

December 2021

Volume 15, Issue 4

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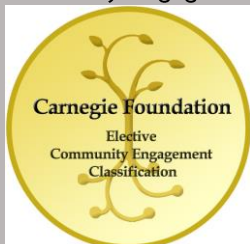
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Carnegie Foundation
Elective Classification in
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Applied Learning in Foundations and Social Advocacy: Education in and for Equity

We know that children's learning is influenced by factors outside of the classroom, including poverty, violence, and injustice.

With that in mind, Cortland County is fortunate to have a strong network of community agencies that support families and educators – as the "Community Resources for Children, Parents, and Teachers" article on page 2 describes.

This article, the fourth in our series exploring applied learning's role in teacher education, demonstrates ways in which teacher educators and teachers "complete the circle" of support with agencies by working to improve conditions in children's communities.

Our November newsletter described the School of Education's Childhood/Early Childhood Education Department. The School of Education also includes Literacy

(to be described in the April 2022 newsletter) and Foundations and Social Advocacy (FSA).

FSA enrolls 350 students. It offers a major in Inclusive Childhood Education, and it houses the Cortland Urban Recruitment of Educators (C.U.R.E.) Program. C.U.R.E.'s Coordinator, Professor Anne Burns-Thomas, explains that C.U.R.E. aims to graduate a more diverse population of teachers as a way of improving the educational success of students of color.

FSA also operates the Educational Leadership (graduate) Program; its students are successful teachers who have been recommended for the program.

Dr. Joseph Menard, the Program's Coordinator, explains that the Educational Leadership program prepares educational administrators to be leaders in, and advocates for, social justice and equity.

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Action Team Interns: Movin' On and Movin' Along

Take care has been the theme for Action Team interns Jenna Kratz and Hailie Addison.

Kratz's focus: *Take care of yourself.*

As the COVID pandemic began to spread, she geared her internship to self-care, especially for students' mental health.

Her achievements include consulting with professional staff to create a spring 2021 campus-wide mental health survey of over 525 students. She used that survey's results to

- Create the SUNY Cortland mental health webpage

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Jenna Kratz (foreground, right) and Giovanna Rossi conducting a *Treat Yourself* event.

Dr. Carol Van Der Karr, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, provided support for this project.

Community Resources for Children, Parents, and Teachers

A hungry child does not learn well. If that child is continually hungry – or homeless or abused or in some other harmful situation – their cognitive, emotional, and social development suffers into adulthood.

Cortland County is fortunate to have agencies that help address such situations. These agencies are resources for children, parents, and educators.

With that in mind, Assistant Professor Margaret Gichuru invited three guest speakers to address her EDU 333 (*Children, Families, and their Community*) classes over WebEx.

This article is another in the academic year-long series on applied learning in teacher education; it is one of two articles that describe resources for teacher educators. The other article will be in the February edition.



Lindy Glennon, Executive Director, Cortland County Community Action Program (CAPCO), Kris Beard, Coordinator of the Cortland County Child Advocacy Center, and Emily Thompson, Family Advocate at the Center described ways in which they help children be prepared to learn, despite tough circumstances.

CAPCO addresses challenges faced by low-income people in our community. (As of 2019-2020, 16.4% of our county's residents – roughly one in six – live in poverty.)

The Child Advocacy Center addresses prevention, education, and investigation of child abuse, regardless of the income level of the abused.

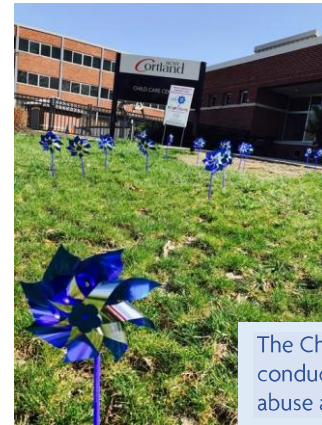
These agencies' work, and the work of many other agencies in Cortland County, helps children learn in spite of conditions that conspire against success.

The Institute for Civic Engagement's director, John Suarez, provided EDU 333 students with background information, including an October 2020 video clip of Karen Dudgeon. Dudgeon is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a Certified Clinical Trauma Professional.

Background

Dudgeon reminded students that effective learning is not determined solely by what happens in the classroom; rather, situations and events outside of the classroom can weaken student's ability to learn.

She explained that when a child experiences stressful or traumatic situations repeatedly, those situations (or conditions or events) can interfere with learning because they stifle growth of the child's brain.



The Child Advocacy Center conducts the *Pinwheels* abuse awareness program

Background

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She explained that when a child experiences stressful or traumatic situations repeatedly, those situations (or conditions or events) can interfere with learning because they stifle growth of the child's brain.

Those situations may include drug abuse, physical or mental abuse, discrimination, homelessness, or hunger, to name a few.

These kinds of trauma are called Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Children suffering from ACEs tend to spend more energy on surviving rather than on learning; as a result, neural growth of the prefrontal cortex in a child's brain slows, hurting academic learning and socialization skills.

Continued on page 8

Two SUNY Cortland students complete the SUNY SAIL Academy's Leadership Program

“Being a leader doesn’t mean you have to do everything,” reflected Madison Chandler. “You can’t do your best when you have too much to do, so as a leader I need to be more aware of myself and pick my battles.”

With these words, Chandler (Conservation Biology) was reflecting on her experience in the semester-long *SUNY Institute for Academic and Innovative Leadership* (SAIL) Academy.

Action Team intern Hailie Addison also completed the Academy.



Merissa McKasty, the Academy's Leadership Development Manager, writes that the Academy "provides talented and committed SUNY students with the tools to develop the leadership mindset and skills necessary to solve complex challenges and to succeed beyond graduation."

Chandler noted that “You need to tell your own story because if you don’t, someone else will tell it for you, and they’ll get it wrong.”

At the same time, she acknowledged a humbling part of leadership, saying that “a leader needs to admit when they’re wrong and admit when they don’t have the best idea in the room.”

“It’s important to listen to other people’s challenges and ideas.”

Chandler will take her SUNY Cortland and SAIL leadership lessons with her when she graduates this December.

Action Team, continued from page 1

- Design *mental health help* stickers for restrooms and campus housing
- Organize “Treat Yourself Day” events
- Conduct a mental health survey of high school students in fall 2021.

Kratz presented on her work at the November 2021 New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance Conference.

Physical Education Chair Matthew Madden advised her on her presentation.

Kratz is the first recipient of the *Barbara A. Galpin* ('68) *Greater Good* Scholarship, through which she joined the Action Team in spring 2020.

This was her last semester on the Team. “I’ve learned a lot with my internship,” she said. “I’ve learned that a simple idea can go much farther than anticipated, how to plan large events, how to develop a survey, and how to present to a large audience.” She continued, saying that

The internship went above my expectation since I did not realize how much change I would be able to be part of *and* to start. There were many times that the internship allowed me to do things I did not even imagine were possible.

Kratz is in the Physical Education/Health 4+1 Program, through which she will graduate with her Master's degree in 2023.

Addison's focus: *Students taking care of their communities.*

She began her internship by composing all the articles for the Institute's November and December 2020 newsletters.

During summer 2021 – while serving as a participating member of the League of Women Voters of Cortland County’s Board of Directors – she designed a “Town/Gown” pamphlet (below), which was distributed in COR 101 courses.

For this project, she consulted with VP for Student Affairs, Greg Sharer; Mayor Brian Tobin; Director of Corey Union, Kevin Pristash; Coordinator of COR 101, David Runge, and director of the Institute for Civic Engagement, John Suarez.

During that summer, Addison helped design and moderate a deliberative dialogue with faculty from many institutions. In that work, she learned about BridgeUSA, a nation-wide, student-led organization that discusses issues of concern to students.

By fall 2021, she had already begun forming BridgeCortland, a chapter of BridgeUSA.

BridgeCortland, now an SGA club, has 24 members, five of whom are now trained as public deliberation facilitators.

BridgeCortland conducted deliberations on Roe v Wade (in partnership with Binghamton U.) and on Vaccine Mandates, and conducted a Gen(eration) Roundtable.

Addison, an English major with a Communications and Women's Studies minor, credits her internship with helping her focus her career plans:

Writing the newsletter articles made me realize that I want to go into journalism, and planning and hosting BridgeCortland events helped me learn about social justice issues – which has made me want to go into advocacy journalism.

Addison will continue with the Action Team in spring 2022.

Food Pantries

SUNY Cortland Cupboard:
Basement of Interfaith
Center (7 Calvert Street)

Catholic Charities of
Cortland:
35 Central Ave

The Salvation Army:
135 Main St.

Cortland Loaves &
Fishes Soup Kitchen:
15 Court St.

211 Cortland:
10 Kennedy Parkway
<https://www.211cortland.org/>

Volunteerism

Cortland County Community
Action Program, Inc.
(607) 753-6781

YMCA of Cortland
(607) 756-2015

Cortland County Youth Bureau
(607) 753-5067


American Red Cross
(607) 753-1182

Catholic Charities of Cortland:
(607) 756-5992

Cortland Community SPCA:
(607) 753-9586

Cortland Main Street Music Series:
(607) 222-5828

Line Hollow Nature Center:
(607) 682-4532



The Cortland Community

• Opportunities
beyond
campus.

Attractions

The 1940 House
Museum:
32 Tompkins St.

Line Hollow Nature Center:
525 McLean Rd.

Shiprock Amusements:
750 N.Y. 13

Cortland Miniature Golf
Course:
13 Rd. 214

The Cortland Historical Society &
Sagehen House Museum:
35 Pleasant Ave



Shop local

Photo Shoppe
(607) 753-2161

Hawthorn Brothers
Hauls:
13 Central Ave

Clark Art Supply
LLC:
11 E. Court St.

Remedy's Custom Ink &
Tattoos:
107 Main St.

Eat Local

Buck's
14 Main St.

Cortland Plaza
177 Main St.

Panache's
Pizzeria:
414 Geneva Ave

Cortland
Halls:
175 Main St.

Waxy Food &
140 Main St.

Collier Meats
140 N.Y. 13

Why community is important


- Build connections
- Strong sense of personal and collective identity
- Benefit local families and businesses
- New opportunities and experiences

"Along with a sense of belonging, students who attend colleges with strong communities tend to feel safer in their college environments."


-Liberal Arts Colleges

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."

- Coretta Scott King



Find more volunteer opportunities at:
<https://www.cortlandareachamber.com/community-volunteer-opportunities>



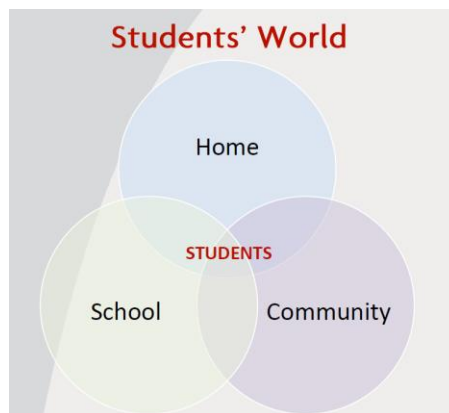
Find more at:
<https://www.cortland.org/>
<http://www.cortlandchamberofcommerce.com/>

FSA, continued from page 1

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)

Students in FSA programs explore the roles of factors outside of the classroom that help or hurt children's learning, especially in urban contexts.

In so doing, they develop knowledge and skills that help them, as future teachers, nurture the learning of students in marginalized populations in urban schools.



The Venn diagram above represents considerations related to FSA students' student learning outcomes. In FSA 101, *Introduction to Urban Education*, for example, student learning outcomes relate to concerns represented by the circle labelled *community*:

1. Analyze the social and political forces impacting education in urban areas and demonstrate understanding of the issues affecting urban schools, urban students and urban teachers.

1. Examine school reform in urban contexts, including a particular focus on teacher activism and community-based school reform.

2. Explain theoretical underpinnings and practical applications of pedagogies that are prevalent and recommended for urban contexts, including culturally relevant teaching, multicultural education and assets-based approaches.

Regarding *Home*, students will be able to

4. Recognize the role of student and teacher identity in urban contexts, including learning about students and families from marginalized and oppressed groups and the ways that these identities can shape school experiences.

This SLO, especially, requires future teachers to learn about themselves, as well as their students.

Applied Learning starts early and continues throughout

FSA 101 helps students begin developing these complex understandings by putting students in authentic – experiential – learning environments early in their college careers.

Dr. Cynthia Moriarity, Field Coordinator for FSA's Inclusive Childhood Education (IEC) program, explains a personal benefit for our future teachers of early applied learning: "Getting students into classrooms early helps students learn about teaching and their potential roles in that career."

Moriarity is also Graduate Coordinator for Teaching Students with Disabilities (TSD) and Teaching Adolescents with Disabilities (TAD).

Burns-Thomas details some of that experience, specifically for C.U.R.E. students, who "do clinically rich observations in a Syracuse City School District school for 30 hours attached to FSA 101. This time includes observations of the classroom and school community, individual mentoring and tutoring of students, and leading group activities."

As with SUNY Cortland's other teacher education programs, the IEC and TSD/TDA programs are rigorous.

Moriarity says "we go beyond New York State requirements." One of the ways in which the IEC program does so is through its extensive use of applied learning. FSA graduate programs, for example, require the applied learning strategies of internships and culminating experiences.

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FSA, continued from page 4

Menard describes culminating experiences as “authentic learning,” especially because they are based on school districts’ actual needs, some of which concern socio/emotional health and learning for students and for staff and teachers. Educational Leadership Program students help develop programs to address these issues.

Personalized learning, reflection, and action through Testimonio

Applied learning projects, such as those in the Educational Leadership Program, tend to personalize applied learning, in part because of its use of reflection.

Assistant Professor Jose Ortiz’s special topics course, *Testimonio as a Reflective Tool to Inform Anti-Racist Practices* (FSA 129), intensifies the use of reflection to personalize – and “activate” – learning.

Testimonio is a genre of literature represented by accounts and reflections by, of, and for the oppressed.

Ortiz’s syllabus tells students that they will study *testimonio* “as a form of self/collective expression, reflection, and empowerment.” “Testimonios,” he says, “reveal political, social, and systemic barriers.”

Each week, Ortiz’s students submit their own reflection on that week’s reading.

In effect, they are reflecting on reflections.

Students identify the challenge that the *testimonio*’s author is addressing and they articulate their own position in the challenge being described.

The goals are for students to recognize their own beliefs and to empathize with the authors’ experiences – which could mirror those of the students’ own future students.

In this way, his students are moving toward the FSA learning objectives of analyzing social and political forces that affect education and “learning about students and families from marginalized and oppressed groups and the ways that these identities can shape school experiences.”

Ideally, students will use their knowledge, skills, and position to advocate for social justice. His students – by using testimonios in their own classes – will show their students that they, themselves, have agency to correct injustice.

But Ortiz explains to his students that “you can’t teach others to be agents of change if you’re not one, yourself.”

As an agent of change, an individual also needs to have a sense of community. “It’s not just a ‘me’ problem,” he says, “but a community-wide problem.”

Acknowledging that this work can delve into traumatic experiences, Ortiz reminds students that, as teachers, they are mandated reporters, so they need to be sensitive and they need to know the resources available at their school and in their community in case they find, for example, an account of abuse.

Personalized learning, reflection, and action through a Multidisciplinary project

Assistant Professor Jeremy Jimenez uses applied learning and reflection to help students personalize their learning in, for example, his *Gender, Race, and Class Issues in Education* (FSA 103) and in two 400-level courses.

Some of his assignments ask students to

- Design a lesson and teach a class during the semester with some of [Jimenez’s] future teacher candidates (sometimes as part of an “Honors” contract).
- Conduct qualitative interviews with one or more individuals whom they know, and who identify in some way with an historically marginalized group.
- Survey their peers in SUNY Cortland about some area of class content and present their findings to the class.
- Write an advocacy letter to a public figure (politician, CEO, or school board member, for example), recommending that they adopt a particularly social justice-related policy. This is an example of an assignment that combines student learning outcome #1 (regarding analyzing social and political forces), above, with #2 (“focusing on teacher activism and social reform”).

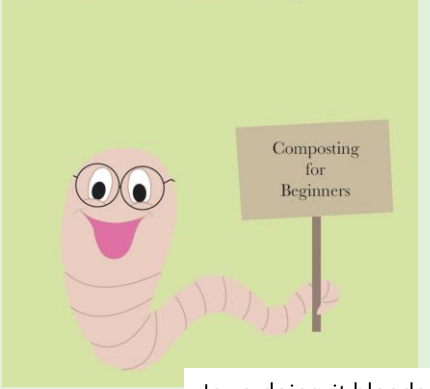
Continued on page 6

FSA, continued from page 5

This last assignment became the focus of a multidisciplinary *Cortland Applied Learning Practitioners* project that Jimenez conducted with Assistant Professor Szilvia Kadas (Art and Art History).

Their project, *Environmental Awareness through Collaboratively Created Children literature/books* (images below), brought together students from Kadas' *Graphic Design II* (ATS 340) and Jimenez's *Foundations of Education: The School in American Society* (FSA400).

Learn with Squirm



In so doing, it blended discipline based SLO's while also incorporating non-discipline-based applied learning SLO's. Those outcomes included –

- Competency in collaborating with people from different backgrounds, including professional backgrounds. (This is also an ATS 340 SLO)
- Problem-solving, including visual problem-solving in projects related to “socially and environmentally conscious issues” for ATS students.
- Demonstrating social and environmental awareness (both courses)
- Becoming engaged in civil civic decision-making (especially, though not exclusively, for FSA students).
- Dealing with ambiguity.

Regarding that ambiguity, in an end-of-semester debrief, Jimenez said that “thrusting creativity on [students] can be really stressful for them. [Creativity's] going to be messy, but that's how creativity and collaboration work.”

Kadas reinforced that message, saying that the fields of digital media and Graphic Design change often, so students need to know how to deal with ambiguity, how to deal with the unexpected, with change.

Jimenez underscored the role of applied learning by explaining that this project nestles into the progression of courses that his students would later take, including *Teaching Elementary School Reading and Language Arts* in the next semester, with relevance in students' *Media Literacy* and *Teaching Elementary School Social Studies* courses – each of which is an applied learning course.

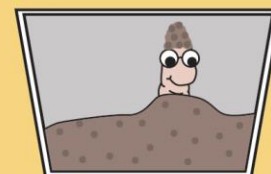
Jimenez identified even more detailed connections between this project and those courses, writing that

This experience will inform later lessons relating to children's reading, media communication through collaboration with graphic design students, and civic mindedness – which is part of elementary social studies curriculum.

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Layers of a Stackable Worm Bin

Add your food scraps to the top layer. Cover your food scraps with shredded, moist newspaper to keep away fruit flies.



The middle layer used to be the top layer. This is where food scraps and newspaper are actively eaten by the worms. After they are done, you have vermicompost, which you can give to your plants!

The liquid from food scraps eventually drips through the layers into the bottom. Collect this “worm tea” because it is packed with nutrients which makes the plants happy and healthy!



FSA, continued from page 6

In their CALP proposal, Kadas and Jimenez highlighted the authentic, real-world nature of the project for the Cortland community, writing that

Our community partner will meet with our students during their assigned course times. We want to make sure we're designing the project in a way to ensure it can be considered eligible for some grant points towards being awarded the Climate Smart New York grant.

Reflection generates students' Ah-HA! moments

Through these kinds of projects, students in applied learning courses can "locate" themselves in the democratic process. In doing so, they often learn a good deal about themselves. They usually realize those revelations through reflection.

Moriarity attests to FSA's insistence on reflection: "The IEC program's reflection requirements are extensive but important. All courses require student reflection and student teachers reflect on every lesson they teach; those reflections connect to students' seminars.

"In Educational Leadership, interns send their reflections to their college supervisor/mentor. They then discuss questions and concerns raised in those reflections.

Menard pointed-out that "many successful school leaders do these logs throughout their careers."

As noted in previous articles in this series, SUNY Cortland's teacher educators across disciplines require their students to reflect.

Menard identifies one of the reasons, saying that as students reflect on this range of experiences, they also learn about their own

career path, moving through their own "Ah-HA! moments." Some, for example, have written comments such as, "Now I understand why my administrator worked in [a certain] way."

He adds that "our undergraduate students' authentic, real-life experiences in K-6 classrooms, where they observe and often partner with teachers, can surprise them."

Some students, for instance, realize that "teaching is a lot of work!" Some decide early in their college careers that they should change majors, while others become even more invested in the career.

Some of those more invested students could, after some years of teaching, be nominated for SUNY Cortland's Educational Leadership Program.

To reach that point, Burns-Thomas emphasizes reflection as key: "Reflection, reflection, reflection. We include journaling about the time in schools, reflective writing about resources, and an oral final exam that asks students to reflect on experiences."

She explains that reflection helps C.U.R.E. students learn about connections between education-related injustices and their own lives:

"The main connection that C.U.R.E. students make is about the systemic and structural inequalities related to school. Many of the C.U.R.E. students attended schools like the ones that they are working at in Syracuse.

"In conjunction with the course materials and the bit of distance that [classroom] observation allows, C.U.R.E. students can see the ways that their own experiences were shaped by structural racism and systematic inequality.

"It often intensifies their desire to become teachers."

Community, continued from page 2

Glennon emphasized the importance of agencies' staff recognizing ACEs: "Understanding the importance of ACEs has become really critical to how we proceed with identifying needs in our community and how we address those needs.

"We take a trauma-informed response to our work because understanding the neurological impact is crucial to building resilience in children and adults."

Education resources: Holistic and Systems-based

Glennon, Beard, and Thompson described ways in which community agencies help children deal with ACEs and other stressors so that children can learn more effectively: The agencies

- Offer pre-school education programs
- Address existing abuse
- Provide prevention education
- Work with the child and the child's family.

CAPCO runs the county's Early Head Start and Head Start Programs, which are for

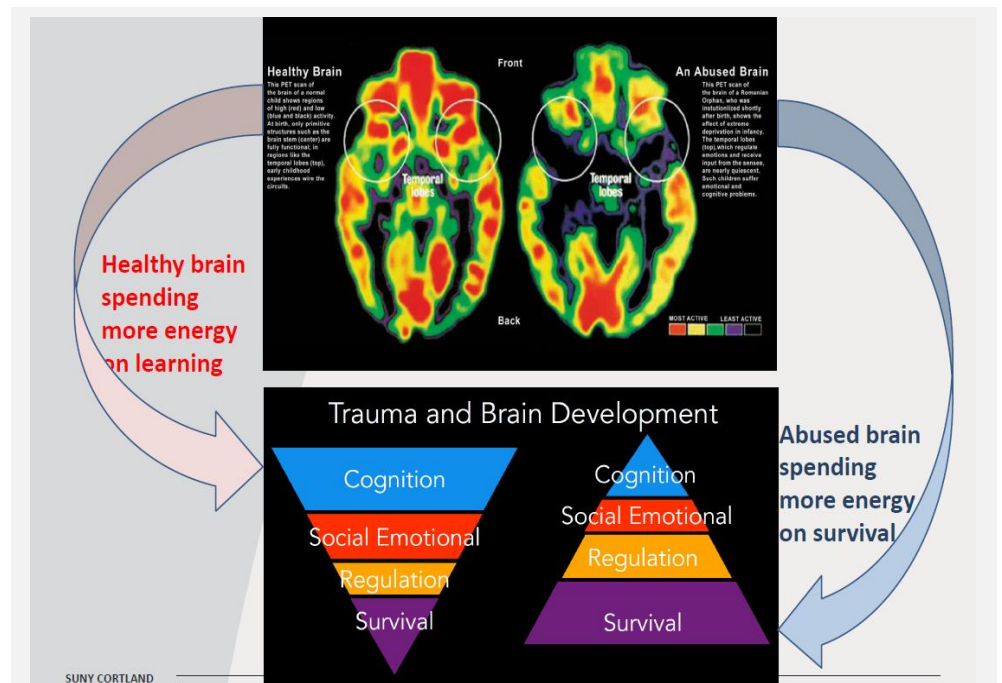
children from birth to five years of age. It has funding for 232 children. Among the programs' resources are classroom education, social and emotional supports, speech therapy, and health and nutrition resources.

CAPCO also offers resources to help people who dropped out of high school earn their high school equivalency diplomas, and it runs the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, which provides health/nutrition education and vouchers to purchase healthy food.

Thompson noted that the Child Advocacy Center works in all of Cortland County's public schools, especially in K-8, helping children learn how to identify abuse and know what to do if they feel they have been abused.

One of her co-workers, Community Outreach Educator Taylor Jandrew, "goes into schools to provide personal body and digital safety classes. Taylor educates all the children in kindergarten through 8th-grade in all our county's public schools."

Continued on page 9



The images at top are brain scans of two children. The brain scan at the left shows the brain of a child who is not suffering from ACEs, in contrast to the child at right.

The top and bottom slides are from Karen Dudgeon's presentation, which is at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ea7QOn203_g

Community, continued from page 8

Thompson continued, pointing out that “this is not only to prevent abuse, it’s also to help children who have been abused learn how to get help because some of these kids may not realize that what they experienced was abuse, or they may know that it wasn’t right, but not know how to get help.”

One of the EDU 333 students asked, “It seems very important to be trauma-informed in a childhood setting. What are some ways of identifying signs of trauma in the children in your care?”

“Get to know the children,” said Glennon. “A child who seems very distracted or doesn’t engage in the way that they usually do could be ‘telling’ you that they are under a lot of stress.

“They could be hungry or living in a noisy and chaotic household, so they’re not getting much – if any – sleep.

“We teach children to be respectful, to share. But if a child is in survival mode, then their decisions might not be consciously made. In survival mode, you grab what you can when you can.”

Thompson elaborated, saying that, “as an educator you’re spending a lot more time with the children than many other people are. You’re wearing many hats, teaching children *and* supporting them through life.

“So I would emphasize a lesson that we include in our trainings for mandated reporters: *Build relationships with children*. Show that you care about them and that you are someone they can feel comfortable sharing things with.”

Beard explained the need for this work, saying that “over 200 children are abused in Cortland County each year. One in ten children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday. 90% of victims know their abuser, but only one in ten victims will tell someone. It is the job of the Child Advocacy Center to help victims get the specialized services needed to start their healing process.”

With a report of child abuse, the Center asks a multi-disciplinary team to investigate the claim; the investigation includes interviews.

Interviewers use trauma-informed practices, one of which involves using audio-visual recording equipment, which lets other people involved in the case check information without needing to put the child through repeated trauma-related interviews.

Such an approach values empathy – understanding the trauma that a child can re-experience during the investigation.

Another trauma-informed practice is the use of Comfort Dogs. Thompson and Beard explained that the Center contracts with *Josie’s Journey* to provide comfort dogs to children for when children are sharing their stories during interviews, when in front of a jury, or at sentencing.

Seeing an abuser – at trial, for example – can be very difficult for the child; a comfort dog can help the child stay calm and say their victim impact statement.

Comfort dogs can also help during counseling sessions. Thompson recounted a time when a person “was just really shut-down, they were really struggling, [but with] a comfort dog, they were able to open-up. [The person] said that the whole reason they felt comfortable was because that comfort dog, Luna, was there.”

These steps help the child feel less threatened, so they can focus less on survival and more on classroom learning.

Beard, Thompson, and Glennon emphasized that they also help the children’s care-givers because those individuals are often working through their own stressors.

Helping the child by helping the family

Thompson said that Cortland County agencies “focus on the whole child and family because we really see that victim, that child, as being part of a system, and we want to help that whole system.”

Continued on page 10

State of Poverty Simulation, conducted by CAPCO, with Action Team intern Kayleen Driscoll and her event partner.



During an abuse investigation, and as needed, the Center provides families with clothing, housing, food, transportation, and funding to cover crime- and investigation-related costs. The Center can also help with medical care.

CAPCO offers similar help: Its Family Development program provides families with emergency needs; its Energy Services Department conducts energy audits and replaces windows, insulation, and appliances to make sure that housing is safe and healthy.

CAPCO and the Center help children and their care-givers learn how to deal with stress, especially long-term stress so that they build resilience and self-sufficiency.

Glennon offered an example: Recently, a 16-year-old girl was pregnant and was not able to stay in school for a variety of reasons.

CAPCO's Adult Literacy program provided her with supports to address learning disabilities, and tutors to prepare for learning and testing. Through this approach, she was able to earn her high school equivalency diploma.

After having her daughter, she became committed to earning a nursing degree. She graduated from a certified nursing assistant (CNA) program and is now employed as a Certified Nursing Assistant.

After learning about the variety of services that agencies provide, a student asked, "what are the resources that are used the most here in Cortland?"

Glennon named access to food as one of the most needed resources. "About eight

years ago," she said, "we got a call from a nurse in Marathon Elementary School who said, 'I don't even know what to do: It's just become clear to me that from the time some children leave school on Friday, they're not getting much of anything to eat until they get back to school on Monday morning and they're starving for breakfast."

"At some of our county's schools, 75% of the families meet the free or reduced-price criteria for school lunches. We began to address this problem with our Snack Pack Program.

"School districts joined us in this response. Through community eligibility, the Cortland City Schools now provide breakfast and lunch for all students.

"This removes the stigma of many children and families in applying for free-reduced price breakfasts and lunches.

"The pandemic has only made this situation worse."

Beard pointed-out that the Center's *Essentials* program provides children and their families with items such as snack bags and comfort bags, which have products that include blankets, hats, gloves, and hygiene products.

She added that if the situation at home is severe, the Center connects the family with food banks in the county and, as need be, helps the family enrolled in SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Aid Program) – food stamps.

These resources help the child get and stay healthy physically and emotionally, which contributes to the child's readiness to learn.

Contact Information

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john.suarez@cortland.edu

Hailie Addison
Action Team Promotions Intern

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Community, continued from page 10

Agencies' collaborate

The agencies' systems approach extends to the greater community. Each presenter highlighted the importance of agency collaboration: As the "SNAP" example above shows, an agency that does not have a particular resource can refer people to a different one that does have that resource.

An agency that is helping a family whose house needs winterizing, for example, can contact CAPCO, which offers a winterization service.

To help address issues faced by children and their families, the Center, CAPCO, and other organizations conduct community outreach by, for instance, participating in community events, such as fairs.

Glennon noted that CAPCO's mission includes helping people in the broader community

understand what it means to live in poverty and what those challenges mean to children and adults.

One way in which CAPCO has done so is through its *State of Poverty Simulation*. In this two-hour event, participants vicariously experience the challenges of living at just above the poverty line.

Future teachers can learn about such community resources "from the inside-out" by volunteering or interning with them. Last year, for example, the Center hosted two SUNY Cortland interns.

This review provides only some of the ways in which community agencies support children's education. For additional information, refer to the Seven Valleys Health Coalition, at

<https://www.sevenvalleyshealth.org/>

Sometimes teachers are, themselves, an additional "agency": Lei Chen, '18, teaches English as a New Language at Syracuse's Corcoran High School. He recently launched a clothing drive for about 100 children who are coming to the Syracuse City School District from countries such as Somalia, Syria, and Afghanistan.



Lei Chen (standing, at left) with one of his classes at SUNY Cortland in April 2019. Action Team interns Ryann Hudson (left) and Sara Coyle are discussing ways of preparing for college with Chen's students.

Coming Events:

Cortland Applied Learning Practitioners Workshops

- Applied learning: Description and best practices. January 11 or 12 (per people's schedules)
- Incorporating applied learning student learning outcomes into a course. February 8 or 9
- Designing reflection prompts. March 9 or 9
- Individual Brainstorming for an applied learning course. Scheduled individually.

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