Did you know that in the past soapbox crates were used as temporary platforms for making impromptu public speeches?
Another exciting area of work during the past year has been the completion of two important books. John Green of the University of Akron and I completed The Fountain of Youth. This edited volume, published by Rowman and Littlefield, lays out the problem of youth disengagement and offers numerous thoughtful, cutting-edge solutions from some of the best scholars and practitioners in the nation. Also, after five years of work, my coauthors Joanne Green, of Texas Christian University, and Chris Smith, of Michigan State, and I completed Living Democracy, designed for introductory courses in American government. The theme of the book is that young Americans must become more engaged in the political process and that numerous “pathways” exist for their involvement. Given the immense number of students who take this course each year (nearly 700,000 nationwide), and the exceptional commitment of the publisher (Prentice Hall), we believe that this book can change the nature of American government classes, and in doing so enhance our democracy.

These two items – new grants and new books – are just the tip of the iceberg of activities at the CPP during the past year. Of course, at the very center of all we do are students. Their energy and commitment are inspirational.

As always, I would like to thank all of the friends of the CPP. With your help we continue to lead the way in the creation of innovative programs and activities to kindle the democratic spirit in young Americans.

Warmest regards,
Daniel M. Shea, Director
Since 18-year-olds gained the right to vote in 1972, young people have been turning out at the polls in declining numbers. The low point came during the 2000 election, one of the closest races in U.S. history, when less than half (36%) of the eligible 18-24-year-old population cast ballots. Youth turnout remains substantially lower than the voting rate of older voters, perhaps forecasting a bleak future for the democratic process.

Social scientists and practitioners have found that young people have seldom been the focus of political organizations, campaigns, or parties. However, in 2004, campaigns spent an estimated $50 million to reach young voters, and groups like MTV's Rock the Vote, Smackdown Your Vote, and Declare Yourself targeted the youth population. These efforts increased young voter turnout by 11 percentage points over 2000 levels. It seems that if you simply ask them, young people will come to the polls.

The CPP has received a $150,000 grant to register young voters before registration deadlines in Ohio and Pennsylvania. The Community College Voter Registration Project is part of a nationwide, nonpartisan effort to register 350,000 voters in 2006, coordinated by Young Voter Strategies and funded by a $3 million grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts. The CPP will recruit and train student leaders at community colleges in Ohio and Pennsylvania to organize voter registration brigades and register 18-24-year-old voters on campus and in their communities. The CPP has assembled a dynamic team, led by project manager Dhira Dale '04 and state coordinators Adam Fogel '06, Bruce Brown, and Will Miller.

This July, 25 community college team representatives met at Allegheny for training with Andre Delattre, national campus organizing director from the New Voters Project, a partnership between the State Public Interest Research Groups and George Washington University. This partnership registered 524,000 18-to-30-year-old voters in 2004.

Dhira Dale is confident in the success of the training seminar, “We wanted to give teams the tools to build successful projects tailored to their campus,” she says. “The training showed them how to break goals into a timeline, armed them with a range of different contact methods, and helped them develop a plan for recruiting more volunteers.”

Since scholars know very little about the voting participation rates of community college students, teams will keep a close record of the method of contact used to collect a day’s batch of registrations. An analysis of these records will reveal the most effective means for mobilizing community college populations.

The Allegheny Voter Registration Brigade-led by Silas Russell ’07 and consisting of Ted Zimmer ’08, Mike Tylka ’08, and other Allegheny student volunteers-is also on the ground at youth events and campuses in Pittsburgh and Cleveland. Their plan makes use of personalized peer-to-peer contacts, the strategy thought to be the most effective for mobilizing young voters. These contacts take the form of tabling at events, clip boarding, “dorm storming”, door-to-door canvassing, and classroom presentations.

“Registering to vote is an important threshold for other levels of involvement,” says CPP director Dan Shea. “Once young people register and vote they tend to become habitual voters engaged citizens.” The project will not only guide many young citizens toward realizing their potential in our democracy but will also introduce many to the power of grassroots organizing.
CPP Kicks Off Voter Turnout Archive With State Grant

The CPP recently received a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to begin construction of a voter turnout archive. The project will result in a database of voter turnout data searchable by municipality or precinct, beginning with the state of Pennsylvania. While data collection is in the preliminary stages, turnout data may be available as far back as 1970.

The archive will provide a much-needed resource for academics, researchers, members of the media, and campaign professionals. In current form, voter turnout data is difficult to acquire – often researchers must gather data county by county, or wait a few years after an election for turnout data from the Census Bureau. The creation of the archive will allow for easier access to turnout data and greater transparency of voting records.

The new archive goes straight to the core of the CPP’s mission. Scholars and practitioners often measure political participation by voter turnout rates. Turnout rates, and accompanying demographic information, can provide rich information about a municipality. Turnout statistics are a quick, accessible means of analyzing variations in political involvement.

CPP Research Fellow and Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science Melissa Comber has taken the lead on the project. Allegheny alumni Shannon Scotese ’04 and Jackie Stallard ’06 worked on the archive this summer, along with current student Ashlie Louie ’07, to collect turnout data and population statistics. Once data collection is complete, turnout statistics will be calculated and made available as a searchable database on the CPP website.
Allegheny DC Trip, a Lasting Tradition

More than 30 years ago, collaboration between former political science department chair Wayne Merrick and the current chair, Robert Seddig, in conjunction with Allegheny political science alums, especially the late Betsy Dotson ’74 and Robert McGee ’69, resulted in the creation of a unique opportunity for Allegheny students. Every two years, the Political Science Department invites 40 students and 10 faculty on a trip to Washington, D.C., to meet up with Allegheny College alumni, many of whom are former political science and international studies majors. Allegheny graduates have pursued careers not only in government service such as the State Department, Congress, and administrative agencies, but also in major corporations, public interest groups, law firms, trade associations, and consulting firms. The trip is a forum for 40 current students to join these men and women in their offices to obtain first-hand information, and initiate conversation, about professional and career opportunities. Our graduates are living answers to the question: What can one do with a political science degree?

A key component of the trip is the Allegheny reception, an opportunity for students to chat with hundreds of alumni in their intended field. Early in the trip’s history, the reception took place at the National Press Club or, with the invitation of the Honorable Raymond P. Shafer ’38, at the Capitol Hill Club.

Lodging arrangements have changed over the life of the trip. At one time, the bus paused at the Howard Johnson’s near Dupont Circle for students to wash up in two or three rented hotel rooms before going on to the reception. Until as recently as 2004, all 40 students spent the night in the homes and apartments of generous alumni. This year, students enjoyed rooms at the Capitol Hill Suites within a few blocks of the Capitol building.

Students met several alumni at their offices this year, including Sara Cahill ‘00 at the National Journal, Ji Hye Shin ‘03 at the Heritage Foundation, Warren Payne ‘95 at the State Department, and Dale Florio ’77 at Winning Strategies. Representative Phil English’s (PA-3) office treated students to a tour of Congress. Other tours included the Supreme Court and the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency. As they have on every trip since the mid-1980s, Roberta McKenry Miller ’73 and her husband, Robert, organized a seminar for Allegheny students entitled, “How to Get a Job with the Federal Government.”

“The trip is a big advantage for political science students,” says Katie Lazar ’06. “When you speak to alumni one on one, it becomes easy to imagine yourself working in D.C. The city is truly the playing field for everything we’ve studied.”
The Soapbox Fall/Winter 2006 – 2007

CAMPUS NEWS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

CPP POLITICAL FAIR HIGHLIGHTS LOCAL ELECTIONS
by Deanne Dunbar

Though the results of local elections have the most significant impact on voters’ lives, fewer Americans cast their ballot here than in national contests. In fact, the typical U.S. municipal election draws between one-fifth and one-half of the registered electorate.

In an effort to extend the feverish tempo of the 2004 presidential election, CPP Fellow Silas Russell ’07 organized a political fair for Allegheny College students and Meadville community members. The fair, at Allegheny’s Henderson Campus Center, provided a distinctive voter education opportunity for many campus political organizations, including the Allegheny Peace Coalition, the Allegheny chapter of the ACLU, Allegheny Rifle Association, College Republicans, College Democrats, Students Advocating Reproductive Options, and others. Additionally, a selection of Meadville candidates delivered speeches and chatted with voters one-on-one. Attendees included Allegheny Associate Professor of English David Miller, Stuart Rothman, and Leslie Petasis, candidates for Crawford Central School Board; local Libertarian leader George Wright; Meadville assessor Harmony Hickernell; and Meadville City Council candidate Christopher Soff.

The fair served to highlight the importance of local elections and was an important display of the CPP’s commitment to non-partisanship. “I think it’s a great idea,” said Jasmine Carreon ’08, the second vice chair of the College Republicans, “that all parts of the political spectrum get to show up in one place and let everyone know what they stand for.”

STATE OF THE UNION EVENT
CPP Fellow Lisa Alexander ’08 combined the resources of the CPP with those of the College Republicans to gather a group of more than 25 Allegheny students to view and discuss the President’s State of the Union speech. The speech’s themes—Iraq, the War on Terror, North Korea, the economy, health care, the environment, and a plan to deal with AIDS and poverty—sparked a lively debate over pizza and pop.

CPP SPONSORS STUDENTS TO NEW LEADERSHIP PENNSYLVANIA
by Elizabeth Fager ’09

New Leadership Pennsylvania 2006, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Center for Women, Politics, and Public Policy at Chatham College, is an intensive week-long residential leadership and public policy institute designed to educate and empower young women for participation in public service. The CPP sponsored student attendees Elizabeth Fager ’09 and Afua Osei ’08. This year’s New Leadership theme was Women and Advocacy. The institute addressed the under-representation of women in politics, with a focus on the role of women in Pennsylvania policymaking. Through a series of intensive workshops, site visits, speakers, and a brief trip to Harrisburg to see politics in action, the women learned about the role of leadership in society, how to build and practice leadership skills, and most importantly how to connect with women leaders who are making a difference.

Osei and Fager also began to lay the foundation for a similar project in Crawford and Erie counties. Each will collect data on women in these communities and compose an op-ed piece for local papers. Both will also coordinate large-scale projects scheduled to begin on National Young Women’s Day of Action on October 19, 2006.
CPP WELCOMES VISITING RUSSIAN DELEGATES
by Ashlie Louie ’07

Allegheny College hosted an Open World delegation in October 2005. The impetus for the college’s participation began with former CPP Fellow Shateela Winters, who discovered an Allegheny alumna at the head of the program. With this information, Dean of the College Linda DeMerritt, Assistant Professor of History Ken Pinnow and Director of International Programs and Services Danuta Majchrowicz jumped in to make arrangements. Eight Russian community leaders—including two government officials, an attorney, two youth program directors, a television correspondent, and a director of a school for political studies—were welcomed by host families in Meadville for a week’s exchange on the workings of local governments.

The delegates sought answers to their questions about community involvement in local government decision-making. Until 2003, appointees of the federal government governed Russia’s municipal entities. Under a recent restructuring plan mandate, regional government officials must now be elected. Meadville provided useful democratic models to the visitors because Pennsylvania’s large rural and agricultural population is very similar to Russia’s Kirov region.

CPP FEATURED IN A NEW DVD FOR NATIONAL FLAG FOUNDATION

Argentine Productions recently completed two educational videos for the National Flag Foundation designed to encourage students to become more actively engaged in civic participation. “Citizen Quest” and “Cool Voting: It’s Your Vote” educate young citizens about the importance and value of citizenship and the power of voting.

A Political Awareness Day voter registration drive at Allegheny College with CPP Student Fellows Lisa Alexander ’08, Sara Schmitt ’06, and Amy Warnick ’06 is featured in “Cool Voting: It’s Your Vote.” This energetic and engrossing video designed for high school seniors will encourage young Americans to take an active role in the political process. As students listen to peer examples of political participation, see the history of voting rights, and witness democracy around the world, they learn about the magnitude of their civic role and are encouraged to participate in the political system through voting. Sara Schmitt ’06 aptly characterizes the concept of voting in the film. “Voting is the foundation of democracy,” she says. “If we don’t vote, we don’t have accurate and appropriate representation, and if you don’t vote, I don’t think you have a right to complain about how the election turns out.”

During their stay, the delegates visited with Meadville mayor Richard Friedberg, Congressman Phil English (PA R-3), and local political and economic development organizations. The delegates also took part in various community activities, such as the annual Make A Difference Day.

The group also gathered at the Center for Political Participation to discuss the impact an average citizen has in elections. A lively discussion ensued about the procedures for voter registration and the Electoral College. The visitors suggested improving low voter participation by removing or loosening voter registration requirements and holding large political rallies.

Allegheny Associate Professor of English David Miller added to the discussion with his insights as a candidate for Crawford Central School Board. Running as part of a coalition of candidates seeking to attain a majority position on the board, Miller surprised the delegates by explaining how individual votes would most certainly translate into major changes in a local election.
Allegheny College Students Participate in AICUP’s Student Lobby Day at the Capitol

On Tuesday, April 4, 2006, over 200 students, administrators, and college presidents gathered in Harrisburg to lobby the state legislature on behalf of the independent sector of higher education. The largest delegation of student lobbyists came from Allegheny College and included Lisa Alexander ’08, Ted Zimmer ’08, Afua Osei ’08, Neil Gershgorn ’08, Matthew Smith ’08, Lynn Stinson ’08, Robin Davis ’08, Megan Augustine ’08, Julie Cain ’08, Rainey Sethman ’07, Caitlin Nay ’08, Ashlie Louie ’07, Melissa Plumb ’07, Melissa Geer ’08, Nicole Baric ’08, Steve Gerring ’08, and Seth Kolski-Andreaco ’07. The Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP) sponsored Student Lobby Day, and CPP Student Fellow Lisa Alexander arranged meetings and travel for the Allegheny group.

Allegheny students spent the morning in the Capitol lobbying local legislators, including Senator Jane Earll (R-49), Senator Robert Wonderling (R-24), Representative Sean Ramaley (D-PA:16), and Representative Michael Veon (D-PA:14) – all of whom are Allegheny alumni. Student groups also met with Senator Bob Robbins (R-50), Representative John Evans (R-PA:5), Representative Teresa Forcier (R-PA:6), and Representative Rod Wilt (R-PA:17).

The students were lobbying for private higher education’s three top requests in the state budget: an increase in the PHEAA Grant program (student aid) consistent with the Governor’s proposed budget; capital funding for independent colleges and universities; and an increase in the Institutional Assistance Grant (IAG) program.

“I was really excited to participate in something that not only taught me about the legislative process interactively, but also to do something to help the college,” said Ashlie Louie ’07. “Private colleges and universities are the fourth-largest contributor to the Pennsylvania economy and funding for them is very important. Senator Robbins was really interested in my opinions and goals.”

While students lobbied, the House of Representatives spent the day considering amendments to the state budget bill (HB 2499). Many legislators met students and presidents off-the-floor of the House while debate continued in the background. Two amendments implementing part of the AICUP budget request passed. Rep. Peter Zug (R-Lebanon) offered an amendment that added $4 million for debt service for capital projects at private colleges and universities, and Rep. Rod Wilt (R-Mercer) offered an amendment that added $2.4 million for Institutional Assistance Grants (IAGs). The final budget will be the result of negotiations between the Senate, House, and Governor.
CPP Welcomes Secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Pedro Cortes to Allegheny College

A full auditorium of students and faculty welcomed Secretary of the Commonwealth Pedro Cortes to Allegheny College on September 16. Allegheny’s Center for Political Participation and Latin American and Caribbean Studies program sponsored the event.

Secretary Cortes is the first confirmed Latino Cabinet member in Pennsylvania history. Part of his responsibilities as Secretary are administering the Department of State and acting as the Commonwealth’s chief election official.

Latinos constitute the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population. As a result, Latinos exercise considerable influence over economic and political policies. In the past 10 years, Latinos’ disposable income growth has increased at a pace double that of the entire country. Businesses are starting to target this population because of its increased buying power. This growth has also spurred political parties to take greater notice of the Latino population. Cortes described the Latino vote as a potential swing vote in elections. Moreover, he revealed how important the Latino population has been to Pennsylvania’s political clout. The positive growth rate amongst Pennsylvania Latinos has stabilized an otherwise stagnant population. Cortes argues that this has prevented Pennsylvania from losing congressional seats in the reapportionment process.

When asked about his views on immigration policy and reforms, Cortes affirmed his support for policies that increase access to education and enhance opportunities for immigrants. Cortes used himself as an example of how far Latinos can go in the U.S. “I am a walking, breathing example of the possibilities,” he told the audience. Latinos who have made their homes in the U.S. are not giving up their culture, Cortes said. An example of this is their unwillingness to give up their native languages. Latinos want to learn English, but do not want to give up their background. Cortes argues that this is beneficial because it adds to diversity in the U.S. Cortes stressed that Americans need to learn to acknowledge, and celebrate, this diversity because it makes America strong, creative, and able to see things from different perspectives.
EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Fellows Present Why Bother? The Importance of Voting in America 2005 at Nine High Schools

by Melissa Mann

In October 2005, fellows from the Center for Political Participation visited nine high schools in northwestern Pennsylvania to present Why Bother? The Importance of Voting in America 2005, an interactive, nonpartisan program designed to motivate young people to vote. The program is a narrated 30-minute PowerPoint presentation filled with exciting images, popular music, and examples of youth political participation taken from current events.

In 2004 CPP Fellows Adam Fogel '06 and Sara Schmitt '05 created Why Bother? to encourage young people to vote in the Presidential election. For its second year, Fellows revised the program to focus on the importance of voting in local elections. The program begins by explaining how voting creates change, highlighting high school students in Seattle and their successful fight to overturn a local ordinance that restricted teens under the age of 18 from attending a dance or concert with more than 150 people present. Throwing their support behind a mayoral candidate sympathetic to their cause, the students helped to oust the incumbent and to develop a revised ordinance that was signed into law in 2002 by the newly elected mayor. Through this example, Why Bother? participants were able to see how young voters can change their political scene.

The presentation goes on to inform students about the effects that local elections have on their lives. It explains the roles and responsibilities of county commissioners, township supervisors, city councils, school boards, and other public officials, highlighting how their decisions affect issues that matter to young people.

The program concludes with information on the mechanics of voting, leading students through the voter registration process and explaining when, where, and how to register. Furthermore, the presentation dispells the mystery surrounding how to vote by explaining how to use both the old lever style voting booth and the new electronic voting machine common in northwestern Pennsylvania.

Approximately 600 high school students in Crawford, Erie, Mercer and Venango counties viewed the 2005 Why Bother? presentation, sparking interesting questions and discussions in the classrooms. According to CPP Fellow Kristin Marstellar '06, “Watching the expressions change on the students’ faces was inspirational. I could tell that they were truly beginning to understand how this election could influence them. I really enjoyed interacting with students, especially during our discussions after they saw the presentation.” The presentation also received rave reviews from the high school teachers, many of whom made suggestions for future presentations and requested return visits from the CPP Fellows.

CPP Constitution Day Project

For our first project of the academic year the Center for Political Participation and the Allegheny College admissions office produced a full-color poster, a sheet of discussion topics on the U.S. Constitution, and a directory of useful web sites, and distributed them to 5,500 high schools across the country. The outcome was three-fold: the CPP helped high school teachers teach their students about the federally mandated Constitution Day, brought a message of activism into high school classrooms, and spread the word about Allegheny College.
A year after the strongest voter turnout by 18-24-year-olds in over a decade, the Center for Political Participation is continuing its work in a national effort, led by Harvard's Institute of Politics (IOP), to maintain college students' interest in politics. Part of a 20-school coalition called the National Campaign for Political and Civic Engagement, student representatives from the CPP attended two research and skills training conferences at Harvard University on November 5 and 6, 2005, and April 8 and 9, 2006. The November conference featured research and academic experts who discussed civic education, the attitudes of students active in community service, and campus social movements. The second conference was a voter-registration and get-out-the-vote training session designed for implementation on college campuses in time for the 2006 elections.

At the November conference, CPP Fellows presented background information on the CPP's Why Bother? program, analysis of a follow-up study that measured the program's success, and a description of how other institutions could implement a similar program at high schools in their areas. "We are really looking to partner with other schools in order to increase participation in the program, particularly in urban environments," stated Senior Fellow Adam Fogel '06.

In April, a group of Fellows and CPP Program Coordinator Deanne Dunbar returned to Harvard to stimulate more interest in the program. "Relationships between colleges in the consortium continue to grow," noted Dunbar. "Nearly all who attended the April conference expressed interest in presenting Why Bother? in high schools around their campus."

The 2006 version of Why Bother? The Importance of Voting in America will be the CPP's first collaboration with other members of Harvard University's National Campaign for Political and Civic Engagement, including The Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University, The Harry H. Barker Jr. Center at the University of Tennessee, and The New Hampshire Institute of Politics at Saint Anselm College. The presentation will focus on the importance of voting in midterm elections. Each collaborating institution will have a hand in developing and presenting the 2006 PowerPoint presentation. Through this partnership, Why Bother? will reach several hundred high school students across the country.
CPP Director Daniel M. Shea has co-authored *Living Democracy* with Joanne Green of Texas Christian University and Christopher Smith of Michigan State and co-edited *Fountain of Youth: Strategies and Tactics for Mobilizing America’s Young Voters* with John C. Green of the University of Akron. The two books, both published this year, will help bring young Americans into the political process and will help scholars and practitioners understand the complexities of youth civic engagement.

*Living Democracy*, a text for introductory courses in American government, was written with the belief that these courses are critically important for our students and for the long-term stability of the democratic process. The text will help students draw connections between the topics presented and the framework of the governing system and find a role for themselves in politics and government. Its innovative approach to teaching American government accurately represents the dynamic nature of our country’s political process.

“This course is one of the most effective ways to draw young Americans into the political process,” suggests Shea. “Though nearly three quarters of a million students take this class each year, instructors often complain that existing texts fail to capture their attention. Our book goes further. It underscores why young people should care about politics and how they can play a meaningful role in the system.”

*Living Democracy* uses a style of writing designed to engage students, provides concrete ways for students to become politically involved, illustrates concepts with novel graphics and pictures, and integrates material between chapters. Its dynamic design helps readers get a better sense of real world politics.

“The book is about engagement and the ways average citizens can make a difference,” says Shea, “but it is also about learning. I daresay that no other introductory text has spent more time and effort focused on student learning.”

Many students at the CPP helped with the project. This past summer, Ian McMeans ’08 and Jenna Wolfe ’08, of Allegheny, and Kaelyn Lowmaster ’08, of Colgate University, helped select pictures and compile data for many of the figures and graphics. “It’s exciting to know that our contributions to this book will help engage students like us and encourage political participation,” said Wolfe.

The book will be released in December 2006 and will be published by Prentice Hall, a division of Pearson Education.

*Fountain of Youth: Strategies and Tactics for Mobilizing America’s Young Voters* is a collection of chapters from leading scholars and practitioners in the youth engagement field. This innovative book proposes strategies for youth mobilization—from reinvigorating parties, to recasting the theme of MTV’s “Rock the Vote,” to rethinking civic education. While the central focus of the book is the role of local political parties in getting young voters to the polls, the editors and contributors examine a broad range of long-term solutions for the problem of youth disengagement. The result is a volume that will be of interest to scholars, teachers, practitioners, pundits, and all those concerned about the health of our democracy.

“Shea and Green have assembled a rigorous and broad compendium of research findings and proposals regarding the political participation of young Americans,” says Peter Levine, director of the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE). “A consistent theme throughout the diverse, thoughtful chapters is the importance of taking young people seriously. Ignoring them or feeding them empty slogans will continue to alienate them and thereby weaken democracy. This book should influence research and political strategy as the Millennial Generation takes its place in the American electorate.”

The book will be published by Rowman and Littlefield Books and will be out by October 2006.
CPP Expands Model Campaign USA

by Deanne Dunbar

Three years ago, CPP Student Fellow C. Dan Myers ’05 created Model Campaign USA (MCUSA), a semester-long program that teaches high school students about the art and ethics of campaigning and concludes with a day-long competition at Allegheny College. This year the CPP expanded the program with the addition of a MCUSA education coordinator.

Meadville community member Marcia Metcalfe was hired to fill the new position. Metcalfe, who holds a master’s degree from the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan, has worked with nonprofit health care organizations for over 20 years and occasionally teaches courses in nonprofit management in Allegheny’s Department of Economics.

Metcalfe’s chief responsibility was to strengthen the preparation of the program’s student coordinators, Allegheny students who meet with the teams of high school students and teach them how to run a political campaign. With collaboration from the CPP staff, she developed and taught a weekly course that was mandatory for all new student coordinators. Through the course, student coordinators gained a more solid grounding in the various campaign topics and learned the team-building exercises and teaching tips necessary to prepare their teams. As a result of Metcalfe’s work, the MCUSA coordinators were better able to prepare their teams, thus enhancing the 2006 competition.

MCUSA continues to be the CPP’s most popular outreach program. College students, high school participants, and high school teachers and administrators have praised the program and its expansion. To continue its growth, the CPP plans to make the student coordinators’ course a permanent fixture and to supplement the existing coordinator’s manual with lesson plans and teaching activities in the next year.

Model Campaign USA Survey Shows Results

The CPP surveyed high school student participants before and after Model Campaign USA this year and found that participation in the program improved students’ political attitudes and behavior. After the program, students were 7 percent more likely to report that they had registered to vote. Students responded that they paid attention to politics “a good deal” of the time 10 percent more after participating in MCUSA. Thirty-four percent even reported that they were “a loyal fan of politics.” Before the program, just 15 percent of the students reported discussing elections or politics with their friends and family “quite a bit,” compared to 28 percent after the program. Just 15 percent of high school students responded that they were very familiar with the election process before the program, and an astonishing 48 percent reported that they found the election process “confusing.” After the program, only 4 percent still had questions about the election process. Participating in MCUSA also led students to express higher feelings of political efficacy. Students were 8 percent more likely to share the opinion that average citizens can make a difference in elections “a good deal” or “some of the time.”
On April 29, 2006, teams from six area high schools converged on Allegheny College's campus for the Center for Political Participation's third annual Model Campaign USA competition. High schools included East, Franklin Area Senior High, Grove City, Meadville Area Senior High, Northwestern, and Wilmington Area High School.

Model Campaign USA (MCUSA) is an innovative CPP program that teaches students about the nuts and bolts of modern and ethical campaigning in a hands-on, competitive environment. For 12 weeks before the competition, student coordinators from Allegheny College visit schools to teach the basics of running a political campaign and to prepare high school students for competition day. This year, the Allegheny students prepared for these sessions with a weekly class taught by Marcia Metcalfe, the new MCUSA education coordinator. The program culminates in an all-day event at which students demonstrate their knowledge and compete to run the best campaign for a fictitious congressional candidate.

The 2005 competition consisted of three 90-minute competition periods, during which students selected a team member to act as the candidate, developed a campaign strategy with a unique message and theme, vied for endorsements, and produced an announcement speech, a script for a TV commercial, and a direct mail piece. Amidst all that activity, teams also kept an eye on the polls and participated in an online blog to keep in touch with constituents.

New for this year, teams could choose to participate in a press conference, debate, television interview, or town hall meeting to respond to a disastrous toxic spill in their district, a crisis presented in the last competition period. The debate, presided over by CPP Fellow Adam Fogel ’06, even showcased the opposing candidate, played by former CPP Fellow Jordan Pallito ’05.

Meadville Area Senior High School earned the overall award for best campaign. However, each high school participant went home a winner. “I really learned a lot from this program,” said Julie Barker, a member of Franklin Area Senior High School’s team. “I was interested in politics before, but now I really feel like I know how to do things and that I could actually participate and contribute to a campaign.”

With three successful MCUSA competitions under its belt, the CPP looks forward to next year’s competition.

The CPP presented awards in the following categories:

- Best Campaign: Meadville Area Senior High School
- Highest Ethical Standards: East High School (Erie)
- Best General Strategy: Franklin Area Senior High School
- Best Direct Voter Contact: Wilmington Area High School
- Best Press Relations: Northwestern High School
- Best Electronic Media: Meadville Area Senior High School
- Best Fundraising: Grove City High School
- Best Targeting: Meadville Area Senior High School
- Best Internet Campaign: Wilmington Area High School
AP INSTITUTES-SUMMER 2006
by Becky Eby

In July 2006, 10 teachers attended the Advanced Placement Institute for U.S. Government and Politics at Allegheny College. The program lasted for one week, with the purpose of preparing high school teachers to teach Advanced Placement courses in U.S. government and politics. As a co-sponsor of the event, the Center for Political Participation invited the group to the Center for a brief presentation on the CPP’s goals and its outstanding educational outreach programs. The group also participated in a lengthy discussion that focused on how to get more young Americans civically involved. Following the presentation and discussion, the CPP treated the group to dinner at the Iroquois Club on Conneaut Lake, where the enthusiastic exchange of ideas continued over dinner.

CPP Educational Outreach Coordinator, Melissa Mann, CPP Program Coordinator, Becky Eby, and CPP Research Fellow and Assistant Professor of Political Science, Melissa Comber, gather for a group picture with the U.S. Government and Politics AP Institute teachers at the Iroquois Club.

Students from the Allegheny College Peace Coalition traveled to Washington D.C. to participate in a protest against the war in Iraq.

POLITICAL SCIENCE FILM SERIES
With Pi Sigma Alpha, the Political Science Honor Society

The first in an ongoing film and discussion series, Anarchism in America attempts to dispel popular misconceptions and to trace the historical development of anarchism, both as a native philosophy stemming from 19th. century American traditions of individualism and as a foreign ideology. The film features rare archival footage of significant personalities and events in anarchist history. More than 30 Allegheny students attended the showing and engaged in discussion following the film.

JODY KRETMANN
With the Luce Foundation and Allegheny’s CEC, CEED, ACCEL, VESA, and the Dean of the College

Dr. Jody Kretzmann is the co-director of the Asset Based Community Development Institute (ABCD) at Northwestern University and author of Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing Community’s Assets. Kretzmann met with Allegheny students, local and regional business and economic development leaders, members of local government and planning commissions, social service agencies, and the Meadville community on using local assets as economic development tools.

ALLEGHENY PEACE COALITION PROTEST

The Allegheny College Peace Coalition (ACPC), with the help of the Center for Political Participation, took 18 students to Washington, D.C. on September 24, 2005. Students were bused from Pittsburgh by the Thomas Merton Center to the largest-ever demonstration against the war in Iraq. Numerous protests took place simultaneously in cities around the globe. Official estimates of attendance in D.C. ranged from 150,000 to 500,000. Students encountered anti-protesters and witnessed numerous (peaceful) shouting matches. The students also chatted with veterans, pivotal members of the Vietnam anti-war movement, and Gold Star Mothers during the march. The protest in D.C. connected ACPC members directly to their beliefs—and to others who share those beliefs—and provided a long the way a visceral experience of the struggle that is politics.
Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science **Melissa K. Comber** received her doctorate from the University of Maryland’s School of Public Policy in 2005. Melissa teaches social policy and government courses. Her research interests include civic education, civic skills, and political participation. Melissa was previously affiliated with the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), where she has published three fact sheets. She also published an opinion piece in the Georgetown Public Policy Review calling for more extensive civic education in high schools.

**Becky Eby** received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Mount Union College in 2006. As one of her school’s top students, Becky graduated summa cum laude and was highly active on campus through various clubs and student athletics. She was politically and civically active in her former state of Ohio. In the 2004 election, she attended one of the national conventions and volunteered on a presidential campaign, as well as with her local party. Becky believes in the mission of Allegheny’s Center for Political Participation and hopes to further its success.

Educational Outreach Coordinator, **Melissa Mann** received her Master of Arts degree in History from the University of New Mexico in 2001. Her experience in educational outreach stems from her work as photo archivist at the Albuquerque Museum of Art and History. During her tenure at the museum, Melissa wrote and produced exhibitions and acted as a research consultant and writer on educational films and publications. She also coordinated the museum’s exhibit outreach program and served as a mentor for the Albuquerque Public Schools’ Career Exploration Program. In addition to her duties at the CPP, Melissa volunteers at the Crawford County Historical Society and continues to research, write, and lecture on her historical interests.
FOLLOW the FELLOWS

Saying Goodbye to 2006 Fellows

ADAM FOGEL ’06
Cum Laude, Alden Scholar, Ray Smock Prize, Ballinger Prize
Adam graduated with a degree in Political Science and English. Adam spent the summer working as the Pennsylvania outreach coordinator on the Community College Voter Registration Project. Adam was also accepted to George Washington University’s Graduate School of Political Management.

KRISTIN MARSTELLAR ’06
Summa cum Laude, Class Valedictorian, Distinguished Alden Scholar, Doane Scholar, Louise Jordan Award, Phi Beta Kappa, Pi Sigma Alpha
Kristin graduated with a degree in Political Science and a minor in Piano Performance. Kristin spent the summer working at the CPP as the interim educational outreach coordinator. She began studies toward her Juris Doctorate at Case Western Reserve University School of Law in the fall of 2006.

AMY WARNICK ’06
Magna cum Laude, Alden Scholar, Phi Beta Kappa, Pi Sigma Alpha, Dean’s Award, Alice Gertzog Prize
Amy graduated with a degree in Political Science and a Values, Ethics and Social Action minor. In June, she began work as the development assistant at the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty in Washington, D.C.
High school civic education can be a source of civic skill development for young people. Civic education can be more equally available than alternative sources of skill development and political knowledge. For example, some young Americans may not have a politically engaged or knowledgeable family, a part-time job, or be involved in extracurricular activities. For these young citizens, civic education may be their primary exposure to the skills and knowledge needed for political participation. When numerous organizations and segments of society are trying new ways to engage youth and provide exposure to politics and civic skills, the high school civics course remains a steadfast potential source of political knowledge and civic skill development.

Currently, American civic education curricula appear to embrace either individuality or civicism, without meeting a common center. In practice, civic education is focused on either civics courses or service learning. While civics courses emphasize liberal political theory and are rights centered, service learning often emphasizes voluntarism and communitarianism. Recently, an accelerated increase in service learning programs and requirements for high school students has been documented. While service learning programs are important to teach a commitment to serve others, they teach a nonparticipatory form of political citizenship. Skills necessary for political activism are not often taught when service learning requirements are fulfilled by volunteer hours.

Overall, neither traditional civic education coursework nor service-learning approaches always teach participatory skills. With a historical shift in civics course content from a “problems in government” approach to a service learning emphasis, the teaching of civic skills has been lost. While the “problems” courses taught not just political knowledge but also participatory and communication skills (and hopefully inspired political engagement), service learning requirements often sacrifice political participation and civic skills for a focus on community voluntarism. We have yet to formulate the perfect civics course content that teaches political knowledge and civic skills while still inspiring political engagement. What is known, however, is that young Americans are less politically engaged than older Americans.

In particular, President George Washington urged Congress to support a civic education that would consist of “teaching the people themselves to know and value their own rights; [and] to distinguish between oppression and the necessary exercise of lawful authority.” John Dewey and Charles Merriam also espoused the necessity of education for developing characteristics of citizenship in a democracy, and the responsibility of American schools to teach youth how to participate in a democracy. Benjamin Franklin maintained that good schools should include the value of promoting democracy. Today, the purpose and content of civic education remains a subject of deliberation. Communities often debate which normative purposes and values to teach. Civic education teaches values that can conflict, such as patriotism versus membership in a global society, or socially acceptable attitudes of character versus independent thinking. Civic education requirements and curricula differ among states, and again among school districts within states. Yet even when civic education policies mandate civic requirements, they often do not mandate the values and norms to be taught.

What is known, however, is that young Americans are less politically engaged than older Americans.
The nature of civic education coursework has changed over the last 50 years. Coursework comprising problems in government has decreased, while coursework about American government institutions has predominated. Generally, “problems” courses invite more classroom discussion about public life, while American government courses teach basic facts about government institutions and processes. The difference between these two curricula is teaching civic skills. In turn, students today may be taking American government and civics courses without learning communication and group discussion skills.

What Is the Solution?
Some scholars advocate a focus on civics instruction. An Indiana University scholar, John Patrick, prioritizes civic education for schools. Within civic education curricula, he emphasizes equal teaching of both civic knowledge and skills. He also claims that teaching civic knowledge along with cognitive and intellectual civic skills is necessary for civic education to be, “an effective agent of civic development among American youth.” Education philosopher Amy Gutmann also calls on public schools to cultivate skills essential for democratic virtues. She declares that teaching civic education, including knowledge, virtues, and skills necessary for political participation, “has moral primacy over other purposes of public education in a democratic society.” She further contends that democratic virtue should be taught in history and civics courses. Teaching democratic virtue should carefully include the “willingness and ability of citizens to reason collectively and critically about politics.” She also emphasizes the importance of education as a means of conscious social reproduction for a society, or a means of transmitting political values to other generations. Patrick points out the paradox inherent in her emphasis, in that the promotion of specific political ideals is coupled with teaching the importance of free and independent thinking as a cornerstone to democracy. In this sense, it is essential to teach competing ideas of an individual’s right to liberties and the importance of civic republicanism.

Yet what is it about civics courses that can inspire political participation, convey political knowledge, and increase civic skill levels? We do know that recent service-learning requirements are associated with increases in voluntarism and community service activities. While these activities inspire civic engagement, they are not focused on political engagement. We also know that taking civics courses is associated with increased political knowledge and sometimes with increased civic skill levels. But what is it about these classrooms that provide such results? How can success stories be replicated in other classrooms and schools? As researchers and teachers, we have yet to formulate this model.

In turn, schools can originate positive change. As schools have been the primary impetus for an increase in service learning, they can also be instrumental in encouraging political participation and teaching civic skills and political knowledge. Schools and school-related programs need to do the difficult work of teaching both community involvement and voluntarism, along with political engagement and political activism. Only then will a generation of citizens armed to effectuate social change exist.

Looking for ways to help the CPP?

Here’s how:

★ Provide internship opportunities.
★ Become part of our bank of speakers.
★ Donate political art or memorabilia.
★ Help fund scholarships and high school programs.
★ Contribute financial support for program needs, such as a political film series, community outreach projects, guest lecturers, and other school projects.

Call 814-332-6201 to find out more.