

**CLiA Chronicle 2018 - '19**  
**HIGH SCHOOL OUTREACH**  
**WILLIAMS CENTER at MT. GREYLOCK**

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**Summary:**

During the 2018 - '19 school year, we developed promising new initiatives through the efforts of Local High School Education Outreach. While the primary focus of High School Outreach remains focused on supporting the activities and programs related to *The Williams Center at Mt Greylock*, Williams student involvement at Pine Cobble School and Buxton School continued this year, and we also made innovative new connections in North Adams. Our community partners provide generous, high quality mentoring of the Williams students and their endeavors to give back.

In 2018 - '19 nearly 80 Williams students participated in some form of outreach with our local high schools in Williamstown and North Adams. These engagements now include volunteer and paid positions in the areas of writing, science, history, music, after-school tutoring, co-curricular groups (Model UN, creative writing, coding, entrepreneurship, community building and civic mentoring). Of those, 66 Fellows were engaged at MG through an ever-expanding web of initiatives and connections.

In collaboration with *The Program in Teaching* and the '68 Center for Career Explorations, HSO supported an exciting student-led research project to identify ways to further connect Williams student interest and experiences in K-12 education at the college and beyond.

Further, considerable time was spent last summer creating the new *CLiA/Local Education* website. This effort streamlined the myriad educational K-12 offerings and application forms, making these listings more consistent and accessible for Williams students.

## **THE WILLIAMS CENTER AT MT GREYLOCK**

The Williams Center (WC) at Mt. Greylock's original vision in 2008—"to maximize the academic value the College can provide the school"—continues to serve as the broad principal focus in order to build and expand upon the rich educational connections that now exist between the two institutions. Over the past few years, we have seen that both Williams and Mt. Greylock students seek to develop and exercise their leadership skills and voices within the school community and as part of a larger national dialogue. To support this end at this time last year, we added our commitment "to support a more inclusive, equitable, engaging and safe school community for all students." We have also responded to the shifting community climate, articulated by the MG faculty and administration, by deepening our collaborations both in and out of the classroom through a more intentional and varied lens.

Many of WC@MG programs are now firmly established, and more faculty and students have come to welcome and add depth to these collaborations; they value the presence and diversity of Williams student Fellows both in the classroom and as leaders of co-curricular activities. This year, the move to the new school—coupled with the ongoing contract negotiations and a delayed start—challenged the school and our partnership. Fortunately, we were able to launch modified programming by late October and had a productive winter and spring term.

Roughly 45 Williams faculty and staff engaged in numerous ways that include participation in class presentations, field studies, ScienceBlast, and GreylockTalks.

Sixteen Mt. Greylock faculty members served as mentors/hosts for Williams Fellows, both in the classroom and as after-school enrichment group advisors.

## **Williams Fellows at Mt Greylock**

### **Writing Fellows & Student Support Fellows Program**

Williams students support writing in selected middle and high school English classes through one-on-one dialogue and revision-based editing. Student Support Fellows work in academic support classrooms with high school students who benefit from extra assistance beyond the traditional classroom. Each year, a few Williams students request opportunities for in-depth teaching experiences alongside master teachers that extend their placements as Fellows. These experiences are not tied to a specific class at Williams; rather, they are initiated by students who seek a more extensive career experience in the field of education. Of note, this winter and spring three Williams student served as special teaching Fellows in

middle school science and chorus and high school history. Other ways Williams student Fellows engage include:

### **Community Matters Fellows**

In response to observations at MG made by a select number of last year's Williams Fellows, a small cohort of Williams leaders initiated a brand new pilot program based on the [Missouri Scholars Academy](#) for ninth grade students. **Anna Kim '19, Phil Abel '19, Emma Lezberg '20, Quincy Powers '22 and Kohen Rhamen '22** spent the fall semester researching, collaborating and creating a curriculum to implement in the spring. MG faculty—Brian Gill, Kellie Houle, Emily Leitt and Mary MacDonald—participated in the initial brainstorming, scheduling, and logistics, and the CM student team created an Executive Summary with a mission articulating the plan for this “peer mentorship program using interactive, community-building activities and discussions to promote dialog and action on issues and values in the community such as bullying, prejudice and inclusivity, self-identity, failure and youth empowerment.” The ninth grade CM workshops took place on Wednesdays during consecutive Phys. Ed. and Directed Study periods for seven weeks. This program was ambitious. The facilitators learned an incredible amount throughout the semester and through deep introspection, study and evaluation at its conclusion. This revealed the challenges and struggles that surfaced— a natural collision of two separate communities trying to engage on an intimate basis. The potential for Community Matters remains great. **Emma Lezberg '20 and Kohen Rahman '22** are committed to a more consistent and supportive collaboration with MG faculty to re-envision this program for next year, using social entrepreneurship and design-thinking to enhance and create community with ninth graders through a problem-solving lens. Our CM Fellows will also have the support of Williams '68 Center for Career Exploration Director, Tonio Palmer. Giving our Williams leaders both the permission and the freedom to imagine, create, and implement such programs with our support is something we feel is an essential part of their Williams experience, contributing to their personal growth and education outside of the classroom.

### **Spanish Conversation Fellows**

We continue to look for ways to create bridges between Spanish speaking students at Williams and the Spanish classes at MG. This year, three of the Spanish TAs from Williams visited upper level Spanish classes during Winter Study for casual conversation and cultural exchange. In late spring, we were able to recruit Williams students from Honduras, Venezuela and Ecuador to visit MG again for conversational exchanges. This was particularly helpful for the AP students in preparation for the AP exam. Next year, WC@MG will continue to help the Spanish department connect with Spanish speaking students to

develop creative opportunities for collaborative activities and conversation.

### Academic Support

The WC offers academic support in the form of one-on-one tutoring/mentoring beyond the classroom, utilizing Williams students as Homework Fellows. The WC also offers many ways for Greylock students to access additional support with the college application process.

- **Free Homework Fellows.** Each week, an average of **25** Greylock students in grades 7-9 received free homework support and mentoring from **20** Williams tutors in all academic subjects. Two school-based coordinators, Marty Walters and Karen Lobdell, are paid to oversee this program. We continue to rely on Marty's tutor guidelines and Marty and Karen's on-site presence as the primary ways to support the Williams tutors. We noticed a significant drop in MG student attendance at tutoring after spring break—due in part to the spring sports season and alternative spaces in the new school where students can congregate and study informally. Next year, we may shorten the tutoring sessions in the spring or reduce the number of Williams students traveling to MG each week in order to better utilize our tutors. One highlight was the wonderful relationship that developed between MG special needs student Aidan Barnes and two Williams mentors who helped this student weekly with homework and track practice.
- **Free Sunday evening tutoring at Williams for high school students.** Roughly four Williams volunteer tutors provide homework support with the same number of Greylock students each week. Each year, two Williams students are paid to coordinate this program. Tutoring occurs in all subjects, including AP and SAT help. This program continues to have fewer MG student participants than expected. This could be due in part to better academic support within MG as well as increased evening commitments for the MG students.
- **Fee-based private tutoring options at Williams.** The Center maintains a list of private Williams tutors and makes it available to interested Greylock students.
- **College essay writing program.** Community members serve as college essay coaches in an online capacity. This year 21 MG seniors worked with a volunteer on the college essay writing process.

### Williams Student led Co-Curriculars

These offerings are led and advised by Mt Greylock and the Williams Center at MG. These opportunities offer expertise and engage MG students in learning beyond the classroom on a weekly basis. Organizing and sustaining these groups is dependent on scheduling and students interest from both the school and college. 2018 - '19 groups included:

- Our **after-school writing program** led by four Williams Fellows continued this year and met weekly with two separate groups (middle school and high school). While writing remains the focus, the groups continue to serve a broader purpose for these students who find acceptance, consistency, and camaraderie amongst each other with the thoughtful guidance and mentorship of our Williams leaders. These leaders meet weekly as a team on campus to prepare for the upcoming sessions. The autonomy and ownership by the Williams leaders of this vibrant program has been the key to its success and consistency. They continue to strike the right balance, keeping fun & playfulness at the center of their afternoon sessions. This year, one of the leaders implemented a true writer's workshop model for the high school group which was positive and successful.
- Two Williams Computer Science (CS) students worked with an MG middle school math teacher in a small after-school mentoring coding club, this year's iteration of **Leaders in Technology**. They also partnered occasionally with the robotics club as the MG students prepared for their winter competition.
- **Model UN** continued to strengthen its ranks. The group launched this fall with close to 10, strong, committed high school students and added some middle school students in the spring. Under the superb leadership of **four Williams student coaches**, the group met every Sunday at Williams and, with parent chaperones, attended four competitions at **Clark University, Exeter Academy and Dartmouth College**, bringing home honors and awards.
- **Ephs Out Loud**: Williams music students offered fee-based private instrumental and voice lessons to beginning and intermediate MG students. These opportunities are based on Williams student availability and interest in any given year.

## Field Studies and Special Academic Programs Highlights

The WC supports many one-day or short-format "field studies" at Mt. Greylock, Williams and beyond.

- **ScienceBlast** - a morning of out-of-the box, hands-on science and math workshops at Williams for all 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. **Eight Williams faculty/staff** facilitated hands-on science and math workshops and **thirteen Williams students** participated as TAs.
- **8th grade water quality lab** at Mt Greylock with Jay Racela and Williams TAs
- **Spanish Conversation and Cultural Exchange**. Visits by Williams College Spanish TAs and Williams student native speakers (Spain, Puerto Rico, Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico and Columbia)
- **8th grade Constitutional Debates** held at Williams

- MG Greylock **REV** students presented their involvement with **The Sunrise movement** at a Williams College Log Lunch.
- The Williams Junior **Marimba Band** performed for a GreylockPlays event.
- **GreylockTalks** continues to expand as an MG student-run speaker series organized in partnership with the WC. This year the MG students requested presentations focused on mental health. To that end, our contributors included Prof. Bernie Rhie who spoke on “What is Zen?”, Lara Aillon Sohl, MD on the importance of sleep and academic and life success, and Alex DiAddezio spoke about “Applying to College, How to Minimize Stress While Exploring Your Options.” On average, 30 - 40 MG students attended each presentation.  
Talks may be accessed here:
  - [“What is Zen?”](#)
  - [“Ahhh...sleep!”](#)
  - ["Applying to College, How to Minimize Stress While Exploring Your Options"](#)
- **Greylock StoryTime** hosted one storyteller who gave a spring presentation entitled, “Staying True to Myself.” Moiz Rehan ‘19 spoke to a room full of middle schoolers, and they were enamored. It was an honest, funny, charismatic and hopeful talk that was wonderfully appropriate for this age. StoryTime seeks diverse and unique perspectives and stories in order to continue to broaden the virtual life experiences of the 13 - 15-year-olds at MG in an inviting and accessible way. Because of the change in the MG Directed Study period, scheduling has been a barrier. We will work on broadening our publicity in Daily Messages to reach a wider audience of potential storytellers next year. A link to this year’s StoryTime video from WilliNet can be accessed here: [Greylock StoryTime - “Staying True to Myself” with Williams Student Moiz Rehan ‘19](#)

## Classes at Williams

This year, 18 MG students enrolled in classes at Williams for academic credit during the fall semester and **x** during the spring semester. **(waiting on updated info from the registrar’s office).**

## Highlighted Testimonials

*“I’ve learned a lot through working with my partners, actually, because I come from a vastly different cultural and academic background from all of the ones that I’ve had. These differences aren’t usually ones I have to face head-on in most settings at Williams, but they became surprisingly prominent when we were planning for weekly meetings. Learning to*

*navigate those differences gracefully and harness the skills we both could offer was an important experience.”*

*“It has really confirmed my interest in teaching and helping me decide to pursue it as a career.”*

*“Being exposed to all the ideas the students have at Mt. Greylock during our creative writing sessions has really been inspiring. It’s a different mode of thinking that isn’t practiced much in a rigorously ‘academic’ setting like Williams. Exercising empathy and really listening to students whose struggles are different from my own is also relevant to my field of study—sociology/anthropology—as well as my general interest in storytelling.”*

*“My experience working as a teacher’s assistant and a tutor at the Mount Greylock Regional High School was extremely positive and, while providing a well-needed, joyful, and refreshing break from the stress-filled crunch of college academics, served to confirm my intent to pursue a future in teaching at the middle or high school level. Largely because of this experience, I applied to and received early acceptance to the Johns Hopkins’ Urban Teachers Program 2020 cohort and, though I still plan to apply to other programs before committing myself to this offer, am determined to obtain a Master’s in Education and teacher certification following my graduation from Williams.”*

*“This semester, I worked as a teaching assistant/classroom support in three of Susan Strizzi’s 8<sup>th</sup> grade science classes at Mount Greylock Regional High School. I pursued this opportunity because I will be working as a 9<sup>th</sup> grade biology teacher next year through Teach for America, and wanted to gain some classroom experience. Each week, I would support Ms. Strizzi in classroom management, working individually with students during lab activities, reviewing for state exams, and grading. When I arrived on my first day, Ms. Strizzi had me dive right in and check to see if each of the students had completed their homework, so that I could meet each student individually to begin getting to know them. This would become my first task each week, so that Ms. Strizzi could begin the lesson. For the remainder of class, Ms. Strizzi would usually begin with a short lecture on new material, and then we would have an activity such as modelling landforms, or learning about the ways that newspapers convey weather patterns to their readers. The students were mainly learning about earth science, so as a biology major this was not my area of expertise, but I felt that I was always able to support Ms. Strizzi by encouraging the students to think critically about the material covered in class by asking thought provoking questions, and spending extra time with students who needed additional support.*

*“Throughout my time in Ms. Strizzi’s classroom, I learned so much from her and her students! Each of three classes had a completely different dynamic. In one of the classes, students were very focused on the material on the material, giving us substantial time to ask additional questions that prompt critical thinking. In the third period class, there were several students with difficult home lives, and many students with behavioral difficulties. Ms. Strizzi taught me to be patient and empathetic as an educator. I learned the importance of considering what students are dealing with at home in how I engage with them in the classroom. Since I helped Ms. Strizzi as she prepared her students for their state science exams, I learned about the challenge many educators face of balancing test preparation with other types of learning. Having spent this time in Ms. Strizzi’s classroom, I feel even more prepared for the challenges I will face as a new teacher next year.”*

## **Beyond MG: Middle/High School Education Outreach**

### **Buxton School**

Three Williams students worked at Buxton School this year with advisor Frank Jackson on a small civic engagement mentoring program. Students met weekly to talk about their community and the broader world dialogue. In addition, two students in Susan Engel’s **Advanced Seminar in Teaching** were placed in their fall practicums at Buxton.

### **Pine Cobble School**

Pine Cobble attracted four Williams students this past year, three of whom who regularly visited the school as classroom TAs. One student served for the entire year as a 1:1 Latin teacher for a new student needing to catch-up with the curriculum. This relationship has blossomed under the superb leadership of Heads of School, Sue Wells and Devin Wootin. Given the smaller, more intimate nature of the school, Pine Cobble offers the opportunity for students to customize their own teaching experience in a broad range of subject areas. Next year, two Williams graduates, have accepted positions as full-time, post-graduate Fellows at Pine Cobble. PC has offered to host a Winter Study class on curriculum design and pedagogy (2021).

### **E3 Academy**

This spring, two Williams students regularly visited E3 Academy in North Adams for mentoring and project-based learning. One of the initiatives they were involved with was an Escape Room program for NAPS elementary kids.

*“I learned a lot about the E3 program and how it allows high school seniors who had difficulty passing in the first four years improve academically and socially. I also think that they learned*

*from us as college students just in simple talk. I preferred the relaxed mentoring time. I definitely see this as a really important and useful program between E3 and Williams students for the future! And the three ladies who are in charge take their jobs very seriously and care so much about the students."*

### **YMCA/Roots**

This spring two Williams students regularly volunteered at the Roots Teen Center in NA. They developed a mentoring program for 7th and 8th graders from Drury middle school in close collaboration with the North Adams YMCA.

### **BART Entrepreneurs**

This spring, three Williams students created an after-school program at BART modeled on Kohen Ramen's ('22) highly successful NYC non-profit program called [MiddyFund](#) designed to help middle and high school students solve problems in their community through design thinking and social entrepreneurship skills. Five BART students participated in this program, which culminated in a "pitch competition" in NYC with MiddyFund highschoolers from Queens, NY. This program was a collaboration between HS Outreach and Tonio Palmer, Williams College Entrepreneur in residence.

The '62 Center for Theater and Dance provided a wonderful dance opportunity with Masilo Dance for roughly 25 BART students. BART hosted this lively workshop in September and students received free tickets to the evening performance at Williams.