ENACT: The Educational Network for Active Civic Transformation

A Model for Civic Engagement Piloted at Brandeis Expands Across the Country

The most important office, and the one which all of us can and should fill, is that of private citizen.”

– Louis D. Brandeis

The International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life at Brandeis University is pleased to announce the launch of ENACT, The Educational Network for Active Civic Transformation.

ENACT is a new national program to engage young people in state-level legislative change. Students at colleges and universities in or near state capitals will learn how to work with advocacy organizations, legislators and legislative staff members to advance policy. And they will directly engage in this work, traveling to the capital, meeting with and lobbying legislators, strategizing with advocacy organizations and creating outreach materials to advance their chosen issues.

This new major program of the Center is made possible by a generous gift from Ethics Center Board member Norbert Weissberg and his wife, former Board member Judith Schneider. ENACT represents a national expansion of Advocacy For Policy Change, a model program for civic engagement that since 2010 has engaged Brandeis undergraduates with the legislative process on key, state-level social issues. The new program builds upon the original vision for the Center, which was inspired and supported by Abraham Feinberg, the father of Judith Schneider.

In Advocacy for Policy Change, student teams research their chosen issues, and they design and implement models of legislative activity. Students choose existing laws they can challenge on policy, legal or moral grounds, or propose laws that redress perceived wrongs. Students work with a legislative mentor and/or a member of an advocacy organization, and strive to effect social change.

The results have been impressive: 121 students have been engaged with the legislative process for 40 bills – six of which have been signed into law – concerning 27 policy areas.

Professor Melissa Stimell, the instructor for Advocacy for Policy Change, will serve as the academic director of ENACT.

*continued on p. 4*
**The International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life**

**Mission:** To develop effective responses to conflict and injustice by offering innovative approaches to coexistence, strengthening the work of international courts, and encouraging ethical practice in civic and professional life.

**Staff**

- Daniel Terris, Director
- David Briand, Oral History Project Manager
- Cynthia Cohen, Director, Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts
- Marci McPhee, Director, Campus Programs
- Barbara Strauss ’02, Senior Department Coordinator
- Leigh Swigart, Director, Programs in International Justice and Society
- David J. Weinstein, ENACT Coordinator & Communications Specialist, Newsletter Editor

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- Norbert Weissberg

- Founding Chair
- Theodore C. Sorensen (1928-2010)

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**IN THE NEWS**

**Staff Highlights**

In April, **Cynthia Cohen** participated in the World Summit on Art and Culture for Peace convened by the District Institute of the Arts of the mayor’s office in Bogotá, Colombia. In May, **Cynthia Cohen** joined the research team of City Responsibility: The Role of Municipalities in Violence Prevention, hosted by the Hague Institute for Global Justice, and participated in its first meeting. Also in May, **Cynthia Cohen** presented in two sessions at the Art in Conflict Practitioners’ Forum in Zurich, including a screening of “Acting Together on the World Stage.” An article by **Cynthia Cohen** on the state of the art of peacebuilding and the arts was published in August in “Insights,” the newsletter of the United States Institute of Peace. **Marcy McPhee** presented at an all-New England regional women’s conference in May about encouraging young children and families to do community service. In August, **Marcy McPhee** was promoted from Assistant Director of the Ethics Center to Director of Campus Programs. In May, **David Briand** and **Leigh Swigart** traveled to The Hague to conduct 15 oral history interviews for the Center’s Ad Hoc Tribunals Oral History Project with international law figures involved in the early years of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. **Daniel Terris** was elected Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of Wheelock College in June. In July, **David Weinstein** and a panel of Brandeis colleagues spoke with high school students visiting from China about how international students can get involved in campus life.

**New Publication**

**Advocacy for Policy Change: Brandeis students work to reform Massachusetts law (September 2015)**

Students in “Advocacy for Policy Change” (Legal Studies 161b) tackled issues including the health care of minors, pre-trial and bail reform, the cost of veteran higher education, women’s health and economic equity, sexual violence on college campuses, immigration rights and safe driving, the earned income credit, and more.

See page 1 of this newsletter for details of the national expansion of this initiative, and read excerpts from year six of this course at Brandeis here: brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/advocacy

**Learning Close to Home and Far Afield: Sorensen Fellows Journey to Home Countries and New Places**

The 18th cohort of Sorensen Fellows—Ariella Assouline ’17, Bethlehem Seifu Belaineh ’16, Tove Freeman ’16, Shaoleen Khaled ’16, Anni Long ’16, Wilkins Lugo ’17, Regina Roberg ’17 and Bezaye T. Teshome ’16—journeyed back to their home countries or to new places for their summer internships. Whether in Argentina, China, Ethiopia, Norway, California, Connecticut or Massachusetts, their experiences were both intense and thought provoking.

The Sorensen Fellows report back “from the field”: brandeis.edu/ethics/news/2015/August.7.html

Ariella Assouline (fourth from right) interred at the Feminist Majority Foundation in Los Angeles, working on leadership building for local college feminist organizations. “Feminist activism is a whole body process,” she says. “Your mind is constantly working to make everything as inclusive as possible, to consider all angles, to make sure every word is perfect. At the end of every day I’m exhausted but invigorated for the next. I am constantly reminded of how relevant and vital this work is and how actual lives are being bettered by it.”
When is it Right to Step In?

Conference Explores the Challenge of Protecting the World’s Most Vulnerable Populations

The Responsibility to Protect or “R2P” principle, adopted by leaders across the globe in 2005, recognizes that the international community has a role to play when sovereign states fail to protect their own populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

As R2P reaches its 10-year milestone, many questions remain, however, about the principle’s legitimacy, implementation and potential abuse.

In March, the Ethics Center and the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research at Tel Aviv University convened scholars and practitioners at Brandeis University to explore how and when the international community should intervene in response to mass atrocities.

Speakers at “The Responsibility to Protect at 10: The Challenge of Protecting the World’s Most Vulnerable Populations” examined the philosophical underpinnings of the doctrine and analyzed situations where R2P has been implemented and, perhaps more significantly, where it has failed to be invoked.

A number of “hot spots,” seemingly tailor-made for intervention under the R2P doctrine, were discussed, including the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Kosovo, Libya, North Korea and Syria. It was noted that only Libya has been the subject of a military intervention under R2P since 2005, and many observers believe that the real incentive for this action was regime change rather than protection of the Libyan populace.

A thematic thread running throughout the conference was the frequent unwillingness of the international community to approve collective action even in the face of widespread and systematic crimes. The power of the Permanent Five members of the UN Security Council – China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States – to veto a proposed intervention, often for reasons of political or economic self-interest, was repeatedly raised as a structural obstacle to the success of R2P.

While most participants acknowledged that reforming the UN structure in order to eliminate the veto power of the Permanent Five was highly unlikely, it was agreed that a campaign to discourage the “illegitimate” use of their veto in times of humanitarian crisis might be pursued.

The “Responsibility to Protect at 10” ended with a plenary session in which participants and audience members were asked to contemplate the proceedings and articulate significant findings and challenges regarding R2P and its real world application. The Ethics Center and the Tami Steinmetz Center agreed to consider follow-up activities to the conference in order to facilitate an ongoing conversation about this critical doctrine.

“The conference generated a unique and comprehensive evaluation of R2P after 10 years of experience, benefitting from the participation of a wide range of professionals: legal experts and international judges, NGO workers from the field, academic experts and other stakeholders,” says Galia Golan ’60 of Hebrew University, a member of the conference committee.

“Our examination of the effectiveness of R2P both in case studies and with regard to specific groups such as women, business people and health workers was not without criticism, and included recommendations for improvement and better implementation of the policy.”

More about the conference: go.brandeis.edu/R2P
Engaging & Reflecting

continued from page 1

Our Sorensen Fellows return from their summer experiences and enroll together in a writing workshop in which they document their work and challenge one another to explore the moral pitfalls of conscious attempts to improve the world.

In the 17 years since we established our student fellows program, the movement to create opportunities for college students to engage in service and social justice work has swelled.

The very success of this movement has raised powerful questions. When do young people who arrive to “help” become an unnecessary burden on struggling organizations in struggling communities? Can “documenting” the lives of the people they come to know (including on social media) become a form of exploitation? When does the act of working for social justice cause more harm than good?

Some critics have gone further and argued that programs that engage untrained young people in social justice work are inherently exploitative and should be cut back or abandoned. I think this is an overreaction. We should not judge the whole field of social engagement just because some participants or programs fall short.

Nevertheless, critics raise legitimate questions. At the Center we ask our students to wrestle with these questions— and we ask them of ourselves. After all, programs that engage young people in social justice can be done well or done poorly, with dramatically different results.

We are now undertaking a searching evaluation of our student fellowship, engaging the more than 100 alumni of that program in a conversation that will help keep us honest and improve our work. This emphasis on reflection and critical thinking will be a key component of the new ENACT program as well.

I believe that our students have a lot to give— and a lot to learn.

ENACT—continued from page 1

David Weinstein, longtime communications specialist for the Ethics Center, will serve as the ENACT Coordinator.

Over the next three years ENACT will help launch new programs in 15 colleges and universities located in or near state capitals, and will build a national online network of students, faculty, activists and legislators. The ENACT Network will be a strategic and information hub—a needed resource for state-level players—that will enable participants to connect with counterparts throughout the country, with guidance from the team at Brandeis.

Participating schools will represent a diverse range of higher education institutions. They will be linked through an online network that enhances their learning, connects them with people active in the field, and provides an opportunity for them to share their work to inspire and instruct others who seek to make an impact on civic life in the United States.

The Educational Network for Active Civic Transformation will be a major voice in addressing challenges to American democracy by engaging young people around the country in civic activism built on knowledge, cooperation, justice and integrity.

The ENACT Model:

• Workshop: ENACT will launch with a workshop at Brandeis University, held May 22 – 26, 2016. Under the leadership of the program’s academic director, ENACT Fellows will share ideas and work on course development.

• Courses: In ENACT courses students will learn about participating in the legislative and advocacy process at the state level, with a substantial hands-on component in which they engage directly in that process, as in the “Advocacy for Policy Change” course at Brandeis.

• Online Network: The ENACT Network will be a national in-person and online network of students, faculty, activists and legislators. It will be a strategic and information hub for state-level players that will enable them to connect with counterparts throughout the country.

Apply for the ENACT Fellowship

Full-time faculty members at colleges and universities where students have relatively easy access to their state capital are eligible to apply to join the first cohort of ENACT Fellows. Over the next three years, ENACT Fellows will build new courses or enhance existing courses to engage students in hands-on study and work related to state-level legislation.

ENACT Fellows will attend the five-day summer workshop hosted by Brandeis University from May 22-26, 2016. All expenses for participation in the workshop, including tuition, are paid by the ENACT Fellowship.

Every ENACT Fellow receives grant funds to support his or her course development and course work. ENACT Fellows and their students will also have full access to the online ENACT Network.

ENACT Fellows will join a burgeoning national network of schools committed to preparing undergraduates to be effective participants in the political system. Fellows will advance this work together, learning from one another’s pedagogy and sharing in each other’s successes.

The schools joining at the May 2016 workshop will be the lead institutions of a higher education network with the goal of eventually expanding to all 50 states.

Deadline to apply: December 1, 2015
Details and online application: go.brandeis.edu/ENACT
How I Got in the Movement: A Civil Rights “Living Legend” Tells His Story

We lost a great human on August 15th with the passing of Julian Bond at age 75. We were fortunate to host Mr. Bond at Brandeis University in March, on behalf of the Office of the President. Mr. Bond was the 2014-15 Fred and Rita Richman Distinguished Fellow in Public Life. He delivered a compelling lecture and made a deep impression on the many students, faculty, staff and guests he met with over the course of his visit to campus.

Named a “Living Legend” by the U.S. Library of Congress, H. Julian Bond was a driving force for social change for more than 50 years as a civil rights leader, politician, scholar and writer. He helped co-found the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, was elected to Georgia’s House of Representatives and Senate, helped found and lead the Southern Poverty Law Center, and was chairman of the NAACP for 11 years.

Richman Fellows are selected from among individuals active in public life whose contributions have had a significant impact on improving American society, strengthening democratic institutions, advancing social justice or increasing opportunities for all citizens to realize and share in the benefits of this nation. There could be no better person for this recognition than Julian Bond.

His legacy will endure. Our thoughts are with his loved ones.

The following is an excerpt from Julian Bond’s Richman Fellowship lecture and the discussion that followed, which was moderated by Chad Williams, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of African and Afro-American Studies. Full video of the lecture and an interview with Mr. Bond are online: brandeis.edu/richmanfellow/videos

On Activist Tactics
I believe that you ought to engage in almost any tactic you can that is peaceful and nonviolent. Peaceful and nonviolent engagement – any tactic you can to win your goals. Set out what your goals are going to be, tell people what you are going to do in order to win these goals... and try as hard as you can to achieve and just go ahead – go for it. And tell me a year from now what you did.

Is a grassroots model that builds an indigenous leadership still relevant and viable?
Absolutely, but you’ve got to do more than that. You’ve got to have a goal. You’ve got to say “This is the outcome I’m looking for.

I’m going to do x. I’m going to work awfully hard. I’m going to lift up everybody I can, and x is going to be the end game here.” I think often, we don’t have an “x.” We don’t have an end game. We don’t have a plan. We don’t have a goal. And to the degree that we do have a goal and a plan and so on, the better off we’ll be. It just makes common sense that there’s got to be some end game to our activism.

Concluding His Formal Lecture
We are a different country today from when I was first beckoned into the Civil Rights Movement. That is only because of thousands upon thousands of Americans who put their bodies on the line for freedom and justice.

The Civil Rights Movement I am so proud to have served in was made up of mostly ordinary people, many as young as some of you, who were called upon to do extraordinary things. Dr. King didn't march from Selma to Montgomery alone; there were thousands marching with him and before him, and thousands more who did the dirty work that made the movement a success.

He didn't speak to an empty field at the March on Washington; there were thousands marching at his side, and thousands more who were marching long before he was born.

Remember them as you remember him. He dedicated his life to fighting for justice and peace. We could all well try to do the same.
Building the Field Around the Globe

CAST Student Grants Awarded

The new minor in Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation (CAST) awarded grant funding last spring to three Brandeis students for CAST-related summer projects:

LaShawn Simmons ’18 – Ebony Axis Zine

Simmons proposed to invite women within the Brandeis community who identify as Black to contribute poetry to a zine titled “ Ebony Axis.” This publication will showcase the beautiful and varied narratives of Black women on campus through poetry. She will also host a coffeehouse to engage participants in critical conversations and dialogue with Black women, while also creating atmosphere of encouragement and empowerment.

Sarah McCarty ’15 and Brontë Velez ’16 – Sound Mapping: Listening for Change

McCarty (at right in photo) and Velez (at left in photo) travelled this summer to the Venice Biennale, a major platform in the art world for creative discussion and evaluation. They will create “soundmapping” works, focusing on sound, movement, performance and video, to critically examine and respond to the historically exclusive and inaccessible institutional spaces of the art world and the historical Western art canon. McCarty and Velez will present their project during the MusicUnitesUS residency of Syrian musician Kinan Azmeh at Brandeis in the fall.

More about both projects: brandeis.edu/programs/cast/student-grants.html

British Council’s Paul Smith: “Culture is About Living”

Liberian singer/activist Fatu Gayflor, Founder and Artistic Director of the Liberian Women’s Chorus for Change, and anthropologist/dance scholar Toni Shapiro-Phim, Director of Programs for the Philadelphia Folklore Project, were in residence at Brandeis in March, hosted by the minor in Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation (CAST).

Following presentations by Gayflor and Shapiro-Phim in an open session of the “Introduction to CAST” course, Paul Smith, Director of the British Council USA and Cultural Counsellor at the British Embassy in Washington, DC spoke at a reception honoring Gayflor and CAST supporter Naomi Sinnreich P ’13.

Smith spoke about culture and conflict, bringing insight from his previous posts in Afghanistan, India and New Zealand to argue for the centrality of culture to resolving crises around the world:

Politics is about power. Economics is about money. But culture is about living. It is... [about] the questions that people want to ask even more than “Have I got financial security?” and “Have I got the right kind of power?” They actually want to ask themselves, again and again, “What is the purpose of my life?” and “Who do I belong with in my community and culture?” and “What am I celebrating?”... If culture is at the heart of a lot of crises, then it seems fairly self-evident to me that cultural understanding and cultural rapprochement and cultural collaboration could well be part of the solution.... And I think that is where culture and arts and peacebuilding really comes into real possibility. ... So I think you're working at a real nexus of matters and I think the interface between arts and peacebuilding and all those other nexuses are really what it is about....

View video of a longer excerpt from Paul Smith’s remarks: go.brandeis.edu/CASTvideoMarch3

Fatu Gayflor, Founder and Artistic Director of the Liberian Women’s Chorus for Change

Paul Smith, Director of the British Council USA and Cultural Counsellor at the British Embassy in Washington, DC


PEACEBUILDING AND THE ARTS
Ethics Center Leadership Council Creates and Innovates

The spring and fall 2015 Ethics Center Leadership Council, aka the Center’s “social justice street team,” aka Annie Fortnow ’17, Emma Silver ’17, and Sophia Warren ’18 (l-r in photo) have been finding new ways to engage the Brandeis community with Ethics Center resources, while promoting thoughtful conversations about social justice.

In the spring they organized “Ethics Center LIVE! Photo Manipulation in Pursuit of ‘Beauty.’” Justice newspaper photo editor Morgan Brill ’17, Cassidy Tatun ’17 from mental health-focused club Active Minds at Brandeis University and Lauren Nadeau ’17 from business-oriented club Women, Inc. joined ECLC members for an exploration of the ethical implications of digital photo manipulation, particularly concerning women, racial and ethnic conceptions of beauty, and effects on body image and expectations for young people.

Their point of departure was the Ethical Inquiry “The Ethics of Digital Photo Manipulation: Alterations in Pursuit of ‘Beauty.’” Read about the conversation in the ECLC blog post “Sugar Cookies, Dialogue, and the Ethics Behind Beauty” at blogs.brandeis.edu/eclc.

This fall Fortnow, Silver and Warren will be publishing the first Ethics Center podcast, featuring the voices of fellow Brandeis students and Ethics Center staff. Look for the announcement on the ECLC blog and the Ethics Center’s Facebook page, website and Twitter feed!

More about the Ethics Center Leadership Council: go.brandeis.edu/ECLC

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT EVENTS

JANUARY
The 10th Brandeis Institute for International Judges convened in Malta. (See article in Winter/Spring 2015 Ethics Central.)

Dr. Valerie Moghadam of Northeastern University discussed “Women Leaders in Morocco and Tunisia: The Aftermath of the Arab Spring.” Sponsored by the Women’s Studies Research Center.

FEBRUARY
‘DEIS Impact! 2015 (see photo, below right).

MARCH
“The Responsibility to Protect at 10: The Challenge of Protecting the World’s Most Vulnerable Populations” brought leading scholars and global actors to Brandeis (see page 4).

To celebrate International Women’s Day, global political strategist and women’s rights activist Hibaq Osman discussed working for women’s rights, and the state of women peacemakers in the Middle East and North Africa. Sponsored by the Heller School Coexistence and Conflict Program.

A panel including the book’s editor Mei-Mei Ellerman of the Women’s Studies Research Center discussed “Letters to Adopted & Fostered Youth, A Global Perspective” and its themes.

“Ethics Center LIVE! Photo Manipulation in Pursuit of ‘Beauty’” (see article above).

Legendary civil rights leader H. Julian Bond delivered the Richman Distinguished Fellow in Public Life lecture (see page 5).

APRIL
“Advocacy for Policy Change” students presented their work. (See related story on page 2.)

The students in the practicum “The Immigrant Experience in Waltham”, taught by Marci McPhee, shared what they learned from a semester working at the Prospect Hill Community Center or Waltham Family School.

In the interactive photo exhibit “Behind the Scenes at Brandeis: The Masks We Wear” Sociology 128b students shared experiences with race, class and gender and asked viewers to question their identity and place within the Brandeis community. Sponsored by the Sociology Department.

MAY
Rosenwald, which describes how Julius Rosenwald became one of America’s most generous and effective philanthropists, was screened at the Museum of Fine Arts for the National Center for Jewish Film’s annual film festival.

‘DEIS Impact 2015
The Fourth Annual Festival of Social Justice
‘DEIS Impact 2015 was January 30 to February 9, featuring 47 events, and a keynote address by Alan Khazei, cofounder of City Year and CEO of Be The Change, Inc., pictured here with the undergraduate ‘DEIS Impacters before his talk.

More: go.brandeis.edu/DEISimpact

Interested in Ethics Center Cosponsorship? See: brandeis.edu/ethics/events/cosponsorship

Photo: David J. Weinstein

Annie Fortnow ’17, Emma Silver ’17, and Sophia Warren ’18 (l-r).
**UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

**Get Involved with 'DEIS Impact! A Festival of Social Justice**

- **January 28 – February 7, 2016**
  **Brandeis University Campus**

The Ethics Center and the Student Union present the fifth annual weeklong “festival of social justice” at Brandeis. Students, professors, clubs and academic departments are planning dozens of events throughout the week, featuring talks, art-making workshops, performances, exhibits and discussions.

- **Become a ‘DEIS Impacter:** Apply to join the student team that helps organize the festival – **online application due September 18**

- **Create a ‘DEIS Impact event:** Get funding to be a part of the festival of social justice – **proposals due October 18**

More info: go.brandeis.edu/DEISimpact

**Be a Part of the Celebration!**

**Commemorating the Centennial of Louis D. Brandeis Joining the Supreme Court**

The celebration will kick off on January 28, 2016 with an event featuring remarks by Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. A series of discussions with special guests will follow during the spring semester.

- **Apply for a Centennial Grant:**
  The Centennial Celebration Committee is funding events and projects proposed by faculty, staff and/or students. Grant awards will typically be between $250 and $500. Events and projects should add to our understanding of Justice Brandeis or his legacy.

  **Grant application deadline: October 1, 2015**

  Details and to apply online:
  go.brandeis.edu/LDBSupremeCentennial

**Apply for the ENACT Fellowship: Join the Educational Network for Active Civic Transformation**

Full-time faculty members at colleges and universities where students have access to their state capital can apply to join the first cohort of ENACT Fellows. Over the next three years, ENACT Fellows will build new courses or enhance existing courses to engage students in hands-on study and work related to state-level legislation.

ENACT Fellows will attend a five-day summer workshop hosted by Brandeis University in May 2016, will receive grant funds to support course development and will have full access to the online ENACT Network. (See article on page 1 for more details.)

**Deadline to apply:** December 1, 2015

Details and online application: go.brandeis.edu/ENACT

**In performance: Selma ’65**

**October 8, 2015 at 5:00 p.m., Shapiro Campus Center Theater, Brandeis University**

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Voting Rights Act, and to draw attention to recent developments surrounding voting rights, the Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation (CAST) minor presents the one-woman show Selma ’65 and a conversation with its award-winning playwright Catherine Filloux. Performed by Marietta Hedges, Selma ’65 brings to life the story of the white civil rights activist Viola Liuzzo, as well as FBI informant Tommy Rowe, who was undercover with the Klan the night Liuzzo was murdered. Free and open to the public.

Details: brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/events

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**In performance: The Delta Project**

**October 21, 2015 at 7:30 p.m., Burke Theater, Brandeis University**

Three performances explore the intersections of race, patriarchy, science, and technology in the 21st century. Details: brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/events

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