

The Mentor

Spring 2022

**CAMPUS
CONNECTIONS**

UCCS University of Colorado
Colorado Springs

UCCS

College of Education
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **COLORADO SPRINGS**



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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 life long learning.

Director's Dispatch



Dear Campus Community and Community Stakeholders,

It was such a joy to be back on campus full time for Campus Connections. We had 17 mentors and 16 mentees join us for the entire semester long program. It was nice to be able to see each other's faces and to be in person. We enjoyed many fun activities planned by the Campus Connections graduate assistants and our wonderful mentors. We were even able to go rock climbing at the UCCS Wellness Center. It was also great to be back having dinner all together in Roaring Fork, the dining hall on campus.

This semester the mentees experienced leadership lessons that were developed through a grant from the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative. They learned about how to make tough decisions and how to problem solve and think critically when faced with difficult times. This grant helped to pay for our mentees and mentors to enjoy dinner together on campus. Our mentees even received Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative sweatshirts!

United Way was generous in supplying our mentees with some snacks this semester. They even sent us some food that could be taken home to families. Thank you, United Way!

We are so thankful for our partnership with School District 11, Inside Out, UCCS dining services, and our other community partners. We are always looking for ways to grow our knowledge and our program. We look forward to adding additional partners and opportunities for growth in the future.

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,

Kim Severn, MA, Co-Director and Instructor for UCCS Campus Connections and Advisory Board Member



Department of Counseling
& Human Services

Campus Connections Staff & Mentors

Staff

Mentors

Joe Wehrman Co-director

Michael Dilworth

Diane Stutey Co-director

Alex Dorland

Kim Severn Instructor/Co-director

Rachel Gardner

Cortny Stark Co-director/Research&Grants

Sarah Gardner

Molly Cammell Program Manager

Elizabeth Gukeisen

Sabrina Estrada Graduate Assistant/Mentor Coach

Abby Hart

Beth Rockwell Graduate Assistant/Mentor Coach

Meghan Kayser

Saffire Halverson Graduate Assistant/Mentor Coach

Max Milsap

Luke Slayback Digital Citizenship Graduate Assistant

Jade Notzon-Kidwell

Haley Christman Digital Citizenship Graduate Assistant

Camryn Palmer

Rudi Hanekamp Counseling Intern

Maisie Rice

Mika Ahlbrecht-Marion Counseling Intern

Danika Silerio

Amanda Bonnet Counseling Intern

Christina Torres

James Scott Counseling Intern

Chloe Valdez-Smith

Kristen Veretto

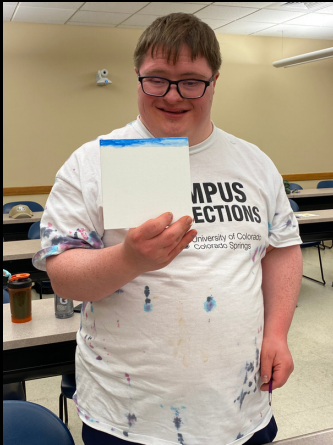
Megan Walsh

Rock Climbing!



This semester one of our amazing mentors set up some time slots at the UCCS Rec Center. The mentors and mentees had the opportunity to rock climb together during our activity time for two days. This allowed our mentors and mentees to bond and work as a team. The students loved it!

From The Mentor Perspective



**Michael
Dilworth**



Michael Dilworth is earning a certificate in higher education through our Office of Inclusive Services at UCCS. He was able to join the Campus Connections program this semester as a community mentor. Michael said that his favorite part of Campus Connections was getting to know the mentees. He loved how fun they were to be around and he enjoyed doing the activities with them. His favorite activity was building a tower with toothpicks and marshmallows. He also led an activity where he had everyone create masks. The mentors and mentees had an opportunity to be creative by coloring and painting face masks. He liked seeing all the mentees have fun.

Michael learned a lot a Campus Connections. He learned how to be nice to all the mentees and who they were as people. He learned a ton of content from the presentations in class and the readings assigned for homework. He enjoyed reading about how the mentees and mentors can work together as a team to get things accomplished. Lastly, Michael learned how to care for the mentees. He says that if any of his friends are thinking about Campus Connections, THEY SHOULD DO IT!!

Research Update

The spring of 2022 has offered us numerous opportunities to innovate and adapt our research to explore the many diverse experiences of our youth mentees, and student mentors.

This spring semester, we had the privilege of collaborating with 2 phenomenal Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative (DFEI) graduate student ethics ambassadors. These ambassadors adapted and implemented 6 of DFEI Leadership, Attitude, and Performance (LAP) lessons with our Campus Connections youth mentees, and undergraduate student mentors. Each week, youth considered the ethical implications of making “tough decisions”, and engaged in experiential activities focused on cultivating youths’ social and emotional wellness, and developing ethical skills and awareness. Campus Connections received funds from the DFEI to support youth activities, provide on-campus meals, and cold weather gear. At the end of the semester, undergraduate student mentors participated in qualitative interviews exploring their experience with programming, and ethical development.

Over the last year, we have received funding from the UCCS Cybersecurity Initiative to support our graduate assistants, and facilitating of programming. In spring and fall of 2021, Campus Connections facilitated weekly digital citizenship activities, highlighting digital wellness and resilience, the “digital footprint”, and safety in online environments. Youth participants completed learning assessments before and after each activity, and an outcomes survey at the conclusion of Campus Connections. The results from the Digital Citizenship curriculum and associated study were published in the The Chronicle of Mentoring & Coaching, December 2021 special issue. In addition to this manuscript, the results of the study were presented by Kim Severn and Dr. Cortny Stark at the University of New Mexico Mentorship Conference in October of 2021. This spring (January 2022), Dr. Stark and Dr. Fuselier-Tapia also published a book chapter regarding the research process, titled “University-based Therapeutic Youth Mentorship Program Quantitative Digital Citizenship Study: Adapting to the Online Environment”, available in SAGE Research Methods: Doing Research Online. Additional funding from the UCCS Cybersecurity Initiative is approved for the fall 2022 and spring 2023 to support student workers, Campus Connections staff, and continued digital citizenship activities and research.

Dr. Stutey and graduate assistant, Michelle Jaime, facilitated therapy dog research in the fall with Campus Connections youth mentees. Each week, youth were able to sign up for time to meet with a therapy dog, Lizzie, before going into their planned activities. After spending time with Lizzie, they are asked to complete a brief six question survey about how they felt. Almost all of the youth mentees shared feeling more calm, relaxed, and content after spending time with the therapy dog. The write up of results from this study is currently underway.

Looking forward, we are collaborating with Colorado State University’s (CSU) Campus Connections research team, and Dr. Rachel Lucas-Thompson from CSU’s Family Relationships and Development Laboratory. The focus of this collaboration is to explore the efficacy of a series of mindfulness interventions, which have shown promising efficacy with multiply marginalized youth.

Cortny Stark PhD LPC LAC CRC, Assistant Professor, Substance Use and Recovery Counseling Program Coordinator, Co-Director for UCCS Campus Connections, Department of Counseling and Human Services

Diane Stutey PhD LPC RPT-S NCC, Associate Professor and Department Chair, School Counseling Coordinator, Co-Director Campus Connections Therapeutic Youth Mentoring Program, Department of Counseling and Human Services

Mentor Recruitment!

**We are always
looking for
excellent
mentors!**



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

Did you know?

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!

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Colorado Springs

News & Events

Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative

This semester, Campus Connections (CC) participated in a new ethics initiative made possible by the generous support of the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative (DFEI)! The development of this project was completed during the summer and fall of 2021 and the new ethics curriculum was implemented in fall 2021. The ethics initiative included the adaption and implementation of 5-10 of the DFEI Leadership, Attitude, Performance (LAP) lessons with our fall 2021 cohort of youth mentees, During the summer and fall of 2021, 3 graduate student ethics ambassadors worked with the project coordinator to adapt selected LAP activities to 45 minute experiential activities for middle school age youth. These activities were printed in our new CC "Finding Your Ethical Compass" workbook. This workbook includes the instructions for LAP activities, as well as the "Tough Decision Log" that asks youth to consider experiences where they needed to use their ethical decision-making skills.

We are excited to have had 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 LPX 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:

Fall 2022 applications

We are still accepting applications for the Fall!

Contact Molly:
mcammell@uccs.edu

Do you have unwanted arts/crafts supplies?

Donate them to
Campus Connections!
@ Columbine3010

Support Campus Connections! Make a donation today!

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