2018 SUMMER ETHICS INTERNSHIPS
INSTITUTE FOR PRACTICAL ETHICS & PUBLIC LIFE (IPE)

ABSTRACTS

For information about 2019 Summer Ethics Internships offered by the IPE with funds generously provided by the family of John Allen and Patricia Hollingsworth, please write to James Childress at jfc7c@virginia.edu


Description: This summer I was fortunate enough to spend ten weeks at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. I was mentored by Dr. Christopher Collura, a neonatologist who guided my research and edited my writing. I came to the Mayo Clinic expecting to join Dr. Collura’s ongoing neonatal ethics research projects, but he encouraged me to pursue my own topic, one that aligned with my career interests. We decided to write an editorial review of concussions in youth contact sports – what is society doing or not doing to protect youth athletes from the short and long consequences of concussions?

Ethical Issues: The review first establishes the risks associated with youth (ages 5-15) tackle football, comparing and contrasting the risk of concussion across multiple sports (ice hockey, motocross, and soccer) to claim that youth tackle football has the most significant risk of serious harm. Youth athletes lack the capacity to make informed decisions for themselves they are a vulnerable population. Through the guidelines of parens patriae, society has a vested interest in protecting them from harm. Changes must be made to the current state of youth football to better protect these children. Specifically, the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) has been inconsistent in its policies regarding the protection of youth athletes in different sports, particularly when it comes to tackle football. The editorial’s argument calls for more proactive methods to be used to prevent concussions from occurring in these children - primarily by removing tackling from the game for all youth players – rather than refining retroactive treatment methods of concussion rehabilitation protocol.

Cameron, Brian [Major: Political & Social Thought] Local Digital History at the Woodson Institute for African-American Studies

This summer, I worked as a research intern for the Citizen Justice Initiative, a digital storytelling project at UVA’s Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies. Established in 2017, the Citizen Justice Initiative creates digital resources that critically examine Charlottesville and UVA’s history through the discipline of African-American studies. Through my internship, I completed an independent research project which examined the history of school and housing segregation in Charlottesville from 1865 to 1960—between the two watershed moments of Reconstruction and the razing of Vinegar Hill. I drew primarily upon other community resources such as the Jefferson School’s history Pride Overcomes Prejudice: A History of Charlottesville’s African American School and the Race and Place digital archive. My research found that at every point of African-American progress since Reconstruction, Charlottesville’s white political establishment used education and land use policy to retaliate and reverse said progress. After Reconstruction, when African Americans had an independent Freedmen’s School that taught to the high school level, the all-white Charlottesville School Board subsumed control and disestablished black high school education until 1926. After decades of black community settlement and homeownership, the all-white Charlottesville City Council in 1929 passed its first zoning ordinance to preserve white property values, devalue black land, and preserve geographic racial boundaries. Contemporaneous with Brown v. Board of Education, Massive Resistance, and the demise of school segregation in Charlottesville, the City consulted with urban planning firm Harland Bartholomew & Associates to launch a campaign of urban renewal in Vinegar Hill, displacing 600 individuals and wiping out $1.6 million in black commerce.

My research raised substantive ethical issues about racial equity and democratic governance in the local context. How can the tools of local policy and the principle of localism be used to solve present-day issues of affordable housing and racial justice when they stand atop legacies of furthering segregation and white supremacy in
Charlottesville? To what extent must local public officials understand local history in order to govern equitably, effectively, and in the public interest? What racial beliefs and assumptions inform notions of “community” and “the public” which officials are tasked to serve? I argue that an approach grounded in African-American studies is imperative to answer these questions.

**Cifu, Isabelle [Major: Anthropology. Minor: Bioethics] Ranger’s Refuge at Gallastar Equine Center**

This past summer, I worked as an intern at Ranger’s Refuge at Gallastar Equine Center, located in Scottsville, Virginia. Since 1994, Ron and Lorelei Pulliam have operated one of the first programs in the country that connects the mental health community and therapeutic riding in a practice called equine assisted psychotherapy. Ranger’s Refuge, located on the same property, is a 501c3 nonprofit farmed animal sanctuary, which is home to over 200 rescued animals, including pot-bellied pigs, horses, mules, donkeys, chickens, rabbits, goats, and cows. I joined Ranger’s Refuge from June to August, apprenticing under Ron and Lorelei. As an intern, I performed a range of duties pertaining to the care of the animals, including feeding, watering, mucking out stalls, transporting animals to the veterinarian, and assisting with minor medical care, as well as assisting with the administrative aspect of non-profit operations, and other tasks related to the maintenance of the sanctuary. Due to the nature of farmed animal sanctuaries, ethical reflection is not only incorporated into the daily decision-making and work, it is engrained within the foundation of the sanctuary itself. The acts of providing sanctuary for victims of violence, making medical decisions in accordance with the interests of animals, and serving as a visible reminder of the unjust violence towards animals all comprise important moral action in the community. As I learned, animal sanctuaries occupy a morally and emotionally difficult position at the nexus of the animal care industry and the agricultural industry. For example, as there is an endless number of animals in need of a home and reprieve from the violence of animal agriculture, farmed animal sanctuary owners must either suffer emotionally, physically, and financially to manage caring for more animals than ideal for their organization, or else make the heartbreaking decision to refuse animals in the interest of prioritizing the animals already in their care. Overall, throughout this summer, I developed a greater appreciation for farmed animal sanctuaries as spaces of safety and embedded resistance within the animal industrial complex, because of the difficult ethical situations that I witnessed, which face people working to end violence against animals.

**Corning, Sarah [Major: Political & Social Thought] United Nations International Organization for Migration**

I spent this summer conducting research for the International Organization for Migration in Tapachula, Chiapas Mexico. IOM is the UN’s migration agency and “is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society”. I was put in contact with the Chief of Mission of the IOM in Costa Rica and coordinated my project with the director of the Mesoamerica program. My decided project sent me to Tapachula, a town 30 minutes away from the border with Guatemala. Everyday conducting my research was different; it was a mix of desk and field research. My report is titled, “Feminization of Migration: Gender-Based Violence and Labor in Central American Women’s Migration”. The report is divided into two sections. First, I offer an overview of existing literature on violence against women in Central America, and the relationship between human trafficking, migration and gender-based violence. The section includes a Honduran case study, which was completed through an in-depth interview. I also outline the necessary considerations when aiding women in transit who have experienced and/or are likely to experience gender-based violence. Second, I explore the Tapachula case of a transit city, focusing on women’s migration experience in relation to labor and GBV. I identify the risks faced by migrant women, and how local and international organizations provide aid. The second section of my article was done through semi structured interviews with civil society organizations, aid organizations, and governmental agencies. With IOM staff, I sat in on governmental meetings, NGO workshops, and accompanied them on border visits, and migrant orientation. I also visited the migrant detention center in the middle of the city, where migrants are taken under a criminal charge for crossing the border unauthorized. The purpose of me being in Tapachula was to study the transit period of migration for Central American women. Transit cities provide many of the same risks and challenges, and some unique ones. Much of my research had to do with migrant women engaged in sex work—some trafficked into it and some who enter voluntarily. My interviews covered childcare, abuse at work, abuse at home, healthcare, and the aid they receive. I tried to find gaps in the aid that is available to migrant women and identify ways to better integrate them into the economy. I also learned a great deal about consciousness raising and the work of women’s collective in assuring security for migrant women in Tapachula. The work experience I gained is incredibly valuable and will shape the work I do in the future.

This past summer I served as a Legal Intern at the New York Chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) in Queens, New York. Throughout the course of the internship I worked on an individual research project dealing with the legal implications of doxxing, processed new case and client intakes, followed on litigation for victims of hate crimes, and shadowed the legal director as he represented clients in investigations and cases dealing with privacy, surveillance, and discrimination. Ethically, CAIR is a non-profit that works to provide legal representation for members of the Muslim community in the United States who face discrimination on all spectrums; from immigration, TSA, Border Protection, and racial prejudice, to equal opportunity education, and service accessibility.

Hampson, Lauren Olivia [Major: Political & Social Thought] Research into Barriers to Affordable, and Accessible Reproductive Healthcare

I was in Charlottesville this summer continuing an investigation that I began in the Spring into the accessibility of affordable reproductive healthcare in Charlottesville and Central Virginia. By volunteering my time at the city’s Planned Parenthood clinic I furthered my research into the geographical, economic, legislative, and social barriers that patients in the Thomas Jefferson Health District face when attempting to access services at Planned Parenthood. While tasks at the clinic varied, I spent the majority of my time gathering ‘stories’ from patients as a part of the organization’s story collecting campaign. This campaign is designed to platform patient voices and highlight the range of services that Planned Parenthood provides as well as the wide array of circumstances that inform the decisions patients make regarding their reproductive health. To contextualize the identified barriers to reproductive health care in Charlottesville and the surrounding area I conducted research into the history of national reproductive health care policies and situated current policy decisions within this trajectory.

Hong, Michelle [Majors: Philosophy; Politics. Minor: Bioethics] Political Campaigns and Public Policy Research

This summer I worked in Charlottesville alongside a team of political campaigners. Our team did support a specific candidate, but as I intend on being quite critical of the research and other work I did with this team, I hope to keep the candidate anonymous. I do support this particular candidate, however I saw that there were various ethical issues involved with the campaigning process and I do no wish to hurt the candidate’s camp or chances of winning.

I worked odd hours. That’s the very first thing I noticed. My co-workers who had worked in non-profit before told me to expect such strange hours to be the norm. I would come in on weekend to attend various different events and even throughout the week I could be in the office from 9 AM-5 PM or even 3 PM-8PM. I worked to create data sheets to get a holistic view of Charlottesville and how political leanings typically worked within the city versus the greater Albemarle community, I strategized with my team members to create the best campaign plan that would reach out to underprivileged communities, and finally I would produce research on various topics (mainly health care) to assist my team in responding to questions of the general public appropriately. In addition to these main tasks, I carried out various other tasks including going out and canvassing on the weekends, making phone calls to potential voters and attending political events where I would be able to observe the candidate interact with different communities.

I saw a number of ethical issues involved with such campaign work, as one can imagine. The main one I plan on discussing is the issue of addressing underprivileged communities—it seems that throughout the campaign process almost anything will be said to ensure that they support the campaign to show that there is diversity present. However, the claims made in the pamphlets and flyers created by a candidate are not necessarily actions that will absolutely be carried through—these are just hopes the candidate has if they do win. I found myself struggling to make phone calls to potential voters (particularly those in underprivileged neighborhoods) and telling them all of the amazing things my candidate would do for them and that they must support said candidate if they want their community’s voice heard, all while knowing their background and using that to decide what script we would use when speaking to them and while knowing that these could potentially be false promises. In my final paper, I hope to analyze the issues with the campaign process and the importance of educating all people on such a process so that they can do their own research- as opposed to listening to the reassuring voices of volunteers or interns as myself over the phone.

This summer I interned with St. Rocco’s Emergency Family Shelter located in Newark, New Jersey. St. Rocco’s is a shelter under Catholic Charities Inc. and provides short-term shelter to homeless women with children. My internship initially consisted of assisting with casework for the mothers but later became my facilitation of a Wellness Project that I created for the mothers for the mothers of the shelter. As I became closely acquainted with the mothers of the shelter I noticed that with all of the responsibilities they had with the shelter and their children they rarely had any time for themselves. Many of them completely disregarded their own health as a means of focusing on the comfort of their children. My Wellness Project looked at health as the following: physical, spiritual, emotional and mental. Each week I planned a program for the mothers to participate in which allowed the mothers to reflect on a certain aspect of health. I would watch the children as the mothers took part in activities such as meditative yoga, healthy cooking classes and fitness dance classes.

My time with St. Rocco’s highlighted a number of ethical issues. While discussing spiritual health with the mothers, the ethical issue of religious diversity within a Catholic charity was presented. The project also led me to reflect on the ethical assumptions that are made about people and their health. What assumptions are made about the health of people without consistent housing, and how they prioritize it? My work with the women of St. Roccos brought in another layer when I thought about the ethical assumptions that are made about women and health especially when the women are mothers and do not have access to consistent housing. Lastly, I was able explore the ethics behind our understandings of health. I came to the conclusion that everyone has a right to be actively informed about their health and to receive necessary care.


I spent the summer at the Shift Research Lab in Denver, Colorado built out an R Shiny web app to allow stakeholders and policy makers to explore the effect of occupational structure on housing affordability, school quality, and commute time for low income families. As growth in home prices in urban areas outpaces wage growth, and the occupational structure shifts from solid middle class jobs to more low income jobs, finding affordable housing near economic centers is becoming increasingly difficult, if not outright impossible. The median home in Denver now costs 5.4 years of the annual median household income (the generally accepted metric for affordability is 3 years). Cities are in struggling in the face of market prices driven up by new industries and more high earning consumers in a market where supply isn't rising to meet demand. Through the project, I came to consider ethical questions surrounding economic development, the future of work, gentrification, and local government, as well as the use of data to inform and the possibility of using data to mislead.

O’Rourke, Meagan [Major: Undeclared] Internship at International Labor Rights Forum

This summer, I was grateful for the opportunity to intern with the International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF) in Washington D.C. As a global non-profit, ILRF’s legal team and campaign leaders advocate for workers’ rights in a variety of industries and countries including Uzbekistan’s cotton industry and Thailand’s seafood market. ILRF works with unions and community leaders to combat some of the most heinous human rights violations including child labor, forced labor, and gender-based violence. Specifically, I worked on ILRF’s apparel campaign and learned the disturbing realities of our “fast” fashion industry in which brands produce clothing on a tight turnaround schedule, putting workers’ health at risk in crumbling factories. Many of these workers are girls in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan who are my age or younger. With loose labor laws in these nations, our campaign targeted the companies supplying their clothes from these countries. We traced complicated supply chains and pressured Abercrombie and Fitch through publicity campaigns to sign the 2018 Bangladesh Accord, a legal contract allowing for the freedom of association among workers. Five years after the Rana Plaza building collapse in Bangladesh, in which 1,134 workers died, it was astonishing how unreceptive some companies were to protecting workers. Outside of the campaign, I worked on a grant proposal for the Department of Labor and attended events at the AFL-CIO to better understand the U.S. role in labor rights. While this internship may have turned me into a more thoughtful consumer, I learned that companies bury the lowest levels of supply chains and use a pro-workers image to disguise their true nature. For example, granola-seeming Whole Foods sources from workers earning well below a living wage. The main ethical dilemma of my internship was grappling with how consumers can be
advocates for labor rights when supply chains are becoming increasingly complicated and “voting with your dollar” is becoming decreasingly effective.

**Said, Nima [Major: Foreign Affairs] Speaking Truth to Power: Food & Agriculture Internship**

This summer I completed a 12-week internship program with Friends of the Earth - an environmental policy non-profit. FOE is a founding member of FOE International, the world’s largest grassroots environmental network. There are several sub-divisions within FOE, each focusing on its own niche topic. My division – Food and Agriculture – focused primarily on the disparities linked to food and farming policy, as well as corporate power. As a research intern, I was given the opportunity to study data that linked common corporate choices with several human rights violations.

For example, much of my research regarded the widely-used pesticide Chlorpyrifos. Chlorpyrifos was introduced by Dow Chemical Company in 1965, and is used particularly to control insects in agriculture, residential, and commercial settings. The World Health Organization has made it clear that this pesticide is hazardous and exposure can lead to an array of neuromuscular symptoms. Chlorpyrifos has been linked to long-term developmental disorders and is particularly dangerous toward women in gestation as well as children during early growth stages. Exposure during gestation or childhood has been associated with lower birth weights as well as changes in children’s cognitive, behavioral, and motor performance.

Despite these findings, Chlorpyrifos is still used at a large capacity by major agriculture corporations. This internship exposed me to the ethical dilemma created by large corporations who use a capitalist agenda in order to benefit their goals. For example, despite widespread support among Massachusetts constituents regarding the implementation of a pollinator protection act – throughout the summer it failed to move out of the Ways and Means Committee and onto the floor presumably because of the amount of funding that the corporations had provided.

I grappled with many ethical questions during my time at FOE. I witnessed many issues regarding environmental and human health become politicized and used as a tool to gain power. At what point does democracy reflect the wishes of the population – on a local, national, and international level, rather than the wishes of large corporations? When will the development of a child be worth more than financial gain? It is difficult to work toward a healthier society when ethical decision-making is routinely compromised. This internship gave me the opportunity to speak truth to power and fight back on corporate takeover.

**Salit, Matthew [Major: Political & Social Thought] Population Health Management Intern – Thomas Jefferson Health District**

This summer, I interned at the Thomas Jefferson Health District (TJHD) in the Offices of Population Health Management and Policy Analysis. I investigated how cities and counties in central Virginia can enact local ordinances that improve public health.

Virginia follows a tradition of local governance called the Dillon Rule, which limits the jurisdiction of city officials to only those powers specifically granted to them by the state legislature. Furthermore, any state law the conflicts with a city law preempts, or trumps, the local interpretation of the ordinance. This severe restriction on city and county power poses an ethical challenge because local health departments are the most knowledgeable body to serve the specific health needs of their constituents, but they lack the authority to act on this information. As a result, TJHD relies on creative solutions that address local health challenges through existing laws or nongovernmental opportunities.

Throughout the summer, I developed a nine-part policy proposal for TJHD officials to address tobacco consumption and healthy eating in Charlottesville and the surrounding counties. These plans include increasing local taxes on tobacco and sugary drinks, designating UVA a tobacco-free campus, and strengthening permit processes to promote access to healthy foods in convenience stores. My supervisors will continue studying, and hopefully implementing, these proposals over the next eighteen months.


As a white person, I’d rarely thought about my race. Last year, I realized that it was that exact fact that prevented white engagement with racism. I divided my summer between reflection and leadership in this area. First, I spent a week in New Orleans for the National Conference on Race & Ethnicity, attending seminars and panels about white fragility and systems of oppression. Then, I worked as a camp counselor for the Cornerstone Summer Institute, leading high schoolers in understanding these same issues. Revealing whiteness is absolutely an ethical
issue. Whiteness is oppression, and to be white is to be racist. While this statement might first sound incendiary, it reflects an undeniable system of institutionalized racism of which white people have always been beneficiaries and have sought to protect. Only through dedicated self-examination can a white person begin to pursue meaningful anti-racist work, and this summer, I worked to begin this process in myself and others.

Schwartz, Robert [Major: Systems Engineering] Systems Engineer and Legal Analyst at the Humana Rights Defense Center

I worked this summer at the Human Rights Defense Center, a prisoners’ rights organization based out of Lake Worth, Florida. I designed, analyzed, and mapped the most complete current database of US prisons and jails; I also led a legal analysis of the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) for eventual use in litigation against juvenile solitary confinement.

My work at the HRDC was centered around the fundamental issue of rights and responsibilities afforded to the disadvantaged. From an economic standpoint, prisoners are often viewed in the United States as nearly free labor. From a political perspective, prisoners and former prisoners are taken to be a disenfranchised class that intentionally supports the status quo through a lack of rights. From a sociological perspective, the denial of the rights and responsibilities of prisoners is often damaging to mental health and otherwise functionally demoralizing. All of these issues are compounded when discussing youthful offenders. These ethical considerations informed my work and led me to more carefully enshrine the need for clearly defined rights and responsibilities for all citizens.


Description: I worked under Joellen Schildkraut, Ph.D., and Lauren Peres, Ph.D., within the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of Virginia. I wrote an extensive literature review on the prognostic factors that predict survival in ovarian cancer. With the completion of the literature review, I began planning a secondary analysis of a database for the African American Cancer Epidemiology Study (AACES). The analysis will cover factors before, at, or after diagnosis that may predict survival and will incorporate items from the follow-up survey. Additionally, I assisted my mentor in the development of a pilot study of newly diagnosed epithelial ovarian cancer and factors contributing to overall survival.

Ethical Issues: Over the last few decades, ovarian cancer treatment advances have improved the expected survival outcome of the general population of ovarian cancer patients. However, the improvement has not been universal across racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. Lower survival rates disproportionately affect African-American women compared with other race/ethnicity groups. Little is known about the prognostic factors that predict poorer survival among African-American women, despite significant strides in identifying risk factors to the development and treatment of ovarian cancer. These factors are likely multi-factorial, including differences in treatment, access to care, comorbidities, and more aggressive presentation. Analysis of AACES provides a unique opportunity to further examine racial disparities in ovarian cancer, as it is the largest epidemiologic study of ovarian cancer in African American women. AACES aims to improve the understanding of factors that affect risk and survival among African American women with ovarian cancer. With completion of the follow-up time period, further data analyses of AACES on the predictions of survival is warranted.

Smith, Madeline [Majors: Environmental Thought & Practice; Studio Art] Gardens and Grounds Intern for the Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello

I spent twelve weeks working as a gardener at the historical home of Thomas Jefferson. During my time spent at Monticello, I executed manual labor tasks, planted hundreds of flowers and vegetables, and I learned the significance of maintaining a historical landscape that used to be operated by enslaved peoples. The gardens at Monticello are akin to libraries of plants, displays historical heirloom seed varieties in the same spaces they were experimentally grown by Jefferson’s staff and slaves in the early 1800s. My daily schedule consisted of beginning work at dawn, mowing and tilling, weeding, and planting. I also interacted with visitors frequently, answering their questions about what we were planting or how the gardens may have been different in Jefferson’s time. During my hours of labor, I contemplated the importance and ramifications of working as a white woman in the very environment that was historically sustained by black slaves. From an ethical perspective, I considered the moral necessity of historical education on slavery and how gardening contributes to the environment in a way that moves beyond the static house or objects that fill it. Monticello succeeds in making people confront the reality that Jefferson was a slave owner, and the gardens play a large role in establishing the physical space that Monticello was
at the times of slavery. Through the gardens, the Foundation has a unique opportunity to help Charlottesville residents and visitors reshape the way people engage with the complex history of this important place.

Soistmann, Rebecca [Major: Global Public Health. Minor: Bioethics] *Health & Homelessness: Barriers to Care in Charlottesville*

I spent this summer working at The Haven, a multi-resource day shelter for those that are homeless or facing homelessness in the Charlottesville/Albemarle region. I volunteered there for a year before beginning my internship and grew particularly interested in the health situations of our guests and clients. Before beginning my internship, I observed that many guests came to the front desk of the Day Shelter to ask for health care-related help, which we could not provide. I found myself questioning where these people received primary care, or if they did at all, and how their care might be paid for.

Using self-reported data from intake surveys (specifically, the VI-SPDAT: Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool) administered from January 2017 to June 2018, the demographics of 204 individuals and 22 families experiencing homelessness in the greater Charlottesville area were analyzed. Several of these questions pertain to the health status of the individuals, and thus observations about the utilization patterns and certain health problems of this population could be identified. Data was compared between those determined to be chronically homeless and non-chronically homeless, as defined by HUD. Statistically significant differences between the two groups were found across several categories, including having an addiction to drugs, having an addiction to both drugs and alcohol, and having a physical disability.

After identifying significant health problems of this population, I met with several different health service providers in the Charlottesville area, including the Free Clinic, the Thomas Jefferson Health District, Partner for Mental Health, On Our Own, UVA Hospital, Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital, Neighborhood Family Health Center, Downtown Family Health Care (private clinic), and Planned Parenthood. From these meetings, I determined barriers that guests and clients of The Haven face when seeking care. I also assessed what services our guests were eligible to receive at each center, and the level to which each hospital, clinic, or organization dealt with homeless and/or very low-income patients.

Using this data and the data gathered from the VI-SPDATs, I assisted in writing a report on health and homelessness in Charlottesville to be included in the updated City Plan to End Homelessness, produced by the Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless. Additionally, I’m working with two medical residents to found a mobile clinic that provides primary care services and mental health care to homeless persons at The Haven twice a month.

In my time at The Haven, I encountered several ethical issues including community ethics, issues of how to divide resources among those that are most in need while assessing how effectively these resources will be used, and how the right to health should be extended to all people, regardless of socioeconomic standing or housing status. Health care should be available without barriers to everyone, but especially our city’s most vulnerable citizens. I also staffed the Day Shelter for three to four hours every morning this summer and faced a whole plethora of other ethical issues, which I plan on addressing in my full paper. I’d like to thank the Institute for providing me this opportunity to learn in my community and hopefully make sustainable change for my city.


This paper discusses the state of the Peruvian health care system and the ethics of access and treatment of women to its resources, or lack thereof. The state of the health care system was evaluated by considering societal norms, interviewing girls that are a part of the NGO Peruvian Hearts, evaluating world health care statistics, as well as evaluating personal clinical experience. The ethics of the healthcare system were analyzed using Beauchamp’s and Childress’s principles of biomedical ethics: beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy, and justice. After considering all forms of evidence and the tenets of the principles, I concluded that the current health care system in Peru violates the principles of ethical access to health care, specifically for women. This discussion provides insight into the continued influence of machismo on the daily lives of women, as well as on their overall quality of life and safety within the construct of their access to, and interaction with, their healthcare system.
West, Caroline [Major: Art Administration. Minor: Drama] Development and Special Events Intern, The Watermill Center

This summer I worked as a Development and Special Events Intern at the Watermill Center, a not for profit avant garde performance art center in Southampton, New York. The center itself houses artists from around the world to come live at the center, learn from artistic director and founder Robert Wilson and hopefully further their artistic endeavors. Described as a laboratory for performance, the eight acre sanctuary of sorts provides the perfect amount of peace and inspiration for creatives alike. Personally focused on fundraising and special events, I split my time between the center’s office space in New York City and its creative space in the Hamptons. Although I spent a decent amount of my summer on the computer conducting donor research, tracking and entering incoming donations, and acknowledging new gifts, the majority of my summer was dedicated towards preparing for the center’s annual Summer Gala. An event that raises millions, the Gala opens up the center to some of the area’s more wealthy individuals for a night of performance art, live auction, food, drink and dancing. An experience within itself, the night really made me think critically about the art and its audience. Although the center prides itself on being an inclusive space, given its location in one of the most affluent communities within the United States, I found myself questioning the “open door policy.”

Ethical concerns of class, accountability for the quality of art being produced and the audience that is able to enjoy it ran through my head throughout both the evening and the entire summer. Furthermore, although I enjoyed working for the center, I now have a much greater concern for efficiency and accountability within a workplace. Given the center’s strong donor base, I sometimes questioned the use of the funds and resources that were provided and wondered if the center could or should exist in any other community besides the Hamptons.


This summer, I interned at Project Harmony Summer Camp in Jerusalem, an English immersion camp for Arab and Jewish children living in Israel, hosted at the Arab-Jewish integrated Hand in Hand school located on the border between East and West Jerusalem. The purpose of the camp was to help the children build relationships with one another through fun activities and informal English-learning. I was one of four counselors assigned to lead a “bunk” of 11 fourth-grade girls through their camp activities that consisted of sports, art, drama, and other similar activities. During my time working at Project Harmony, I was engaging and living through several ethical questions and claims. First, the camp’s goal was working towards a “shared society,” which made an ethical claim that people should deeply engage and do life (like education and summer camp) across lines of difference, especially in a conflict zone. In other words, Project Harmony makes the argument that living in peace but apart is not the solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Second, the camp focused on equity in all things: in the language spoken at camp (not favoring one over the other), social group management through shared games, and protection of some students from racism when in public spaces outside of the camp setting. Third, an ethical question with which I struggled working with kids was the line between disciplining and enforcing the rules versus showing grace allowing a second chance, even when the child was technically undeserving. Finally, I wrestled with whether or not the work I was doing with children was truly making a difference in the wider conflict.


I spent this past summer traveling to free and charitable health clinics across Virginia. I wanted to understand how they operated, their standards of care, and any challenges they were currently facing. My window for research happened to coincide with Virginia’s expansion of Medicaid, which posed the greatest disruption to a number of clinics in Virginia since their inception. Central to this disruption is the complicated balancing act that clinics have been forced into between increasing patient numbers, and decreasing their standards of care. Prior to Medicaid expansion, clinics saw a limited number of patients, but they could ensure high standards of care at little or no cost. Since Medicaid’s expansion, many of these same patients would be covered under Medicaid, but the services that are covered do not include all of the services previously offered by the clinic. As it stands, clinics are faced with the prospect of cutting down their services in order to accept more patients with Medicaid, or to continue with their current offering of services for a smaller set of patients. The correct choice for many of these clinics is not clear, and some clinics have opted to stay the same while others have begun the Medicaid adoption process.
Yoder, Maria Isabel [Major: Political & Social Thought. Minor: Mathematics] Mexican American Legislative Caucus – Policy Research Intern

The Mexican American Legislative Caucus (MALC), based in Austin, Texas, is a non-profit organization made up of House members who convene to address issues affecting the Latinx community across the state of Texas. This summer, as their policy research intern, I worked to help the Caucus in responding to issues brought on by the zero-tolerance policy set by the Trump administration. After the introduction of the zero-tolerance policy in April—which ordered the criminal prosecution of all migrants entering the United States illegally, whether or not the individual was seeking asylum or refugee status—thousands of migrant children were separated from their parents and held in detention centers. After national uproar, the Trump administration claimed that they would stop the process of family separation, but this executive order hardly solved the atrocities occurring along the border, and only masked the inhumanities migrants were facing at the hands of law enforcement. In my role at MALC, I assisted in organizing working groups composed of immigration advocates, medical professionals, and law enforcement agencies, in attempts to coordinate transparency and safety in treatment of immigrant families. At these working groups, we heard recommendations and composed a report in response to the family separation crisis. These suggestions will be used in the upcoming Texas policy-making session to ensure protection of immigrant families and individuals, and to influence statewide policy regarding ICE and detention centers. Citing recommendations from advocates that called attention to the negative mental and emotional impact of detention centers on immigrants, this report has created specific action items to guarantee ethical immigration policy. As deadlines have passed and the national administration continually fails to meet their promises, MALC puts pressure on the state of Texas to meet immigrants crossing the border with necessary humanity and respect for their rights, and to—with urgency—reunify the families they have separated.