

Presidents Leadership Class

FALL 2016 • COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

The Director's Cut

Hello from Boulder! A lot has happened in your PLC community here on campus since the last newsletter. I want to share just a sample of some of the new developments.

We have a new website!

After years of operating our own independent website, we finally partnered with CU's Office of Information Technology to build a new site from the bottom-up. The site's target audiences are current students, prospective students, and alumni. There are profiles on each current student and we've posted the class lists back to 1972. Our new website is: www.colorado.edu/plc. Don't forget our other web presences with the PLC group on LinkedIn and Facebook.

We have a new instructor!

I am pleased to announce the addition of Dr. JulieMarie Shepherd Macklin to our team as PLC's full-time instructor. She brings a wealth of experience as a scholar and practitioner of leadership both professionally and personally. Dr. Shepherd Macklin is certainly no stranger to the PLC community. She's a PLC alumna who was active on student staff, and has been very involved with PLC's growing alumni club. She will teach Ethical Leadership and Multi-level Issues in Leadership in the fall, and Community Issues in Leadership and Global Issues in Leadership in the spring. Dr. Angela Thieman Dino and Senior Instructor Gordon Riggle will continue to be in our teaching rotation, as well.

We have new alumni-sponsored scholarships!

Brian Watson (PLC 1989) has established the Brian Watson Foundation Scholars Enrichment Fund, which provides two students with \$1000

scholarships each academic year and has the option to award up to three additional students. The scholarship is targeted at students who have overcome considerable challenges on their journey to CU, and now want to combine their leadership skills with their entrepreneurial spirit. The first scholarships were awarded Fall 2016.

Tim Pestotnik (PLC 1979) is supporting our students with his Tim Pestotnik PLC Scholarship Fund that provides two \$2,500 scholarships each semester. This scholarship is a fulfillment of the promise Tim made to a donor when he was a scholar. Tim promised to 'pay it forward' when he was able. We were so happy Tim made good on his promise and we were even happier to select the first two awardees in Spring 2016.

We have PLC Torchbearers!

We've created a recognition program for those who support PLC with gifts of \$25,000 or more to one of our endowment funds whether all at once or with a formal multi-year commitment. We're designating these donors as Torchbearers after being inspired by PLC's original logo. I am happy to report that we already have four Torchbearers: Dr. Reginald Valdez (PLC 1982); Scott Whitley (past PLC Board Chair); Dr. Joseph Pesce (PLC 1984); and, Sarah Schupp (PLC 2000).



Senior Ryan Friedman - Student Staff



Scott Sloan and Kerry Masock - Day of Service, City Park



Dr. Shepherd Macklin speaks at orientation

We have a great program!

As I enter my fourth year with PLC, I can't help but think how incredibly fortunate I am to have been welcomed into such an amazing community of students, alumni, and supporters.

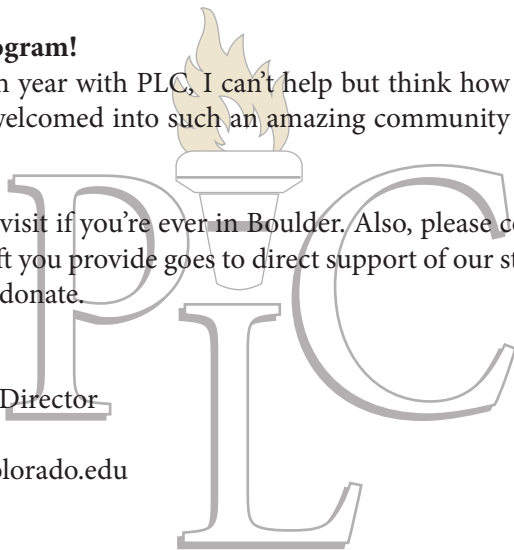
Please stop by for a visit if you're ever in Boulder. Also, please consider PLC in your giving plans. Any gift you provide goes to direct support of our students. Our website has links on how to donate.

Thank you!

Steve Dinauer, PLC Director

303-492-7181

stephen.dinauer@colorado.edu



Teju Ravilochan speaking at Parents Lecture 2016

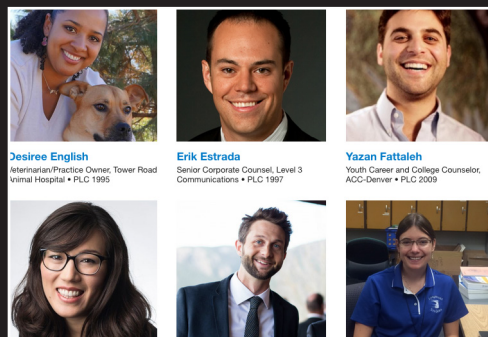
PLC Alumni Club Update



Alumni Lecture - Governor's Mansion



Alumni Day of Service 2016 - City Park



Mentor Profiles on the PLC website

The PLC Alumni Club is now in its third year of existence and continues to gain steam. The Alumni Club is organized under the CU Boulder Alumni Association, and is currently headed up by Kerry Masock (PLC 2007) and Cait McHugh (PLC 2004). All PLC alumni are automatically members. The purpose of the Alumni Club is to continue to develop and support extraordinary leaders through an active alumni network. We encourage PLC alumni to support the club and each other through their active personal involvement in the club and its activities, events, and initiatives, and through their personal support of the club and PLC through investment of time, energy, or money.

Thanks to the hard work of a group of about 20 PLC alumni, the Alumni Club put on the following engaging and entertaining events over the past year:

- During Back to Boulder / Homecoming Weekend, the Alumni Club hosted a Friday afternoon open house at the PLC Office, a Friday happy hour at the St. Julien Hotel, and a Saturday pre-game tailgate in Ralphie's Corral in conjunction with the University of Colorado Alumni Club.
- In November, nearly 50 PLC alumni gathered at the Denver Press Club for the Alumni Club's annual meeting.
- On March 10, 2016, the Alumni Club organized a nation-wide, simultaneous PLC happy hour attended by PLC alumni across the country. Cities as big as New York and as small as Durham, NC were represented. Please contact Kerry or Cait if you are interested in hosting in your city next year!
- In late April, the Alumni Club presented its Third Annual PLC Alumni Lecture at the Governor's residence at the Boettcher Mansion in Denver. Nearly 70 PLC alumni came together for a pleasant reception and an engaging conversation with community leaders on the topic of international refugees in Colorado.
- In late August, the PLC Alumni Club did their first annual Day of Service in City Park in Denver.
- The PLC alumni are now highlighted on the new PLC website, especially on the Mentor Profiles page. To date, forty alumni have entered their profiles on the site and made themselves available to connect with current PLC students.

The Alumni Club has focused on obtaining and maintaining up to date contact information, creating new and innovative forms of engagement opportunities, and being a support network for PLC alumni everywhere. The planning meetings for all

Alumni Spotlights

of our engagement opportunities are as fun as the main events, and all alumni are welcome to attend. Although all PLC alumni are automatically members, your email is not automatically included in our system. Please contact Kerry or Cait: kerry.mascok@colorado.edu or Cait.c.mchugh@gmail.com to get on our email list.

Save the Dates!

December 4: Alumni Annual Meeting - Denver Press Club

February 8: Networking Night at Boulder Marriott

March 9 & 10: PLC Selection Interviews & Alumni Happy Hour

April 8: 3rd Annual PLC Summit - Fiske Planetarium

April/May: Alumni Spring Lecture (Denver location TBD)

Alumni Mentors

We are excited to announce our new mentor program that seeks to create an inclusive and supportive PLC community by connecting current students to professional alumni mentors. The program is a great platform for PLC alumni to re-engage and contribute to the development of the next generation of leaders. Mentors will serve as a guide and resource to current students by sharing life experiences, career advice, networking tips and more. Students will reach out to mentors listed on our new website in order to initiate an organic relationship. Interested alumni who would like to make themselves available to mentor can register their profile on PLC's website.



New professional mentor, Marisa Beahm Klein, is a 2003 PLC alumna and Writer/Editor at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in D.C. Since signing up as a mentor she has been able to connect with current PLC junior, Amanda Cary, who is spending the semester in Washington D.C. in the CU in DC academic and internship program.

Beahm Klein's

profile highlights her current position, past professional experience, and expertise in the areas of arts, culture, journalism, marketing and travel. She also has shared some advice on her page about pursuing a career in the arts management industry.

Mentors can be located anywhere. Connections with current students are easily made through email, LinkedIn, Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, phone and the nearly forgotten art of letter writing. Our hope is that matches can be developed and beneficial for all participants. Please see our website for profiles and contact information.



Tyson's mother called me late one afternoon, panicked. Tyson had just been kicked out of school for the second time in two weeks. This time, he ran out of the classroom and, after being cornered in a school office, threw a chair. Tyson had experienced

multiple traumas, from allegations of parental neglect to foster care to living in temporary housing. His public school had no idea how to deal with him. So, more often than not, they resorted to school suspensions. Tyson was only five years old.



Robyn Bitner, Esq.

Law Clerk, The Honorable James C. Cacheris
PLC 2004

The highlight of my PLC career was the senior Capstone course, taught for the first time that year by Dr. Ty Tashiro (PLC 1991). The unique syllabus weaved together our nearly four years of PLC training, culminating in a competitive grant proposal meant to combine our knowledge of societal problems, leadership theory, and social action. The final assignment was to create a proposal for transformative change. To take the idea even further, we had the option of submitting our proposal to an organization that provided seed funding to get social ventures off the ground. Of course, it would be just like PLC to do something like this; the organization strived to push us outside our comfort zones.

PLC's Capstone course stands out in my memory because it represents the myriad ways in which being a PLC scholar changed the trajectory of my life and my career. It was an opportunity to strengthen my research skills, learning the value of meta-analyses, peer-reviewed journals, and impact factor ratings to understand social problems. It provided chances to practice public speaking, allowing me to get so comfortable in front of an audience that I would later select teaching and then lawyering for my career. The Capstone course also encouraged me to question my own beliefs, and to challenge others', so that I was constantly seeking more and better information to inform possible solutions. Finally, the course strengthened social ties between us PLCers as we persisted together to achieve lofty intellectual goals.

When I graduated from PLC in May 2008, I didn't put much thought at the time into how it had affected me, or how it might affect me. Instead, I hurried off to join Teach for America in New York City, where I taught kindergarten and first grade in

a charter school in the South Bronx. I first encountered students like Tyson there. I also found myself realizing that PLC had given me an unwavering belief in the critical importance of the work that I did every day.

Now, eight years after graduation, I find myself back in New York City, providing free legal representation to students living in temporary housing. In an interesting twist, I secured my current position as a Skadden Fellow at Advocates for Children of New York through a competitive grant proposal process. I pitched the idea that preschoolers in temporary housing could and should have better access to high-quality early childhood programs because I believed in the power of education to create transformative change in these students' lives.

By now, I've represented countless Tysons, whose long-term exposure to toxic stress means exhibiting challenging behaviors, like running and throwing chairs. My fellowship has allowed me to utilize the skills I first gained in PLC—comprehending vast literatures, brainstorming solutions, educating and persuading others, and building relationships—to convince school staff to respond differently to students like him. Rather than school suspensions, we talk about appropriate behavioral supports, such as safety plans and 1:1 aides. Rather than physical restraints and 911 calls, we talk about recognizing the signs of fight-or-flight in a child and utilizing de-escalation techniques.

The skills I learned as a PLCer make me a better lawyer today. They've allowed me to more effectively fight to keep students like Tyson in the classroom, where he belongs.

Tyson's mom stopped by my office last week. She wanted me to know that, after I helped transfer him to a school that could better meet his needs, Tyson had made it onto the honor roll. It was his first time ever.

Ryan Van Duzer
Travel Journalist
PLC 1998

For me, PLC instilled a wonder of the world and the importance of being an involved global citizen. I had traveled very little before my time at CU, but since graduating, I have lead a very uncommon life. Some may call it living the dream.

Instead of getting directly into the “real world” after getting my degree in broadcast journalism, I chose to join the Peace Corps and work with at-risk youth in Honduras.



These two challenging, yet incredibly rewarding years in an impoverished, small, Honduran village inspired a life of adventure and humanitarian work. My life of nearly continuous adventures soon started when I decided to cash in my plane ticket home from the Peace Corps, and instead, ride my bicycle 4,000 miles back to Boulder (much to the chagrin of my mother). I wrote about my travels for the Daily Camera and made a short documentary that played on the Travel Channel.

Since that first big adventure, I have made a career out of creating content aimed at inspiring people to get off their couches and enjoy this beautiful planet. I have survived the jungles of Venezuela on the Discovery Channel, trekked the Himalayas for National Geographic, and ridden my bicycle across the USA multiple times (raising money for Community Cycles), both west-to-east and north-to-south. I pride myself on the fact that I have never owned a car and am a very passionate bicycle advocate.

I love motivating high school students with tales of adventure and perseverance and I have spoken to PLCers at their first year orientation and the PLC Summit. I am committed to creating video content that is educational and entertaining. Currently, I am putting all my energy into my YouTube channel- follow my adventures at: <http://tinyurl.com/jex7qkn>(www.youtube.com/duzertv).

Maureen Ediger
Executive Director - Phamaly Theater Company
PLC 1992

Maureen Johnson Ediger currently serves as the Executive Director of Phamaly Theatre Company. Her organization produces professional scale plays and musicals around the Denver Metro region, with a cast of performers with disabilities across the spectrum. When she joined the PLC she was anxious and excited to see what would come of it. Below is an account from Maureen about her PLC journey and what it has meant to her career.

I was a kid from a small school, heading to Boulder where there were nearly as many people in my residence hall as the population of Ouray, my hometown. As a first generation college attendee in my family, I was more than a bit daunted by the prospect of finding a place to land that would nurture what, up until my 18th year, had been a seemingly highly accomplished life. I arrived in Boulder and in the PLC class of 1992 with big aspirations. To find myself surrounded by the caliber of my classmates was a gift. I am positive I would not be the person, the professional, the mom, the public servant, the leader that I am now without my participation in PLC.

There is a very strong connection between where I am now and the experiences from PLC. One of my most impactful memories was attending a play at Su Teatro with a group of 10 other first year PLCers. The production was about the Ludlow mine massacre and was mostly in Spanish. I was in awe that this powerful story of loss, power and grief could be told on a tiny stage in an inner city Denver neighborhood. Another time, a group of us headed to Denver in one of those infamous white vans to see a play about Mahalia Jackson at the Eulipions Theater in Denver's Five Points neighborhood. Another emotional, passionate performance inspired me to love theatre and support it as an art form to tell stories that need an audience to hear the message.

As most PLC alumni will attest, the walk-about was pivotal. I met with Adam Goodman and his rolodex in the fall of 1993 and told him I wanted to "work in politics". I was introduced to a former trustee, Lynn Ellins, who also was a former regent and a current campaign manager. I was introduced to the world of caucusing, polling, signature gathering, speech writing, vote counting, hand shaking, deal making and traveling around this grand state of ours hitting the campaign trail. I knew "just enough" about politics at the PLC parents' weekend lecture the next fall to boldly declare at a debate for the board of regents' candidates that if these were the qualified candidates, then I could and should certainly run myself. There is no question that without PLC I would never have been exposed to the political process, made the vast network across Colorado, or



been bold enough to declare such an audacious statement. In 1996, supported by many of my classmates and students (because now I had been a CA!) I ran for and won an at-large seat on the board of regents.

My career has wound its way around having a family, through volunteer service on the board of regents, through political consulting, returning to school to get a MPA, advocacy and public relations work at CU Denver to where I am now – my dream job! I am currently the executive director of Phamaly Theatre Company. My networking skills, political talent, love for the theatre and putting stories on stages, and my advocacy for people living with disability have been melded into my current position. Phamaly Theatre Company has a mission to inspire people to re-inspire disability through professional theatre. We tell stories that start dialogues and change the way people think! I am so very lucky!

There's a reason for the nostalgia and strong emotional connections to both the program and our classmates. What an incredible opportunity we all had to spend our undergraduate years when you're encouraged to be bold and supported in your curiosity to have weekly recitations dedicated to asking, listening, pushing, pulling, changing and solidifying. There is one item, however, that could use some more conversation.

Where is the lecture that we are warned that the rest of the world hasn't been through PLC? I'm mostly joking (I am a solid Gen X'er after all) but it is true. PLC gives you the sense that everyone cares, thinks about questions of morality and ethics, practices highly effective habits, engages in active listening, and wants to be a part of the public good. If only we could stay in the PLC bubble! Alas, the world needs us. (Again, a bit of that Gen X sarcasm shining through.)

If my lessons from PLC could be boiled down to one statement, it would be "assume good intent." Assume that the rest of the world is also trying to make it a better place and find those common interests to explore relationships to be part of it together.

Do you want your PLC experience and your work now to be featured in the next PLC Community Newsletter? Do you want to nominate or suggest one of your PLC alumni peers for a spotlight feature? If so, please email Silas Binkley at silas.binkley@colorado.edu.

Student Spotlights

Henock Solomon Finance - PLC 2015



I have always had a passion and curiosity for learning about international economic stability and political change. Having two parents who lived in Ethiopia during a violent political campaign forced me to question why some countries' governments are more

stable and promising than others. Following my passion and interest on this subject has led me to major in finance and minor in economics. Before entering law school, understanding how the world financially operates will allow me to fully comprehend how law and legislation statistically impact our world. While international relations change relative to commerce, I believe that having concrete financial stability may be the most essential step in creating a successful future.

The summer after graduating from high school, I was fortunate to intern for Congressman Coffman in his district office. Through serving his constituents, this internship opened my eyes to the local issues that arise in the veteran and immigrant communities. Communicating information to embassies initially appeared as a mundane task, but in fact, it was of vital importance to the constituent's case to which I was assigned. I was able to see the change and impact that I made for people who were in need. Working with representatives and international business consultants instilled in me an even greater inspiration and ambition to follow my passions.

Presidents Leadership Class has a fundamental role in developing my aspirations into a reality. Taking the Ethical Leadership course improved my public speaking and critical thinking abilities tremendously. Studying leadership styles and skills in depth allowed me to understand what kind of leader I choose to be and why. Not only have I improved as a professional student through PLC, but having a community of supportive and success-driven peers constantly encourages me to push and conquer challenges.

In addition to my educational career, the most important lesson that PLC has taught me is the meaning of community.



The networking resources that have been available through PLC inspires me to one day give back and provide opportunities to this program, the same way opportunities have been opened to me. I believe that I will succeed and accomplish my goals because PLC believed in me first.

Sarah LaFasto Mechanical Engineering - PLC 2012



The culture of PLC has always been, for me, a cohort of challenge-accepting individuals dipped in vastly different life experiences. This culture enabled a diversity of discussion and thought, challenging us to think differently by removing ourselves from our own lenses. To be surrounded by this community has pushed me to develop critical thinking skills to not only examine the world around me, but also myself. PLC has helped me to constantly reinvent my path by opening my eyes to the journey.

I have always believed that if you follow what you love, you will always end up exactly where you are meant to be. I strive to free myself from creative oppression and have a flair for the linguistically dramatic. I am a noted champion napper and maintain my sanity through the aggressive art of Muay Thai countered by the delicate avenue of creative writing. You will always find me being exactly myself and looking for the beauty in the unbeaten path. In fact, I haven't taken the path I thought I would when I entered CU Boulder and PLC. But I have embraced the detour and learned where I truly fit academically and professionally. I started my college career in Neuroscience and Creative Writing and, when I realized I wasn't satisfied, made a quantum leap into Mechanical Engineering. I find myself reaffirming this decision every day. After beginning my engineering trajectory I began to notice a substantial gap in the engineering curriculum. I took it upon myself to found Engineers Speak, an organization aimed at bridging the gap between the technical language of engineering and interpersonal communication more prevalent in Arts & Sciences. Here and for the first time ever, I find myself exactly where I belong.

This decision came with no small amount of courage and I can't help but relate it to rugs. I distinctly remember a lecture from freshman seminar, where we were told that high school education was learning to stand on top of a beautiful rug and college education was ripping the rug away and examining the floor underneath. What happens when you get down to the floor is amazing- you become aware of your intellectual starvation and empower yourself to learn not only the 'what,' but also the 'why.' PLC is a group of individuals who are challenged to rip up the rug. Not only do we spend four years examining what we find underneath, we take it upon ourselves to start building a new floor.



ALWC

Last summer PLC partnered with the CU Outdoor Program (CUOP) to successfully relaunch the Applied Leadership Wilderness Course (ALWC). The course, which is offered exclusively to PLC'ers and led by PLC upperclassmen, emphasizes the concepts of experiential learning and situational leadership in conjunction with a dynamic, often unfamiliar environments to develop and hone students' individual styles of leadership and communication. The course consisted of a three-day intensive classroom component, followed by a seven-day backpacking section in Rocky Mountain National Park.

In the classroom, students explored overarching concepts including the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) 4-7-1 model of leadership, situational leadership theory, experiential learning, and the tenets of successful feedback and conflict management through a combination of lecture, practical exercises, and directed debriefing. The seven-day wilderness section of the course centered around putting leadership abilities to the test. Each student had the opportunity to lead their group of five students through the day, facilitating campsite setup and takedown, route finding, safe and timely travel - putting into active practice the hard skills learned previously. Additionally, each leader of the day had to lead their group through one of a variety of leadership scenarios, enabling individual advancement of their own style, as well as situational integration and adaptation of new approaches. A culminating event, intended to facilitate meaningful reflection and individual improvement, comprised of a one-day stationary solo experience, where students were isolated from one another with minimal gear for the course of one day to reflect on specific questions related to their personal and professional development.

At the conclusion of the course the students had covered over 30 miles of diverse terrain on the Continental Divide Trail; they encountered moose, elk, marmots, and a host of other wildlife; and they worked together to persevere through personal, environmental, and group challenges. Most importantly, the students walked away with a variety of new leadership tools and a greater understanding of themselves.

"I came away from ALWC with a clearer perception of failure to reach a goal. Before I tended to view failure as an absolute end that is to be avoided at all costs. Now, however, I view failure more as a temporary obstacle, requiring adaptation to your strategy. Overall, the ALWC has improved my understanding of leadership and my strategy for carrying it out."

- Isaiah Koolstra (PLC 2015)

For information contact silas.binkley@colorado.edu



PLC 2016



Jesus Banuelos-Rivera - South Park High School
Katherine Beaudry - Erie Middle-High School
Nathanael Bennett - Air Academy High School
Paris Buedel - Carrboro High School
Angelina Chavez - Arapahoe High School
Fernando Chavez Arroyo - Adams City High School
Natasha Clarke - Air Academy High School
Kristopher Dais - Colorado Connections Academy
Elizabeth De Wetter - Aspen High School
Simon Egerton - Vandergrift High School
Dane Fisher - Poudre High School
Christopher Galena - Batavia High School
Alyxandra Golden - Arapahoe High School
Wyatt Guernsey - Conifer High School
Camilla Hallin - Grandview High School
Analise Iwanski - Rocky Mountain High School
Sean Jones - William J Palmer High School
Shruti Kaul - Cherry Creek High School
Lauren Kercheval - Grandview High School
Photios Kyriazi - Regis Jesuit High School
Nicholas Maddalone - Arapahoe High School
David Martin - Air Academy High School
Alexandra Martin - Hudson High School
Carter Mateer - D'Evelyn Jr-Sr High School

Mara McLaughlin - Woodrow Wilson High School
Maureen McNamara - George Washington High School
Gregory Miller - Peak to Peak Charter
Kathryn Milliet - Durango Academy
John Moir - Palisade Senior High School
Alice Mueller - Mountain View High School
Sarah Olson - Mountain Vista High School
Lina Osmundson - Horizon High School
Leilani Osmundson - Horizon High School
Natasha Ouellette - Niwot High School
Zayna Pieper - The Classical Academy
Paula Pulido - Highlands Ranch High School
Elsa Roeber - Rocky Mountain High School
Remington Ruyle - East High School
Austin Scheck - Arvada West High School
Charles Schmidt - East High School
Dominique Shells - Valor Christian High School
Sarah Shortall - Arapahoe High School
Faiza Sid-Ahmed - Denver School of Science & Tech
Suyog Soti - Fairview High School
Robert Thompson - Roaring Fork High School
Kevin Vick - Littleton High School
Alexis Wall - Rangeview High School
Kate Wexler - South High School
Hannah Wineman - New Trier High School