

For the Kids!

By Eddie Angelbello '19



Eddie performs a lip-sync rendition of Adele's "Hello" with a fellow dancer at Charlotte DM 2015.

In Charlotte Dance Marathon, a nonprofit student organization dedicated to raising funds for Levine Children's Hospital, we pride ourselves in saying that we would do anything For The Kids (FTK!). Our members, many of whom are Levine Scholars, have been cold-calling, classroom-canning, social-media-creeping, and doing pretty much everything in their power to raise money for the past year leading up to our big event, which is a 12-hour, all-night dance party that took place April 7-8.

As I said, we will do anything for the kids, but last week my commitment to that mantra was put to the test. Let me give you some back-story. I have never been overwhelmingly praised for my fashion sense. I am known to constantly embarrass myself when it comes to clothes. I wear shorts and flip flops when it is 45 degrees and raining. And when it is 85 and sunny, I will occasionally have the urge to throw on a nice sweater. I wear plaid. My colors clash (usually on purpose). BUT, even given my infamously horrid taste, the outfit I could be seen sporting to raise awareness for DM was enough to make me more than a little self-conscious. It was with a red face and the sweat of pure embarrassment glistening on my forehead that I stepped into... a giant inflatable baby costume!



Eddie stands outside the Student Union with other Dance Marathon team members trying to raise awareness.

As students streamed toward our table from across Craver Road, I stood there as an enormous baby, the biggest baby of them all, just holding a sign and trying to get people to register for Dance Marathon.

Why on earth, you might ask, did I do this? I did it for the kids, of course. But when it comes to Dance Marathon, I find the courage to step out of my comfort zone not only from the people I do it for, but also from the people I do it with. Our Dance Marathon leadership team is full of compassionate, dedicated individuals — all of whom I feel inspired by and privileged to work alongside. These are people who do not often have an abundance of free time, but even so they choose to use that time to do things like raise money for a hospital that serves kids and families who are in desperate need of care. I find that Charlotte Dance Marathon, an organization founded by Levine Scholars, is itself reflective of our program. It is a team of students from disciplines ranging from engineering to English who are not just passionate about making a difference but are coming together and working hard to make it happen.

Giving Them the Pickle

By Sarah Wood '21



Left: Sarah Wood '21 and fellow Niner Guide hopeful Dmitry Tereshenko '21 getting AXE-CITED about giving campus tours.

Right: Sarah posing with a campus map, the most essential document for Niner Guide Training.



My parents and I drove between the pillars that mark the main entrance to UNC Charlotte while I videotaped. “Where are we, Mom?” I said for the sake of cinematography. “UNC Charlotte,” she replied, “your future home.” She made it sound like it was my move-in day, but really, it was the day of my first campus tour, the day that laid the framework for the next four years of my life. We sat through a short information session, and then our tour guides came in. With a level of energy and optimism that matched mine, they introduced themselves and we began our tour. I was paired with Brittany, a Psychology and criminal justice double major. I will always remember her face because she did her makeup in our school colors, something I still have not mastered. As soon as we walked out of Cato Hall, I was sold. I was going to come to UNC Charlotte no matter what.

Fast forward two years, and I am sitting in my bed studying my Niner Guide workbook with only a week to go until my Final Evaluation. In the past 2 months, I have done Open House tours, Admitted Students day tours, buddy tours, shadow tours, mock tours, and even a tour for the new class of Levine Scholars! I did not know there were so many types of tours until starting Niner Guide

training, but then again, I did not know a lot of things. To give one example, as confident as I was about my people skills, I really did not know anything about guest satisfaction until becoming a Niner Guide. My role in the program is to provide prospective students with the very best presentation of our campus. That can mean anything from knowing exactly when Atkins Library opens on Saturdays or answering a difficult question about sexual assault; but whatever it may be, guest satisfaction always means consistently giving a good first impression, proving my love for our University, and giving our guests the pickle. It may sound weird, but you know how at some restaurants, they serve you a pickle with your meal for no extra cost? Metaphorically, being a Niner Guide is all about giving our guests that extra pickle, an added bonus to their experience with us that shows them we want to welcome them into our family.

My hope as a Niner Guide is that in a few years, someone I gave a tour to will be in the shoes I am in right now, memorizing all of the information and perfecting their personal stories, frantically preparing for their evaluations. I hope they will find their second home in the Niner Guide program, just as I did.

EXPAT LIFE: "Just Like Riding a Bike"

By Kaitlyn (Chapman) Worley '16

“Ding! Ding!” That was a common sound during my first few weeks in the Netherlands. Nothing quite compares to the excitement of morning rush hour on a creaky bicycle. Unsurprisingly, my first few attempts were met with choruses of bells (... and probably a few Dutch expletives) from fellow riders in the bike lane, making it clear I was cycling too slowly. What else could be expected? Most Dutch people have ridden bikes longer than they have been walking! Yes, I mean it. There are infant seats attached to bicycles. Luckily, my limited childhood bicycling skills have returned, and I have found that much of living abroad is “just like riding a bike” – having done it once, it has been easy to do again!

I moved to the city of Utrecht (approximately 30 minutes south of Amsterdam by train) last September with my husband Devin, four suitcases, and our cat Finn. When Devin’s company offered us a relocation opportunity, it was a surprisingly easy decision. We sold our furniture, ended our apartment lease, and boarded our one-way flight all within six short weeks. I should mention, my first time on a commercial airplane was traveling to NOLS the summer before freshman year at UNC Charlotte, and my first international trip was my Levine-supported summer internship in Germany. Needless to say, the Levine Scholars Program first opened my eyes to the world of travel and international experiences. Since moving to Europe, I have visited nine new countries and have biked along canals in the Netherlands, watched the Aurora Borealis in Norway, strolled through festive Christmas markets in Germany, experienced the music of Mozart in Austria, and traveled back to the Middle Ages in Estonia. A lot has changed since that first NOLS flight.

While at UNC Charlotte, I studied Civil Engineering and was involved with a variety of sustainability initiatives. My interests in city planning and sustainable urban development evolved through my classes and internship opportunities. After graduating in Spring 2016, I began working as a Civil Engineering Designer for McAdams, where I helped design civil infrastructure and technical drawings for projects like mixed-use developments, public spaces, and residential neighborhoods. Nothing could have prepared me for the sustainable engineering feats I would soon see in the Netherlands. Protected bike lanes, vast public transportation systems, and countless canals and waterways are just a few examples. I am constantly reminded of the efficiency, density, and mobility the Dutch have been developing for generations. Sustainability and climate change discussions are taken very seriously since almost a third of the country is below sea level. I hope to bring some of this knowledge back to the U.S. and apply it in my lifelong career.

My first international experience – my eight-week internship in Germany – prepared me for the language barriers, cultural differences, and everyday dissimilarities I now face in the Netherlands. Yes, there are still many new challenges and frustrations, but I have found that life in a foreign country requires a little personal confidence and a big willingness to ask questions; including but not limited to, “What is this strange-looking mush in the supermarket?” or “How do you carry a kitchen table on a bicycle?” Life in the Netherlands continues to be an exciting adventure. I am working remotely as a consultant with my previous engineering company back in the U.S. and just finished applying to Urban Planning Master’s programs here in Holland. I have made



Kaitlyn with her bicycle in Utrecht, The Netherlands.



Kaitlyn next to the main canal in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.



Kaitlyn and her husband Devin on a fjord in Tromsø, Norway.

friends, have joined a few community groups, and continue to plan future travels. I am left thinking of a quote by Albert Einstein, “Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.” Cheers from the Netherlands!



Seth (second from left) and Venture participants taking a rest after a 17-mile summit to Mt. Mitchell

VENTURE: UNC CHARLOTTE'S OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAM

By Seth Whitley '20

Every summer, a new class of Levine Scholars is introduced to the program through NOLS. Two summers ago, my cohort and I went to the Wind River Mountain Range in Wyoming. It was through NOLS that I found a passion for outdoor experiential learning.

After bonding so well with my cohort, I knew I wanted to continue having similar experiences. Luckily, I heard about the Venture program, which specializes in those exact experiences! Venture is the outdoor adventure organization on campus. The program offers subsidized trips like rafting and rock climbing to students and faculty, a high and low ropes course, and even a minor: Kinesiology and Outdoor Adventure Leadership.

In my first semester, I took their introductory course: Introduction to Outdoor Adventure. While progressing through the class, I was surprised at how much theory there was at the heart of outdoor experiential learning. We learned how to tie a figure-eight on a bight, but we also learned about the concept of Johari's window and how different participants and leaders react to different experiences.

With a brief introduction to these concepts in a field filled with adventure, I knew I had to go further. The next semester I took River Management, which developed the basic "hard skills" and "soft skills" needed to lead rafting and other white-water trips.

There are four levels of staff involvement to every type of trip Venture offers: shadow, apprentice, instructor, and trip lead (in ascending order). The instructor role is the first position where there is responsibility required out of the position. By that April, I was the instructor for my first trip.

I remember standing on the side of the French Broad River and telling a group of students everything they needed to know to have a fun, safe time rafting down the river. Even though I had the knowledge, it was a bit scary to know that these people trusted me to lead them down a river with crashing white waves. We got in, and I called out a few strokes for my crew to practice paddling. Everybody paddled their hardest and then laughed after I called it off. We went through the whole section with no major happenings aside from the participants loving the rapids.

Being able to talk to some of the participants who felt nervous beforehand and then not nervous after was awesome. Asking them to push beyond their comfort zone to try something new and then seeing their joy afterward, is always a great feeling.

Venture has taught me that you can have the most fun the world has to offer, while also learning more about yourself and others. The opportunity to learn should never be underestimated as we never quit having new experiences and meeting new people.

Senior Spring Break in the Capital

By Morgan Flitt '18



Morgan, Larry, and Katie at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.



Morgan, Larry and Katie at the US Botanic Garden in D.C.



Morgan, Larry, and Katie outside their AirBNB in D.C.

Sitting outside at our senior beach trip in the fall, reading, drinking diet ginger ale, we decided we had to spend our last spring break going somewhere. Katie Finch '18, Larry Lardieri '18, and I have all been friends since the beginning of NOLS and have stayed relatively close since then. However, we had never taken the opportunity to travel together. We knew that we might never have the same opportunity to go and explore a new area that we had never been to before. After brainstorming options, we circled the place: San Francisco. Fast forward through hours of planning, researching, and budgeting and we had the trip fully formed. Now all we had to do was manage funds well enough to be ready to venture come March.

One month before the trip, sitting across from each other, tearing off bits of injera at a local Ethiopian restaurant, however, prospects looked entirely different. The flights to California had become more costly, we had not quite figured out logistics of renting a car, and we had no idea how we would get from the Redwood Forest to Napa Valley. So, we quickly nixed our entire plan and California. What was next on the list? I made the suggestion and was delighted where it landed. We wanted walkable, historic, beautiful, and comparatively inexpensive; Washington, D.C. for spring break it was!

We had not planned nearly as much, but on an early Sunday morning we piled into Katie's car loaded with enough drinks, candy, and food for the six-hour road trip. As one might imagine, the six-hour road trip quickly turned into seven, eight, nine hours, but we stayed entertained with podcasts and Trader Joe's case

studies. When we arrived in D.C., we were impressed at our quaint AirBnB but quickly left it to get pizza. Cranking the space heater high and enjoying not being in a car, we planned our adventure.

The next few days consisted of a great deal of walking, even more eating, people watching galore, and fighting with broken iPhones. We got to see some of the major sites that D.C. has to offer, such as the National Portrait Gallery, the Holocaust Museum, and the National Air and Space Museum. We also just explored the random areas that we ended up in and accomplished a few goals along the way. Katie had a gluten free croissant; Larry got a new pair of shoes; and I got to pretend I could perform or even work at the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts.

Using NOLS terminology, the "peaks" of the trip included: doing daily morning yoga (kind of), scoring a great vintage hat in Georgetown, getting too into Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri, and almost eating in the same restaurant as the Obamas. The "valleys" included: worry over breaking unclear metro laws, umbrellas breaking in the middle of rainstorms, spending hours in the Apple store fixing a broken iPhone, not having access to petting the dog that lived above us, and still having to do schoolwork. However, the excellent food, amazing company, and the great memories we made were well worth the challenges along the way. We were glad, in the end, as we tore off injera pieces in the middle of a beautiful Ethiopian restaurant somewhere in the north side of D.C., that we chose to make the trek to the capital for our last spring break.

Galway Girl

By Sarah Mullen '20



NUI Galway Ladies Soccer team.

When asked to describe myself, I always feel the need to talk about where I come from and my large Irish family. However, it felt hypocritical identifying with a heritage that I have never experienced. I have been told that my freckles are a map of Ireland written across my face. If NOLS taught me anything, it was to follow the map. Deep down I knew I would be going to Ireland, I just had to pick the city. When I was younger I used to Irish dance to the song “Galway Girl,” and since I already had the dark hair and blue eyes, I wanted to fit the whole description and be able to say that, even if only for a few months, I truly was a Galway Girl.

Before I knew it, the planning was done, my program was booked, and I was on a plane to the motherland. I was so caught up in the excitement of going abroad that I did not stop to think about all of the things I would not know. First, you cannot be prepared for the weather in Ireland no matter how much anyone warns you. Sure, I knew it was going to rain, but I did not know the rain would come down sideways and freezing 300 days a year. Second, the Irish accents (brogues) can be a language barrier. I would say it is more embarrassing to continually ask people to repeat themselves when they are speaking the same language as you rather than a foreign one. Third, the weeks seem reversed here. Town is buzzing on weekdays while the weekends are quiet because everyone goes home. As with any study abroad experience, one must learn to adapt. I invested in a heavy-duty raincoat, trained my ears to recognize the ‘t’ sound as

a ‘th’, and learned to say yes when my roommates ask me to hang out on weekdays even though my inner nerd has been conditioned to believe that Sunday through Thursday should be spent at a desk doing homework.

Since arriving in Ireland, I have spent a few weekends exploring cities in other parts of Europe like London, Paris, and Barcelona. However, to truly embrace the Irish experience I have made sure to spend my fair share of time within the country. The Giants Causeway was magical, the Cliffs of Moher were breathtaking, and the craziness of Dublin reminded me of sweet home Chicago. Each place was an amazing experience for a weekend, but everywhere I visited reinforced my decision to choose Galway for the semester. It is the perfect mix of traditional and modern elements. It is big enough that there is always something new to do, but small enough that I can have my favorite tea shoppes and see people I know on the streets. It is everything I imagined Ireland to be.

While I am not learning a new language, which seems to be the norm when abroad, I am experiencing a new culture on a deeper level. My housemates are four of the most amazing Irish girls who have taken me under their wing and given me friends for life. I am playing for NUI Galway Women’s soccer team and traveling to other Irish Universities for tournaments. Countless weekends have been spent visiting friends and family in rural Ireland that I have never met, but who welcomed me into their homes. I have never



Left: Sarah and her brother taking in the views at the Cliffs of Moher. Middle left to right: Sarah with a sheep because it is Ireland after all. Galway's Spanish Arch and Salthill Promenade. Sarah in her favorite tea shoppe, Cupan Tae. Bottom: St. Paddy's Day celebrations in the center of Galway.



eaten as many potatoes or drank as much tea as I have when old Irish ladies hosted me.

It is hard for me to believe that a few years ago I was not sure if I even wanted to study abroad. Now I cannot imagine my life without this incredible experience. I have loved these past few months of embracing Ireland and all of its accurate stereotypes. Everyone is friendly, there seems to be more sheep than people, Guinness is the country's pride and joy, and if you visit once you will most certainly want to come back. I have not even completed my semester, and I have no doubt that I will be back here soon.



Ireland

A Place to Call *HOME* - A Place to Call *YOUR OWN*

By Maria Cruzat '20

We are halfway through the semester. We just finished multiple midterms. Then comes Spring Break – one week of no classes. There are many ways students can spend their Spring Break, but when the opportunity to work with Habitat for Humanity in Roanoke, VA with fellow Levine Scholars was presented, the decision on how to spend my break was simple. I am in.

I had the opportunity to participate in the Levine Scholars Program's first alternative spring break last year. We worked in Lewisburg, WV helping construct a home for a family. Our responsibilities included creating a kitchen island and installing shelves and doors. I was able to spend a week devoting my time to service with my fellow Levine Scholars. We explored the town, shared stories with locals, cooked together, and enjoyed each other's company. It was a great alternative Spring Break, and I was excited and ready to continue working with Habitat for Humanity the following year. What I was not expecting though, was for my time in Roanoke to exceed my expectations.

This week-long trip consisted of a group of 14 scholars from all cohorts, Dr. Diane Zablotsky, and Billy Roosenberg. With what seems like will be a traditional practice – one can only hope – Dr. Zablotsky's freshly baked cookies were readily accessible in the vans, and before we knew it, it was time to say goodbye to Charlotte. As peaks of the Appalachian Mountains came into view, we all became increasingly excited to see the town we were going to serve. Our big project with Habitat for Humanity was laying a plywood subfloor for a house. As our team worked to create this foundation, I saw the relationships among scholars strengthen. There is something about the spirit of selflessness and working for the benefit of others as a community that brought the feeling of family to mind. In this week, the phrase "the Levine Scholars Program is a family" really resonated and hit home for me. As we were creating the foundation for the home, we were also creating the foundation of friendships and networks.

With the help of Bryan, our Habitat for Humanity ground leader, we learned how to use a circular saw properly, were challenged with how to remain calm when navigating through a bent nail situation, and saw how vital a team was when it came to moving, measuring, sawing, and drilling. After trials and improving our skills, we became a well-oiled machine and accomplished our goal of creating the subfloor. Mornings and afternoons spent in labor mixed with dinner-cooking team competitions, late-night basketball and

card games, hiking McAfee's Knob, and exploring downtown Roanoke led to a week full of unending smiles and waves of laughter – and a plethora of joyful memories that we each walked away with.

Why do I love Habitat for Humanity? Simply put – because everyone deserves a place to call home and a place to call their own. We were able to connect with the family we were building the house for as they helped build their house with us. The house was for a couple with five children. Both parents were immigrants, and the husband had not seen his mother since leaving his home country. As he was sharing his story, I could only imagine how he was feeling, but I could tell how hard he and his wife were working to reach their goals and to raise their family. They were both in a special transition phase of their life, where they could see this home and picture their future with their family living there. These moments that reminded me of the power of community and selflessness.

There were many opportunities for this Spring Break, but I am extremely thankful to the Levine Scholars Program for providing the opportunity for us to help surrounding communities.



Maria and scholars relaxed on hammocks and enjoyed the stunning mountain view after hiking to the top of McAfee's Knob.



After a joyous celebration of hammering in their last nail, the team spray-painted their names onto the subfloor.



Maria (middle), Marika Samuelsson '21, and Sarah Wood '21 team together to hammer in the plywood.

Sustainable FUNCTIONAL Fitness

By Gabriella Kroska '18

Every major experience with the Levine Scholars Program prepares you for the next, during your undergraduate years and later in life. This could not be more true about NOLS and civic engagement. While we have had incredible success and support throughout our time working on the project, we have also had a lot of opportunities to apply many of the skills we learned on NOLS: tolerance for uncertainty and adversity, communication, judgement, decision making, vision, and action.

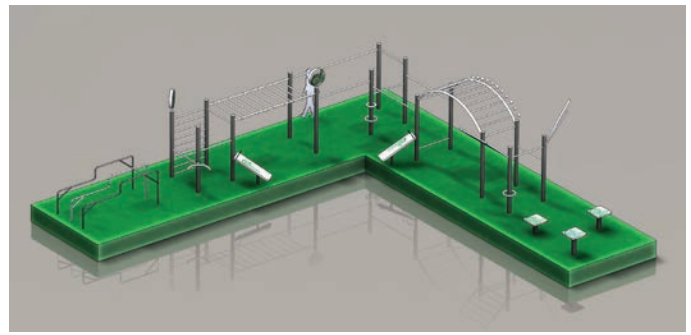
The idea to have an outdoor calisthenics course built on campus was conceived in the summer of 2015, while Matthew Lowry '18, Esteban Mendieta '18 and I were completing our nonprofit internships. A study by Brailsford and Dunleavy showed that UNC Charlotte had less than one-third of the weight training and aerobic area of universities of similar size, and less than 20% of student health and wellness space. Of the fitness areas available, little existed in the way of available equipment for functional calisthenic exercises. Each of us had a background related to functional fitness/exercise and rehabilitation in some capacity and had a shared passion for promoting integrative training that promotes functional strength and reduces the likelihood of sports injuries, workplace injuries, or injuries occurring during daily activities.

We designed our project proposal with the intention of providing a sustainable method for students, faculty, and staff to include functional fitness in their regular schedules, and to provide a springboard for educating the community on methods to increase and maintain fitness outside of a gym environment.

The development stage took over a year because each team member was out of the country at least once. Between the three of us, we hit every continent except Australia and Antarctica. It is hard enough to get three Levine Scholars from different majors together, let alone when they are on different continents! Progress during that time required a lot of patience with each other, as well as communication and coordination. By the time I went abroad in spring of 2017 and we were wrapping up the proposal for approval, we had gotten the hang of collaborating online and through Skype. We generally continue to do so, even now that we are all stateside. Alex Caviness '20 joined us while I was abroad in the spring semester of 2017, bringing his background as a mechanical engineering major, an avid rock climber, and a lover of outdoor adventure. Alex's goal for the project was to increase awareness of fitness facilities beyond gyms through community exercise spaces.



One of the rare times the team is all together!



Digital representation of the facility, as designed by Esteban and Alex.

Because of our individual backgrounds, playing to each other's strengths was pretty easy. Matthew (the fast-talking finance guy) oversees budget matters, networking with supporters off campus and contacting manufacturers for quotes. Esteban and Alex (the engineers) created the design using Computer Aided Modeling and SolidWorks, and I (the exercise physiologist) am largely in charge of drafting the proposal (justification of project, precedent, supporter information) and networking with student and faculty groups on campus to gain support. Esteban and I were both able to provide examples of precedent for the project, through documenting similar facilities found while abroad in Barcelona, Spain and Santiago, Chile.

The implementation phase of the project has been delayed because of two of our greatest challenges in the last year: getting a location for the project approved on campus and coordinating with a manufacturer. Due to challenges with both of those aspects, construction will not occur before most of the team graduates. Going forward, Alex will take the lead on the project in terms of further development and marketing.

Once the facility is built, coordination will occur with Recreational Services to design a group fitness class utilizing the facility. I hope to be able to coordinate with the Kinesiology Department to offer some sort of academic training course regarding functional/calisthenic training or integrate it into a current activity course. Our overall goal, however, is to provide a space that students will use to learn more about exercise and fitness and to promote the knowledge that you do not have to buy a gym membership to exercise.



For now, the parallel bars behind the ROTC building are all there are to represent calisthenic exercise equipment on campus.

National Conference For Undergraduate Research

By Quinn Barnette '18

Each year the National Conference for Undergraduate Research is held at a new location for undergraduate scholars all over the country to gather and share the findings of their research. Last year was the first time the Levine Scholars Program and Honors College took a group of students to the conference in Memphis, TN! As a rookie researcher, I have only had a few experiences at academic conferences and never in cities that were completely new to me. To my surprise, I was greeted by the world's largest Bass Pro Shop located within view of the infamous Peabody Hotel, known for having mallard ducks residing in the lobby fountain. Needless to say, this experience was as equally cultural as it was developmental – professionally and academically.

The conference itself was held at the gorgeous campus of the University of Memphis, and comprised work from every discipline. As a public health researcher, I was able to sit in on presentations from English, Religious Studies, Anthropology, and so many more. NCUR was an excellent experience because not only did it give me practice in presenting my original research, but it also allowed me to get connected with other people my age interested in the same things as well as so many other diverse subjects I had never encountered.

When we were not working at the conference, we had ample time to explore the city of Memphis and everything it had to offer. The vast majority of us were able to experience Beale Street for the first time

Casey Aldridge '17,
Megan Woody '18,
Eileen Jakeway '17, and
Quinn
Barnette '18 and honors
students arrive in the
Memphis airport.



Casey Aldridge '17,
Megan Woody '18,
Eileen Jakeway '17,
and Quinn Barnette
'18 and honors
students on the
beautiful University
of Memphis campus
after completing their
presentations.



and explore the infamous Memphis Blues scene. We watched the Beale Street performers turn the cobblestone street into a runway for aerial somersaults and checked out the live bands memorializing Memphis music legends. Despite the fact that we were unable to visit Graceland (Elvis Presley's home), it was abundantly clear how the city that revolutionized the world's music industry continues to attract international attention decades later. While I deeply valued the opportunity to share my work with similarly minded students all over the country, it was enriched in a way only afforded by exploring a new city with a culture all its own.

FINDING MY PULSE IN POETRY

By Daiana James '20



Daiana James '20
(second from right)
performs with other
artists at the March
'Wimmenz Showcase'
at Dupp&Swat.

Upon my arrival in Charlotte nearly two years ago, I remember wondering how on earth I was going to keep my sanity. I was 17, six hours from home, and there was not a familiar face in sight. While excited to have my first crack at this adulthood thing, the nagging feeling that this big world was going to swallow me whole haunted me. Nevertheless, I pressed on through the first few weeks of my first semester.

Out of all the events that took place during those hectic days, what was most notable to me was the Black Student Union Convocation. I remember taking down the names of all the organizations that were interesting to me that night, but the only one that had left a lasting impression on me was Souls' Speak. At the time, it was the

only active spoken word organization on campus. I instantly fell in love. Among all the on-campus organizations I initially took interest in and joined, Souls' Speak was the only one I remained part of for over a year. In that time, I have grown tremendously as an artist and person, daring to pursue my chosen vehicle of expression with a tenacity of which I did not think I was capable.

Now, what feels like a lifetime later, I have found a new world that has readily opened its arms to embrace me. There are a handful of poetry events in Charlotte that I attend regularly. Among them are Eclectic Soul, an open mic and artist showcase hosted by the aptly named Sir Abstraxxx; Superfriends' Writing Workshop, which is followed by Release Therapy Open Mic – both of which are hosted by APoetNamedSuperman. Word of Mouth at Dupp&Swat is a more intimate open mic for more experienced artists, also hosted by APoetNamedSuperman; The Inkblot Slam, which is a poetry competition hosted by Breeze, as well as many, many more.

In the short time that I have been active in the Charlotte area poetry community, I have found a home in its art and artists. My talent has been warmly recognized and cultivated. I cannot imagine what my collegiate experience would be like without this.

For more information about poetry in Charlotte, please check out the hashtag #CLTPoetry. It is updated frequently with events of all kinds taking place throughout the city.

Around the World

Isabella Calpakis '17

New York, NY

Immediately after graduation, Isabella spent two months working in Greece at Ionian Village, a young adult travel and leadership program. After moving back home to New York in the fall, she is now working in communications at an Australian start-up company in Manhattan. Her latest trip was to Nassau, Bahamas, in support of the nonprofit Lend-A-Hand Bahamas, benefitting native Bahamian children.



Evan Danchenka '14

New York, NY

It took Evan Danchenka about two years to properly learn the basics of a functioning New Yorker. An auto-refill metrocard, local coffee punch card (that 10th \$5 latte is free!), and a collection of building access cards are the most important pieces of plastic in his wallet. Next, he is setting his sights on translating building addresses into street intersections, talking with clients over the sound of passing sirens, and knowing what color tie is appropriate for the next architecture gala.



Brandon Nixon '16

London, England

Brandon is currently working at Google's London office as an International Benefits Analyst. He remembers his first international experience to Jerusalem as a freshman. He admits, "I could never see myself living abroad in an entirely new country if it was not for the Levine Program."



Melissa Martin '20

Edinburgh, Scotland

Melissa is a budding linguist pursuing degrees in English and Psychology. As such, she has greatly enjoyed her semester in Scotland's capital engaging with locals and identifying variations in the English language. Learning new words and phrases such as "Flapjack" (Granola Bar) and "This is a cracker!" (This is very good!) have led her to reconsider the changeability of language.



The Levine Scholars Program

The Levine Scholars Program is a four-year scholarship that includes full tuition, room, board and four summer experiences, including study abroad, which will develop leadership skills and social awareness. In 2010, the inaugural class of Levine Scholars

enrolled at UNC Charlotte and approximately 20 scholarships are awarded to high school seniors every year. The Levine Scholarship is valued at \$105,000 for in-state students and \$155,000 for out-of-state students over four years.



Class of 2018

Levine Scholars are talented high school seniors from across the United States whose accomplishments epitomize the values of philanthropists Sandra and Leon Levine, including a demonstrated commitment to community service, intellectual curiosity and the capacity for ethical leadership. Through community engagement, mentoring relationships with civic and business leaders in Charlotte, and a rigorous academic program, Levine Scholars develop the characteristics necessary to produce positive change in the communities in which they live and work. Scholars are able to turn their community service interest into actions with community service grants of \$8,000 to support their work in the community.

It is this unique connection to Charlotte – its resources, leaders and challenges – that differentiates this program from other scholarships of its kind. The program is specifically designed to expose Levine Scholars to the urban culture of a thriving city and to engage them in service to address needs of the citizens of Charlotte.