

NEWSLETTER

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RURAL STUDENT GROUP CONTINUES TO ENGAGE COLUMBIA COMMUNITY WITH RURAL EDUCATION & HEALTHCARE ISSUES

— By Ty McNamee

In Fall 2016, Rural Student Group at Columbia University (RSG) was founded, dedicated to the mission of offering a student, faculty, and staff organization focused on rural education and healthcare programming and research. With current HPSE doctoral student Ty McNamee as co-founder, this group hoped to shed light on the disparities faced by rural areas in regard to education and healthcare, discussing these topics not often addressed in academic spaces.



A major goal of RSG was to plan a large-scale event for the Columbia community that would center around the aforementioned themes, meeting several outcomes: 1) provide the Columbia community with basic knowledge about rural areas around the U.S. and world; 2) offer a program that would educate the Columbia community about a specific healthcare issue affecting rural areas; and 3) offer a program that would shed light on how education research has discussed rurality and current issues facing students in rural education

spaces. In determining these outcomes and through detailed planning by RSG members, the first-ever Rural Education & Healthcare Symposium at Columbia University was born and took place last spring on April 18th.

By coming together as an organization, RSG crafted a symposium filled with various activities and events that spread information about rural education and healthcare issues. The day began with a breakfast, during which students, faculty, and staff could stop by and grab food. The only stipulation for receiving food was participation in an activity about rural areas around the U.S. and globe. This activity included RSG constructing a large map and creating small pieces of paper with different rural towns, the populations of the rural towns, and quick facts about the towns written on them. Each attendee who received breakfast would take one of the pieces of paper and pin it on the map so that they would have a quick, tangible way of learning about rural areas.

The rest of the day included more intensive programming that delved deeper into the issues facing rural locales. This programming utilized

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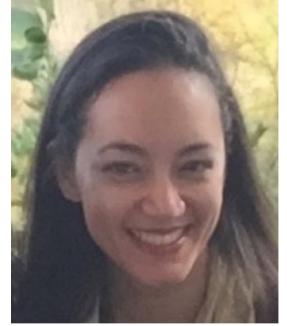


– By Marisol Jimenez

Since he began his tenure as New York City School Chancellor, Richard Carranza has found himself embroiled in controversy over his plans to diversify the school system by changing admissions policies to the city's specialized high schools and revamping admissions policies in K-12. Both initiatives have been met with controversy: while some support his efforts, others see them as a threat to their children's ability to receive a quality education and have vowed to fight the proposed changes. The latter group contends that city schools' renown for their academic achievement should be allowed to continue admissions practices they argue are merit-based; dismantling this, they argue, threatens the prestige of these schools. As a graduate of the New York City public school system, I watch this public battle unfold, asking some of the same questions that other New Yorkers ask: Why are not all schools able to provide a quality education? How can we give all students access to a quality education?

When I began the HPSE program as a master's student, I grappled with similar questions, but framed in the context of higher education. Working at a Hispanic-Serving Institution that is nationally recognized for its ability to improve students' social mobility but not highly regarded in national rankings, I wondered: Why are some colleges more highly ranked than others? Do college and universities at the top of national rankings really offer a higher quality of education, however we might define that, than their peers? By what criteria do colleges rise to the top of ranking systems? Why are some colleges more successful than others at helping students graduate? Attempting to answer these questions, I joined Dr. Corbin Campbell's College Educational Quality (CEQ) study, a research study which "aims to reimagine a "good college education" by focusing on the teaching and learning process rather than student inputs" (College Educational

Quality, 2018). The CEQ study aims to shed light on what is good teaching in college, and it examines this across institutional contexts and prestige levels, thereby exploring whether institutions of higher prestige offer a higher quality education than lower prestige institutions.



My interest in understanding variations in the quality of education students experience across institutions is now coalescing in my dissertation: a study of teaching practices at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), or institutions that gain that designation because they serve a student population that is at least 25% Latinx. More specifically, through my dissertation, I am studying the relationship between teaching practices at HSIs and organizational level factors that can influence how faculty teach.

My dissertation focuses on teaching practices at HSIs because teaching practices have the potential to positively influence the baccalaureate attainment rate of Latinx students. Latinx students have the lowest college completion rate of any racial/ethnic group in the United States (Nuñez & Elizondo, 2012). Only 15% of Latinxs have at least a bachelor's degree, and an even smaller number, 4.6%, hold an advanced degree (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, 2017; Krogstad, 2016).

To study faculty teaching practices at HSIs across the country, I am using responses to the University of California at Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute's (HERI) 2013-2014 faculty survey. The HERI Faculty survey is a national survey that collects socio-demographic data as well as information on such aspects of faculty work as their pedagogical practices, research

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ALUMNI PROFILE: MEET JONATHAN NEIDIG

"He who knows only his side of the case knows little of that." This quote from John Stuart Mill's On Liberty aptly captures my appreciation for my Teachers College experience. As an active duty Army Officer, I was selected by the United States Military Academy at West Point to serve as a

military science instructor. My role would be to plan the cadet basic training for the incoming freshman class as well as teach classes on military operations during the academic year. As part of this assignment, I was afforded the opportunity to attend Teachers College and pursue a Master's degree in the Higher and Postsecondary Education program. I am incredibly grateful for this enriching and rewarding experience.

Initially I had no idea what to expect at Teachers College. My undergraduate degree was in Information Technology

and I had spent the previous seven years training in ground combat units and participating in military training operations around the Pacific. I also spent time testing new communications systems for the US Army. Coming from this environment, I had concerns about how I would fit in at Teachers College. When I arrived I was pleasantly surprised by the warm and welcoming reception.

Taking a short break in my Army career from operational units allowed me to pause and reflect on my experiences as well as my attributes and competencies as a leader. The HPSE program was an ideal place for this. Many of the classes studied adult development and I found myself applying much of what I was learning to my own development. The other benefit of this reflection occurring at Teachers College was the incredible diversity

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CONVOCATION 2019

Tuesday, May 21, 2:00pm
Masters Ceremony for
Department of Organization &
Leadership

Wednesday, May 22, 10:30am
Columbia University
Commencement

Wednesday, May 22, 2:00pm
Doctoral Hooding Ceremony

For more information:
convocation.tc.columbia.edu



May 15, 2018: HPSE Graduation Brunch



HPSE EDD & MA
HPSE Adjunct Assistant Professor;
Vice Chancellor for Student
Affairs at Rutgers Univ.-Newark

FACULTY PROFILE: MEET CORLISSIE THOMAS

I recently met a group of my Teachers College classmates for dinner. We got together to celebrate the life of Dr. Lee Knefelkamp, a trusted advisor, mentor and friend to many of us. As we sat and talked, I thought about how much I treasured my time as a student at Teachers College and how much these friends and colleagues mean to me so many years later. I have different relationships with

them now, some more or less close, but I value them all and recall well the conversations and experiences that we had together that created the foundation of my professional life in higher education.

Almost every day I think, see or do something that reminds me of a discussion, a reading, a theory, or a lesson I learned at TC. I was so ready to be at TC when I was accepted for the MA in Student Personnel Administration in the late 1980s and again to be a doctoral student in the mid-90s, that I absorbed every moment in class, searched for deeper meaning in everything, and almost couldn't get enough of the classes, the reading, my professors and my classmates. While capturing the extent to which my TC education has impacted me in a brief essay is a challenge, I can share a few key takeaways that shine brightly amid the many lessons I learned at the College.

At TC I first learned the value of a team. Whether it was with my Masters cohort, a study group within a particular class or from my membership on a research team as a doctoral student, I cultivated a desire to work in teams and quickly came to understand that groups often arrive at better solutions than people working individually. My belief in the value of team thinking and operating has signifi-

cantly influenced the way that I conduct myself as a leader in Student Affairs. Working as a team allows university professionals to devise solutions and experiences for students that address the student in a multifaceted way, recognizing that student concerns and needs are often layered. For example, a financial aid problem may reveal a family or personal concern that may manifest itself in the form of poor class attendance or performance. With student success as the goal, Financial Aid, Counseling, and Academic Advising working together can work with the student to address the problem and its causes. Or, poor nutritional habits observed by Student Health Services, may be best addressed by a coordinated effort between Health, Dining Services and Peer Education, in concert with Athletics and Student Life. In short, I have found that the team approach to serving students is often most effective in supporting student success.

Closely related to learning the value of a team at TC, was the understanding of the value of diversity. Vivid in my memory are the differences in perspective, varying world views and significant disagreements that composed our learning environment at the College. Acknowledging and working through those differences, whether to accomplish a specific task, or in the course of reflecting on an assigned reading, opened my mind to a world beyond my own and made diversity and inclusion a core value of my work from then until now. My TC education encouraged me to express the intersectionality of my own story and to hear it in others'. It helped me to recognize who is *not* being heard or who may be considered "the other" at a given moment. Listening for all voices has improved my ability as a student affairs leader to make better university policies and decisions, and to advocate fully for students. In my current role as the chief student affairs officer at a university that is nationally noted for its diversity, I learn something new every day about me and my

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TEACHING AT HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTIONS

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and service, sources of stress and satisfaction, and their institutions. Though survey responses shed light on different aspects of the teaching and experiences of over 24,000 faculty members in the United States, I am focusing on the teaching practices of faculty at HSIs and the organizational context in which their teaching unfolds.

Though we shun, at times, the idea that there are “best practices,” we know enough about teaching and learning to recognize that some practices do increase the likelihood of student learning, and that teaching holds a

transformative potential for all students. I believe parents and students, too, share this belief and it is why in NYC and across the country, heated conversations are taking place about how to address inequity in access to a quality education. Through my dissertation, which examines how teaching unfolds at a particular kind of institutional type but also across institutional contexts, and through the work I have begun as a student and researcher in the HPSE, I want to contribute to efforts to shed light on the transformative potential of teaching and broaden students’ access to a quality education, regardless of the institution they attend.

CORLISSIE THOMAS, FACULTY PROFILE

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diverse colleagues and students, and my receptivity to that learning started at TC.

Finally, I credit Teachers College with instilling in me a deep belief in the essential connection between theory and practice. The relationship between theory and practice was the foundation of the Master’s program when I attended, and continued to be a primary conversation when I returned to TC as a doctoral student and served as a TA for MA Fieldwork and research team member. Reading Knepfelkamp, Widdick and Parker’s *Applying New Developmental Findings* for the first time was a guiding light when wrestling with questions about how to design programs that would support student leadership at various developmental stages, or how to facilitate discussions for diverse groups of students, or for first years differently than I might for seniors, or how to address student conduct in a way that prompts ethical

development and creates a teachable moment, and more. My TC education provided me with the basis for my professional approach to educating students, and until today I still seek understanding and the foundation for practice in theory.

There are many other ways that my Teachers College education has impacted my life and professional practice. It was at TC that I gained an appreciation for educational literature and research. It was there that I was taught by fine scholars, and experienced the honor of walking the halls that Maxine Greene, Esther Lloyd Jones and John Dewey also walked. It was there that I met colleagues and friends for life, and there that I return at any opportunity to give back to future higher education professionals a small portion of what TC gave to me.

MEET JONATHAN NEIDIG, ALUMNI PROFILE

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of the experience. New York City, with its immense mix of people of different cultures and ideas, proved a great opportunity to examine many of my own beliefs and perceptions.

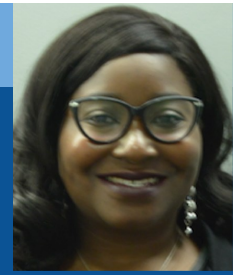
The HPSE program included many courses that challenged my current beliefs and exposed me to new concepts and arguments on topics which I had never previously considered. This allowed me to examine and at times, argue “the other side of the case.” I was able to update and refine my own beliefs and I hopefully shared that experience with my fellow classmates and teachers.

When I graduated in May 2018, I immediately took on responsibilities in the cadet summer training, already well underway. My wife, Maria, and I were blessed with the birth of our first child, Jonathan. All of this added to an incredibly hectic summer, during which USMA was incredibly accommodating for my family’s situation, which finally gave way to the academic year. The new instructors were run through an initial onboarding training program and I had spent a big portion of the summer coordinating the reconfiguration of the MS100: Introduction to War-fighting syllabus and course content. I found myself directly applying what I had learned in Katie Conway’s Cur-

riculum and Instruction class, the culminating project of which happened to be developing a course syllabus.

As the academic year began, I found myself in the classroom in front of dozens of freshmen cadets all eagerly looking for me to answer the question of “What is this whole Army thing about?” I had to draw upon my own training and experience as an officer to make the subject matter relatable to them. Utilizing the works of Dewey, Shulman, Schwab and Palmer, I found myself striving to make the dry subject matter of Army doctrine exciting and relatable to students just out of high school. My goal was to help them develop a foundational understanding of Army operations upon which they will build over the next three years.

The importance of diversity in making an organization stronger was driven home to me during my experience at Teachers College. Diversity directly strengthens the bond of trust between the United States people and the United States Military Academy and the Army as a whole. Much of this trust is built upon the people seeing themselves reflected in these institutions. In order to effectively serve their client, the American people, the Army and West Point must continue to emphasize diversity and inclusion. Because of my experience at Teachers College I feel much more aware of this importance and ways to support it with the rest of my Army career.



For me, choosing to pursue a graduate program in higher and postsecondary education was all about increasing the odds. I know now, that to be a black woman from a low-income family who graduated from my undergraduate institution, I am represented in a single digit percentage. There are still many moments, while walking through the hallways at Teachers College that I think, “I wasn’t supposed to be here” because of the barriers that exist for students who share my experiences growing up. I want to be a part of the solution that makes someone like me more likely. I also acknowledge that it can never be just about access; we need to make the experience of navigating campuses less disorienting for students who come from marginalized backgrounds.

HPSE has given me the opportunity to reflect on how life-changing the higher education experience has been for me and by extension, my family. It is in the way I’ve been prepared to navigate the world, but it has also expanded my concept of what is possible. I appreciate the way that being involved in the Higher and Postsecondary Education Association (HPSEA) as Executive Chair has allowed me the privilege of building community with some of the brightest scholar-practitioners in the field. People who I know will encourage changes that will make it more likely for marginalized students to succeed, grow, and persist to graduation. When I learned about the NASPA Graduate Associate Program, I saw another avenue to strengthen the HPSE community. One that could help facilitate a more meaningful connection to one of our field’s largest

professional associations for students at Teachers College.

We know that for many students, persisting through to graduation can be like running a marathon and that it will take bringing different voices to the table to provide an environment that has a healthy balance of challenge and support. The development of any field depends on innovative ideas. NASPA and other professional organizations can be a space for new voices that reflect the concerns of our time and we have so much that we can contribute. As a NASPA Graduate Associate, I consider it my duty to help my colleagues make the most out of the resources that NASPA has to offer. I also hope to help fill any knowledge gaps that may exist so that more people are aware of funding that can make attending NASPA events more accessible.

Through the NASPA Graduate Associate Program, I have been able to make connections with graduate students and new professionals from all around the country. We’ve shared our experiences and the ways that the foundations of our programs inform what we conceive of as best practices. Furthermore, I can bring the things that I learn as part of my involvement with the NASPA Graduate Associate program back to the programming that HPSEA plans this academic year. I’m excited about what is ahead and honored to be able to take on this role for my Teachers College community.

RURAL STUDENT GROUP

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the expertise of faculty members whose research and writing focuses on rural education and healthcare topics. For a lunchtime program, Dr. Jennifer Havens from University of Kentucky video conferenced in to discuss the opioid crisis in the rural United States and her research on this epidemic. The culminating program of the day brought in Dr. Sonja Ardoin from Boston University (now Appalachian State University), who presented on the current state of rurality in education research, obstacles facing rural students pursuing education, and her recently-published book that details a research project she conducted on working-class and first-generation rural student college access. In both programs, symposium participants asked questions of presenters and engaged in rich discussion about the topics at hand.



A large part of being scholars, practitioners, and scholar-practitioners in higher education means sharing with external communities our work and scholarship. While RSG is interested in rural education and healthcare information gathered

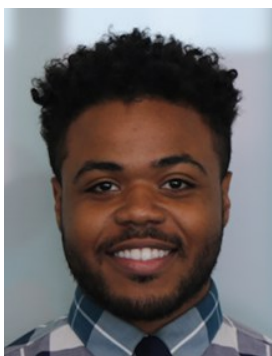
through research, we are extremely happy that we got to share that information with the broader Columbia community via our interactive symposium. Thanks to the Teachers College Office for Diversity & Community Affairs (ODCA) for their generous sponsorship, a second Rural Education & Healthcare Symposium will take place this academic year, Spring 2019 - stay tuned for more details!



Acknowledgements: Rural Student Group continues to engage Teachers College and the broader Columbia community with rural education and healthcare issues, this year headed by HPSE doctoral student Chase McNamee as Executive Chair and HPSE master’s student Jenay Willis as Associate Chair. I wish them luck!

I would also like to thank ODCA for their funding and support in planning this symposium, the Education Policy & Social Analysis (EPSA) Department for financial sponsorship of the symposium, Dr. Sonja Ardoin and Dr. Jennifer Havens for presenting their knowledge regarding rural education and healthcare issues in the U.S., and the entire RSG team for their help in pulling off this event!

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: MEET BRIAN!



Brian Allen, Ed.D.

I returned to the Higher and Postsecondary Education as a newly admitted Ed.D. student knowing that I would be studying in an academic environment with the support of my advisor, Dr. Noah Drezner, and other HPSE faculty. Teachers College has been the source of truly transformative experiences and opportunities that

have allowed me to better understand the work that I am passionate about in Student Affairs and Higher Education. As an undergraduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I was a student leader and campus activist who was interested in learning more about the role of student affairs professionals and to what extent they held a responsibility to supporting students of color in creating a more equitable, inclusive and just campus environment. After having several conversations with senior leadership at my alma mater, it became apparent to me that creating and implementing sustainable change was not an immediate concern to that administration. I decided to apply to graduate programs to better understand campus climate issues and the field of Higher Education.

My time as an HPSE master's student was full of new experiences, challenges, triumphs and opportunities for growth. It was during this time that I developed an academic identity that I felt was authentic and allowed me to bring my full self into the classroom and the professional experiences I was gaining. Enrolling in classes like College Teaching and Learning, Theories of Diversity, and the American College Student, pushed me to think critically about the different facets of Higher Education and I was able to learn from the different perspectives that my peers brought to these courses. It honestly took a while to find community at TC outside of the HPSE program, but once I was introduced to students in the Black Student Network, Coalition of Latinx Scholars and QueerTC, I quickly found folks who would become a strong network of support for me. I was also fortunate to have many opportunities to develop relationships with HPSE faculty collaborating on programmatic initiatives like the Black Lives Matter in Higher Education Series with Professors Corbin Campbell and Noah Drezner, or conducting research with Adjunct Professor Duane Bruce on Student Affairs Professionals of color's job satisfaction, campus climate perceptions and intent to

leave the field. Rather than completing the program in one year, as most do, I finished in two years which allowed me to gain experience in diversity, multicultural, and student affairs while working in offices at private/public institutions, and graduate/community colleges.

Today, I currently work at New York University as the Assistant Director of the Center for Multicultural Education and Programs where we promote various educational and campus-wide programming initiatives dedicated to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. Overseeing Community Engagement & Outreach, I am responsible for Welcome Programs, the FOCUS Mentorship Program, retreats and leadership programs, men of color initiatives, cultural graduations and serve on several university-wide committees. Through intersectional approaches to addressing social issues our center works to create a campus environment where all students feel as though they are valued members of a community to which they have developed a sense of belonging. Through working at NYU I've been able to begin cultivating a research interest, focusing on cultural solidarity and coalition building among students of color at predominantly white institutions. Working at a private institution and studying at an Ivy League has definitely opened my eyes to both navigating and supporting students in different institutional cultures and campus climates. Living in NYC has honestly been the opportunity of a lifetime, especially for someone like me originally from the Midwest! Being such a diverse, progressive, and eclectic city, I was definitely able to find myself and better understand the intersections of my identities after finding communities that I felt spoke to the experiences I've had throughout my life. In my free time I really enjoy exploring the city and finding new restaurants/bars, being in community with folks in the networks I've been introduced to, and waiting patiently on MTA for my daily commutes to and from work.

During my time at TC I co-founded a viral hashtag, social (media) movement, and non-profit organization, #BlackandHooded which seeks to promote positive depictions of Black academic excellence and promote graduate study as a method of persisting and resisting against the status quo. Anthony Wright (Co-Founder) and I have managed to sustain an academic scholarship program with 2 cohorts of #BlackandHooded Scholars, as well as a networking database of almost 400 Black scholars, academics and practitioners across different fields and disciplines.

Important Dates:

December 3: Spring registration begins

January 23: Spring term begins

February 5: Last day to add and drop courses

March 17 to March 24: Spring Break

May 14: Spring term ends