

## **The Slay Fund for Social Justice at Drake University**

Report on Grants Awarded and Completed, Academic Year 2017/18

Submitted by Professor Renee Ann Cramer, August 2018

In academic year 2017/2018, the Slay Fund for Social Justice made grants to projects in four broad categories: student research and internships, pedagogy for social justice, campus-wide events and speakers, and long-term programs with community partners. These funding categories coincide with the three strategic priorities of the Slay Fund, which allocate funding for: speakers and events related to social justice; capacity building and institutional support programming; student-proposed and student-focused initiatives. These categories and priorities overlap to a great extent, but we have identified primary activities in the following ways:

### ***Student Activism, Research, and Internships***

The Slay Fund offered support for the travel of several Drake students to New Orleans for **NCORE**, the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity.

Drake International Relations major **Kelanie Crosswait** was awarded a grant towards travel to an internship with the Palestinian Friendship House in the West Bank. Kelanie contributed meaningfully to the mission of PFF, by translating materials, increasing their web presence, and writing grants for the organization.

Drake Law, Politics, and Society major **Samantha Bayne** was awarded travel costs associated with her internship with *Let America Vote*. Samantha spent the summer of 2017 registering voters in Virginia, and conducting non-partisan voter education in several districts there.

### ***Pedagogy for Social Justice***

Law Professor Brent Pattison collaborated with **#ArtForceIowa** to develop educational programming for middle school students in Des Moines. With ArtForce and Drake law students, the middle schoolers created art to tell the story of the US Constitution, using their perspectives to ascertain what is most important. The Slay Fund provided funding for supplies and hospitality.

**The Social Justice Living and Learning Community** enables an entire cohort of second- and third-year Drake students to find purpose in social justice, and community on campus. The Slay Fund supports the SJLLC by providing a stipend for both faculty and student mentors of that community, funding for travel to training sessions for the student co-facilitators, and small grants for hospitality and materials throughout the year.

The Slay Fund supported **Flight**, a cohort program for students of color run by Drake's Director of Student Equity, Engagement and Inclusion Tony Tyler. The grant to Flight went towards hospitality and supplies for group-focused work meant to enhance retention and achievement.

### *Events and Speakers*

**Drake Pan-Hellenic**, and student leader **Deshauna Carter** were awarded a grant to provide partial funding for the Drake Yard Show, an annual event that highlights the history of Black Greek organizations nationally, and on our campus. The award went to providing a DJ and lighting for this fun, inclusive, celebratory event.

**Professor Kevin Lam and the School of Education Diversity Committee** were awarded an honorarium for Dr. Aurora Chang, who visited campus in April. Dr. Chang gave a public talk on the ways that immigration policy and status impact lived experience; she also provided a workshop for School of Education faculty and students on the ways that immigration policy impacts access to, and provision of, education.

The **Coalition of Black Students** accessed the Slay Fund, for Black History Month programming. They brought Regional NAACP leader Betty Andrews to campus to deliver the keynote address at the annual Black on Black Ball.

The fund provided a contribution towards an honorarium/speaker's fee to bring **Michael Brown, Sr.** to campus in early April, in order to visit classrooms as an extension of planned presentation on campus. We were glad that Drake students had the opportunity to hear a first hand account of events in Ferguson, Missouri and to learn more directly about the impacts of police violence against young men of color.

The Fund granted support for a speaker brought through the **Glaspell Writers and Critics Speakers Series**, poet Ocean Vuong. Vuong's poetry focuses on immigration, war, asylum, and Vietnamese history and the Asian diaspora.

### *Programs with Community Partners 17/18*

Through a partnership with the **Solidarity Foundation**, several Drake students facilitated Savings Groups with economically marginalized individuals from communities of refugees, immigrants, and low-wage workers. After being trained by Solidarity Foundation personnel, four Drake students spent two hours per month facilitating these groups, learning about challenges to savings faced by these workers, and witnessing the power of group process to mitigate those challenges. The Slay Fund committed to this project by supplying materials and student wages.

In partnership with the **Young Women's Resource Center**, two Drake students (Rubith Cordova and McKenzie Jones) recorded interviews and oral histories of those involved with the center over the past 40 years, in order to help the Center celebrate their anniversary, as well as understand the impact of the Center in the community in order to prepare grant materials for future funding with external agencies. The Slay Fund provided materials and student wages for this project.

**Total Spent, by Category, Closed by end of FY 18**

9% of Slay funds allocated to student research and travel  
37% of Slay funds allocated for pedagogy for social justice  
20% of Slay funds allocated for campus-wide events  
34% of Slay funds allocated to community partners