Credits:

Design/Layout: Kalle Westerling, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow.

Text for Annual Report: Kalle Westerling, with contributions from Futures Initiative team.

Photos: All photos by Jessica Murray, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow (p. 9, 13, 16, and 20); Michael Gillespie (p. 6); the Center for the Humanities (p. 7); Lauren Melendez (right picture on p. 14); Estefany Gonzaga (right picture on p. 14); the Graduate Center, CUNY (p. 22); individuals depicted in their headshots are responsible for their own pictures (p. 25 and 29); Mike Rifino (back cover).
CONTENTS

From the Founding Director 4

Executive Summary 5

Goal #1: Strengthen Diversity, Equity, Innovative Pedagogy, and Interdisciplinarity in Teaching and Research for Graduate Center and CUNY Faculty 6
Team-taught Interdisciplinary Graduate Courses 6

Goal #2: Structure Equality and Support the New Majority of Students—From Community College to Graduate School and Beyond 10
CUNY Humanities Alliance: Humanities Teaching and Learning (Mellon Foundation) 10
CUNY Humanities Alliance Program Staff 11
Research by Postdoctoral Fellow Kitana Ananda 11
Undergraduate Leadership, Peer Mentoring, and Student Success: Liberal Arts for the New Majority (Supported by the Teagle Foundation) 12
Structuring Equality: A Handbook for Student-Centered Learning and Teaching Practices 14

Goal #3: Develop the Next Generation of College Professors and Intellectual Leaders 15
Professional Development of Futures Initiative Graduate Fellows and Beyond 15
Louise Lennihan Arts and Sciences Grant 15

Goal #4: Create and Support an Intellectual and Technological Network Across CUNY’s Community Colleges, Senior Colleges, and Graduate Programs 17
Open-Source App Prototype: Ensuring Stable, Offline Access to Futures Initiative Events 18

Goal #5: Advocate Higher Education as a Public Good 19
The University Worth Fighting For 19
Administrators 21
Graduate Fellows and Postdoctoral Fellows 22
Faculty Fellows and Advisory Board 26
2017-2018 Faculty Fellows 28
Alumni Faculty Fellows 30
Futures Initiative Advisory Board 30
It is satisfying to review what we’ve accomplished at the Futures Initiative this year, our third, on behalf of our mission of “advancing equity and innovation in higher education.” It is also daunting, of course, to think of how much work remains to be done. Everywhere in higher education we hear calls for change. But what kind of change? We contend that innovation without equity is hollow.

In equity theory, one must attend to the relations as well as the perceptions of fairness in the distribution of resources. In education, equity comes with an implied generational imperative: to distribute fairly to the next generation all of the resources extended to the previous one. That is hardly the case now in America, as tuitions soar and students leave higher education in debt and with diminished prospects for careers that provide either adequate remuneration or stability. Within the profession of college teaching, we have also seen diminution, as more and more faculty positions become contingent, without benefits or a promise of full-time or consistent employment.

We have witnessed some encouraging changes at CUNY this year--free tuition for some students and three-year contracts for some adjunct faculty--are a welcome beginning. We are also proud of CUNY’s success (confirmed in several recent studies) in contributing to the social mobility of our students, including many who come from economically-disadvantaged backgrounds. We need to build on these while always being alert to structural inequality: discrimination from racism, sexism, and sexual orientation as well as to injustice perpetrated against those with different abilities or immigration status. We live in a time of dramatic, astonishing technological change. How do we design innovative new technologies that improve the human condition, the environment, and make learning more accessible to all?

Our specific focus at the Futures Initiative is on the ways we can infuse equity and innovation into the three traditional areas of higher education: research, teaching, and service to society.

Let’s start with research. How many graduate programs are actually designed to prepare students to pursue truly original, meaningful scholarship, beyond the mantel of apprenticeship? As is the case with the international network HASTAC (Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory, hastac.org), co-directed by the Futures Initiative since 2014, we entrust research leadership to our graduate student fellows, supporting them as they develop and present their own vision to a wider public. This underscores the impact of their research beyond graduation, beyond a dissertation defense, and beyond academe.

What about teaching? Studies show that teaching occupies approximately 60% of a professor’s time. Yet how many graduate programs incorporate research on learning and effective pedagogical methods into the design of graduate training? How many connect pedagogy, learning, and teaching to research in an intrinsic, mission-driven way? By supporting eminent and diverse faculty in team-teaching experimental, student-centered courses, we connect teaching and research. We also focus on engaged pedagogy in order to model the classroom as a space where students can have agency and learn how to act for social good and social change.

Finally, service. How do we ensure that our institutions truly serve society? How can we ensure that they are equitable and support a better vision for society and that what we do within the academy has impact beyond it? Whether one pursues a career in higher education or anywhere else, as a professor or a student, understanding how institutions work and what needs to happen before they can change empowers one for life.

Our leader in compiling this report (and in all) is Dr. Katina Rogers, Director of Administration and Programs. She had input from Lauren Melendez, Director of Peer Mentoring and Administrative Specialist for FI, and the 2016 recipient of a Graduate Center Employee Recognition Award for her exemplary contributions. We also had input from the FI graduate fellows. The beautiful design is the work of Kalle Westerling, Futures Initiative Fellow, Director of the HASTAC Scholars and doctoral candidate in the GC’s Theatre Program. As Katina goes on parental leave, we wish her and her new baby the very best as we welcome Dr. Frances Tran, Postdoctoral...
Fellow and Interim Associate Director. We thank each and all of our faculty and students for all they have done, in the past year, to exemplify the highest goals of our program and higher education more broadly.

We would also like to thank the administrators who have supported our work throughout CUNY and the Graduate Center. We thank the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Teagle Foundation for their generosity. And we thank the citizens of New York for their support of public higher education and CUNY, one of the most important engines for social mobility in the nation and the single greatest economic engine in our city.

This Annual Report summarizes our year. It is also a call to all of us, together, to strive higher and with renewed purpose and commitment to the goals of equity and innovation. Let’s get started!

With appreciation and admiration,

Cathy N. Davidson
Founding Director, The Futures Initiative
Distinguished Professor, Graduate Center, CUNY

---

Executive Summary

The Futures Initiative is a unique program at the Graduate Center that supports the relationship of equity and innovation in research, teaching, and public service in higher education and that makes overt the profound connections between the Graduate Center and the CUNY campuses—and beyond. In its third year, the Futures Initiative sponsored an array of programs, beginning with several team-taught, interdisciplinary courses. Taught by Graduate Center faculty in partnership with CUNY faculty, these courses were designed to foster goals of diversity, active pedagogy, and public engagement. A series of public programs, “The University Worth Fighting For,” addressed urgent issues in higher education—both the need for public support of higher education and, within higher education, the need to redesign a more relevant, engaged form of higher education. Futures Initiative graduate fellows designed and implemented the events and used a variety of open-source and low-cost tools to extend their reach beyond those able to participate in person. Fellows, for example, webcast and live-tweeted most of our events and also provided recaps of each event that others can continue to learn from. A peer mentoring program, supported by the Teagle Foundation, trained advanced undergraduates to serve as mentors guiding others through the challenges of life and work. The CUNY Humanities Alliance, a partnership between Graduate Center programs—including the Futures Initiative—and LaGuardia Community College, focused on training graduate students who are interested in community college teaching careers, thanks to support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Finally, the Futures Initiative continues to co-direct the Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (hastac.org), the world’s first and oldest academic social network. This year, we helped to identify a new national collaborative partner, moving part of HASTAC from Duke University to our new partnering institution, Arizona State University. Together, all of these Futures Initiative programs, course offerings, projects, technologies, and networks advance the twin goals of “equity and innovation” in higher education.
Goal #1: Strengthen Diversity, Equity, Innovative Pedagogy, and Interdisciplinarity in Teaching and Research for Graduate Center and CUNY Faculty

Following a competitive, CUNY-wide application process, five to seven courses are selected annually for support from the Futures Initiative, with faculty teaching these courses designated as Faculty Fellows. These courses are designed to exemplify equity and innovation. They promote the Futures Initiative goals of increasing faculty diversity. They emphasize innovative, student-centered pedagogy in their methods and interdisciplinarity as a form of knowledge. They create collaborations across the CUNY campuses and work towards a larger goal of public engagement. Futures Initiative courses are structured to support the connections between the three pillars of higher education: research, teaching, and service to society.

Team-taught Interdisciplinary Graduate Courses

2016–2017 Courses

SOCIAL INEQUALITY & HEALTH DISPARITIES: SEX, GENDER AND REPRODUCTION. Co-taught by Professors Diana Romero (Hunter College and the CUNY School of Public Health, Community, Society and Health, Public Health Program) and Ananya Mukherjea (The College of Staten Island, Sociology/Anthropology)

This course brought an interdisciplinary public health (social ecological/multilevel) and sociological (critical cultural studies) lens to examine the social, historical, political and other contexts in which sex, gender, and reproductive health are situated. There was a particular focus on the role of social inequality with regard to imposition and effects of policies on diverse groups and their associated, disparate sexual, and reproductive health (SRH) outcomes.

RACE AND GENDER THEORY IN THE UNDERGRADUATE HUMANITIES CLASSROOM. Co-taught by Professors Cathy Davidson (The Graduate Center, English) and Michael Gillespie (City College, Black Studies and Film Studies), in partnership with Shelly Eversley (Baruch College, English)

This course was designed as both an introduction to core concepts of race, gender, and intersectional theory and as a course in the pedagogy of teaching these topics in the introductory undergraduate humanities classroom. The class was divided into four modules—visuality, sound, literary and expressive culture, and higher education—and groups of students designed lesson plans and activities for each. In summer 2017, embedded fellow Danica Savonick organized these materials into a collection with an easy-to-navigate table of contents on hastac.org so that other educators can learn from, borrow, and remix the materials.

THE PUBLIC AND PUBLICS. Co-taught by Professors Setha Low (The Graduate Center, Environmental Psychology, Anthropology, Earth and Environmental Sciences, and

“The most valuable take away was the significance of interdisciplinary scholarship. The course engaged with contemporary debates and controversies through multiple theoretical lenses concerning the social sciences, public health, and law/human rights. It equipped students with the conceptual and methodological knowledge needed to critically examine and challenge the contemporary notions of sexual and reproductive health and its policies.”

— MIKE RIFINO, Embedded Fellow in Social Inequality & Health Disparities
In a moment when formations like Black Lives Matter, the recent women’s march, and the #NoDAPL water protectors have brought renewed attention to the intersecting nature of inequality in the U.S., this class couldn’t be more urgent.

— Danica Savonick, Embedded Fellow in Race and Gender Theory in the Undergraduate Humanities Classroom

This interdisciplinary course examined the concept of the public, and the plural publics, as an analytical construct of particular importance in both scholarship and political life. This course offered students a useful way to think about diversity in society, as the concept of “public” implies the question of who is included in and excluded from the collective. Students learned how to master the classic and more recent literature on space and place with respect to the designation of public and private. Students also went beyond the literature on shared resources and social spaces to think broadly about major approaches to the common, the communal, and the ordinary. Special attention was paid to a dimension of the study of public life of particular concern to us both, and of perennial political relevance as a question of global social justice: the privatization of formerly shared or commonly owned resources—the “enclosure of the commons”—as both a historical process and a present-day phenomenon.

**SEMINAR AND PRACTICUM ON THE TEACHING OF PSYCHOLOGY.** Co-taught by Professors Patricia Brooks (The College of Staten Island and The Graduate Center, Psychology) and Jill Grose-Fifer (John Jay College of Criminal Justice and Graduate Center, Psychology)

This course focused on professional development and the use of innovative student-centered pedagogical methods for undergraduate teaching that focus on active learning. Students read and discussed research on the science of teaching and learning, and the advantages and disadvantages of various technologies for instruction. Students used a collaborative model of teacher preparation in which knowledge and resources were shared with peers. In addition, the students collaboratively created professional development resources and lesson plans, which they shared with the public on their Futures Initiative course site: https://futuresinitiative.org/teachingpsychology/

**THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHILDHOOD: PERSPECTIVES ON SELF, OTHERS, SOCIETY AND HUMAN RIGHTS.** Co-taught by Professor Martin Ruck (The Graduate Center, Psychology) and Erika Niwa (Brooklyn College and The Graduate Center, Psychology)

This course took an interdisciplinary approach to examine how the social construction of childhood, both across time and context, shapes children’s perceptions of self, others, and society. Societies are grounded by the fundamental belief that the perceptions and lived experiences of children and youth are inextricable from the complex worlds that they inhabit, extending from the most proximal contexts (including families and schools) to the most distal contexts (including policy, institutions, and cultural beliefs). Furthermore, inequality and oppression play a key role in these processes. Specific attention was paid to examining the complex intersections of individual development and multi-level ecological systems as they shape a range of developmental domains—including perceptions of children’s rights, civic engagement, and identity development—in the face of continuing inequality and oppression. The course syllabus and student contributions are highlighted on https://futuresinitiative.org/childhoodandhumanrights.
2017–2018 Courses

Following a competitive, CUNY-wide application process, seven courses were selected for the Futures Initiative's 2017–2018 programming under the direction of fourteen Faculty Fellows from across CUNY.

Fall 2017

PUBLIC SCHOOL: ART IN THE CITY. Co-taught by Professors Claire Bishop (The Graduate Center, Art History) and Paul Ramirez-Jonas (Hunter College, Art)

Public School is a course designed to encourage the making of, and reflection upon, art outside the gallery. Unlike a conventional CUNY seminar, we will never meet in the classroom, but instead use the five boroughs of New York City as our campus—visiting sites, buildings, organizations, individuals, and situations that catalyse critical thinking about the public sphere.

PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH IN THE BORDERLANDS: RESEARCH AND PEDAGOGY FOR THE AMERICAS. Co-taught by Professors Ofelia García (The Graduate Center, Urban Education and Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages) and Rosario Torres-Guevara (Borough of Manhattan Community College, Academic Literacy and Linguistics).

This seminar explores how to extend understandings about the US Latino community and their experiences in two ways: First by reading and discussing work that is grounded in Latin American/Latin@ cosmologies, philosophies and worldviews; second by conducting Participatory Action Research with the Latino community. The class is a virtual collaboration with Members of NLERAP (National Latino Education Research and Policy Project).

RETHINKING HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY. Co-taught by Professors Ann Kirschner (University Professor, CUNY; Dean Emeritus, Macaulay Honors College) and Gilda Barabino (City College, Dean, Grove School of Engineering)

This graduate seminar explores innovations in higher education, with a special focus on technology and new pathways that lead to lifelong learning. The course is interdisciplinary in its approach, and looks at the web of assumptions about democracy and social mobility that underlie the American system of higher education.

UNDOCUMENTED, ILLEGAL, CITIZEN: THE POLITICS AND PSYCHOLOGY OF BELONGING IN THE UNITED STATES. Co-taught by Professors Colette Daiute (The Graduate Center, Psychology) and David Caicedo (Borough of Manhattan Community College, Psychology—Social Sciences, Human Services & Criminal Justice)

This course will focus on the recent history of citizenship challenges, as related to contemporary migration and higher education. The current movements of people fleeing violence and injustice worldwide have been met with some innovative policies, yet also with fences, detentions, travel bans, and other means. After reviewing such migration patterns and reactions, we focus, in particular, on the politics and psychology of what it means to belong in the U.S. today, officially and unofficially.

Spring 2018

BLACK LISTED: AFRICAN AMERICAN WRITERS AND THE COLD WAR POLITICS OF INTEGRATION, SURVEILLANCE, CENSORSHIP, AND PUBLICATION. Co-taught by Professors Cathy N. Davidson (The Graduate Center, English) and Shelly Eversley (Baruch College, English)

This course examines the inter-relationship between the Cold War, the early Civil Rights movement, and the writing and censorship of African American writers. By looking at a range of literary and theoretical texts, we will work to understand the relationship between a range of legal and social conditions and the forms of Black expression at that time. Collaborative projects for the course include working on an annotated edition of a “forgotten” novel published by one of the little-known Black women writers of the 1950s and contributing new or augmenting impartial entries to Wikipedia for African American writers of the Cold War period.
CHANGE AND CRISIS IN UNIVERSITIES: RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EQUITY IN UNCERTAIN TIMES. Co-taught by Professors Ruth Milkman (The Graduate Center, Sociology) and Katherine Chen (City College and The Graduate Center, Sociology)

This course examines conditions that foster and hinder diversity at an institution where our faculty and students learn and work: the university. While teaching substantive content, we also model various teaching methods, including how to handle “hot” issues in the classroom and how to experiment with pedagogical techniques designed to maximize the potential of all students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. This course explores the transformation of people’s everyday experiences at universities, as well as within society. We discuss the burgeoning literature on recent trends affecting universities, with special attention to how those trends exacerbate inequality along class, race/ethnicity and gender lines.

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CHILDHOOD AND PEDAGOGY. Co-taught by Professors Wendy Luttrell (The Graduate Center, Urban Education; Critical Psychology; Sociology) and Amita Gupta (City College, Teaching, Learning & Culture and Early Childhood Education)

The definition of “childhood” has spurred political and policy debate, new inquiry across the disciplines, and re-considerations of pedagogical strategies within childhood education. The new inquiry, often called “critical” childhood study, distances itself from the taken-for-granted, universalizing view of childhood that has been dominated by Western psychological and developmental perspectives. Students in this course will create a website/blog/online forum as a shared space for themselves as well as Pre-K teachers to showcase and discuss instances of child-centered pedagogy.
Goal #2: Structure Equality and Support the New Majority of Students—From Community College to Graduate School and Beyond

The Futures Initiative strives to make greater connection between the Graduate Center and the other CUNY campuses and to recognize the distinctive character of CUNY’s undergraduate students. Most graduate students at the Graduate Center teach courses at one of the CUNY campuses. The Futures Initiative strives to translate the specialized research of our graduate faculty and graduate students into CUNY’s the best teaching in undergraduate classrooms.

CUNY Humanities Alliance: Humanities Teaching and Learning (Mellon Foundation)

Co-Directors: Cathy N. Davidson (The Graduate Center), Bret Eynon (LaGuardia Community College), David Olan (The Graduate Center).

The Futures Initiative serves as a partner in the CUNY Humanities Alliance, a program supported by a $3.1 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation designed to train graduate students to teach in community colleges. The Humanities Alliance spans administrators, faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates at both the Graduate Center and at LaGuardia Community College. Over 120 languages are spoken at LaGuardia Community College and some seventy percent of the students, a majority of whom are first-generation college students, have family incomes below $25,000 a year.

Learning how to teach community college students who are fighting for their education against enormous challenges and obstacles is the purpose of this program. The Futures Initiative works with the Teaching and Learning Centers at the Graduate Center and LaGuardia Community College to support program development, research and evaluation, digital scholarly communication, and public engagement.

The 2016-2017 academic year was the first of this four-year program. In Fall 2016, Humanities Alliance graduate teaching fellows shadowed faculty mentors teaching a twelve-week quarter at LaGuardia and participated in professional development seminars and fellows’ meetings. In Spring 2017, the graduate fellows taught their own courses and launched their course subsites hosted on the online community platform, cunyhumanitiesalliance.org.

The program also works to increase access to and opportunities in the humanities for diverse undergraduate students through the LaGuardia Mellon Humanities Scholars. This year’s Scholars participated in biweekly meetings and humanities enrichment activities. They also worked with faculty mentors to design and create independent projects on this year’s program theme of “Risk” for a year-end showcase.

Launched in Fall 2016, the program’s online community platform, cunyhumanitiesalliance.org, is powered by a Commons in a Box installation of WordPress and is co-managed by the postdoctoral fellow for digital scholarly communications and public engagement, Kitana Ananda. Director of programs and administration, Kaysi Holman, co-manages the program’s online community platform and former Futures Initiative Fellow, Lisa Tagliaferri, contributes as a web developer. This dynamic space currently hosts eight graduate fellows’ course websites and a program blog, and offers support, connection, and opportunities for training in digital literacy to students at this commuter campus.

VISIT THE PROGRAM’S ONLINE COMMUNITY PLATFORM:
cunyhumanitiesalliance.org
KAYSI L. HOLMAN, J.D., is the Director of Programs and Administration of the CUNY Humanities Alliance. This being the first year of the CUNY Humanities Alliance, Holman developed and launched an online communications and publication platform, supervised the inaugural graduate teaching fellows, and co-facilitated the LaGuardia Mellon Humanities Scholars program for LaGuardia students interested in pursuing Humanities scholarship and careers (culminating in a year-end undergraduate Showcase on this year’s theme of “Risk”). Holman organized panels about the CUNY Humanities Alliance work at the Futures Initiative Spring Symposium and the North Eastern Public Humanities Conference, and participated in the Graduate Career Counseling Conference in Houston (see her posts on CUNYHumanitiesAlliance.org). Before coming to the CUNY Humanities Alliance, Holman directed programming and administration for HASTAC (Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory) and the Ph.D. Lab in Digital Knowledge in the John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute at Duke University. She also previously worked with nonprofits and educational organizations dedicated to equity and social justice, both within higher education and achieved through access to higher education.

ELIZABETH ALSOP, Ph.D., is the Mellon Humanities Scholar for the CUNY Humanities Alliance and the Assistant Director of the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) at the Graduate Center. In this role, she provides support for the teaching fellows and helps pivot the lessons of the Humanities Alliance to broader audiences through a variety of programs and projects at the TLC. During the 2016-2017 year, Alsop presented her research at meetings of the Modernist Studies Association and International Narrative Society, as well as the Flow conference in media studies, and served as a guest speaker in television studies classes at Princeton University and Marymount Manhattan College. Most recently, she received a PSC-CUNY grant to support the revision of her current book project, Making Conversation: The Poetics of Talk in Modernist Fiction, under contract with the Ohio State University Press’s Theory and Interpretation of Narrative series. In addition to her scholarly work, she also published cultural criticism in The Atlantic and The TLS online.

KITANA ANANDA, Ph.D., is the Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow for the CUNY Humanities Alliance in 2016-2018, and is based in the Futures Initiative at the Graduate Center. In this role, she conducts qualitative research to understand the communities served by the Humanities Alliance and contributes to program development. She also co-manages the development of the program’s digital platform, cunyhumanitiesalliance.org, and collaborates with program staff to develop tools and strategies for communications and public engagement.

Research by Postdoctoral Fellow Kitana Ananda

Futures Initiative and Humanities Alliance postdoctoral fellow, Kitana Ananda has been conducting qualitative research for the program. In this first year, she worked with three graduate fellows on a formative “near-peer” classroom observation process that included a pre-visit interview about their teaching methods and goals, a classroom visit, and a post-visit interview to debrief about the observation. Preliminary insights from this research confirm what she has learned from participating in the program’s professional development workshops: Namely,
that shadowing a faculty mentor’s course, and the mentoring relationship that results from this engagement, is a meaningful component of the project that has allowed graduate fellows to integrate new teaching and learning practices into their own pedagogy. In addition to her research with some of the program’s graduate fellows, Ananda has conducted interviews with the Humanities Alliance faculty mentors, to gain insight into their experiences of teaching and mentoring within the program. Edited versions of these interviews have been (and will continue to be) posted to the program’s website.

Ananda has also collaborated with the program’s deputy director, Kaysi Holman, and Former FI Fellow, Michael Dorsch, on constructing survey and focus group questionnaires for an external evaluation of the program’s first year.

Undergraduate Leadership, Peer Mentoring, and Student Success: Liberal Arts for the New Majority (Supported by the Teagle Foundation)

The Futures Initiative directs the Peer Mentoring and Leadership Program, funded by a grant from the Teagle Foundation, in which exemplary undergraduates—nominated by graduate students and faculty in Futures Initiative courses—learn mentoring, leadership, and other professional skills and then pass those on to other students at their campuses.

Following an intensive workshop in July 2016, 27 undergraduate peer mentors located at twelve CUNY campuses worked with one another as well as other CUNY students on matters of student success throughout the academic year. Peer Mentors also maintain a blog to share advice, resources, and reflections. A small sub-team directed this endeavor: Lauren Melendez, Director of Undergraduate Peer Mentoring and Administrative Specialist; Mike Rifino, Ph.D. Candidate in Human Development, Co-Director of Undergraduate Peer Mentoring, and Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow; and Thomas DeAngelis, Ph.D. Candidate in Earth and Environmental Sciences and Futures Initiative Peer Mentoring Liaison (Fall 2016).

In Spring 2017, peer mentoring participants were invited to lead, orchestrate, and speak at a session for the University Worth Fighting For Spring Symposium, a day-long public event showcasing the full range of work that has taken place in our interdisciplinary courses, graduate fellowships, and the Futures Initiative Peer Mentoring program. This was a high-visibility opportunity for undergraduate students, and a chance for them to build their academic credentials within a supportive environment. Select students also contributed to the design, editing, and publication of a collaborative book, Structuring Equality: A Handbook of Student-Centered Learning and Teaching Practices.

In March 2017, Peer Mentoring Co-Directors Lauren Melendez and Mike Rifino, along with Peer Mentor Estefany Gonzaga, presented at the American Association of Colleges and Universities conference on Diversity, Learning, and Student Success. Their poster presentation, titled, “New Majority Student Success: Fostering Connection, Renewal, and Leadership through Peer Mentoring,” was highly influential. Following the presentation, conference organizers invited Peer Mentor Cherishe Cumma to write an essay for publication in their journal, AAC&U Diversity and Democracy.

The program will continue in 2017-2018, thanks to continued support from the Teagle Foundation, with a new emphasis on leadership.
We had the chance—they gave us the space—and we just were creative, and we gathered all of our ideas into one.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“Their main office is at the Graduate Center. Going there was an amazing experience. An eye opener. It made me feel like I could be there some day as a student. It was a great experience.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“I didn’t know how reachable it was to be a graduate student. I was really maybe afraid of reaching out and finding that information for myself. Right now, I’m applying for a masters, and it is because of them that I do it.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“At the end of that two-day workshop, the supervisors completely left the conference room and they just let the peer mentors do it all themselves. They let us figure out how we wanted to run the program.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“We had the chance—they gave us the space—and we just were creative, and we gathered all of our ideas into one.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College

“To manage school anxiety, I suggest freshmen to go into the school environment without expectations. Not to discredit college, but rather to relax and be more open to new possibilities.”

— YELENA DZHANOVA, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Baruch College

“Because of my participation in this program, I’ve actually gotten into another program, so it’s like a pathway to different programs. This program has been an amazing opportunity.”

— FI PEER MENTOR

“As a mentor, not only for FI, but a mentor for many in my personal life, I believe it is my role to inform others of ongoing events that may or may not impact their lives in the future.”

— HURRIYA HASSAN, Futures Initiative Peer Mentor, Queens College
The Futures Initiative and HASTAC published Structuring Equality: A Handbook for Student-Centered Learning and Teaching Practices, a collaborative, student-written book spanning several Futures Initiative programs. The book was written by Graduate Center students in Cathy Davidson’s Spring 2016 course, “American Literature, American Learning.” Then, a team of undergraduates in the CUNY Peer Leadership and Mentoring Program, directed by Lauren Melendez and co-directed by Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow Mike Rifino, worked on the essays while mastering professional copyediting, proofreading and book design skills under the direction of GC doctoral student Hilarie Ashton. This program was generously funded by the Teagle Foundation which has also made possible the digital and paperback book publication.

The essays in this book show how any reader, tomorrow, can adopt new practices designed to scaffold or structure equality by granting students agency, activism, responsibility, and full participation in the experience of learning. This is a model of higher education where the objective is not to learn from an expert but to learn how to become an expert, how to achieve expertise in any situation, in the classroom and in all the areas of life beyond the classroom. The book includes essays, lesson plans, and assignments that turn the principles and theories of engaged, active learning into ways to structure equality in the classroom and also throughout academe, through a variety of our innovative assessment practices and methods.

Graduate students in the HASTAC Scholars program have also written reviews of each chapter of the book, under the guidance of HASTAC Scholars Director and Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow Kalle Westerling. These reviews are now published as a collection on HASTAC.
Goal #3: Develop the Next Generation of College Professors and Intellectual Leaders

Professional Development of Futures Initiative Graduate Fellows and Beyond

The Futures Initiative considers doctoral education to be the hub of our work from which many spokes radiate and believes that understanding how institutions work helps graduate students succeed in academe and beyond. We empower Futures Initiative Fellows as the program’s leaders, inviting their contributions as we determine each year’s programmatic plans and encouraging them to connect their work with the program with the research and training that are core to their doctoral programs. Graduate Fellows lead the Futures Initiative’s weekly meetings, literally setting the agenda for our program. They “embed” in the team-taught courses, forging connections among faculty members and other graduate students. With scaffolding from the leadership team, the graduate fellows plan and execute our public events, such as the University Worth Fighting For series, and develop online records of these events (video, webcasts, social media, photographs, and blogs) for the larger public.

Louise Lennihan Arts and Sciences Grant

In 2016 the Futures Initiative established the Louise Lennihan Arts and Sciences Grants, thanks to the generosity of Curtis Wong, a recent recipient of an honorary doctoral degree from the Graduate Center, and a matching grant from Microsoft as well as contributions from anonymous Graduate Center faculty. The competition honors Dr. Lennihan for her extraordinary service on behalf of students and faculty at the Graduate Center. Six micro-grants in the amount of $500 for research or travel were awarded to doctoral students working on the intersections of humanities, arts, science, and technology. The grant recipients were chosen by a selection committee of graduate students, staff, and faculty, from a pool of 66 highly competitive applications across many fields. 2016-2017 recipients of Lennihan Grants are:

PHOEBE FRIESEN, PHILOSOPHY, used the Louise Lennihan Arts and Sciences Grant in support of OnTrackNY, a research project she developed at the New York State Psychiatric Institute, where she has been a volunteer and collaborator for several years. The project, which offers a variety of supports to individuals and families, consists of in-depth interviews with participants of an innovative coordinated care program for individuals who have recently experienced psychosis for the first time. The interviews explored themes of identity and wellbeing, and used the technique of photo elicitation to elicit reflections.

NORA GOLDMAN, LINGUISTICS, studies the relationship between language, gender, and power in online feminist discourse, including ways that women participating in feminist activism on the Internet construct and maintain their identities and challenge or reinforce power structures through linguistic choices. The Lennihan Grant allowed Goldman to present her research at the annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America in January 2017. Her paper was a quantitative study of intra-speaker variation among participants in a 2014 Twitter thread marked with the hashtag #yesallwomen. The study of online language use is overall underrepresented in the conference program despite the rich data that computer-mediated communication provides to language researchers.

SAKINA LAKSIMI-MORROW, URBAN EDUCATION, examines the lived experiences and the intellectual formations of students of color in academia, focusing on students’ experiences with dissertation work. While access and diversity are foundational to social equity and have been the focus of a lot of academic research, most institutional measures are formulated through quantitative means. Admission rates and graduation rates are used as the markers of access and diversity, obscuring the more complex lived experiences of people that inhabit the institution, and the contributions they make to the academy and to the larger project of intellectual emancipation. Laksimi-Morrow’s experimental multi-media project considers the ways in which students navigate the professional,
intellectual and affective processes of academic knowledge production through their dissertation work across the social sciences and humanities.

ROBIN MCGINTY, EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, locates prisons as sites of resistance and the production of carceral knowledges as repositories of archival memory, and interrogates the racialized and gendered spatial formations of the carceral sphere and apparatus through the optic of currently and formerly incarcerated African-American women. As an interdisciplinary project that places currently and formerly imprisoned black women at the center of the ongoing discourse around “mass incarceration,” McGinty uses a mixed methodological approach to re-conceptualize the historical relationship between the criminalization and imprisonment of black women, its continuities and discontinuities in the context of the carceral sphere, its violent formations and functions in the 20th century. The award supported travel to investigate the archives and historical records regarding the criminalization and imprisonment of African-American women in Maryland.

ANNA PALTSEVA, EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, focuses on the centrality of food not only to health, but also to culture. A deeper understanding of soil contamination and best practices to limit exposure can empower those who grow and produce food, improve health outcomes for consumers, and foster greater connection to the land. Paltseva’s project uses a combination of lab and field experiments to determine the amount of absorption and uptake of lead and arsenic in produce grown in soils with different amounts and types of phosphate fertilizer. With the scientific goal of this project being to understand and develop techniques of mitigating soil contaminants for the improved and safe growing of food, the project actively intersects/engages the humanities through agriculture, touching food, traditions, and human values.

PALOMA RODRIGO GONZALES, CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY, focuses on racial thinking in the Andean region. The notion of embodied ‘stains’ that non-Catholics carried in their blood, and that were believed to determine their moral and intellectual capabilities, has been pervasive in Peruvian conceptions of race since the sixteenth century. Rodrigo Gonzales’ work explores the persistence of a form of racial thinking that relies on religious conceptions of dirtiness/cleanliness, purity/impurity. Thanks to the Lennihan Grant, Rodrigo Gonzales was able to conduct ethnographic and archival research on the “Mongolian spot,” a dark bluish birthmark that emerges as a sign of “non-whiteness” in the historical intersection between colonial Catholicism and scientific racial thinking in Peru.

CECILIA SALVI, ANTHROPOLOGY, investigates the creation of value through circulation. The Lennihan Grant allowed her to conduct research in South America on the cartonera movement, which began in Buenos Aires during an economic crisis and continues to be a thriving local and international enterprise. Initially implemented as a way of saving on printing costs, artists and writers collectivized and began using recycled cardboard as book covers. These books are sold for much cheaper than normal publishing houses. This social movement exemplifies one born out of necessity, but which continues to expand and thrive beyond what is typical of a social movement.
Goal #4: Create and Support an Intellectual and Technological Network Across CUNY’s Community Colleges, Senior Colleges, and Graduate Programs

Technology with a Purpose

The Futures Initiative uses websites, online collaborative tools, webcasts, video, livetweeting, and other forms of social media to make our teaching, research, and programming accessible to a wide range of publics and to connect students and faculty across the diverse and vast CUNY system. With an awareness that many of our students cannot afford home wifi or expensive computers and are connected only via mobile devices, designing accessible, low cost technologies is another part of our commitment to equity. On a national and global level, the Futures Initiative co-directs audience of the world’s first and oldest academic social network, HASTAC (Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory, hastac.org). HASTAC is an open, collaborative online community with no dues (and no sharing of data to commercial vendors). HASTAC has two mottos: “Changing the Way We Teach and Learn” and “Difference is our operating system.”

At CUNY, the Futures Initiative has developed an open-source online learning community built on the CUNY-developed, open source platform of Commons in a Box. This community invites students at CUNY’s community colleges, senior colleges, and graduate programs to become active contributors to their own teaching and learning. Our “Tech Tip of the Week,” produced by Futures Initiative Fellow Michelle Morales, offers useful video and text instructions that help faculty and students enhance the technologies they use for learning and teaching.

Through our team-taught courses and undergraduate peer mentoring program, we have collaborated with fifteen colleges across the CUNY system: Baruch College, Borough of Manhattan Community College, Brooklyn College, City College of New York, Hunter College, John Jay College, Kingsborough Community College, LaGuardia Community College, Lehman College, Medgar Evers College, New York City College of Technology, Queens College, the College of Staten Island, York College, and the School of Public Health. In addition, we collaborate closely with LaGuardia Community College as part of the Humanities Alliance.

Within the Graduate Center, our collaborative efforts center on grant building on the technology of CBOX, developed at the Graduate Center under the direction of Matthew K. Gold, the Futures Initiative website provides a space for the program to share information and archive materials, while also creating the possibility for network members to connect with one another, create their own websites for their courses or research, and more.

Today, the Futures Initiative CBOX site is currently in its fifth semester of use by the greater CUNY community and hosts over 730 users across 18 CUNY campuses (as of June 2017).
programs, public programming, strategic planning, and course development. We collaborate with programs such as the Humanities Alliance, the Teaching and Learning Center, the Office of Career Planning and Professional Development, the Pipeline Program, GC Digital Initiatives, and more. We also collaborate with a number of academic programs, including English, Urban Education, Psychology, Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages, Art History, Sociology, Anthropology, Earth and Environmental Sciences, and the M.A. in Liberal Studies Program (MALS).

Open-Source App Prototype: Ensuring Stable, Offline Access to Futures Initiative Events

Technology is an integral of the FI mission. We believe digital tools have the potential to build community and foster greater access and we hope our FI Events Mobile App will make progress on both of these fronts for both FI and broader CUNY community. Events are a key component of the intellectual and cultural offerings that make CUNY valuable not only to students but to their surrounding communities as well. Making events easier to find raises the profile of the intellectual life of each college, while also making it easier for members of the public to find and attend events on topics that matter to them. Currently, FI events are announced and displayed on our website and shared via social media and email. However, each of these outlets of information faces one major issue: the need for cellular data or wifi to access. CUNY students spend much of their time commuting and, given the nature of NYC travel, are often in locations where signals are unavailable. Therefore, a mobile app that could provide offline access to events has the potential to improve accessibility. This research project has 3 major components: (1) developing an Android mobile application led by FI fellow Michelle Morales, (2) publicly releasing and sharing all code involved in the project, and (3) reflecting on the development process via blog post reflections and tutorials.

Collaborating Across the Country and Around the World: HASTAC

Along with Duke University, the Graduate Center directs the 15,300+ member HASTAC network and also runs the local HASTAC@CUNY network hub. While most of the content on HASTAC is created by members, the Futures Initiative’s programming is a prominent element of the network’s content and a major contributor to its monthly newsletters.

HASTAC is dedicated to “Changing the Way We Teach and Learn” and with “Diversity as Our Operating System.” Since 2007, HASTAC has administered the Digital Media Learning Competitions, supported by the John. D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, in partnership with the University of California Humanities Research Institute (UCHRI).

In July 2017, the Duke portion of HASTAC’s administration will begin to transition to Arizona State University, and HASTAC will be co-administered by the Futures Initiative at the Graduate Center and by the NEXUS Lab at Arizona State University. HASTAC will be co-directed by Cathy N. Davidson from CUNY and Jacqueline Wernimont, Director of the Nexus Lab and Assistant Professor of English at ASU.

HASTAC SCHOLARS. The HASTAC Scholars fellowship program is an innovative student-driven community of graduate and undergraduate students. Directed by Kalle Westerling, Futures Initiative Fellow and Ph.D. Candidate in Theater and Performance, the program accepts some 200+ graduate and undergraduate students each year. More than 1,400 HASTAC Scholars in dozens of disciplines have been sponsored by 220 colleges and universities—including community colleges, liberal arts colleges, and large Research 1 public and private institutions.
Goal #5: Advocate Higher Education as a Public Good

The University Worth Fighting For

The University Worth Fighting For series brings the Futures Initiative’s mission for inclusion, equity, and social justice in higher education to life within the Graduate Center and for a broader public. The title is based on the conviction that, as a society, we should be supporting higher education as a public good but that goal comes with a responsibility to make higher education responsive and relevant to the demands of a changing society. All of our events are student-led, with Futures Initiative graduate fellows designing topics, inviting speakers, live tweeting and webcasting events, and then providing a full online recap for the larger public at futuresinitiative.org.

2016-2017 Series

RACISM, XENOPHOBIA, POPULISM: THE MISEDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC, September 20, 2016. Organized and moderated by Kitana Ananda, Futures Initiative and Humanities Alliance Postdoctoral Fellow

The Futures Initiative started the academic year with a timely discussion on racism, xenophobia, populism, and public education. Panelists Jessie Daniels (The Graduate Center and Hunter College), Mary Phillips (Lehman College) and Linda Sarsour (Arab American Association of New York) discussed historical context and shared classroom resources for discussing contemporary movements like Black Lives Matter.


A discussion including multiple perspectives on working against structural barriers to support equity and social justice in the STEM fields, both in the academy and in industry. The panel participants focused on the kinds of inspiring, creative research that can be fostered by dismantling racial and gender-based bias. Expert panelists included Jill Bargonetti (Hunter College), Gillian Bayne (The Graduate Center and Lehman College) Andrew Rosenberg (Queens College and IBM) and Sara Vogel (Ph.D. Student, The Graduate Center, Urban Education).

MEDIA BLACKNESS, November 14, 2016. Organized by Danica Savonick, Futures Initiative Fellow and Ph.D. Candidate, English

An engaged conversation about the rendering of blackness in, across, and through multiple forms of media, featuring Cathy N. Davidson (The Graduate Center), Shelly Eversley (Baruch College), Racquel Gates (College of Staten Island) and Michael Gillespie (City College of New York). The discussion included multiple perspectives on the intersections of blackness and aesthetics in film, television, digital media, and beyond, featuring a new publication by Faculty Fellow Michael Gillespie, Film Blackness: American Cinema and the Idea of Black Film (Duke University Press, 2016).

ACCESSIBILITY, MOBILITY, AND DESIGN, February 8, 2017. Organized and moderated by Jessica Murray, Futures Initiative Fellow and Ph.D. Student, Developmental Psychology

A conversation about the meaning of mobility and the role of design as a process that can cultivate a culture of accessibility that goes beyond accommodations. Sara Hendren (Olin College of Engineering) and April Coughlin (SUNY, New Paltz) discussed physical, structural, and attitudinal barriers within and outside of the classroom, that shape access to education for students with disabilities.
GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE FIGHT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, March 6, 2017. Organized and moderated by Allison Guess, Futures Initiative Fellow and Ph.D. Student, Earth and Environmental Sciences/Geography

In this conversation, the Futures Initiative highlighted the urgent need for abolition and decolonial education and shared strategies from across the globe. Marianna Poyares (The New School), Zandi Radebe (University of South Africa), Cleopatra Funzani Mtentu (University of Johannesburg), Zee Dempster (The Graduate Center), Eve Tuck (Ontario Institute for Education Studies), and Arianna Martinez (LaGuardia Community College) (re)focused our collective attention on how the university can be repurposed to serve the larger public towards liberatory ends.

SPRING SYMPOSIUM: PEDAGOGY, RESEARCH, AND SOCIAL CHANGE, April 3, 2017. Lead organizer: Danica Savonick, Futures Initiative Fellow and Ph.D. Candidate, English

Faculty and graduate students from this year’s team-taught courses, Futures Initiative Peer Mentors, and the Humanities Alliance, celebrated the end of the scholarly year with a day-long symposium presenting the work that connects student-centered learning to institutional and social change.
CATHY N. DAVIDSON, is Founding Director of the Futures Initiative and Distinguished Professor of English who teaches interdisciplinary, team-taught courses each year as part of the Futures Initiative program. She is also cofounder and director of HASTAC. Davidson is currently an appointee of President Obama, confirmed by the Senate, to the National Council on the Humanities and serves on the Board of Directors of Mozilla, Data and Society, and numerous other organizations. In 2016-2017, Davidson published articles in Inside Higher Ed, Anthropology News, The Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinary Studies, the Japanese journal Five, the Harvard Business Review, Choice Reviews, and Liberal Education. The Journal of American Studies hosted a Forum to celebrate the 30th anniversary of her Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America and she was recipient of the 2016 Boyer Award for Significant Contributions to Higher Education. In her latest book, The New Education: How to Revolutionize the University to Prepare Students for a World in Flux (Basic Books, 2017), Davidson argues that the American university is stuck in the past—and shows how we can revolutionize it to prepare students for our age of constant change. From the Ivy League to community colleges, she introduces us to innovators who are remaking college for our own time, by emphasizing student-centered learning that values creativity, engagement, and social change. The New Education ultimately shows how we can teach students to be leaders of change, not simply subject to it.

KATINA ROGERS, Ph.D., Director of Administration and Programs, coordinates the overall strategy for outreach, communications, and programming. With a deep understanding of technology, publishing, and education, Rogers ensures that each of these elements complements the other, from the Futures Initiative’s website infrastructure to our social media strategy. In 2016-2017, she spoke frequently on matters related to higher education reform, graduate training, career preparation, and new modes of scholarly publishing; recent talks have included venues across CUNY (the Graduate Center, Medgar Evers College, Bronx Community College, Hunter College, and the Faculty Fellowship Publication Program) as well as more broadly, including the Modern Language Association, New York University, the Council of Graduate Schools, the Graduate Career Consortium, Syracuse University, and more. Rogers is also working on a book project, Putting the Humanities Ph.D. to Work: Theory, Practice, and Models for Thriving Beyond the Classroom (under contract for publication by Duke University Press). Intended for graduate students in the humanities and for the faculty members who guide them, the book grounds practical career advice in a nuanced consideration of the current landscape of the academic workforce and an emphasis on reaffirming humanities education as a public good. It explores how rhetoric and practices related to career preparation are evolving, and how those changes intersect with admissions practices, scholarly reward structures, and academic labor practices—especially the increasing reliance on contingent labor. The book also examines the ways that current practices perpetuate systems of inequality that result in the continued underrepresentation of women and minorities in the academy.

LAUREN MELENDEZ, Administrative Specialist and Director of the Undergraduate Leadership Program, is pursuing her Master of Science in Education degree in School Counseling at Hunter College. In 2016, she was part of the team awarded a Teagle Foundation grant in support of the Futures Initiative’s peer mentoring program and was invited to apply for a renewal grant for funds to run the program for an additional year. The Futures Initiative was also awarded another grant from the Teagle Foundation President’s Discretionary fund. Melendez presented a poster at the annual conference of the American Council of Colleges and Universities in March 2017 in Orlando, Florida. Following this presentation Kathryn Campbell, Editor of Diversity & Democracy, who was impressed by how the undergraduate mentoring program combined mentorship opportunities with hands-on learning experiences, invited one of the peer mentors, Cherishe Cumma, to write a reflection piece on her experience in the program, which is scheduled to appear in the Fall 2017 issue of the journal. In
addition to cultivating Cumma’s aspirations to become a published author, Melendez co-organized a panel during the Spring Symposium, “Pedagogy, Research and Social Change,” with Futures Initiative fellow Mike Rifino and several undergraduate peer mentors. In May 2017, Melendez presented alongside Futures Initiative fellow Michelle Morales at the Graduate Center’s Digital Initiatives Annual Showcase where they spoke about the Futures Initiative website and about how the peer mentoring program has designed a WordPress site that the peer mentors use for blogging and connecting with one another across the CUNY campuses. Also in May 2017, Melendez was honored with a highly competitive Graduate Center Employee Recognition Award for her work with the Futures Initiative, including her outstanding leadership of the Undergraduate Peer Mentoring Program.

CELI LEBRON, Budget Analyst, received a B.S. in Computer Engineering and a minor in Creative Writing from City College of New York’s Computer Engineering Program and plans to continue her education by pursuing a Master’s degree in Finance. She is integral to the Futures Initiative’s operations, and does everything from working with the Accounts Payable and Procurement Departments to process reimbursements and travel authorizations to providing monthly financial reports for the program. In the year ahead, Lebron will increasingly take on a more deeply programmatic role, including the mentorship of our undergraduate science and engineering students.

**Graduate Fellows and Postdoctoral Fellows**

The remarkable achievements of our Graduate Fellows and Postdoctoral Fellow in the past year are testimony to their unparalleled growth:

KITANA ANANDA holds a Ph.D. in Socio-Cultural Anthropology from Columbia University and serves as a Postdoctoral Fellow for the Futures Initiative and the Humanities Alliance. This year, Ananda received a PSC-
CUNY grant to support the first phase of her research on Tamil refugees in the California Bay Area, titled “Becoming Refugees, Being Resettled: Tamil Asylum-Seeking and Migration from Sri Lanka.” She was recently appointed as an adjunct assistant professor at Hunter College, CUNY, where she will teach “The Anthropology of Violence” in Fall 2017. Recent conference presentations include: “Encampment and its Exposures: Protection and Surveillance Among Sri Lankan Tamils in South India” at the American Ethnological Society conference at Stanford University, and “Connecting Doctoral Education and Community College Teaching” at the Futures Initiative Spring Symposium. She also organized and moderated the University Worth Fighting For event, “Racism, Xenophobia, Populism: The Miseducation of the Public,” in September 2016.

ALLISON GUESS, Futures Initiative Fellow (Fall 2015–present), is a Ph.D. student in the program of Earth and Environmental Sciences (Geography) at the Graduate Center. Guess currently serves as a doctoral student representative on the board of the Institute for Research on the African Diaspora in the Americas and the Caribbean (IRADAC). Her research is a contextual historiography of the deliberate Black land communities/constructions and Black people’s relationships to those lands, specifically as they relate to (voluntary reverse) migrations of Black millennials moving southward and eastward, in the midst of ongoing settler colonialism, capitalist development and anti-Black racism. This year, Guess has been granted several research fellowships, including a summer fellowship from IRADAC and the CUNY Dominican Studies Archives and Library Research Award. In addition, Guess was selected as one of 25 participants in Antipode’s 6th Institute for the Geographies of Justice to be held in Montreal, Canada in summer 2017. She also organized and moderated the University Worth Fighting For event, “Global Perspectives on the Fight for Higher Education,” in March 2017.

KASHEMA HUTCHINSON, Kashema Hutchinson is a doctoral student in Urban Education at the Graduate Center, and is a 2016-2018 HASTAC Scholar. Her research interests include culturally relevant pedagogy and non-traditional practices of teaching and learning such as cogenerative dialogue and the sociopolitical implications of zero tolerance policies in schools, especially the school-to-prison pipeline. Being heavily influenced by hip hop culture, Hutchinson creates infographics as educational tools that bridge various concepts with rap music. She will be contributing to communication initiatives in the Futures Initiative and is a Leadership Specialist for the Teagle funded Undergraduate Leadership program.

CHRISTINA KATOPODIS, Futures Initiative Fellow (Fall 2017–present), is a doctoral candidate in English at the Graduate Center and a Futures Initiative Fellow. Her research investigates the influences of sound and sonic vibration on American Transcendentalism and Pragmatism, attending to deep listening in the nonhuman environment of 19th Century America. Katopodis received a research grant from the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society to view the Ellen Tucker Emerson Music Collection at the Concord Public Library and a Provost’s Digital Innovation Grant to record sounds at Walden Pond and build a website that maps Walden’s soundscape. She recently joined the New Media Lab community at the GC to complete this project. Concurrently, Katopodis is writing and presenting work on nonhuman music in Henry David Thoreau’s writings, Emerson and feminist philosophy, and pragmatic listening in the works of Margaret Fuller. In 2016-2017, Katopodis presented her work at various venues: a paper in sound studies, “Counting Long Scales of Time: American Transcendentalism and Creative Attunement to Our Nonhuman Environment,” at SLSA 2016 in Atlanta; an essay on feminist pedagogy, “Teaching Consent in the Composition Classroom using Shakespeare’s The Taming of the Shrew” at NeMLA 2017; and a presentation on “Margaret Fuller’s Early Feminist Pragmatic Method” on the Margaret Fuller Society panel at ALA 2017 in Boston. She now serves as the Communications Officer for the Margaret Fuller Society and is currently building the society’s website.

MICHELLE MORALES, Futures Initiative Fellow (Fall 2016–present), is a doctoral candidate in Computational Linguistics at the Graduate Center. Her research interests include natural language processing and machine learning for mental health applications. Morales’s dissertation project investigates how to use multimodal (video, audio, and text) information to automatically detect depression. As part of her dissertation, she is currently building an open-source tool to help researchers construct multimodal detection systems. Given the severe shortage of clinicians and the ever increasing number of individuals in need, Morales’s research aims to improve the current state of mental healthcare by providing a scalable technological solution. This year, Morales presented her research at conferences including Codeland, CUNY IT, the IEEE Spoken Language Technology...
Workshop, and was selected for a summer internship with IBM’s Chief Analytics Office. In addition, she organized and moderated the University Worth Fighting For event, “Enacting a Different STEM: Building Equitable Futures Beyond ‘Diversity,’” in October 2016. Morales contributes her interests and skills in open-source technologies and documentation to the Futures Initiative, helping faculty use technology creatively in their classes and helping the Futures Initiative reach a wide, online audience.

JESSICA MURRAY, Futures Initiative Fellow (Fall 2016–present), is a doctoral student in Developmental Psychology at the Graduate Center. Her interests include mobilities, work-family psychology, transportation, technology, accessibility, and disability rights. She is currently working on a research project funded by the Provost’s Office at The Graduate Center, OurMobility.org, which examines transportation disadvantage for people with disabilities and other intersecting identities. Her work for the Futures Initiative includes web development and marketing, with an emphasis on digital accessibility. This year, Murray presented a paper on OurMobility.org at the Graduate Center Digital Initiatives showcase in May 2017. Murray has also presented at the Center for the Humanities Mellon Seminar on Public Engagement and Collaborative Research; the CUNY IT Conference; Columbia University’s Seminar on Disability, Culture, and Society: Theorizing Access; and Teach@CUNY Day. She also organized and moderated the University Worth Fighting For event, “Accessibility, Mobility, and Design,” in February 2017. Among her many contributions in 2016-2017, Murray redesigned and upgraded the Futures Initiative website and, along with Michelle Morales, worked on improving our site architecture and design.

MICHAEL RIFINO, Futures Initiative Fellow (Fall 2015–present), is a doctoral student in Human Development and co-director of the Futures Initiative Undergraduate Leadership program at the Graduate Center. Rifino’s research interests focus on investigating the processes of emotional development and learning among community college students to better understand how transformations in both processes play a role in promoting agency. He is currently researching how patterns of emotion-related discourses emerge within the context of academic learning. In part through his work with the Peer Activist Learning Community (PALC), Rifino has developed a research agenda related to the dynamic processes of emotional development and agency. This year, Rifino presented on a panel for the CUNY Humanities Alliance’s “Education after LaGuardia: Going to a Four-Year College or Graduate School.” He also presented a poster on “New Majority Student Success: Fostering Connection, Renewal, and Leadership through Peer Mentoring” at the AAC&U conference, Diversity, Learning, and Student Success, in March 2017 in Orlando, Florida. Rifino co-organized a panel at the Futures Initiative Spring Symposium on “Fostering Connection, Renewal, and Leadership through Peer Mentoring.” Rifino is also proud that a student whom he mentored, Konstantinos Gobakis, was awarded a 2017 Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship.

DANICA SAVONICK, Futures Initiative Fellow (Fall 2014–Spring 2017), is a doctoral candidate in English at the Graduate Center and a teaching fellow at Queens College. Savonick’s research analyzes the relationships among pedagogy, aesthetics, and social justice. More specifically, her dissertation examines how aesthetics fundamentally shaped classroom practices in the late twentieth century and how teaching in CUNY’s free and open classrooms inspired important feminist and antiracist authors to produce some of the most powerful literature of the 1960s and 1970s. This year, Savonick was awarded three of the nation’s most prestigious national awards: The Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Grant, the Woodrow Wilson 2017 Women’s Studies Fellowship, and the K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award from the American Association of Colleges and Universities. She is also a recipient of a TLC Mini Grant. These awards will facilitate the timely completion of her dissertation, “The Promise of Aesthetic Education: On Pedagogy, Praxis, and Social Justice.” A HASTAC blog post she co-wrote with Cathy Davidson, “Gender Bias in Academe,” was republished by the London School of Economics Impact blog and, at approximately 80,000 views, has become one of the most-read pieces for both venues. She gave a number of conference presentations, published “Changing the Subject: Adrienne Rich and the Poetics of Activist Pedagogy” (American Literature), and co-authored “Building a Student-Centered (Digital) Learning Community with Undergraduates” (Digital Humanities Quarterly) with former Futures Initiative Fellow Lisa Tagliaferri. Savonick was the lead coordinator of the Futures Initiative Spring Symposium in April 2017.
FRANCES TRAN, Post-Doctoral Fellow and Interim Associate Director for the Futures Initiative (June 2017–present), earned her Ph.D. in English and a certificate in American Studies from the Graduate Center in June 2016. Her dissertation, “Animate Impossibilities: on Asian Americanist Critique, Racialization, and the Humanities” received the Alumni and Doctoral Faculty Prize for the Most Distinguished Dissertation of the Year from the English Department. Tran’s research draws on Asian American and multiethnic science and speculative fictions for the insights they provide into new modes of sensing, un-learning, and becoming that articulate pedagogies and practices for critiquing persisting forms of institutionalized racism. Engaging the speculative as variously a literary genre, research method, and critical practice, her scholarship strives to create space for realizing “other” humanities attuned to the continuing materiality of racial difference and social inequality. In June 2016, she published an article drawn from this project, “How to Live UnSafely: Toward a Better Good Life for Asian American Studies,” in the Journal of Asian American Studies. This year, Tran taught six courses as a lecturer in the English Department at Fordham University. These classes covered a range of topics including, “Reading, Writing, and Time Traveling,” “Narratives of Freedom and Captivity,” and “Modern and Post-Modern Poetry.” She is excited to return to CUNY to advance her commitments to public education and antiracist pedagogy as a Postdoctoral Fellow and the Interim Associate Director for the Futures Initiative.

KALLE WESTERLING, Futures Initiative Fellow (Fall 2014–present), is a doctoral candidate in Theatre and Performance at the Graduate Center, a Futures Initiative Fellow, and Director of HASTAC Scholars, a vibrant student network within The Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (HASTAC). Currently, he is completing his dissertation on the history and aesthetics of male-identified bodies in 20th-century burlesque and 21st-century boylesque, “The Roots and Routes of Boylesque: Queering Male Striptease and Burlesque in New York City from 1930s Golden Age Burlesque to the New York Boylesque Festival in the 2010s.” This year, Westerling has presented on “The Roots and Routes of Boylesque” at the American Studies Conference, and on “Tripping the Light Transtastic: Hidden Histories of Trans Diva Performance” at the conference for the American Society for Theatre Researchers. He has fostered the growth and professional development of many other graduate students through his directorship of HASTAC Scholars, where he has coordinated projects such as a collaborative review of Structuring Equality and a well-attended webinar on Twine for storytelling, teaching, and research. Westerling has spoken on topics such as digital humanities mentoring and maintaining an academic digital presence, and in 2016-2017 taught a graduate class on Dramatic Vision and Form at Villanova University as well as undergraduate courses at Baruch College and New York University.

The Futures Initiative is proud of the ongoing work of our former team members:

MICHAEL DORSCH, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow 2014–2016 and doctoral candidate in Earth and Environmental Sciences, continues to work with the Futures Initiative and the Humanities Alliance by conducting evaluation and analysis of ongoing programmatic work. Dorsch is currently Data and Visualization Analyst in Institutional Assessment & Research at California State University, Monterey Bay.

LISA TAGLIAFERRI, Futures Initiative Graduate Fellow 2014–2016 and Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, successfully defended her dissertation, “Lyrical Mysticism: The Writing and Reception of Catherine of Siena” in spring 2017. Tagliaferri is currently Engineering Technical Writer at Digital Ocean, where she writes extensively on how to code in Python 3. She continues to work as a web developer with the Humanities Alliance.
Faculty Fellows and Advisory Board

CATHY N. DAVIDSON, Founding Director and Faculty Fellow, 2015-Present (The Graduate Center). For full bio, see “Administrators” section above.

2016–2017 Faculty Fellows

PATRICIA BROOKS, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (The Graduate Center and College of Staten Island; Psychology), is the Director of the Language Learning Laboratory in the Psychology Department. She joined the CSI faculty in 1997 after completing postdoctoral research fellowships at Carnegie Mellon University and Emory University. Her research program focuses on individual differences in language learning and development across the lifespan. She conducts laboratory studies of adult foreign language learning and uses computer games to study speech perception and production in children with typical and atypical language development.

AMY CHAZKEL, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (The Graduate Center and Queens College; History), a historian of Latin America who specializes in post-colonial Brazil, is an Associate Professor of History at Queens College and the CUNY Graduate Center. She is the author of Laws of Chance: Brazil’s Clandestine Lottery and the Making of Urban Public Life in Brazil (Duke University Press, 2011), winner of the New England Council of Latin American Studies Best Book Prize, co-winner of the J. Willard Hurst Prize of the Law and Society Association, and recipient of Honorable Mention for the Best Book Prize of the Brazil Section of the Latin American Studies Association. She is also co-editor of The Rio Reader: History, Culture, Politics, an anthology of primary sources on the history of Rio de Janeiro (Duke University Press, 2016). She serves on the Radical History Review Editorial Collective. Her current work includes research for a book that explores the social, cultural, and legal history of nighttime in nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro.

MICHAEL B. GILLESPIE, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (City College; Black Studies and Film Studies), is Associate Professor of Media Communication Arts and Black Studies at City College. His teaching and research focuses on film theory, black visual and expressive culture, historiography, global cinema, film adaptation, and genre theory. His recent publications include “Reckless Eyeballing: Coonskin, Film Blackness, and the Racial Grotesque” in Contemporary Black American Cinema: Race, Gender and Sexuality at the Movies; “Dirty Pretty Things: The Racial Grotesque and Contemporary Art” in Post-Soul Satire: An Interdisciplinary Critical Overview; and “Smiling Faces: Chameleon Street, Racial Performativity, and Film Blackness” in The Politics of Appearance: Racial Passing in U.S. Fiction, Memoir, Television, and Film, 1990–2010. His book, Film Blackness: American Cinema and the Idea of Black Film, is forthcoming from Duke University Press. Gillespie is also co-editing two volumes, Black Cinema Aesthetics Revisited and New Chester Himes Criticism.

JILL GROSE-FIFER, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (The Graduate Center and John Jay College; Psychology), is a neurophysiologist who uses EEG recording to investigate sensory and cognitive function across the lifespan. Her research focuses primarily on brain development during mid and late adolescence with a view to better understanding increased risk taking and other behaviors in these populations. More recently, she has also begun to use EEG recording to investigate how certain personality traits may affect how college students process emotional information and whether certain personality traits are predictive of better academic success. She is also interested in the scholarship of teaching and learning and assessing the efficacy of innovations in pedagogy. She was the recipient of the John Jay Distinguished Teaching Prize in 2009, and the John Jay Outstanding Scholarly Mentor award in 2012.

SETHA LOW, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (The Graduate Center; Environmental Psychology, Anthropology, Earth and Environmental Sciences, and Women's Studies), received her Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley. She trains Ph.D. students in the anthropology of space and place, urban anthropology, the anthropology of the body, and cultural values in historic preservation. She is also director of the GC’s Public Space Research Group. She has been awarded a Getty Fellowship, an NEH fellowship, a Fulbright Senior Fellowship, and a Guggenheim for her ethnographic research on public space in Latin America and the United States. She was president of the American Anthropological Association from 2007 to 2009. Her
current research is on the impact of private governance on New York City co-ops and condominiums, and she recently published a book titled *Spatializing Culture: An Anthropological Theory of Space and Place*. She is widely published, with many books and more than a hundred articles and chapters, and lectures internationally.

**ANANYA MUKHERJEA**, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (College of Staten Island; Sociology/Anthropology), received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the City University of New York Graduate Center and her BA from New College, Florida. She joined CSI's program in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work in the fall of 2004. Her research interests include: the study of gender and sexuality; medical sociology (the social politics of infectious disease epidemics and their management, particularly viral epidemics); urban sociology; the sociology of culture and popular culture; and the study of animals in society. Dr. Mukherjea teaches courses on gender studies, urban sociology, community studies, and the sociology of culture at CSI, and she has co-taught the Introduction to LGBTQ Studies at the Graduate Center with Dr. Paisley Currah. Dr. Mukherjea is also a member of the faculty for the doctoral program in public health at the Graduate Center, CUNY.

**ERIKA NIWA**, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (The Graduate Center and Brooklyn College; Psychology), joined the Psychology Department and the Children and Youth Studies Program at Brooklyn College in 2014. After receiving her Ph.D. in Applied Developmental Psychology from New York University, she then completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Rutgers University. Her work examines how culture and context shape the developmental pathways of children and young people, with a specific focus on inequality.

**DIANA ROMERO**, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (School of Public Health; Community, Society, and Health Program), is an Associate Professor at Hunter College. She holds a Ph.D. in Sociomedical Sciences from Columbia University. Her research interests include: research related to poverty and maternal, child and reproductive health; racial/ethnic health disparities, particularly among Latina women; reproductive health policy with an emphasis on abortion.

**MARTIN RUCK**, Faculty Fellow, 2016–2017 (The Graduate Center; Psychology), earned his Ph.D. in applied cognitive science from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. He is a widely published specialist in the overall process of cognitive socialization—at the intersection of race, ethnicity, and class—in terms of children’s and adolescents’ thinking about human rights, educational opportunity, and social justice. He has recently extended his work on young people’s perceptions of their rights to the UK and South Africa. Currently, he is investigating how children’s perceptions of social exclusion and discrimination are influenced by their social experiences and interpretations of rights and justice. Ruck’s *Handbook of Children’s Rights: Global and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, with Michael Freeman, was published in 2016.

### 2017-2018 Faculty Fellows

In the Fall of 2017, we will welcome the following faculty:

**GILDA BARABINO**, Dean of the Grove School of Engineering, City College of New York

**CLAIRE BISHOP**, Professor of Contemporary Art, The Graduate Center

**DAVID CAICEDO**, Instructor of Psychology – Social Sciences, Human Services & Criminal Justice, Borough of Manhattan Community College

**KATHERINE CHEN**, Associate Professor of Sociology, City College of New York and The Graduate Center

**COLETTE DAIUTE**, Professor of Psychology, Urban Education, and Educational Psychology, The Graduate Center

**SHELLY EVERSLEY**, Associate Professor of English, Baruch College

**OFELIA GARCÍA**, Professor of Urban Education and Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages, The Graduate Center

**AMITA GUPTA**, Professor Early Childhood Education and Chair of the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture
Faculty Fellows 2016–2017

FROM TOP LEFT: PATRICIA BROOKS, AMY CHAZKEL, CATHY N. DAVIDSON, MICHAEL B. GILLESPIE, JILL GROSE-FIFER, SETHA LOW, ANANYA MUKHERJEA, ERIKA NIWA, DIANA ROMERO, AND MARTIN RUCK.

Faculty Fellows 2017–2018

FROM TOP LEFT: GILDA BARABINO, CLAIRE BISHOP, DAVID CAICEDO, KATHERINE CHEN, COLETTE DAIUTE, SHELLY EVERSLEY, OFELIA GARCÍA, AMITA GUPTA, ANN KIRSCHNER, WENDY LUTTRELL, RUTH MILKMAN, PAUL RAMIREZ JONAS, ROSARIO TORRES-GUEVARA.
ANN KIRSCHNER, University Professor, The Graduate Center and Dean Emeritus, Macaulay Honors College
WENDY LUTTRELL, Professor of Urban Education, Psychology, and Sociology, The Graduate Center
RUTH MILKMAN, Distinguished Professor of Sociology, The Graduate Center
PAUL RAMIREZ JONAS, Associate Professor of Art, Hunter College
ROSARIO TORRES-GUEVARA, Assistant Professor of Academic Literacy and Linguistics, Borough of Manhattan Community College

Alumni Faculty Fellows

GILLIAN BAYNE, Associate Professor of Science Education, Lehman College and The Graduate Center
KANDICE CHUH, Professor of English, The Graduate Center
SUJATHA FERNANDES, Professor of Sociology, Queens College and The Graduate Center
DAVID FORBES, Associate Professor of School Psychology, Counseling, and Leadership, Brooklyn College
OFELIA GARCÍA, Professor of Urban Education and Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages, The Graduate Center
WILLIAM P. KELLY, President Emeritus of The Graduate Center, Former Interim Chancellor of the City University of New York, and The New York Public Library’s Andrew W. Mellon Director of the Research Libraries
CARMINA MAKAR, Assistant Professor of Teaching, Learning, and Culture, City College of New York
ANNA STETSENKO, Professor of Human Development and Urban Education, The Graduate Center
EDUARDO VIANNA, Professor of Psychology, LaGuardia Community College

Futures Initiative Advisory Board

CATHY N. DAVIDSON, Founding Director (Co-Chair)
KATINA ROGERS, Director of Programs and Administration (Co-Chair)
GILLIAN BAYNE, Associate Professor of Science Education, Lehman College and The Graduate Center
HERMAN BENNETT, Professor of History, The Graduate Center
PATRICIA BROOKS, Professor of Psychology, College of Staten Island and The Graduate Center
AMY CHAZKEL, Associate Professor of History, Queens College and The Graduate Center
SHELLY EVERSLEY, Associate Professor of English, Baruch College
DUNCAN FAHERTY, Associate Professor of English and Director of the Early Research Initiative, Queens College and The Graduate Center
JENNY FURLONG, Director of the Office of Career Planning and Professional Development, The Graduate Center
OFELIA GARCÍA, Professor of Urban Education and Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages, The Graduate Center
MICHAEL GILLESPIE, Associate Professor of Black Studies and Media and Communication, City College of New York
MATTHEW GOLD, Associate Professor of English and Digital Humanities and Executive Officer of MALS, The Graduate Center
JILL GROSE-FIFER, Associate Professor of Psychology, John Jay College and The Graduate Center
PRITHI KANAKAEMDALA, Assistant Professor of History, Bronx Community College
SETHA LOW, Professor of Environmental Psychology, Geography, Anthropology, and Women’s Studies, The Graduate Center

ANANYA MUKHERJEA, Associate Professor of Sociology and Anthropology, College of Staten Island

ERIKA NIWA, Professor of Psychology, Brooklyn College and The Graduate Center

DONALD ROBOTHAM, Professor of Anthropology and Director of the Advanced Research Collaborative, The Graduate Center

DIANA ROMERO, Associate Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health

MARTIN RUCK, Professor of Psychology and Senior Advisor to the President for Diversity and Inclusion, The Graduate Center
The Futures Initiative is housed at The Graduate Center, City University of New York.

- Strengthen Diversity, Innovative Pedagogy, and Interdisciplinarity
- Support and Train the New Majority of Students
- Develop the Next Generation of College Professors and Leaders
- Facilitate Intellectual and Technological Networks Across CUNY
- Advocate Higher Education as a Public Good