviews." - **Hannah Albert, Public Communication '19**

CDAE INTERNS IN ACTION

By Alie Sarhanis

Ben Johnson (CENT '19) secured an internship at JAM Creative, a full-service branding and commercial photography studio in Burlington. He aided in the pre-production process, retouching large quantities of production images, portraits, and wedding photos. "My biggest highlight was being able to have the opportunity to go to actual weddings events and participate in photo shoots like I would in an actual job."

"This internship has contributed drastically to my knowledge of the photography industry. So far, I have been learning more than I ever could in a classroom setting in terms of studio photography as well as how to run a small business." – **Ben Johnson, Community Entrepreneurship '19**



Ben Johnson, CENT '19



Jess Taylor, CID '20

This fall, **Jess Taylor (CID '20)** has been interning with 1% for the Planet, a nonprofit organization based in Burlington that works with businesses to give 1% of their sales to environmental organizations. Jess does research on where to get donations and funds by investigating grants. "I'm really enjoying learning about the working of a nonprofit," she said. "It's cool to see all the pieces come together." Jess heard about this organization when enrolled CDAE 166, Community Entrepreneurship— her group chose 1% for the Planet to donate their profits to. As a result of that, it was a company that she knew was in the area and was a company that she was interested in working for.

Interested in securing an internship and receiving academic credit for the experience?

Contact Alie Sarhanis, CDAE Internship Coordinator: alie.sarhanis@uvm.edu For more information: go.uvm.edu/cdae-intern.

ALUMNI IN THE COMMUNITY: LAURA BETH SAAMAN

By Samantha Verge, '21

"It's a great job that's everything that I've ever hoped for," Laura Beth Saaman says of her job working as a Youth Employment Specialist at the Vermont Association of Business Industry and Rehabilitation (VABIR), which increases the employment of people with disabilities.

Saaman started her job at VABIR shortly after graduating from UVM in May with a degree in public communication from CDAE. Working in Newport, VT, she helps high school students with disabilities develop plans to gain employment. Saaman does this by assisting students with everything from their resumes to placing them with local businesses for job shadowing or on-the-job training.

"It encompasses everything I love about communication, such as the interpersonal interactions with students and people I work with every day," says Saaman.

Hailing from Attalla, a small town in Alabama, Saaman has always been passionate about sharing stories and understanding how people think. She entered into UVM her first year as a theatre major, but later decided she wanted to study in a broader field.



Laura Beth Saaman, PCOM '19

After switching to public communication, Saaman learned skills in CDAE core classes that were applicable in any field, such as strategic writing and active listening. In CDAE, she was also able to take classes on diverse topics that have allowed her to communicate effectively with people from different backgrounds and professions. At first, Saaman was hesitant about CDAE's focus on group work. In the end, though, she came to appreciate the experience and perspective that everyone brings to the table in collaborative projects. She puts these skills to use now as the youngest employee at VABIR.

In her senior spring semester at UVM, Saaman was a teaching assistant for the public communication capstone course. Through this service learning experience she was able to work with community partners to help students develop professional portfolio materials. This experience, she says, applies to her current job at VABIR, where she helps high school students build their own portfolios and apply for jobs.

She now spends her working days at four different Vermont high schools, where she meets with students with disabilities to help them work toward their employment goals. She also networks with local businesses to build relationships students can utilize when they enter the job market.

Saaman says many CDAE values have guided her work, where she sees each student as unique, with their own individual strengths. At VABIR, she loves to empower a new generation of learners and "help students find their voice and figure out what they want to do."

ALUMNI IN THE COMMUNITY: MORGAN DEWEY

Interview by Samantha Verge, '21

What did you enjoy about studying within CDAE?

In CDAE you learn how to think about issues, develop communities and work with communities, and that can apply to anything you want to do. When I got into gender, sexuality, and women's studies and political science I realized I had a foundation of economics, development, and community-based studies that can apply to many other fields of study. CID didn't teach super specific skills, but it taught that building relationships is really important, and that you should track successes when working with communities.

What was a valuable lesson you learned from your time studying within CDAE?

One valuable lesson was in relationship building. CDAE demonstrates the value of relationships and how work is more meaningful and effective if you build relationships and learn about groups and communities first and then begin to work with them.



Morgan Dewey, CID '15

Was there an experience you had during your time in CDAE that aided you in your current career?

PCom Professor Sarah Heiss heard what I was interested in for my thesis, which was about how domestic violence groups can brand themselves to include all genders. Heiss believed in me and was there throughout my research. She trusted me, and in the end my thesis was published in a journal. Heiss believing in me and supporting me is illustrative of how CDAE functions, and it can change careers.

What are you doing now that you've graduated?

I am now working as the communications director for End Rape on Campus, which is a national nonprofit based in Washington, DC that's working towards ending sexual violence on college campuses.

How has CDAE prepared you for this position?

It prepared me in how I approach my work. CDAE taught me to find strength in partnerships, and to face work in a community-based way. I now listen to students to make sure that they're getting the help they deserve on campus, since we have a community of students that trust us and want to work with us.

What have you accomplished since starting at End Rape on Campus?

As communications director, I work on all our communication such as social media, our website, design work, and press work. We have a team of two here, and right now our biggest project is dismantling the proposed Title IX regulations. These regulations would make it so survivors would be less likely to report on campus because it will weaken protections for survivors.

What do you like most about working at End Rape on Campus?

I like being creative in order to spur culture change. I've done direct service working directly with survivors, I've dabbled with policy work, and I want to reshape cultural narratives to create culture change. We have to do this creatively in order to dismantle our culture surrounding patriarchy, and we have to be thoughtful and intentional.

ST. LUCIA STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM CELEBRATES 15 YEARS (CONT'D.)

By Zack Pittel, '19



CDAE Lecturers Thomas DeSisto and Kevin Stapleton (Photo by Zack Pittel)

CDAE Lecturers Thomas DeSisto and Kevin Stapleton have been co-teaching the St. Lucia course CDAE 195/295: Sustainable Development on Small Island States since 2011. In this interview, they reflect on how UVM students and St. Lucians have been changed by the program over its fifteen year history. This service-learning course involves students researching small island development issues and planning their own projects to implement with community partners in a winter trip to St. Lucia.

world application in this program?

Kevin Stapleton: The academic underpinnings are critical because in order to solve the problems you need to understand the origin of those problems and possible solutions to those problems. That is what so much of the CDAE curriculum is meant to do: it's meant to help people understand the problems facing the world. Although it may feel disjointed at times, if it weren't for all of your experiences in classes, you wouldn't be able to do all this. When students walk away from their projects in St. Lucia, they have succeeded. That doesn't mean that the project has turned out the way they wanted it to turn out, but it means that they've done everything possible to accomplish something. A lot of times that means that most of the project was great, but sometimes it means it was a great learning experience, and students really do put to work what they've learned in classes.

How has running this course changed your approach to teaching international development?

Thomas DeSisto: I think it's critical that there are just certain limitations to what you can work on and your scope, the limited resources available, and the resources that the community has available to them. The more focused and targeted you are, the better. It's small scale things that make an impact on the day to day life. It doesn't need to seem grand, because often it's the small targeted things, connecting to people, that really matters.

Can you discuss the relationship between academic learning and real-



CDAE students meeting with Mr. Guillaume Simon, Director of the St. Lucia Consumer Affairs Department (CAD), and CAD staff to plan a series of interviews on topics related to consumer opinions and experiences of the water and electricity utilities. (Photo by Thomas DeSisto)

ST. LUCIA STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM CELEBRATES 15 YEARS



CDAE students look out from along the Micoud Highway toward Dennery Island, St. Lucia. (Photo by Molly O'Shea)

Emma Lane, a graduate of the St. Lucia program and a Student Services Specialist in UVM's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, looks back on how the program made a lasting impact on her life and career.

Did you have any expectations going into the course?

I was expecting the faculty members to be more of the leads in the projects and students would just be the assistants. But I found that they really let the students take the reins on their own projects, with where to go with it and how we got to implement it when we got down to St. Lucia. I thought that was really interesting. I didn't expect to have that much freedom and control over our own project.

Were there any moments which stuck out to you from the course?

We were working with the government down in St. Lucia, so a lot of people respected our partnership with them, and were happy we were there to get their feedback and relay that information to their officials. That was really cool, that they trusted us with their opinions and trusted us to relay that information.

How has this class impacted you? Did it make an impact on your career or life in any way?

My major was Community and International Development (CID), and having St. Lucia to refer to as a reference and be like "here's an excellent example of what the CID major embodies in one course." I referenced that a lot to people [when] explaining what my degree was in by explaining some of the opportunities I had, and the work I did in St. Lucia. It was by far my favorite college experience, everything from the travel there, the people there, the island itself, to working on a team with my classmates and with Thomas and Kevin.



Emma Lane, St. Lucia program graduate and Student Services Specialist in UVM's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (Photo by Zack Pittel)

