



University of Denver
Pioneer Leadership Program
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UNIVERSITY of
DENVER

PIONEER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

**Class of 2020
Community Change
Initiative Presentations**



5:45 pm – 9:00 pm

Wednesday, May 23, 2018
Sturm Hall, Lindsay Auditorium

Schedule for the Evening

5:45 – Reception, *outside Lindsay Auditorium*

6:15 – Welcome & Introduction, *Lindsay Auditorium*

6:30 – Presentations, *Lindsay Auditorium & Sturm 151*

8:30 – Closing Remarks, *Lindsay Auditorium*
-followed by dessert reception

**Thank you to all of our
participating organizations
and community partners!**

College Connection Crew

Noah Binstock, Carter Fite, Grace Harrison, & Maura O'Leary

Partner Organization:

Environmental Learning for Kids

Our project started as a commitment to increasing environmental access for urban youth. However, after our first meeting with our primary stakeholder, Environmental Learning for Kids, we realized that strategic pivot had to be made. ELK does an incredible job connecting students with the environment, but we found a void in their ability to provide a genuine student perspective on the college experience. This void is where we, the College Connection Crew, come in. By engaging ELK students, hosting college tours and providing mentorship opportunities, we function as a liaison between high school students and DU student organizations

The Opportunity Initiative

*Ty Bever, Nana Danso, Ilana Hayutin, William Holtzmann,
& Rosalie Whyte*

Partner Organizations:

Asbury Elementary & Access Gallery

We work to increase the resources that are available to children with disabilities, especially those in the public school system. Through engaging activities and a mentorship program, we build strong relationships with the students of Asbury Elementary Special Education. In congruence with weaving social fabric, we connect children with organizations that specialize in enrichment activities for individuals with disabilities. Enrichment opportunities are important for all developing children but are especially important for children with disabilities as these activities double as therapeutic recreation. In order to broaden our students' network of opportunities, we connected them to the non-profit organization Access Gallery which provided them with the unique developmental and therapeutic benefits of art. We also focus on providing one-on-one academic instructing in subjects of need.

Food Insecurity and Nutrition Education

Michael Huang, Marianne Hughes, Kaylene Khosla, Colleen Peterson & Elayna Smith

Addressing food insecurity in the Denver Metro Area as an alarming facet of poverty in urban settings, this Community Change Initiative was designed to combat the many challenges food insecure communities face in addition to increasing access to quality sources of nutrition like fresh fruits and vegetables. Out of multiple iterations, we continue to believe in forming local partnerships to confront our most pressing problems.

Student Leaders as Agents of Change

Lisl Davies, Breanne Harkins, Kaeli Humphrey, Hannah Santos, & Matt Walter

Partner Organization:

Student Government at Heritage High School

Student Leaders as Agents of Change is an initiative designed to empower high school students involved in government and leadership programs. Our focus has been creating an outlet for young leaders to enact change within their student bodies in a tangible way. We have been working with students at Heritage High School to co-create a guide on developing and improving student government programs. This guide details several of the essential pillars of student government and is designed to instruct students on how to take real steps in growing as effective leaders on their campuses.

PRESENTATIONS IN LINDSAY AUDITORIUM

PLP for the Arts

Kelsey Briding, Kevin Douglas, Tasha Feichtinger, Trenton Parrotte, & Miriam Wilson

Partner Organizations:

The Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Littleton High School, Green Mountain High School, East High School, & Skintight Outrage

Arts Education in the Public School System has been a matter of hot debate for years. Many schools find themselves cutting arts programs, or adopting “pay-to-play” methods, that limit accessibility to these opportunities for students in the Denver area. Our team tackled the wicked problem that is Arts Funding by searching for low-cost ways to partner students with art. We found a solution in teaching local students Improv skills, and empowering them to start their own clubs at their respective institutions.

Illuminating Illiteracy

Adriana Alba, Gillian Breuer, Mathew Greenlee, & Olivia Heffner

Partner Organization:

Denver Public Library Plaza Programs

The Illuminating Illiteracy Initiative has been working to both illuminate and rectify adult illiteracy in Denver and to support the affected communities by providing accessible resources to increase literacy skills. In partnering with both Denver Public Libraries' Plaza Programs and the Minnesota Literacy Council, the Illuminating Illiteracy Initiative has provided a sustainable resource for adults seeking literacy education in the Denver area.

Plates for the Planet

Alex Becht, David Fain, Sami Helgeson, Theodore Hite, Sarah McClain & Phoebe Paur

Partner Organizations:

City and County of Denver's Sustainable Neighborhoods Program & Highland United Neighbors Inc. (HUNI)

With the goal of eliminating food waste on a residential level, Plates for the Planet (P4P) created a partnership with Denver's Sustainable Neighborhoods program. They developed an app and implemented an ongoing program that helps residents of these neighborhoods track and reduce their daily food waste. P4P encourages residents to weigh their waste and put their data into the app. It then provides suggestions on how to minimize their waste in the future and links to helpful resources regarding food waste. They would like to thank all of the stakeholders that helped make this possible.

Remediation and Diversion of Acid Mine Drainage (AMD)

Andrew Benton, Alexander Frith, Keanna Lundy, & Samuel Noonan

Partner Organizations:

Trout Unlimited, University of Denver, & Colorado School of Mines

The pollution caused by the run-off of hard minerals from abandoned mines is resulting in extensive degradation of both the waterways and wildlife in the surrounding environment, creating what are known as 'dead rivers' where no life can be sustained. Our team worked to restore the Tiger Mine site in Leadville, Colorado by focusing on the following four goals: controlling the flow of contaminated water, converting the anaerobic system to an aerobic one, raising the pH of the water, and precipitating out the harmful materials. We worked two teams, one that calculates and develops digital 3D models of the site with an emphasis on diverting the flow and one that researches ways to biochemically reverse the effects of pollution.

Queer Sexual and Gender Education

Maddie Kincaid, Angelica Oberlaender, Madie Russel, & Conor Weadley

Partner Organizations:

Rainbow Alley, Center for Inclusive Excellence at DU, Health and Counseling Center, and Denver Health

Our group is working on a developing a short documentary about sexual education within the U.S. and how it's lack of inclusiveness and comprehensiveness truly hurts the LGBTQ+ community. Our initial hope for this project was to develop a sex ed program here in Denver; however, we quickly learned that Denver as a city is very proactive about the issue. Since we did not want to stop working with queer sexual and gender education, we had to find another way we could help improve sexual education. After much research and communication with Rainbow Alley, we have decided to create a short documentary to bring awareness to the necessity of inclusive and comprehensive sexual education within the United States.

GALS Outdoors

Brenn Anderson-Gregson, Lauren Dewey, Melissa Shambach, & Jake Sullivan

Partner Organization:

GALS

GALS Outdoors is dedicated to improving young girls' self-confidence, professional development, and involvement in the outdoors through an integrative approach of outdoor knowledge, team building and unity, and mentorship. Our mission is to address the problem of gender inequality in the outdoors through creating a foundation for young women that will increase their feelings of capability and passion for the wilderness. This program combines outdoor education through interactive classroom learning and wilderness excursions. We worked alongside Girls Athletic Leadership School to impact the lives of young women in the Denver Community.

INTERMISSION

Combating Against Rape Culture – Sexual Assault Prevention

*Nyanika Arora, Jordan Hernandez, Zach McQueen,
& Merrick Vanheuckelom*

Partner Organizations:

South High School, Palmer High School, & Summit Medical Clinic

Our group has decided to tackle the issue of sexual assault on college campuses. In order to do so, we conducted and created pamphlets for discussions in the hopes of educating younger demographics on the implications of rape culture, toxic masculinity, etc., and how those correlate to the issue of sexual assault itself. We also found it pertinent to provide a safe and comfortable environment for them to learn about sex issues from people close to them in age. We hope that our work will yield a more productive conversation about how to end the issue.

NewAvenues

Reyn Aubrey, Jack Cote, & Seth Dickinson

Partner Organizations:

*Jewish Family Services, South High School,
& The Denver Rescue Mission*

NewAvenues has a simple mission: break down the stigmas around the preventative measures to homelessness, and humanize the homelessness community. Homelessness is possible to eradicate, but you have to do it intelligently. We set out on a mission to harness social media to try to humanize the community of people currently experiencing homelessness, and use it as a platform to push the benefits of preventative measures in order to multiply the efforts of our partner organization, JFS.

Opportunities and Resources for Middle School Students

*Ryan Baca, Cesar Caraveo, Alex Medearis, Jordan Sanchez,
& Bryan Tanigawa*

Partner Organization:

College Track Denver

As a group, we are expanding College Track Denver's outreach to middle school students to aid them in their pursuit of a higher education. College Track is a comprehensive after-school program that focuses on academics, student life, leadership, and getting into college, which works with students beginning as a high school freshman and continuing through their college careers and beyond. Our involvement consists of engaging student presentations, teacher outreach, and parent engagement to promote the opportunities and resources that College Track offers.

PRESENTATIONS IN STURM 151

Quality in Early Childhood Education

Georga Feek, Mari McCarville, & Harriet Pryor

Partner Organizations:

*College View Elementary School
& Nicole Brown's Kindergarten Classroom*

Our mission is to ensure that quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) is accessible and equitable across the Denver-Metro community. We partnered with College View Elementary School to improve the quality of ECE through a social-emotional development program. Through stakeholder interviews and classroom observations, we identified a need for additional teaching methods and content that expands upon mindfulness, empathy, and behavioral issues – important components of social-emotional education. We wrote and taught six collaborative lesson plans to promote social-emotional development within the classroom, using recognized developmental resources. We hope that our CCI project will provide the foundation for systemic and sustainable change in College View's Kindergarten classrooms and positively impact children's lives.

Sexual Assault Education

Erin Jones, Grace Rooney, & Jordan Turner

Partner Organizations:

Cherry Creek High School & Campus Outreach Services

Our group partnered with Katie Koestner's Campus Outreach Services as well as with Cherry Creek High School to create an interschool conference centered around the issue of sexual assault. From a total of five high schools around the Denver Metro area, high school students and administration participated in the first annual Respect My Red conference. We helped facilitate workshops with the students as well as helped plan and lay the groundwork for this conference to be replicated for years to come in an array of schools and districts.

Pioneers for Pollinators

Daniel Brenzel, Madison Broader, Miles Dorrance, Kulani Gonzales Stocks, & Charlie Menke

Partner Organizations:

*People and Pollinators Action Network (PPAN),
Pioneers for Pollinators (the club),
Audobon Society of the Rockies,
& Denver City Council (District 6 – Paul Kashmann)*

You may ask yourself; "what's the buzz about?" It's about saving the pollinators, of course! Through partnerships with community organizations and by engaging our peers and elected officials, we aspired to do just that. By influencing policy, educating people and advocating for the health of pollinators in Denver, we have already seen change in pollinator awareness and have laid the foundations for a movement that has far-reaching potential in our community.

Mental Health in Latinx Communities

Yamilex Avitia, Daniella Duran, Lauren Plomer & Juan Sanchez

Partner Organizations:

Vuela for Health & College Track

Our CCI mission was to facilitate a better understanding of mental health for Latinx youth and families, with "Latinx" meaning people who speak Spanish at home with Latin American heritage. To do so, we worked with Vuela for Health, an organization that engages in strategic partnerships with the Latinx community, to support the expansion of a program that will help parents/family members/caregivers connect with their children or youth that they know might be experiencing mental health crises. This program is called Mental Health First Aid Training, and we conducted focus group research to propose improvements that pertain specifically to issues relevant to cultures and different backgrounds, with a focus on Latinx populations.

INTERMISSION

Create Humanity

Reese Arthur, Mariel Hernández, & Makenna Schmitz

Partner Organization:

African Community Center: International CITY

Create Humanity uses art to build unity between refugees and domestic residents in Denver. Our initiative aims to connect youth through the universal language of art while furthering dialogue related to celebrating differences. Our group established a weekly art program to create understanding, support, and community among youth. We brought art projects to International CITY, an after-school youth integration program located in Aurora, open to all refugee students. We hosted various events on campus, including opportunities to engage domestic residents in an evening at Beans, a music festival, and in promoting "refugee awareness week" on campus. Beyond raising awareness, we were able to build relationships with our student refugees, ensuring our mission statement that all are welcome here.