Greetings!

Pre-registration for the Spring semester begins on Monday, Nov. 7th and runs through 17th November. Students are encouraged to visit the office to learn about new opportunities and to register for placements.

Upcoming: Trip to the Family Partnership Center

Many thanks to Family Services, which is organizing a tour of the Family Partnership Center for Vassar students interested in learning more about the various agencies housed at the Center. Transportation will be provided by the OCEL and will leave Main Circle at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 15. Register for this event here.

Tsechen Kunchab Ling Temple Retreat

16 students visited the Temple of All-Encompassing Great Compassion, located in Walden, N.Y., over the weekend of Oct 27-29. They were the 32nd cohort of Vassar students to participate in this unique immersive experience and had the opportunity to meet His Holiness the Sakya Trizin, the head of the Sakya order of Tibetan Buddhism. They learned about Buddhist philosophy and psychology as well as basic meditation techniques and were able participate in the life and activities of the temple. Additionally, student carved prayer stones and observed ritual practices. This opportunity was co-sponsored by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life.
The Earth Science and Geography Department and the Office of Community-Engaged Learning invited Peter Barnard, Urban Designer from Scenic Hudson, and Chris Kroner, Senior Project Manager from the Hudson Valley Design Lab (MASS Design) for a talk, "Applying GIS to the Community," on October 27th.

Scenic Hudson is a non-profit that aims to make Hudson Valley "a model of vibrant riverfront cities and towns linked by inviting parks and trails, beautiful and resilient landscapes, and productive farms." Peter shared a history of Poughkeepsie's urban development and talked about Scenic Hudson's work on the Waterfront Connectivity Project to improve connections between Kaal Rock Park and Waryas Park.

Opened in the summer of 2017, Hudson Valley Design Lab (MASS Design) is "a community design and innovation center with an eye towards reinvigorating the local economy, creating a culture of innovation, and stimulating reinvestment in the city." Chris talked about their newly opened community gallery space on 21 Academy St. and about the consulting work that the Lab is doing for the Hudson Valley Farm Hub. Both of them spoke about their organizations' involvement in the Northside Collaborative Project and how GIS is applied as a participatory mapping tool, involving residents, volunteers, stakeholders, government, etc., within their planning processes in ongoing community meetings in Poughkeepsie. This event not only exposed students to community applications of GIS and to important non-profit work in the Poughkeepsie community, but also connected students with potential opportunities to engage and work on ongoing community projects.

- Siennah Yang ’18