

Humanities Engage: Ph.D. Student Opportunity

Summer Immersive Fellowships

Humanities Engage fosters experiential learning and immersive experiences for doctoral students across our arts and humanities programs in support of our mission to deepen and broaden all students' intellectual and professional development, and make Humanistic careers across all employment sectors visible, valued, and viable.

- **Eligibility:** DSAS Humanities Ph.D. students with no university academic appointment in summer 2021 (TA/TF/GSA/GSR/other full summer funding) or external fellowship and who expect to be enrolled in fall 2021. Preference will be given to students in earlier years of their graduate studies and those who have not previously received funding via *Humanities Engage*.
- **Stipend:** \$4,000 for ca. 200 hours of effort
- **Timeline:** Immersives can begin as early as May 3, 2021 and must be completed by August 20, 2021.
- ***Humanities Engage* expectations:** Contribute at least one blog post to the project website, no later than two weeks after the immersive begins; submit a reflective essay (or equivalent, e.g. video) on the experience for the project website by September 1, 2021. Participate in cohort activities. Help co-mentor subsequent cohort.

Please note the following:

The feasibility of any in-person components will be assessed in accordance with the University's risk posture and COVID-19 standards and guidelines and the host organization's health and safety protocols.

International Ph.D. students will need to consult with OIS and obtain their Immigration Specialist's endorsement prior to accepting a Fellowship.

Students are responsible for reporting taxable stipend payments and for remitting any tax due to their local taxing authority.

Students may submit separate applications to multiple opportunities but may only accept one immersive fellowship. Students may not accept more than one *Humanities Engage* fellowship or grant of any type over the summer.

OPPORTUNITY

RefocusED - Voices Against Violence

Organization Description

[RefocusED \(www.RefocusEDinc.org\)](http://www.RefocusEDinc.org) is a 501c3 registered nonprofit organization located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Our mission is to research, develop, study, and refine educational models, practices, curriculum, and programs which cultivate healthy, well educated, engaged citizenry who

are primed to play an active role in our evolving global society and equipped for the demands of the ever- changing workplace.

Voices Against Violence (VAV)¹ grew out of an initiative of Richard Carrington, Sr., a disabled veteran, working with gang members in 1992. It became one of the first and foremost anti-violence organizations in Pittsburgh, pioneering programs in Street Intervention and Restorative Justice. Since 1997, this community-focused organization has developed and implemented numerous anti-violence programs, conducted conflict mediation and resolution, created school-based programs, facilitated parent groups, managed workforce development and summer employment programs, and cultivated other leaders who have since branched off to start their own programs or organizations. For more than 25 years, VAV has hosted a FREE camp as a way to actively engage Beltzhoover-Allentown-Knoxville (BAK) area youth ages 4 to 14.

In addressing the Violence in communities, Voices Against Violence (www.vavpgh.org) has long been an advocate of Violence Interruption through implementation of programs navigating young people away from circumstances and decisions which most often lead to violence. Since 1995, VAV has hosted its Summer Experience for children ages 4-14 as a means of Violence Interruption by providing a safe, positive, nurturing environment; engaging enrichment activities; and good "old-fashioned" fun. They also host dozens of "Learn & Earn"² youth who work as Junior Counselors. For some, this is their first real job, and they require considerable mentoring to be successful in meeting the expectations of a workplace.

Immersive Fellowship Description

Dr. Maureen Anderson, founder and lead researcher of RefocusED, is the Director of Programs for Voices Against Violence. In 2020, in the aftermath of the COVID-19 quarantine, the camp provided an opportunity to investigate its impact on families and how environment, activities, and practices may mitigate negative effects. This year, some of that research may continue, but the focus of the 2021 project will be on the long-term impact of VAV Programs.

Each year, we survey the participants, and from these, we are aware of the immediate, positive effects our programs have on participating youth. However, we would like to gain a better perspective on the longitudinal effects our programs. We want to know what their civic and community engagement, racial identity, and constructions of justice look like years after they have participated in our program. We also think our alumni provide an opportunity to explore what critical racial identity related to issues of equity and justice can look like in this generation at this specific time in history.

We are interested in working with a *Humanities Engage* Fellow to create methodology to select a smaller sample of the alumni and to conduct a robust, qualitative exploration of

- 1) their critical personal identity and relationship with the community
- 2) their personal narratives that led them to where they are, and
- 3) their reflections on the time spent with Voices Against Violence in the Restorative Justice and/or the Summer Experience (camp) programs.

¹ *Voices Against Violence is open to all and inclusive of trans and non-binary students.*

² *Learn & Earn - a City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County Workforce Development Program for youth ages 14-20.*

Deliverables

The first step of this project will focus on collecting qualitative interviews, ideally in narrative form, from our participants and alumni. The Fellow will then discuss with RefocusED staff how to best represent these findings in a creative and engaging way to share with VAV staff, board, funders, alumni, and current participants.

This particular opportunity is confined to the evaluative effort to provide information directly to the RefocusED & Voices Against Violence staff, board, and other organizational stakeholders about the impact of the programs mentioned. The Fellow's participation does not entail research toward their own research projects.

Responsibilities

- Work with the Director of Programs, Dr. Maureen Anderson, to chart a course for qualitative documentation of Voices Against Violence participants and alumni.
- Conduct and analyze qualitative interviews with a select group of participants and alumni and situate within relevant literature
- Document findings in creative, engaging, and impactful display

Qualifications

- A commitment to understanding the impact of multi-generational poverty and trauma, violence interruption, and intersectional justice
- Experience conducting and analyzing qualitative interviews
- Ability to work independently and as a team member of RefocusED and Voices Against Violence
- Organized, with an ability to meet project deadlines
- Preferred, but not required: Experience in design or visual representation of qualitative data

Application

Applicants should please provide the following materials in this order and in a single .pdf to michele.krugh@pitt.edu by March 26, 2021, at 5PM.

A. *Cover Letter (2 pages max) addressing these key points:*

1. Which host organization opportunity are you applying to?
2. How does this project draw on your academic preparation and professional experience to help advance the host organization's goals?
3. How will this opportunity contribute to amplifying your research training and advance your professional goals? Explain why the timing makes sense in light of where you are in your program.

B. *Brief, current CV (2 pages max)*

C. *Brief letter of support from primary Ph.D. advisor. (Note: This letter can also be sent directly from the faculty member to michele.krugh@pitt.edu.)*

Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed via Zoom by representatives of the prospective host organization and of *Humanities Engage*.