

# Compass

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development



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## Note from the Director

Welcome to the second issue of *Compass*!!!

Each of the articles below provides a sample of the Stevenson Center's current activities, great students, and remarkable alumni. Your partnership has shaped where we are and where we are headed.

From the time and talent of our progenitor, Dr. Robert Hunt, to now, the Center has grown in the number of students and the services offered to communities. Five of our graduate students are in domestic internships. Seven are serving in Peace Corps, and five more will be leaving by October. We offer AmeriCorps Member status and education awards to select members of our student body. Our alumni go on to accomplish truly amazing things through hard work and a service orientation. This semester we also hosted a visit by Dr. Ira Lieberman, formerly with the World Bank. The office remains quite busy; we are always open to inquiries from prospective students, updates from alumni, requests from community partners, and meetings with our great faculty and students.

We have been successful in advancing our mission: *The Stevenson Center at Illinois State University promotes community and economic development in the U.S. and abroad. The Center sets the pace for public service and scholarship through a unique combination of coursework, research, professional practice, and collaboration with communities.*

Thank you for your support, enjoy the read, and please keep in touch!

Kindest regards,  
Frank

## Student Spotlight



Kara Harvey pointing to the Togolese Republic

### *Leaving cheesecake for rice & fufu*

Kara Harvey, a Sociology Peace Corps Master's International student, recently received her Peace Corps placement in Togo, West Africa. A sociology and psychology major, Kara came to Illinois State from Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania. As an intern with the Shippensburg Women's Center, she planned campus events related to women's health awareness. This internship helped prepare her for the Peace Corps assignment in Togo: girl's education and empowerment. Kara is excited about her Peace Corps invitation because she has been "blessed with amazing educational opportunities and wants to help other people."

Kara particularly enjoyed the seminar in community development class with Dr. Joan Brehm, Sociology. Kara and classmates provided assistance to the Hispanic Families Work Group by performing a needs assessment for childcare in Bloomington-Normal.

Kara's area of expertise is sociology of the body: she studies the representations and social uses of the human body in modern societies. Her thesis research will focus on transgendered autobiographies. She plans to get a Ph.D. in psychology. Ten years from now, Kara hopes to report back to the Stevenson Center from Australia as director of a women's group—her dream job.

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### **Students and Alumni Serving with Peace Corps**

Daniel Chand, Zambia

Brandon Curtis, South Africa

Rebecca Hodel, Ethiopia

Nicole Kurtain, Ethiopia

Andrew Maxwell, Ukraine

Rachel Smith, Macedonia

Kevin Souza, Niger

Kelly Uphoff, Republic of Georgia

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### **Current Internships**

Rebecca Bliss,  
Hispanic Families Work Group, IL

Kate Jones-Smith,  
Chicago Community Ventures, IL

Lindsay Rosenquist Burns,  
Orange County On Track, CA

Ken Springer,  
Economic Development Council of the  
Bloomington-Normal Area, IL

Mat Willey,  
State Public Policy Group, Inc., IA

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## Student Intern Offered a Job at Mikva Challenge

Rich Feffer, Sociology, is serving his professional practice with Mikva Challenge in Chicago. Mikva Challenge is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that promotes youth leadership by providing Chicago high school students with hands-on experience in elections, activism, and policy-making. As an ACED Intern at Mikva Challenge, Rich has worked directly with young people, helping to engage them in the political process. He supervised 40 high school students working in the offices of Chicago elected officials, and he planned, coordinated, and participated in campaign work trips to Iowa and New Hampshire for over 100 high school students. Through these trips, he was part of the “Super Bowl” of politics. He helped young people get involved with eight presidential candidates from both major political parties. He recently accepted a full-time job offer at Mikva Challenge to direct the programs he worked on during his internship. The Stevenson Center and Illinois State are very proud of Rich’s accomplishments! Rich will begin as Elections in Action Director on May 1.



Rich Feffer & four Chicago students with Senator Hillary Clinton in New Hampshire

Both the Stevenson Center and Mikva Challenge are non-partisan

## Stevenson Center Partners with Western Illinois University

The Stevenson Center has a renewed partnership with Western Illinois University's Peace Corps Fellows/USA Program, which started jointly with ours in 1994. Being an AmeriCorps Member requires commitment and meeting specific requirements. Ten students have already successfully completed service and earned Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards. Feedback has been positive, and we look forward to pursuing additional opportunities that could benefit our students.

## “The beginning of the Stevenson Center” from Alumnus Joel Fritzler



Joel Fritzler in Germany as one of four Americans selected for the John J. McCloy Fellowship Program in Urban Affairs

Joel Fritzler, M.S. 2000, Political Science, had only been home for a little over a month from working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Malawi when he found himself in another foreign land—Central Illinois. He was one of the first students to enroll in Illinois State University’s Peace Corps Fellows/USA Program back in 1994. Joel’s “two years in Central Illinois was as much of a cultural experience as was living in Botswana for two years. Dr. Hunt did his best in providing us with some cultural sensitivity training before turning us loose on our work sites.”

In the beginning, the Stevenson Center didn’t have a “Center” at Illinois State, but it did have the “Blu Couch Haus.” This is Joel’s description of the Blu Couch Haus: “It was an old house (since torn down) on the corner of School and Willow. The School of Art had studios upstairs, and we had the main floor to use for our offices and meetings. We went to an ISU warehouse where surplus furniture was stored, and we found this old blue couch which had seen better days but had Peace Corps written all over it. It became the centerpiece of our space and a resting place for nights of test cramming.”

Joel was a guinea pig for the new program, which had its advantages and disadvantages. Joel states, “At that time, all of our coursework was supposed to be done in the first year followed by a full-time 11-month internship. I had completed my bachelor's degree under the quarter system, where each quarter was only 10 to 12 weeks long, so I was able to take more classes [as an undergrad]. I didn't care for the 16-week semesters, but since there was not an established program, we had some flexibility in selecting various elective courses in other schools/departments.”

The following is a story about a conference that Joel attended while at Illinois State and a memory that sticks out in his mind vividly: “I believe that during the Fall Semester, right before mid-term exams, Dr. Hunt asked if we wanted to go to a conference in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, to showcase the PCF Program. At first, (the three of us) said, ‘No thanks, we need to stay here and study.’ But then Bob said, ‘There’s a microbrewery in Stevens Point.’ I think it was a Friday afternoon when we got to Stevens Point, where we found out that we could either attend the opening session of the conference or go to the last tour at the microbrewery. No one ever remembers opening session remarks. For our presentation the next day, we were scheduled in the same time slot that the keynote speaker was giving a workshop. Then, our room was also changed from the room printed on the agenda. To top it off, the PCF’s from WIU (a sister program during the first few years) could not attend. So, we found ourselves short four presenters but with only one person in the audience. I do not remember anything else about the conference, but every once in a while a liquor store here in Carbondale has a special supply of Point beer, and I scoop it up.”

Currently Joel works for Southern Illinois University and was elected to the Carbondale City Council where he advocates updating their outdated Comprehensive Plan, preserving old buildings/brick streets, and improving the recycling/solid waste programs.

## Dr. Ira Lieberman Visits ISU for Hoon Mok Chung Memorial Lecture

The Stevenson Center's Second Annual Hoon Mok Chung Memorial Lecture was a success. Dr. Ira Lieberman, formerly of the World Bank, spoke about microcredit to a standing-room-only crowd of 300 in the Bone Student Center on February 26. The lecture series is held to memorialize Dr. Hoon Mok Chung, a Political Science professor at Illinois State from 1971 to 1979, who passed away in 2005.

At present, Dr. Lieberman is president of LIPAM International Inc., an economic development consulting company that advises governments, donor institutions, and nongovernmental organizations. He also founded and managed the Consultative Groups to Assist the Poorest (CGAP) from 1995 to 1999, when CGAP provided roughly \$40 million in grants to microfinance institutions. He led groups focused on microfinance in the Balkans, Latin America and Africa. From 1990 to 2003, he worked at the World Bank on a variety of projects including helping manage the World Bank's global practice on privatization, focusing on European and former Soviet Union areas.

His lecture, *The Commercialization of Microfinance Is Here to Stay - Is it an Unmixed Blessing?*, provided background information and addressed the evolution from not-for-profit to commercialized microfinance. Dr. Lieberman also sat down with the current Stevenson Center students to discuss the structural adjustment activities of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. He brought a working example of his privatization efforts in the Balkans. In addition to his lecture and conversation with the Stevenson Center students, Dr. Lieberman spoke with Politics and Government students on microfinance in Peru. The Stevenson Center is looking forward to an ongoing relationship with Dr. Lieberman.

### Public Relations Intern Moving-On

Without the expertise and good nature of Melissa Hoebbel, there is no way this newsletter, the Hoon Mok Chung Memorial Lecture, or other PR work would have been completed this year and so professionally. The Stevenson Center has been extremely lucky to have Melissa on its staff.

From Inverness, Illinois, and with an interest in becoming a pharmacist, her first internship convinced Melissa to choose a different path. With three weeks before the semester began, Melissa enrolled in ISU. She took a Public Relations class and has not stopped since. You can tell by her day-to-day efforts that she loves the busyness and ever changing nature of the work. From event planning and regular interaction with people to all the writing involved, this is the field for her. The faculty in the Public Relations program have acknowledged her exceptional skill level.

As she is graduating with a Bachelor's in Public Relations from ISU, Melissa will be leaving the Stevenson Center this week for an internship and eventual job with the Ingenuity Team, a new entertaining and marketing company in Chicago. We will greatly miss her and hope a return visit will include a tune or two from Melissa on her banjo—the one with Earl Scruggs' signature.

### Alumni Spotlight



Todd Crabtree in Northern California

Peace Corps Fellow alum Todd Crabtree, M.S. 1996, Applied Economics, is currently the Executive Director of the Community Development Commission (CDC) of Mendocino County, California, located about three hours northwest of Sacramento. Todd started at the CDC as the Housing Loan Specialist then became the Community Development Manager. The CDC is the county's public housing authority and community development commission. It administers housing assistance programs such as Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) and Shelter Plus Care. The CDC also manages community development projects for Mendocino County including applying for and administering funds for infrastructure projects, homeless shelters, and abuse shelters. There is no typical day at the office; sometimes he will spend an entire day dealing with personnel matters and another day examining a project's development. His days are filled by meetings with local and state officials. Under Todd's leadership, the CDC hosted Applied Community and Economic Development Fellow Craig Schlatter, who graduated (M.S. 2007, Applied Economics) and is now Community Development Manager. Todd's favorite aspect of his job is helping people but not encouraging dependence. Todd enjoys getting away from the office and going to the ocean or visiting one of the hundreds of wineries in the Mendocino County area.



Brad Pribe, Ted Fischer, Adrienne Martin, Michael Hotard, Bishal Kasu, Sanjay Soman, Jessica Murphy—Stevenson Center students with Dr. Ira Lieberman



Public Relations Intern Melissa Hoebbel, Director of Development Dorothy Witte, and Dr. Ira Lieberman

## News from the Republic of Georgia

Kelly Uphoff, a Peace Corps Master's International student in Applied Economics, is serving in the Republic of Georgia in Gori, a city of 50,000. Gori is the birthplace of Joseph Stalin, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union's Central Committee from 1922 until his death in 1953. Gori has a rich cultural and historical heritage but suffers from high unemployment, poverty, and little economic activity.

Kelly is a volunteer in the Business Entrepreneurship (BE) program; her role is to support potential entrepreneurs who want to start a medium or small-scale business but have little access to capital. Working with another Gori-based BE volunteer and their Georgian counterparts, Kelly recently implemented the "Shida Kartli Asset Development Project." Using the tenets of asset-based development, the project team seeks to show individuals how they can start a business without purchasing a building or getting a large bank loan. The team is conducting a detailed assessment of existing business assets in Gori and surrounding villages, networking events, and projects designed to mobilize these assets towards business activity.

Kelly has also enjoyed meeting the local people and experiencing the local culture. While she is happy to be living in a city, one of her favourite activities is to travel with friends or host family members to the surrounding villages.

## AmeriCorps Members

The Stevenson Center is in its third year of providing AmeriCorps Member status and benefits to some of our students serving in Illinois. Current members include:

- Joseph Alustiza, who is working on a comprehensive needs assessment for the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging
- Kate Jones-Smith, who has been assisting Chicago Community Ventures with data collection and reporting
- Adrienne Murphy, who is focusing on special events, research, and civic education for McLean County Community Compact
- Jessica Murphy, who works on a number of projects at the Boys and Girls Club of Bloomington-Normal
- Ken Springer, who is a lead researcher for the Economic Development Council of the Bloomington-Normal Area

Kelly Uphoff (center) with students from her tourism marketing course at the Tourism Expo, Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia



## Give a Gift to the Stevenson Center

We want to serve more communities and more students. Reducing the cost of these services so that more underserved communities can benefit from the great work of our students is a primary goal. Donations reduce that cost. Thank you for your consideration.

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- |                                                         |                               |                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Endowment                      | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 |
|                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 | Other \$ ____                  |

Please send checks payable to the Stevenson Center or visit us online at [www.stevensoncenter.org](http://www.stevensoncenter.org) to make a donation.

## **Recent Peace Corps Placements**

- Kara Harvey, Togo 9/17/08  
Brian Hillery, Cameroon 9/17/08  
Michael Hotard, Kazakhstan 8/18/08  
Sean Moore, Mauritania 6/18/08  
Sanjay Soman, Togo 9/17/08

Director: Dr. Frank Beck, [fdbeck@ilstu.edu](mailto:fdbeck@ilstu.edu)  
Assistant Director: Beverly Beyer, [babeyer@ilstu.edu](mailto:babeyer@ilstu.edu)  
Staff Clerk: Martha Boudeman, [mjboude@ilstu.edu](mailto:mjboude@ilstu.edu)  
Senior Fellow: Dr. Bob Hunt, [rwhunt@ilstu.edu](mailto:rwhunt@ilstu.edu)  
Public Relations: Melissa Hoebbel, [mahoebbe@ilstu.edu](mailto:mahoebbe@ilstu.edu)  
Student Assistant: Andrew Wilson, [agwils2@ilstu.edu](mailto:agwils2@ilstu.edu)



**STEVENSON CENTER**  
FOR COMMUNITY AND  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
*Illinois State University*

Campus Box 4200  
Normal, IL 61790-4200  
Telephone (309)438-7090  
Facsimile (309)438-5228  
[StevensonCenter@ilstu.edu](mailto:StevensonCenter@ilstu.edu)  
<http://www.StevensonCenter.org>