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Section I

The goals of the Fellowship for Building Intercultural Communities (FBIC) are twofold: 1) to build a better understanding amongst the students attending the University of Pennsylvania of the background and culture of students in West Philadelphia and 2) have West Philadelphia students be able to openly and respectfully interact with different worldviews and backgrounds and have a better understanding of diversity.

Overall, the applied proposal was very successful. FBIC partnered with the Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships to have two summer fellows.¹ The Netter Center has partnerships with neighborhood schools in West Philadelphia, which follows the model of university-assisted community schools.² However, a challenge that I ran into was in relation to the infrastructural problems within the Philadelphia school district. Earlier this year, the Philadelphia School District faced a large budget deficit, meaning that the city mandated over twenty schools to be shut down. Moreover, the deficit leads to many layoffs of school staff, including guidance counselors and support staff. This meant that some of the schools that the Netter Center had partnerships with were closed. This challenge translated to the community school that I proposed to work with, Sayre High School. Thankfully, Sayre High School was not closed, but another high school nearby was. Thus, students from this nearby high school were also attending our planned workshops at Sayre High School. Although the fact that increased students were attending was a positive aspect, what was not so positive was that the budget cuts also mean less support staff and teachers. Thus, classrooms and staff were over capacity. In order to address this challenge, instead of having one Sayre High School Fellow and one Netter Center Fellow, both fellows became Sayre High School Fellows. This means that both fellows were charged with working with Sayre High School students to plan workshops for an intercultural program. This model worked well because both fellows were actually able to implement some of the planned curriculum during the summer.

Directly, about 50-60 high school students in West Philadelphia benefitted from an introduction to concepts related to interculturalism. Some of these concepts include social and cultural capital. Indirectly, I think two fellows whom I worked with and I benefitted from engaging with topics that we are passionate about and applying them to the community. Furthermore, I think our partner, the Netter Center, better understood the importance of cultural competency on behalf of Penn students. Thus, we are working to create more training for Penn students that focus specifically on building authentic connections with students, understanding the history of West Philadelphia, and developing cultural awareness and competency skills. Our first training is scheduled to be September 20, 2013.

In terms of sustainability, this summer was crucial in building a solid foundation for the successful continuation of our program. This includes expanding social media and outreach presence as well as creating infrastructure in the program itself. For the school year, we have a model where 6-7 upperclassmen (junior or senior standing) facilitators guide a group of 12-15 underclassmen (freshman or sophomore standing) fellows. Currently we have selected a group of 6 facilitators. We are working on an

¹ The Netter Center is Penn's hub for solving issues of poverty, education, and health in the neighboring community of West Philadelphia through academic and civic engagement

² University-assisted community schools are built on upon an idea of mutual benefit. The university assists schools with human and financial resources. In turn, these schools become a space for universities to advance teaching, research, and civic development for their own students.

application process this month to launch in late October to select a cohort of undergraduate fellows. Essentially, this is a scaled-up version of the summer model, where I, as an upperclassmen facilitator, lead two underclassmen fellows. In the end of August, we were part of school-wide activities fair, where we had over 80 students sign up on our e-mail listserv, showing interest. Furthermore, one of the fellows received about \$1,200 in funding for the upcoming school year from the Netter Center to continue to work on building a relationship with students at Sayre High School and working to implement curriculum related to cultural competency and social capital. We also have about \$2,500 left over in the summer from this grant in order to continue to build upon what was created in the summer for this upcoming school year. I am hopeful that more high school students in West Philadelphia will be impacted by work that FBIC does. Looking towards the farther future, I foresee FBIC applying for non-profit status so that Penn students who graduate can continue to be involved and have a means to continue to work with FBIC.

Section II

Peace is a state of mutual understanding and cooperation amongst a variety of peoples to build a better society. To me, peace is predicated upon being able to communicate and collaborate with those who come from a different background than you. This past summer reinforced the importance of intercultural dialogue as a means to accomplish just this. Intercultural dialogue means the creating of a safe space to talk about issues of identity and what its broader implications are. As a student of a private university coming from a relatively privileged background who wants to engage with students in a local community where 29% of the population is below the poverty level, there is bound to be a cultural disconnect.³ FBIC contributes to peace by helping to bridge this gap.

This past summer was a formative experience. Some takeaways include understanding the importance of partnerships. Without partnering with the Netter Center, which provided institutional legitimacy to FBIC, this project would not have achieved as the success it has. Thus, I am very grateful. Another takeaway was a reinforced belief with the importance of intercultural dialogue. During one of our workshops we asked the high school students to respond to the following quote:

"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin, and culture is like a tree without roots."

- Marcus Garvey

One response from the students that sticks out in my mind is this: "A person without knowledge of where they came from will not know where they are going with and life and will not have meaning to who they are and what they can become". To me, this student's powerful response embodies why intercultural dialogue is so necessary.

Overall, I am so grateful to the Kathryn W. Davis Foundation and feel blessed to have had this opportunity.

"Although I was interested in the public or non-profit sector before this past summer, seeing this proposal come to reality makes me want to spend my life figuring out how intercultural dialogue can be integrated into educational curriculum around the world. Although this is a lofty vision, the experiences from this summer have shown me that there is critical need for it, especially in a rapidly globalizing society."

-Joyce Kim

³ The Pew Charitable Trusts. Philadelphia Research Initiative. Philadelphia 2011: The State of the City. Philadelphia, PA, 2011. Web.



To the Left: One of the fellows coming up with thoughts based on a workshop on privilege

Above: Two high school students at Sayre High School discussing how cultural capital relates to their lives

Below: A definition of cultural capital that Sayre High School students helped to come up with during a workshop in the summer

