

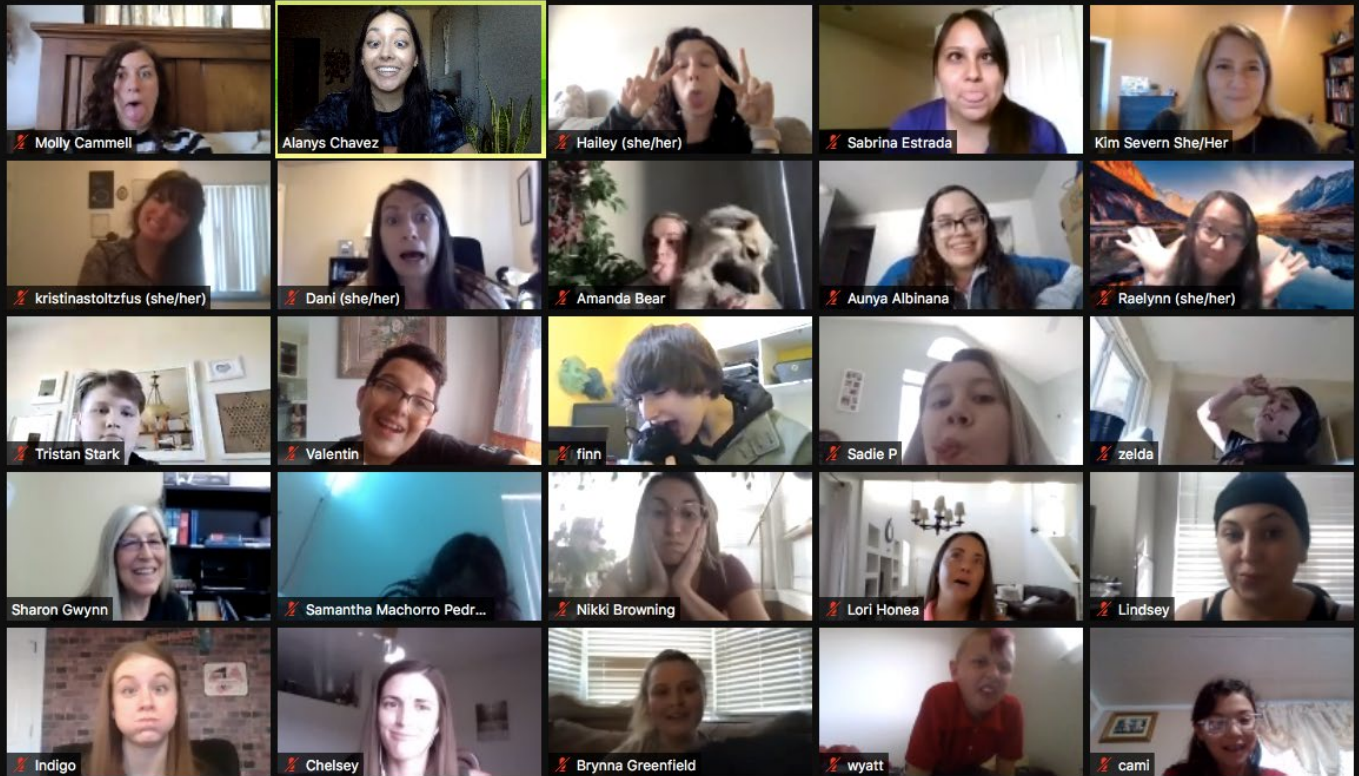
The Mentor

**CAMPUS
CONNECTIONS**

UCCS

College of Education

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS



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What is Campus Connections?

Campus Connections is a wellness and resiliency-oriented service-learning program that pairs UCCS students and youth from the community in mentor-mentee relationships. Youth are referred through our El Paso County community partners and are matched with a UCCS student who provides one-on-one therapeutic mentoring throughout the semester.

Mentors spend four hours once a week with their mentee providing academic support, career planning, and promoting positive social skill development.

UCCS mentors support youth in building goals while providing a supportive environment to help them achieve those goals. Campus Connections takes place on UCCS's campus, giving participants exposure to university life and the potential to explore the possibilities of lifelong learning.

Director's Dispatch



Dear Campus Connections and Community Stakeholders,

The spring of 2021 has offered us numerous opportunities to innovate and adapt our Campus Connections activities to life in the virtual world. Programming was facilitated using the Zoom teleconference platform, with youth and undergraduate student mentors cultivating connection in new and innovative ways.

Mentors and youth used synchronous online multiplayer game applications to engage their mentee in virtual board games, using these interactions to build relationships and essential social skills. During one-on-one time in their Zoom breakout rooms, mentors utilized reflective listening skills to explore youths' academic goals, teach academic success skills, and provide a safe/brave space for youth to share their thoughts and feelings. This safe and brave space was further cultivated during check-ins with our Campus Connections masters-level counselors in training.

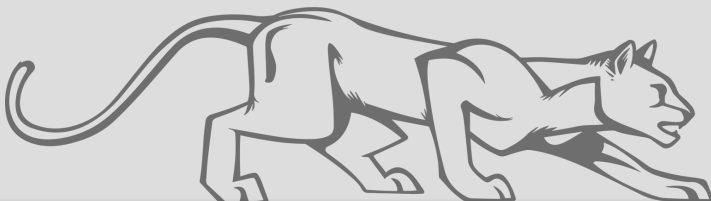
This spring semester, we had the privilege of supporting the UCCS Cybersecurity Initiative through the implementation of youth-focused Digital Citizenship curriculum with our mentees. Campus Connections received funds from the Cybersecurity Faculty Seed Grant to support the development and facilitation of our new Digital Citizenship curriculum. As part of this project, each youth mentee participated in activities exploring digital wellness, digital accessibility, and securing one's information online. Youth also considered how and where their personal information or "digital footprint" lives in the online environment.

Each semester offers new opportunities for personal and professional growth for our Campus Connections counselors, and mentors, and this spring semester has been no exception! We are excited to have the opportunity to continue to learn new ways to cultivate connection in the virtual world and support our youth mentees as they too learn to navigate life in online settings.

On behalf of the entire team at Campus Connections and the Department of Counseling and Human Services, I would like to thank all of you for your continued support of this innovative program.

Sincerely,

Cortny Stark PhD LPC LAC CRC, Assistant Professor, Co-Director for UCCS Campus Connections



UCCS

Department of Counseling
& Human Services

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **COLORADO SPRINGS**

Campus Connections Staff & Mentors

	Staff	Mentors	Major
Joe Wehrman	Co-Director	Aunya Albinana	Psychology
Diane Stutey	Co-Director	Annika Anderson	Psychology, minor in Human Services
Kim Severn	Instructor/Co-Director	Nicole Browning	Human Services
Cortny Stark	Co-Director Research & Grants	Maisie Casa	Inclusive Elementary Education
Molly Cammell	Program Manager	Krista Davis	Business Management
Hailey Gloden	Graduate Assistant	Danielle Dickey	Human Services
Alanys Chavez	Graduate Assistant	Indigo Enger	Elementary Education
Beth Rockwell	Graduate Assistant	Angelina Fackelman	Human Services
Sabrina Estrada	Graduate Assistant	Ethan Gage	Athletic Training
Amanda Bear	Graduate Assistant	Kilie Godec	Psychology, minor in Human Services
Sharon Gwynn	Graduate Assistant	Brynna Greenfield	Psychology, minor in Human Services
Chelsey Soulligny	Graduate Assistant	Huma Habib	Human Services
Raelynn Goodwin	Counseling Intern	Nicole Hansen	Psychology, minor in Human Services
Kristina Stoltzfus	Counseling Intern	Ivy Phinn	Psychology, minor in Human Services
Emma Bair	Counseling Intern	Sadie Porter	Human Services
Lori Honea	Counseling Intern	Gwen Rosenkrantz	Human Services
		Matthew Schramm	Human Services
		Lindsey Thomas	Psychology, minor in Human Services

From the Graduate Student Perspective

Hailey Gloden

Being a part of Campus Connections for five semesters flew by. I started during the Fall 2019 semester as a mentor. At the time, the program was in-person, which allowed us to run various meaningful activities every week for the youth. Every week was a new experience because I never knew what the mentees would bring to the table, other than their excitement. It was a joy to work with the youth and other mentors each week.

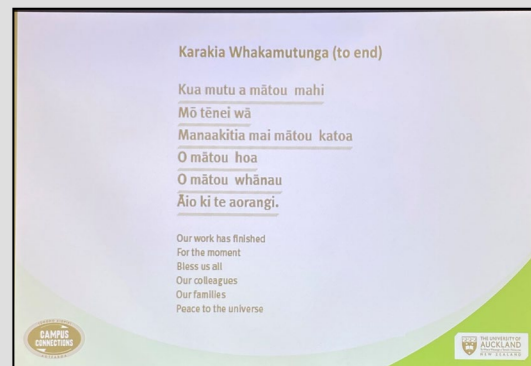
Fast forward to the Spring 2020 semester; I now served as a Graduate Assistant (GA) for the program. From this lens, I got to see how much work goes into one night of programming and found a whole new level of respect for Campus Connections staff. Come March, we went virtual seemingly overnight. I still remember the day the four GAs found out D11 schools were closing, and we had to call families to let them know Campus Connections was on hold until we could figure out how to do it all online. We managed to wrangle it all together and had a really successful online version of the program. Mentors pulled together, and most mentees still showed up every week. It was amazing to see how dedicated the mentees and mentors were to the relationships they started in person.

Fast forward again to Spring 2021, we have successfully run the program online three times!! Working with the program online while simultaneously finishing up my schooling online was exhausting, but it really exemplified what it means to find new ways to make things work—to adapt at the drop of a hat. I am incredibly thankful for the time I have spent with Campus Connections. As a brand-new school counselor, this program really helped prepare me to have conversations with parents and youth and provide information in a meaningful way. I learned a lot about online programming that will undoubtedly assist me in my professional career. Despite the challenges of the last few semesters, I would do it all over again if I could. Campus Connections is a phenomenal program with staff who are highly dedicated to the success of our youth.

Chelsey Souligny

My favorite part of Campus Connections was getting to know our family group and connecting with the kids individually. I was impressed with the undergraduate mentors and their ability to engage the youth and how much they genuinely cared. As a Graduate Assistant, I helped facilitate Digital Citizenship curriculum to the mentees. Living in a digital world and especially during COVID, it is important to teach youth how to interact with technology in healthy, safe ways. It was challenging teaching this curriculum online but gave me compassion for all the teachers that have been doing this for over a year. Professor Severn does an amazing job facilitating the program despite being virtual. There is a lot of support with graduate students involved as counselors available to the youth or graduate assistants helping with the program. I can only imagine that Campus Connection is even more impactful when in person.

CC Goes International



Pictures (clockwise from left): Campus Connections signage on campus, Dr. Kelsey Deane, Molly Cammell and Dr. Pat Bullen, the closing Karakia, an art wall on campus



By: Molly Cammell, Campus Connections Program Manager, UCCS

I had the distinct pleasure of visiting the Campus Connections- Aotearoa program at the University of Auckland in New Zealand this May. University of Auckland is one of 4 universities who have licensed Campus Connections from Colorado State University, who originally created the program about 10 years ago. The other universities include University of Northern Colorado, Colorado State University-Pueblo and, of course, University of Colorado Colorado Springs.

I started the day by meeting the team, Kiri Wilder the Case Manager and Dr. Kelsey Deane, one of the Directors at 7:45am. Dr. Pat Bullen, the other Director, joined us later. Dr. Deane and Dr. Bullen are responsible for bringing the program to the University of Auckland. They are currently in their 5th term running the program.

I was then introduced to the class of post-graduate students who were studying counseling and sat in on a lecture on the topic of Adaptive Behaviors taught by Dr. Deane. The post-graduate students were a mix of traditional and non-traditional students. We were then joined by the group of undergraduate mentors who enjoyed a lecture on Trauma-Informed Care and Sensory Modulation. Topics around SAGE mentoring and motivational interviewing were also discussed.

The mentees showed up around 10am. They were all from an Alternative Education program in the Auckland area. This means they have been expelled or suspended from mainstream schooling but are legally required to attend some sort of educational program until they are 16.

They engaged in walk-and-talk with their mentors, played games in the Whanau (family) groups, ate lunch provided by Pita Pit, and participated in pro-social activities to wrap-up. This week's activities were basketball, Build a Bridge and Egg Drop.

Overall, the program is run very similarly to the program we run at UCCS. However, the most striking and exciting difference was the incorporation of the Māori culture throughout the day. The Māori are the native people of New Zealand.

At the beginning of the program, a staff member led a Karakia in Te Reo (Māori language). This is a type of prayer that sets the tone for the day and is considered to be more spiritual than religious. It is all about honoring the whenua (land) of New Zealand. A Karakia was also said before lunch and at the end of the day.

The day wrapped up with a debrief with the mentors. This is an opportunity for the mentors to discuss any struggles they may have had with their mentees and get some advice from the staff and their peers.

Mentor Recruitment

We are
always
looking for
excellent
mentors!



Did you know?

Becoming a Campus Connections Mentor is a great way to:

- Build your resume
- Get hands-on experience
- Give back to the community
- Build leadership skills

There are leadership opportunities built in!

Campus Connections is a 3-credit course (COUN4950) that can be taken multiple times! There are more leadership opportunities offered with each time you take the class:

- **First Semester:**
Mentor
 - **Second Semester:**
Mentor Coach
 - **Third Semester:**
Lead Mentor Coach

Faculty:

Partner with us in recruiting mentors for Campus Connections! If you are interested in having someone from our staff come and speak to your class about the program, please contact us at mcammell@uccs.edu.

News & Events

A Look Ahead

Campus Connections (CC) is excited to announce the beginning of a new ethics initiative made possible by the generous support of the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative (DFEI)! The development phase of this project will occur during the summer and fall of 2021, with the new ethics curriculum implemented in spring of 2022. The ethics initiative will include the adaptation and implementation of 5-10 of the DFEI Leadership, Attitude, Performance (LAP) lessons with our spring 2022 cohort of youth mentees.

During the summer and fall of 2021, 3 graduate student ethics ambassadors will work with the project coordinator to adapt selected LAP activities to 45 minute experiential activities for middle school age youth. These activities will be printed in our new CC "Finding your ethical compass" workbook. This workbook includes the instructions for LAP activities, as well as the "Tough Decisions Log" that asks youth mentees to consider experiences where they needed to use their ethical decision-making skills.

We are excited to have the opportunity to share the DFEI ethical principles with our CC mentors and mentees, and hope to continue to share the DFEI LAP curriculum with future cohorts of CC participants!

~Cortny Stark PhD LPC LAC CRC

Tell your students

about Campus Connections!
The program runs in the Fall and the Spring. We are always looking for students to act as mentors to our youth participants! Applications at uccs.edu/campusconnections

Coming Up:

Spring 2021 Virtual Graduation

May 6, 2021 5:30pm

Fall 2021 Mentor Applications

Still accepting applications for the fall! Contact Molly:
mcammell@uccs.edu

Do you have unwanted arts/crafts supplies?
Donate them to Campus Connections!

Columbine 3010

Campus Connections Board Members: Dean Valerie Martin Conley, Cory Notestine, Valerie Scates, Sarah Clapham, Dr. Kristen Myers, Dr. Joseph Wehrman, Dr. Diane Stutey, Kim Severn, Molly Cammell, Kodi Enkler, Melanie Folkerts

Support Campus Connections! Make a donation today!

<https://giving.cu.edu/fund/campus-connections-gift-fund>

Q&A with Campus Connections mentor Alberto Castillo

February 24, 2021 Crayton Daniel



Alberto Castillo has lived a life full of lessons. Now, he's learning how to share them with other students.

Castillo is a veteran of the U.S. Army and a student in the College of Education. He's an aspiring trauma and addiction counselor with dreams of working with the military and veterans population. While his classes are preparing him for his career as a counselor, he's learning life skills as a mentor in the Campus Connections program.

Castillo shares what it's like to be a Campus Connections mentor and how it has made an impact on his and his mentee's life.

What is the importance of the Campus Connections program?

The importance of Campus Connections is for these mentees to have one-on-one mentoring time with students here at UCCS. If these youths are having issues with school, personal life, or whatever it may be. They can talk with their mentor and learn

new coping techniques or new techniques on how to overcome a situation that they may be facing. This is also a great time for these students to get caught up on homework if that is what they are wanting to do with their one-on-one time. These students get to come to a place where they can be who they are 100%.



“It was rewarding to be able to be there for him when he needed guidance.”

Photo: Alberto Castillo during one of his four tours in the middle east. | Quote: *“It was rewarding to be able to be there for him when he needed guidance.” -Alberto Castillo*

Why is being a Campus Connections mentor important to you?

Being a Campus Connections mentor is very important to me because of the knowledge that I gained and also the impact that I had in my mentee's life. I would have to say that my mentee made an even bigger impact on my life. I got to help guide my mentee on a path to success. I noticed that he would come to me for things that I struggled with at that age, it was rewarding to be able to be there for him when he needed guidance.

How has being a mentor made an impact on your school/work life?

Being a mentor has impacted my school and work-life by not taking anything for granted. I became a more helpful person overall. I learned so much while in this program, things that I can take with me in my everyday life. I am more understanding of people and I have more patience with people.



"This was the moment that I knew that this was going to be a great fit."

Photo: Alberto Castillo with his two daughters. | Quote: *"This was the moment that I knew that this was going to be a great fit."* -Alberto Castillo

Do you have a favorite memory or story you would like to share?

It was our first day and everyone was a bit nervous to meet each other. When I met up with my mentee we started talking. We hit it off right away and everything just clicked. There was so much that we had in common. My mentee was one of the older youths, so he was one of the "cool kids". His whole attitude would change once we got back around the group. He would shut down and not talk much, he would look at the floor and not engage. Towards the end of the evening, my mentee had opened up completely. He was joking around and participating in all the activities. This was the moment that I knew that this was going to be a great fit and a great semester for him. I was so excited to start the program with my mentee.

What can people expect when they become a Campus Connections mentor?

People can expect to have a life-long memory of being a mentor to these youths. They will leave this course with knowledge that they can use in their own lives and help others around them. I know first-hand that signing up for Campus Connections can be intimidating, but please know that the leadership in this course will always be there for you. There was never a time when I felt stuck or alone in this mentorship. I honestly felt like I had a family behind me, and I cannot wait to go back and participate in this program again. Also, if I could give any advice to new mentors. I would say have an open mind and just listen to what your mentee is saying. These wonderful mentees

have so much to say and they look forward to Campus Connections every week. Most of all HAVE FUN!

Campus Connections is currently looking for mentors for the Fall 2021 semester. All majors are welcome to apply before the March 19 deadline. To learn more about this unique program and how to apply, visit their [website](#).

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Fall 2020 Outcomes



Mentee Information

57%
Female

43%
Male

50% Caucasian
29% Black/African American
21% Multi-racial
7% Asian
7% Pacific Islander
4% Hispanic

*Multi-racial/ethnic participants were able to select more than one category making the total greater than 100%.

Between
11-14
 Years old



85%
 Of youth
participates in
Free and
Reduced Lunch

Participating Schools

- West
- Jack Swigert
- Sabin
- Mann
- Holmes
- Achieve Online



Mentor & Graduate Student Information

64%
Female

36%
Male

72% Caucasian
11% Hispanic
6% Multi-racial
6% Asian
6% Black/African American

*Multi-racial/ethnic participants were able to select more than one category making the total greater than 100%.

24
 Average
Age



3.3
 Average
GPA

Mentor Majors:

- 4 Human Services Majors
- Psychology, Computer Security, Communication, Finance/Business, Criminal Justice, Bio-Chemistry
- 1 School Counseling Graduate student

Counseling Intern Majors:

- 1 School counselor
- 2 Clinical Mental Health Counselors

Teen Group

Including:
 5 Females from Atlas
 Prep, District 2



Lead by:
 1 School Counseling
 Intern
 1 Licensed School
 Counselor



Fully Online
 for
 9 weeks

