

FALL 2015

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# THE DORNSIFE CONNECTOR

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**COLLABORATION**

**AND**

**COMMUNITY**

## EDITOR'S WELCOME

Dear friends and neighbors,

Fall is upon us, kids have returned to school, and Drexel's new academic year has begun. We're excited to offer a slate of returning and new programming from our Drexel student and faculty partners, as well as from our many non-profit partners.

Dance is back, with free classes for kids age 4 - 18, along with senior dance fitness sessions. Also from Drexel's Department of Performing Arts, a series of music performance classes for middle-school age students who are interested in learning to play guitar, drums, or piano. Are you interested in the production and technology side of music? Then check out the music industry workshops. A day for the animals on October 17 features the Philadelphia Zoo, the Academy of Natural Sciences, and the PSPCA. Keep an eye out as well for the October 24 Community Health & ACA Enrollment Fair. And diners at our monthly community dinners are in for a special treat in December, with special guests from the Curtis Institute of Music joining us. There is too much to give a complete list here, so make sure to pick up a calendar.

And last but not least, we are so pleased to welcome our new Executive Director, Cicely Peterson-Mangum. Make sure to say hi to her the next time you are visiting.

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## STAFF MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

<i>Name:</i>	Amy Wen
<i>Job:</i>	Logistics Coordinator
<i>Hometown:</i>	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
<i>Current residence:</i>	Warminster, Pennsylvania
<i>Favorite TV Shows:</i>	I can't pick just one, there's so many to choose from! Currently I'm into World Trigger, Attack on Titan, and The Walking Dead.
<i>Favorite Food:</i>	Does dark chocolate count?

### *What is your job?*

I manage the scheduling and space assignments of the programs and events at the Dornsife Center, as well as our social media accounts. Don't forget to follow us and like us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram!

### *Where will we find you at the Dornsife Center?*

I live on the third floor of the Lindy House. If I'm not there, then I'm either hanging around Dominique's office on the first floor, or running around the three buildings working an event or making sure everything is running smoothly.

### *What is your favorite thing about the Dornsife Center?*

My favorite thing about the Dornsife Center is the wide range of programs and activities we have to offer and most, if not all, are absolutely FREE! It's great to see people coming together to share their knowledge through the Side-by-Side courses, learn a new skill like dance or music, and access resources such as the great world of the internet through our KEYSPOt computer lab. Please do take advantage of our programs here!

### *What do you do when you're not at work?*

When I'm not at work, I'm most likely either trying out a new restaurant, playing video games, catching up on TV shows and movies, catching some Zzzzzz, or playing with my cat. Oh! And cleaning up my apartment. Just your regular old stuff.

## THE SKY IN THE CITY

"HI THERE, want to see Saturn through a telescope?" If you're walking past the Dornsife Center during our public astronomy nights, that's the invitation you're going to hear. Physics graduate student Joe Glaser, undergrad Jack O'Brien, and recently-minted PhD Vishal Kasliwal aren't shy about persuading passers-by to take a look at the planets, the moon, and the stars through the three telescopes set up on the lawn after the sun sets. "What's the worst that can happen, you get enchanted?" says Vish Kasliwal. And that's just what happens. "OH WOW" is the reaction you hear from everybody who is looking through a telescope for the first time.

"Inviting people to look through a telescope is my door to sharing my passion for astronomy with others," notes Kasliwal. "Nature is beautiful, wonderful and mysterious - it is a privilege that we are able to comprehend the mysteries of the universe. Everyone should be given an opportunity to appreciate the sky for themselves. Most people do not realize how powerful even a small telescope can be. They do not expect to see the wealth of detail that the Moon exhibits, nor the staggering perfection of Saturn's rings. Most people are stunned and left breathless."

"The Sky in the City" at the Dornsife Center is part of Drexel's Department of Physics community outreach. Everybody is welcome to both the

on-campus observatory open houses on the first Wednesday of each month, as well as the Dornsife Center astronomy nights on the third Wednesdays. Partnering with the Dornsife Center allows the department to reach a broader audience with a second location for public astronomy activities.

And the goal for this program? Vish Kasliwal: "Curiosity is a uniquely human trait. We wish to awaken curiosity about our universe. Even the most naive questions are seldom easy to answer and if we can have our audience walk away just thinking about why things are the way that they are, we have accomplished the goal that we had set out to achieve."



(left to right) Jack O'Brien, Joe Glaser, and Vishal Kasliwal

## PARTICIPANT PROFILE WITH LAMONT TWYNE

You'll definitely remember Lamont Twyne if you've met him. This dynamic and funny Mantua resident has been visiting, as he tells it, "this awesome 5-star KEYSPOOT since day one." Mr. Twyne started using the Dornsife Center's free-access computer lab when it was set up at Mantua Square's community room during the Dornsife Center's main site renovation. He found out about the programs when he bumped into Drexel's Vice Provost for University and Community Partnerships on Spring Garden Street. "Ms. Lucy Kerman: wow what a blessing she is to the community. She was



the person who originally told me about the KEYSPOOT."

Twyne uses the KEYSPOOT computers for job searches and other internet resources, and he also connects with other residents there. "I work on a number of things while I am here - resume or cover letter writing, and helping other community residents with online job applications if the center's staff, Mr. Kevin Williams and Mrs. Brenda Lewis, are busy assisting others." The KEYSPOOT has been indispensable to him as he has built his own small catering and food service business.

Twyne notes, "I have taken full advantage of the wonderful training programs offered here, and attended some of the monthly community dinners, too, which brings the community together. The many resources are so helpful as well. I have successfully applied for my LLC, EIN, website address, and other start-up things I need to launch my new food service business. The staff helped me with the key things and got me through points A, B, C, and D. The center is a big help to the community, and I will highly recommend it to others and let them know the many things which this particular community KEYSPOOT has to offer."

## COMMUNITY | LAWYERING | CLINIC

The Kline School of Law's Community Lawyering Clinic (CLC) is like few other university-based law clinics. As Director Rachel Lopez puts it, "the approach is unique in that it combines traditional legal services with community capacity building. Its goal is not only to provide legal assistance to our neighboring communities but also to help community members with the information and skills necessary to become their own advocates."

Professor Lopez brings a rich experience in community lawyering and advocacy to her leadership at the CLC. "At Seton Hall Law School, I supervised students on a wide range of cases, including immigration, human rights, death penalty, prisoners' rights, family law, and civil rights cases, in both domestic and international forums. Additionally, at the Center for Constitutional Rights, I supervised and mentored fellows on Freedom of Information Act litigation, a human rights report, and a class action lawsuit challenging the NYPD's unconstitutional stop and frisk practices. Because community lawyering requires that lawyers be responsive to the evolving needs of the community, it necessitates a degree of flexibility and willingness to learn new areas of the law. Given the breadth of experience that I have in practice, I feel more comfortable than many other lawyers who tend to be more specialized in diving into new areas of the law."

How does it work? The clinic is staffed by Drexel law students working under Professor Lopez's supervision and offers referrals, legal advice, and sometimes direct representation on a range of matters including employment discrimination, homeownership, and compassionate release. The clinic is also launching the Community Resolutions Project, which will provide mediation and conflict coaching to community members. Our focus areas were determined through a legal needs assessment for which the clinic gathered input from the community on the most prominent legal issues in the neighborhood. In addition to providing direct legal services, the clinic also works on projects aimed at addressing the systemic challenges facing the community, such as discrimination, chronic poverty, and disenfranchisement. The project could include know your rights trainings, law reform efforts, community legal education, and community organizing. The law school also runs two pro bono projects, which assist community members with criminal record expungements and with wills and similar planning documents.

Brittany Dyer describes what being a student in the CLC

is like: "The clinic experience is challenging yet rewarding. We are all passionate about the access to justice crisis in the US, and at the CLC we can assist community members with their legal issues, who otherwise may not have anywhere else to go for help. We provide direct representation to clients when we can and we also work on policy projects that address some of the widespread legal problems in the Mantua and Powelton Village neighborhoods. Professor Lopez supervises our work, but we are largely responsible for our own caseload and policy projects."

"In teams of two we work on a particular project or legal area that we picked at the beginning of the year. But we also get exposure to areas of the law that we are not assigned to. For example, this



(left to right) Brittany Dyer, Shaina Hicks, Cassandra Fitzgerald-Black, Ryan McCarthy, Rachel Lopez, Kristin Brown, Lauren McCulloch, Sam Scavuzzo, Jasmine Smith

weekend we are doing a Law Day on employment discrimination and although only two of us are assigned to the employment discrimination project, we will all be there on Saturday doing intake and talking to potential clients about their rights in the workplace. The CLC is great because we see a variety of legal problems and we are constantly learning about new areas of the law. We never know who is going to walk in the door or call with legal questions on any given day, so it is always interesting and exciting. It is also rewarding because the work we do is for real people and there is no better feeling than using the skills you learn in law school to help someone get a positive outcome."

Do you have a legal problem but you aren't sure whether the Community Lawyering Clinic can help? Just get in touch with them to ask. Law student Cassandra Fitzgerald-Black would let neighbors know that "the Community Lawyering Clinic provides direct legal services, referrals and other forms of advocacy to clients within the Promise Zone, specifically to Mantua and the Powelton Village area...the law students are eager and willing to build meaningful relationships with community members in order to create not only legal solutions but alternative solutions that support and aid the community at large." If the students don't have the capacity to take a case - and they can't take each one - they always provide referrals to additional resources. You can contact the clinic at 215-571-4019.



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