

PUBLIC

PRACTICE



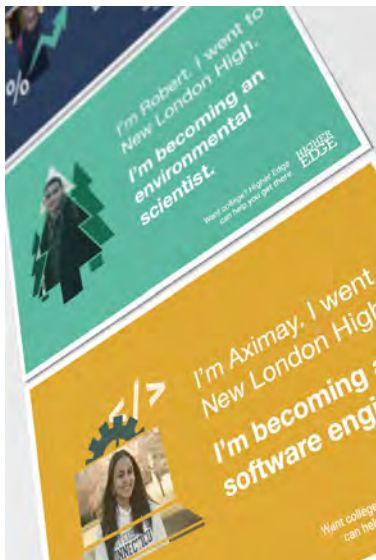


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Introduction

Design: Public Practice as an upper-level studio art course at Connecticut College that offers an in-depth exploration of methods and processes of public-based (social) design and introduces students to creating social change through the power of design thinking. This semester we worked with the non-profit organization Higher Edge.

Higher Edge is based in New London and is dedicated to guiding low-income and first generation students through enrollment, retention, and graduation from college by providing the support and resources needed for success. Our work this semester was collaborative, designed and implemented in conjunction with Higher Edge and connected communities in public spaces.

The course introduced us to methods, practices and processes of design and issues affecting the design discipline including new technologies, cultural and environmental implications, user and outcome. All explorations were project based with research and included new media and traditional forms of making both object and image. Our projects are designed with the community's voice and give the community ownership of the project.

We were fortunate to receive funding this semester with a Margaret Sheridan Community Learning grant from the Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy. This grant assisted us with research and materials and implementation of projects during the semester.

DESIGN THINKING PROCESS

Design: Public Practice used Emily Pilloton's model for social change and engagement.

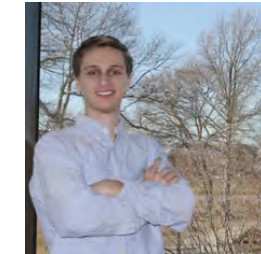
1. Design through action
2. Design with, not for
3. Design systems, not stuff
4. Document, share, and measure
5. Start locally, and scale globally

Design Team



TEAGAN ATWATER
Project Leader on web projects

Computer Science and Architectural Studies major.



COLIN FORSYTH
Project Leader for Project Grow

Senior Design major and CAT scholar



BELLA FRANZ
Project Leader for video project

Economics and Architectural Studies double major.



JENNIFER JACKSON
Project Coordinator

Art Major and Architectural Studies and Psychology double minor.



ALYSSA KLEIN
Project Leader for Project Polygon

Double major in Art and Computer Science. CAT scholar.



NETA NAKASH
Co-leader for Project Grow

Architectural Studies and Mathematics double major and Studio Art minor.

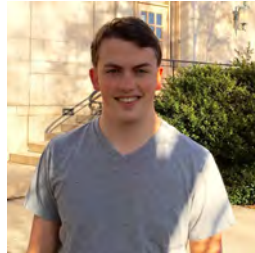
Design Team



**CHELSEA
PRESTON**

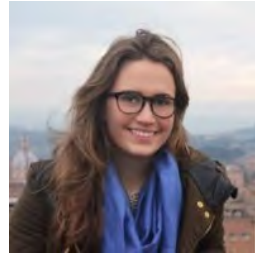
Project Leader on web projects

Junior Art major.
Women's soccer player.



JAMES ROBINSON

Double major in Art (Design) and Computer Science.
CAT scholar.



CAELI SMITH

Co-leader for video project

Studying art, Italian and english, CISLA scholar.



PROFESSOR ANDREA WOLLENSAK

Professor of Art
Judith Ammerman '60 Director,
Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology

RESEARCH

Interviews

Before beginning the design process, we conducted various methods of research, meeting with Higher Edge staff and students, as well as Connecticut College staff who grew up in New London and are currently working with community engagement.

Dean Reiser

Associate Dean for Community Learning
February 11th, 2015

CONDUCTED BY NETA NAKASH

Where did you go to High School?

New London High School

Where did you go for higher education?

Boston University for undergraduate and School for International Training Graduate Institute in Vermont.

How much college preparation did your school or environment provide?

Education was emphasized in my family, but I was the first in my family to go to college. I do not recall being informed or assisted in the process, rather I did much of the preparation by myself. I was interested in going to Boston, so I applied to Boston University. The day I went to college was the first day I saw Boston and I loved the City, my courses and the students!

Was there a positive environment to

express an interest in college?

Yes, both at home and at the high school.

How does New London view Connecticut College?

There are many different perceptions of Connecticut College in New London. Some citizens have great working relationships and partnerships with the college, while others view us on the hill. I am in a unique position because of my involvement and engagements with both communities. College's tax exempt status is a national issue. New London has a small tax base and feels that Connecticut College should contribute to taxes. There are also many challenges tied to poverty and employment status in New London that affects how the city views the college.

What is your favorite thing about New

London?

My favorite thing about New London is the rich diversity of its people, such as the culture, arts, beauty, architecture. There are so many dimensions. I have developed a relationship with many people in New London and have found it easy to engage with the community. The smaller size of New London compared to Boston is nice and the downtown has a nice quality.

Why did you decide to come back to New London?

I was away for a long time, living in Boston, Tucson, and Mexico. I came back for a visit on my way to Boston and realized everything I loved was here in New London - my family, meaningful work, and diversity.

Is there anything you wish you had known before going to college?

I wish I had known more about what college was, how to make good decisions for courses and careers, and how to take advantage of all the opportunities. New London High School did prepare me academically for college.

What advice would you give the current high school students, whether they are already considering college or have yet to consider it?

Life is short, everyday is a gift and important. If you want to have options and opportunities, learnings as much as you can is a good foundation for that. I encourage students to seek out knowledge and information, not to wait for it to appear. It helps

to have relationships with people who have experience and wisdom.

Is there anything else you would like to share that could help improve the concept of this design project? Anything you would like to see as a product of this design project?

I would like some component to continue beyond the course and see a commitment to OVCS, the Holleran Center and Higher Edge. The projects need to be sustainable and have an infrastructure that can support them in the future. Think about the big picture of each project - these projects take people and institutional commitment.

Any other thoughts?

I would like some plan initiated by the superintendent of schools to foster lifelong learning and education. The school needs to promote and reinforce continuing education, matched with teacher's attitudes. We have to work with the system to change the system. •

Zakiya

Connecticut College Class of 2015

February 11th, 2015

CONDUCTED BY COLIN FORSYTHE

Where did you grow up?

Born in raised in New London

What do you love about New London?

I love new london in the summertime, the beach and michaels dairy

What needs to change about New London?

I really hope that the school system will improve.

What was the general attitude towards going to college at your high school?

I went to williams, everyone at williams goes to college. That really motivated me to apply myself and strive to get into the best school I can. I truly believe that the youth in new london want to go to college. The greatest misconception out there is that the youth in new london do not want to strive for greatness and go to college.

What were students' perception of Connecticut College students?

I never even considered connecticut college because I had no idea what it has to offer. I thought it was a school on the top of the hill

and I never really wanted to learn anything more.

Has that perception changed since enrolling at Conn?

Conn is a world of it's own. It may be in new london but it has exposed me to a whole new world. Conn is a great place to go to college and I wouldn't change my decision. I wish more new london students would consider conn. They would not regret it. I also encourage students to research the Jane Bredson Grant it has made it possible for me to afford this great college experience and it is available to New London residents who attend the college .

How do you define "success"?

I define success as finding what you love to do so that work does not feel like work.

Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

In five years from now I see myself graduating from a master's program in public health. Working as a hospital administrator in women's health. •

Leah

Connecticut College Class of 2014, currently living in New London, CT

February 9th, 2015

CONDUCTED BY NETA NAKASH

Where did you go to High School?

Walter Payton College Prep, Chicago IL

How much college preparation did your school or environment provide?

It was centered around getting us into college. We had extra requirements to prep us for college. We had writing seminars for college essays and act practice classes. We also had advisors that reviewed our college applications.

How does New London view Conn Coll?

Rich, stuck up, don't care about New London

What is your sense of the mentality of people in New London?

Positive, optimistic that New London is getting better

What is your favorite thing about New

London?

How involved the community is. Most of the businesses are small and run by locals. People care about the city and respect it.

What is your general experience from living in New London?

Extremely convenient. The whole community is friendly and was extremely easy to meet new people. Travel is very easy, you could walk or bike everywhere in good weather. The cafes are amazing!

Is there anything else you would like to share that could help improve the concept of this design project?

I feel like people at Conn view New London as a sketchy bad place to actually live in. I feel like a lot of students and alumni think less of you if you live in New London after you graduate and consider it a setback. •

PARTICIPATORY INSTALLATION

Project Polygon

This project aims to promote student voices and conversations around students' interests, hobbies, and futures, with the hopes of encouraging students to pursue a college education to achieve their dreams.

within the high school have a narrow view of what their futures can look like if they were to be “successful”. We wanted the students to engage and take ownership of their voice and the experience of interacting with the project.

ANALYSIS (RESEARCH)

Through our initial research we found a project, Freewall: Making Space for Diversity, from designigniteschange.org. This was a project implemented by the Kansas City Art Institute with goals to better the community and empower its audience. The project was about developing a community and an acceptance at an Alternative School in Kansas City. The students at this school are academically challenged by it by disabilities, socioeconomic status or on probation of some kind and endure negative backlash such as bullying. This division between students can incur self-esteem issues and educational drawbacks. This project focused on identifying things that the students loved and the notion of self expression. Through our research we decided to mimic this proj-

This project aims to promote student voices and conversations around students' interests, hobbies, and futures, with the hopes of encouraging students to pursue a college education to achieve their dreams through a large geometric wall installation where students respond to given prompts on color coded triangle stickers they can share their voices with the student body.

PRELIMINARY STAGES (EMPATHIZE)

After meeting with Higher Edge we saw a need to address the students directly. The community within the New London High School needed to begin a dialogue surrounding students' interests and potential dreams that could be translated into a career or college/major. We wanted to push the student body to see beyond what they perceived as their “options” for their future.

BEGINNING PROCESS (DEFINE)

We decided to research other community oriented projects and designing for change. We defined the needs of our audience to be getting their voices heard. The students

Categories:

my dream is...

my favorite class is...

my hobbies are...

ect's form but add our own twist to make it our own.

SCHEMATIC DESIGN (IDEATION)

We worked through a couple different ideas of what this project would look like. We knew it's general form as a wall installation filled with geometric triangles where students would post their responses to our prompt(s) but needed to work through a handful of other questions. Would we have everything in English and Spanish? How would we create a relationship from our prompt to our responses? How many prompts would we have? Through answering these questions we began to find our direction but needed to do some sort of user test on our concept. We planned to go into the high school with our concept prototype.

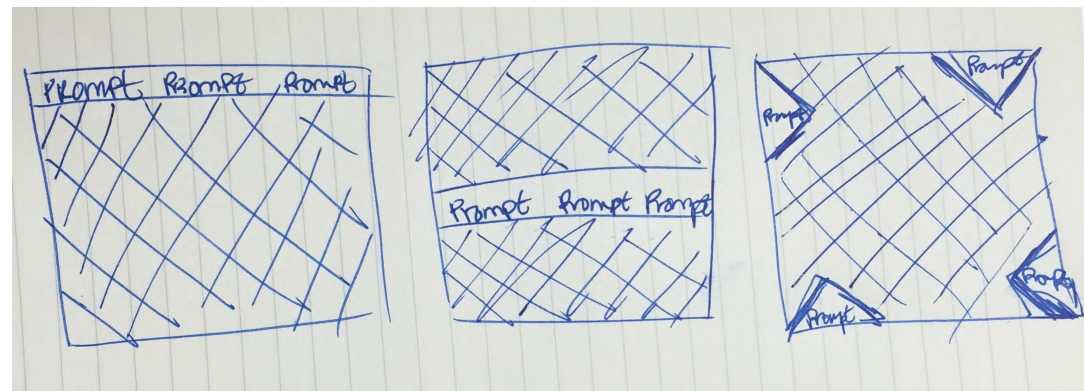
We also sketched out companion pieces and what they may look like as we would also work in a response component to bring our dialogue to the next level and validate the students' participation.



Finally we wireframed and mocked up a web-based response platform for the project, where students could go to see suggestions for colleges, majors, and careers that suit their interests with links to more information.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT (PROTOTYPE)

As our initial prototyping tool we used sticky notes on large sheets of paper with our prompts to get feedback from the high school students. Our "Come Post It" workshop looked to both explore what the students' feelings would be about the prompts themselves-what kind of responses would



they give us? Would they think that the project was dumb and not want to participate? As well as get feedback on the action of sticking up the post it note. We wanted to see how students reacted to taking ownership of their responses.

We then met with a group of students after our workshop during lunch to get direct feedback on our project. We found that the students liked the bright, playful colors of the post it notes and liked our initial prompts. They suggested the more prompts with varying questions to allow some to be more personal (vulnerable) and others to be more general. The students seemed excited about the project and looked to take ownership alongside the guidance office once our time there ended.

We then did a paper prototype of the final project where we worked out experiential hiccups on how we considered where/how students would place their triangles on the board and edited how we gave students the information they needed. We took the prompts off from the top of the installation

and created a key which created a much sleeker and easier to engage experience.

FINAL PROJECT (CHOOSE)

With input from New London High School students, the group decided to go with a simple clean implementation that would be the cleanest and easiest to read. We chose a large 4ftx4ft pre-triangled purple toned board as purple was the hardest color to write on. We created a key with the prompts and our project statement to sit alongside the large board. We chose the colors of the triangle stickers to correspond to the color of the prompt so when people are looking at the piece at a cursory glance will see a brightly colored geometric art piece but then the closer they engage with the installation the more meaning and information they will gain from the high school student voices.

INSTALLATION OF PROJECT (IMPLEMENT)

To implement our final piece we worked with CopyCats in New London, a profes-

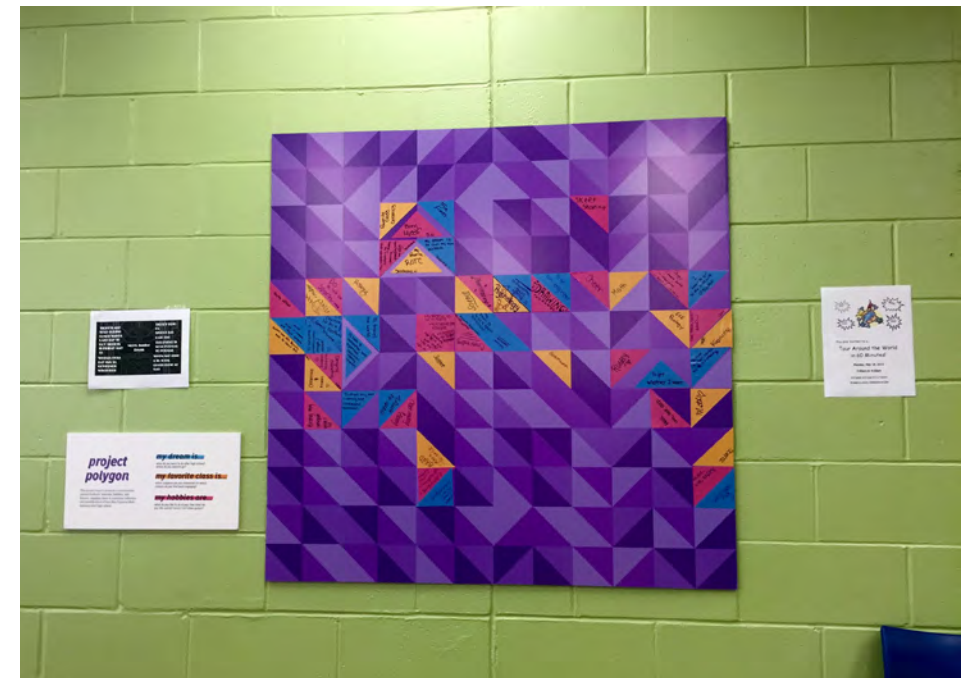
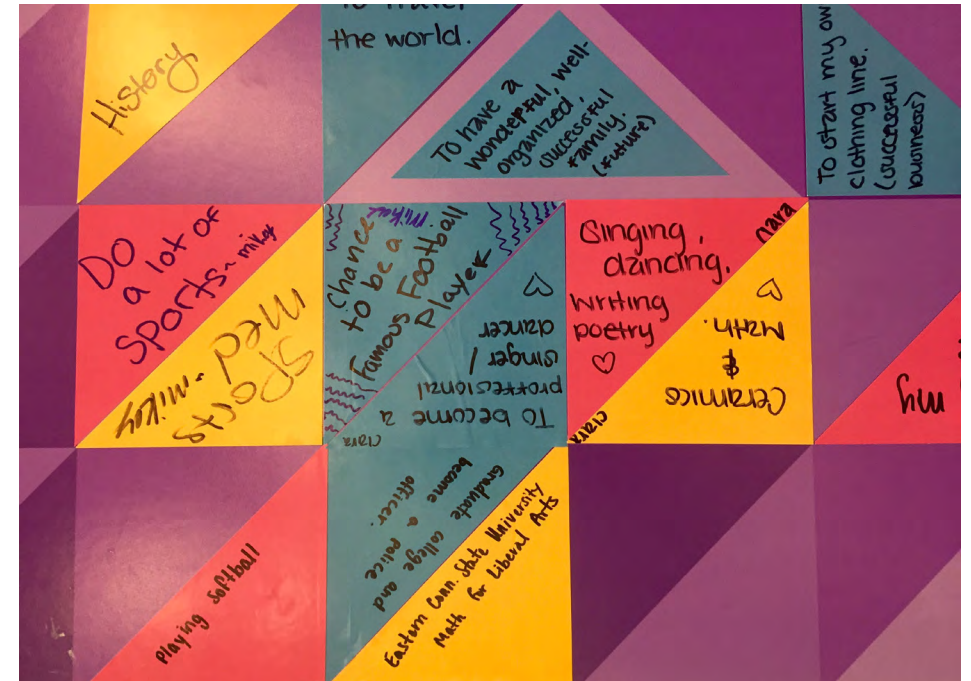


16 Project Polygon

sional printing company to print and mount our large board and our triangular stickers. We then went into New London High School's lunch room to put up the board and have some students fill out a couple stickers so the rest of the student body could see some examples of what this project should look like.

The board being a large print mounted on foamcore made for a light and easy installation and we only needed to use mounting tape and command strips to put up both the board and the plaque with the prompts.

We then went into the junior english classes to target students who are in a pivotal point in figuring out what they are interested in pursuing for their potential college career. Over the course of the next week or so students from our group went into the lunch periods to give the whole student body a chance to get their voices heard. We had an array of different levels of engagement. Some high school students just wanted to know what we were doing, some filled out one sticker and others filled out all three. The students we engaged with were friendly and intrigued, interested in being a part of something bigger and to be seen by the larger student body. •





WAYFINDING

Blazes Project

PRELIMINARY STAGES

We wanted to create a means of wayfinding that would lead the students from New London High School to the Higher Edge office for the first time. The inspiration behind this project was the wayfinding used in nature trail systems. By placing simple signs along the pathway to the Higher Edge office, the students could easily find their way from the high school. Additionally, there was no exterior sign on the Higher Edge building. Since Higher Edge shared the structure with a local church, we had to be mindful of size, aesthetic, and location of our exterior sign. The exterior sign is the final stop in our directional system.

BEGINNING PROCESS (DEFINE)

The initial idea was to use circular signs, much like those used on nature trails. We also wanted to include the Higher Edge “i” symbol to represent the organization in a simplified manner as well as using the color scheme from their logo.

ANALYSIS (RESEARCH)

After printing out circular signs, we decided we needed a means of representing direction, more than just forward. There are 4 turns that students must take in order to get to the Higher Edge office, so we needed directional signs to show them which way to turn. We then mapped out the path from New London High School to the Higher Edge office, indicating the telephone poles that the signs would be placed on. It was important to map out the path in order to determine how many signs would need to be made as well as the space between each sign.

SCHEMATIC DESIGN (IDEATION)

We moved from the initial circular design to triangular. The points of the triangles would indicate direction as well as movement. The triangles were also incorporated as a continuation of a previously developed theme throughout our other projects. We had also had 3 different colored triangles, but decided on a light blue as the only color to be used.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT (PROTOTYPE)

Several sizes were tested on the telephone poles with paper triangles. The size was determined based on readability from a distance from one sign to another. The final

signs would be printed out on sticker paper to be placed on a corrugated board and cut out.

FINAL PROJECT (CHOOSE)

We chose a triangle about 8 inches on the longest edge. The signs were assembled by hand with the stickers being placed on corrugated board, cut out into triangles, and finally laminated with clear contact paper to prevent damage from rain.

INSTALLATION OF PROJECT (IMPLEMENT)

The final triangles were screwed into the metal poles of stop signs and other road signs along the pathway in April 2015.

CONTINUATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PROJECT (LEARN)

The project will be temporary and possibly used again during Higher Edge’s recruiting season in the spring. •



VIDEO

The Road to Higher Edge

The goal of the video project was to create a video for Higher Edge that can be used either on social media platforms or on the website for promotional or informational use. The ultimate use of the video will be determined by Higher Edge.



PRELIMINARY STAGES (EMPATHIZE)

The goal of the video project was to create a video for Higher Edge that can be used either on social media platforms or on the website for promotional or informational use. The ultimate use of the video will be determined by Higher Edge.

BEGINNING PROCESS (DEFINE)

Working with Chris and Alicia, we settled on a “Day in the Life” style for the video, following a Staff member, CAP student (high school), and a Success student (college) through their regular “Higher Edge” routine - ex. staff member: working with students, around the office, etc. - while overlaying these visuals with an in depth but concise interview audio discussing each subject’s relationship to Higher Edge, education, their academic interests and their future.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT (PROTOTYPE)

We created interview outlines, detailing questions and prompts to engage our interviewee’s (Higher Edge Staff, CAP student from high school, Success Student from college). We also created an outline organizing the general intent for each segment of the video (document located in the documentation folder). Along with these interview segments we filmed b-roll footage around Higher Edge, New London High School, and at UConn Avery Point to be used as visuals during interview audio.

FINAL PROJECT (CHOOSE)

The final project will consist of one video, about four minutes long, that details Higher Edge’s mission, its work with students and families, and its students’ academic work and goals.

RESULT

The video project for Higher Edge consists



of three interviews and is marked as a short promotional film. Each of the interviews includes: one staff member, a CAP student, and a Success student from Higher Edge. A CAP student, who is a high school student part of the college access program, is guided on all aspects of the college application process. The Success student is part of the support program for Higher Edge students in college and is part of the program until their graduation. Higher Edge's support for Success students focuses on academic, financial, and career guidance throughout college. This video concentrates on "a day in the life" of each student and staff member, all of which shows short excerpts of their daily routine as they talk about their involvement in Higher Edge. The purpose of this video is to educate students and their families about Higher Edge, and to use as advertising for the website or New London High School. •



PUBLIC MURAL

Project Grow

Project Grow is a collaborative public art mural located in Bateswood Park. We held a daytime event that sparked thoughtful conversation between Higher Edge high school students, Connecticut College students, and the New London community. The project gave students a chance to share their stories in a creative, powerful, and inspiring way. In order to make this a fun learning experience for all, we invited professional NYC graffiti artist, SUEWORKS, to tag a site-specific mural on the neighboring wall.

We brainstormed ways in which we could visually communicate student voices around New London. Project Grow stemmed from a number of ideas that helped us develop the idea for a simple, yet effective strategy. We knew we wanted to design something with the high school students in a space that is used frequently by the New London High School.

Our initial idea was to have a series of typographic sidewalk pieces that existed around the high school, but decided that students may interpret it as a directional system. We decided a centralized public art mural would be best. We saw potential in the vandalized walls of Bates Woods Park, a multipurpose social and athletic space that's only a short walk from the high school.

ANALYSIS (RESEARCH)

We looked at numerous public art projects and inspirational designs for our tree. Our team created a color pallet that would stand out against the dark green color of the wall. We wanted to visually link this project with SUEWORKS' piece by choosing similar colors and a geometric aesthetic. This gave them the chance to learn about layout and typography. Through the New London Parks Department, we gained approval for the Bates Woods Park site.

SCHEMATIC DESIGN (IDEATION)

Our original plan was to have students use handprints to make their mark on the wall, however we decided that was too unoriginal. In order to spark more conversation and make a larger impact, we purchased letter stencils that students would arrange to spell out personal messages they'd like to share with New London.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT (PROTOTYPE)

The team drew out the final design of the tree to scale on large format paper. Using masking tape, we created straight edges that would allow text to wrap around the



branches more easily. Once cut, we took the positive tree stencil and used it to determine what size text stencils looked best from a distance.

FINAL PROJECT (CHOOSE)

We decided to use phrases that Higher Edge students proposed during the implementation and supplemented these phrases with few quotes from college essays from Higher Edge students.

INSTALLATION OF PROJECT (IMPLEMENT)

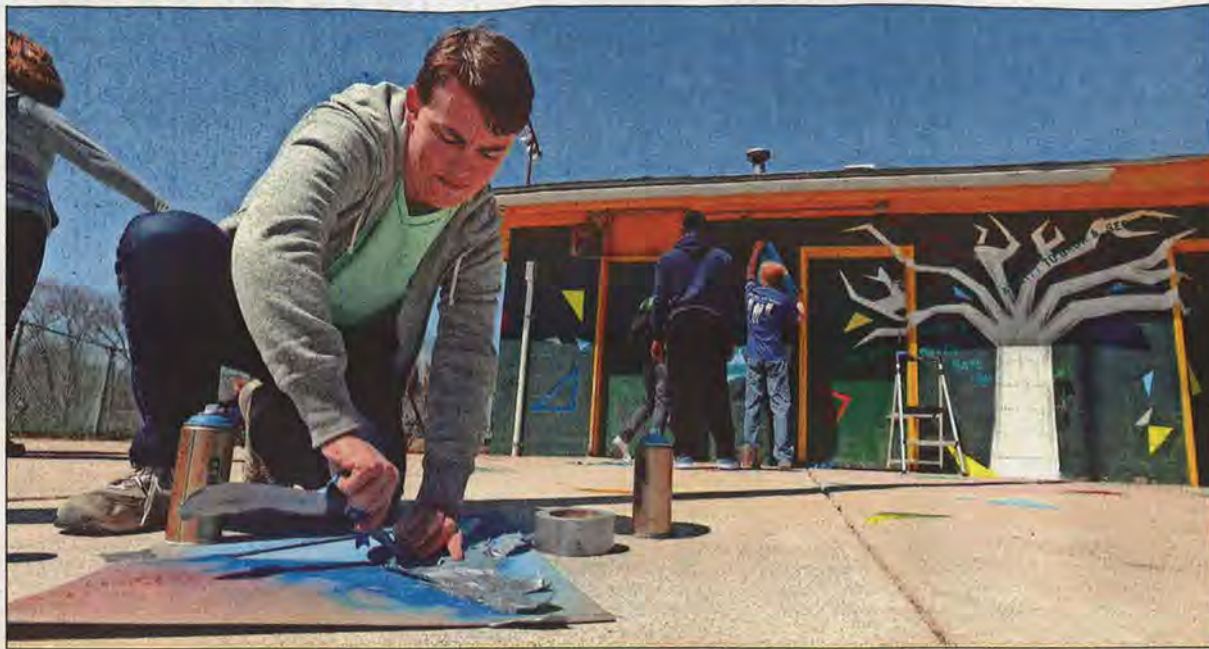
Higher Edge students spray painted our tree stencil the day before the Project Grow event. We used our taped edges to create an outline of the tree, then we filled it in. Everyone who attended could spray paint triangles and text around the project site while learning proper spray-painting techniques, tips, and tricks from SUE. One the second day of installation we worked with Higher

Edge students to paint their phrases around the tree.

CONTINUATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PROJECT (LEARN)

Project Grow has the potential to branch out over the years. As new students are introduced to the Higher Edge program, they can add new text to the wall. We've allowed room for more messages in hopes that this may become an annual event! •





TIM COOK/THE DAY

Connecticut College sophomore James Robinson removes some stencils that he was using to spray paint geometric shapes on the concrete Saturday as part of a community mural at Bates Woods Park in New London. The mural is a joint effort between Higher Edge of New London and Connecticut College.

Making a powerful park statement

NL High School, Conn College students unite for Bates Woods project

By KRISTINA DORSEY
Day Staff Writer

New London — On Saturday morning at Bates Woods Park, New London High School senior Harry Georges told Connecticut College art professor Andrea Wollensak that he had figured it out. He had decided on the quote he wanted to paint onto the mural he and other students were creating at the park.

It was this: "You can be powerful beyond measure."

Wollensak responded enthusiastically, and they both walked to the sprawling exterior wall of the park's

concession stand to figure out where the quote should be placed.

Georges told Wollensak, "I want my voice on that wall."

She said, "That's great — that's what it's all about."

Indeed, this mural project is about community and inspiration and collaboration. Its central image is a tree, with roots reaching down to the ground and branches wending their way toward the sky. Around the tree weave positive messages from New London High School students — messages influenced by what they are thinking about, what they want to be, what they might want for their future.

This program, dubbed "Project Grow," unites two groups of students, from Connecticut College

and from Higher Edge. Wollensak approached Higher Edge head Chris Soto with the idea, and a happy association was born.

The Conn "Public Practice" class is about striving to create social change through community engagement and design strategies.

Higher Edge is a nonprofit, New London-based organization that helps guide through the college process high school juniors and seniors from low-income households and those who would be the first in their families to attend college.

Soto, the Coast Guard Academy alumnus who established Higher Edge in 2011, said of Project Grow, "We want Conn College students and Higher Edge students to be a part of this together. It's definitely about

that cross-pollination."

He added, "We realize we have to do things outside the walls of Higher Edge that are going to, 1., provide awareness but, 2., help slowly and step-by-step create this college-going mentality. I think the mural is just the thing — it's about awareness. Students go to Bates Woods, they're going to ask questions, they're going to see quotes from students they may or may not know. It's one more impression on them about going to college."

And the dozen participating students benefited from having an illustrious leader. Guiding them through the mural process was SUEWORKS, a prominent New York-based graffiti/urban artist. SUEWORKS is known

SEE BATES WOODS PAGE C3



TIM COOK/THE DAY

New York-based urban artist SUEWORKS, left, leads students from Connecticut College and Higher Edge Saturday as they work on a community mural at Bates Woods Park in New London.

Bates Woods collaboration brings murals to park

FROM C1

for his 3D perspective, and his clients have included ESPN and VH1.

He has worked with students often, too, recently traveling to Norway and Israel to do just that. Soto, who had worked with SUEWORKS before, suggested him as a collaborator for the New London program. (The "SUE" in SUEWORKS, by the way, stands for "Styles Under Evolution.")

Inspired by it all, SUEWORKS created his own mural at Bates Woods to complement the one that students devised. He did his on Friday, on the back of one of the baseball dugouts. The piece is joyfully abstract, with colors that pop and with angles and a composition that suggest a rush of movement.

On Friday, too, SUEWORKS talked to the kids about how murals like this are done and showed them the process — sizing the wall, drawing the image, painting the final product.

On Saturday, the students took on the responsibilities themselves. As a softball game was running in the adjacent field, they hunkered down over stencils laid out on the pavement, taping letters together

to create a particular quote. They taped the words to the wall and spray painted the messages.

Georges said of the mural's positive messages (his own quote was one he's heard from his brothers), "It's good inspiration ... and it's an ideal spot because a lot of kids come out here to play games and watch softball and baseball."

The Bates Woods location, which was suggested by New London Parks and Recreation Department, is next to the high school.

Damoya Nelson, a New London High School senior, offered as her mural quote one of her favorites: "It's not where you're from. It's where you're going."

"People look at New London kids — 'Oh, they're this, they're that, they can't make it anywhere.' But a lot of us are living examples that's not true," said Nelson, who will study business when she attends Ithaca College this fall.

Nelson is the first in her family to go to college, and she said that consequently, "We don't know a lot about the process. Having (Higher Edge) by my side to lead me and show me what I'm supposed to do really helped.

"People look at New London kids — 'Oh, they're this, they're that, they can't make it anywhere.' But a lot of us are living examples that's not true."

DAMOYA NELSON
NEW LONDON HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENT

... Having your own team of cheerleaders rooting you on — you feel good and they help you and you're not all by yourself."

Nelson spoke positively, too, about how the Conn College students are trying to help the community with a project like this.

The Conn class is involved in something else at New London High School — a large geometric mural where students write their dreams, passions or favorite course on a small, adhesive, bright-colored triangle.

Those are then placed on a board in the building. The Conn students post something next to those; if the student wrote that they love music, the

new triangle might suggest what college would be good for them, what possible majors are or what related professions could be.

The Conn students have also gone to the Higher Edge offices a couple of times and talked to the high schoolers.

Wollensak said, "My students love it ... They're really connecting with these kids."

Neta Nakash, a Conn senior, has spent a lot of time volunteering in New London and the region during her time in college.

But, she said, "This experience has been the most one-on-one conversations that I've had with students in New London. It's been great for me to hear from them and learn from them."

As for the Bates Woods mural session, Nakash said afterward that she enjoyed getting "to hear the students having fun and saying how awesome this was and how they want to keep doing it. I think this is something Higher Edge could definitely keep doing with the students. It's a great way for them to have their voices out there and be the role models for future generations at the high school."

k.dorsey@theday.com

In The News: An article in The Day showcases Project Grow

<http://www.theday.com/article/20150425/NWS01/150429538>

WEB

<title> **Online** </title>

<description>

This project is a public-facing website to help organize and display projects over the course of years. It will serve multiple purposes: First, it will help communicate the work we are doing with partner organizations so that they may follow our progress. Second, it will form a portfolio of work to help encourage new organizations to partner with the course in the future. Third, it will be a place for graduates of the course to point back to as part of their own portfolios.

</description>

PRELIMINARY STAGES (EMPATHIZE)

We outlined our three needs, described at left. These helped us get a grasp of what kind of information we needed to provide, so that we could design the information architecture for the site organization.

BEGINNING PROCESS (DEFINE)

After determining the main uses of the site, we had to decide whether we were going to develop it from scratch or use a prebuilt template. To lower the threshold for being able to maintain the site in the future, we opted with a template. After exploring our options on multiple Wordpress theme websites, we narrowed down to one, called Krative, to use as a starting point.

ANALYSIS (RESEARCH)

This project did not require the use of any user or technical research because it was easily set up and is mostly only for documentation of what we've done on other projects.

SCHEMATIC DESIGN (IDEATION)

Since we decided to use a template, there wasn't any from-scratch visual design or

development. We were able to move individual components around on the pages and make some style adjustments to them, but the benefit of using the theme was a quick, workable solution so that focus could be placed on content.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT (PROTOTYPE)

We customized the Krative template to suit our needs better, and to make necessary visual adjustments to suit our brand. Since we used a template theme, we were able to focus on content and build that out to best represent the course to the public.

INSTALLATION OF PROJECT (IMPLEMENT)

We bought a domain name and web hosting, and the site runs on a BlueHost server.

CONTINUATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PROJECT (LEARN)

Each semester, new members, posts, and categories will be made so that content can be updated and kept organized. Domain name and hosting renewal fees will apply. •

See the website at www.designpublicpractice.com

JAN

FEB

PRINT

App due

In Print

MAR

A series of graphic design materials including a banner, poster campaign, recruiting poster, and infographic, that together work to raise awareness of Higher Edge and the opportunities it offers.

APR

Higher Edge's mission is to help students apply to, get into, and succeed in college. To that end, it's important that high schoolers and their parents be made aware of how Higher Edge can help them achieve their college goals. We realized that a key component of assisting that mission might involve print materials.

As we embarked on our initial explorations of our semester's work, we realized that supporting Higher Edge's mission closely relied on a combination of a few factors:

Awareness of college and Higher Edge

- In a community where college wasn't an expected norm, raising awareness of the benefits, possibilities, and availability of college (and of Higher Edge) might translate to more students seeking out Higher Edge's services and eventually, pursuing a successful college career

Recognition of student interests

- In order to convince students that college was right for them, it's important that they introspectively consider their own interests and passions and how they might manifest themselves post-high school. Assuming that college is a great opportunity for most people, people might be more likely to choose college (and Higher Edge) if they're cognizant of how their unique skills and interests translate to college

Perceived accessibility of college

- For students with few friends or relatives who attend or attended college, college might seem inaccessible. By showing students that other students just like them attended college, we might decrease perceived barriers to a college education.

Knowledge of specific means to achieving college goals

- Some students, before they enter Higher Edge, might lack the information necessary to optimize their chances at getting into and succeeding in college and they might potentially be deterred from seeking out Higher Edge under the belief that such effort would be futile. For example, they might not know when to apply for which scholarships.

IDEATION

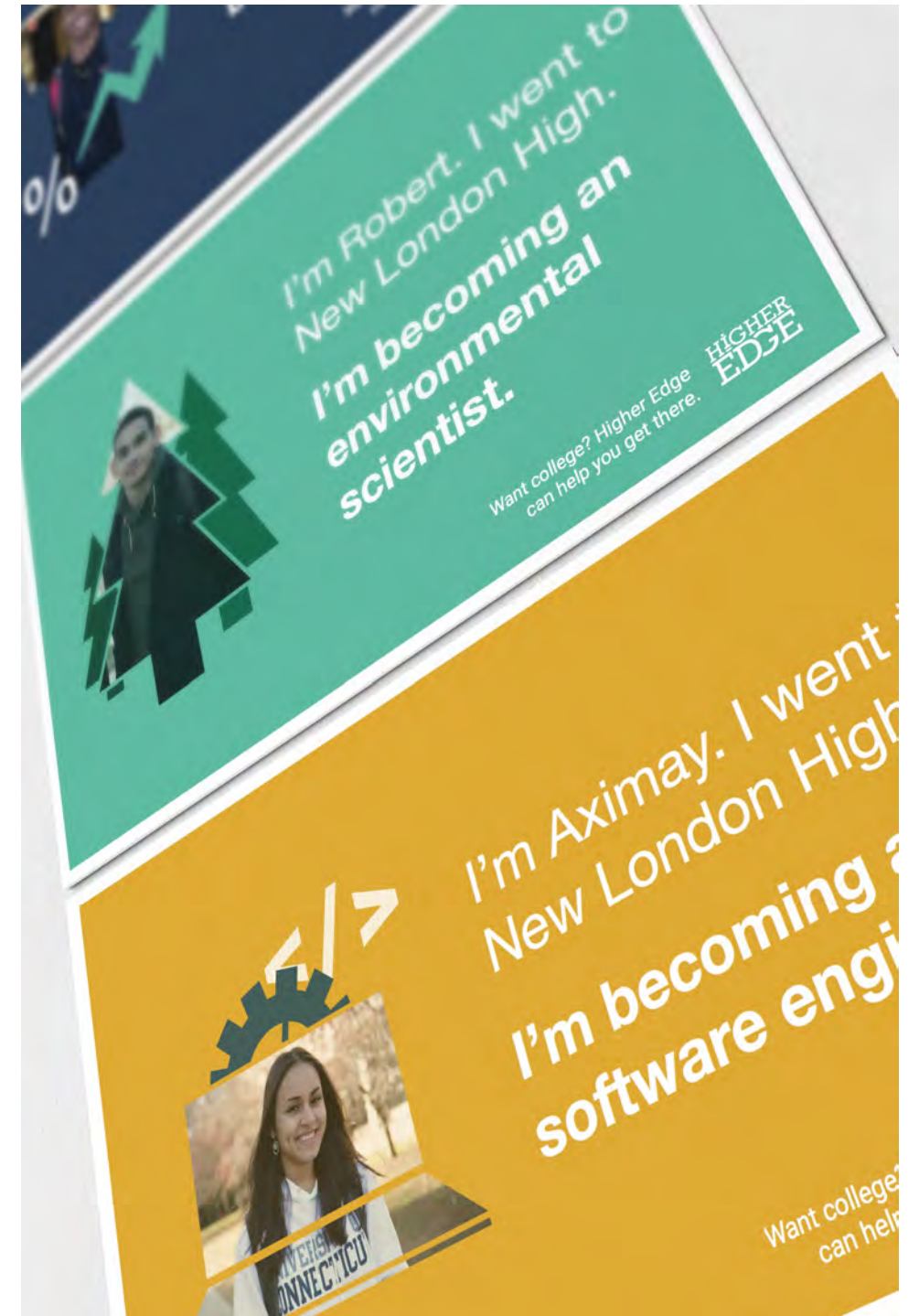
One of Higher Edge's strengths is its people. It's very good at helping students get into



college but as a small organization, it faces challenges in areas of brand awareness and convincing a large number of high school students to pursue their passions through college. We considered a variety of projects to address these concerns, including banners, posters, web content, infographics, and more.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

As we created print materials, we realized that for the multilingual population of New London, it would be important to include Spanish on materials that might be seen by exclusively Spanish-speaking people. Given



that older populations might be less likely to have grown up also speaking English, we determined that we would include Spanish on materials that would be seen by non-students (that is, parents, grandparents, other community members, etc.)

FINAL PROJECT (CHOOSE)

We chose to print a bilingual banner, a poster campaign highlighting Higher Edge’s Success Students (current college students who enrolled in Higher Edge in high school), a recruiting poster calling students to apply to Higher Edge, and an infographic illustrating the cycle of applying to various scholarships.

IMPLEMENT

The final banner, made of durable, weatherproof canvas, was given to Higher Edge to use in various promotional settings. The

poster campaign, showing Higher Edge Success Students, was posted in high-traffic areas in New London High School where each poster will make a significant impact. The recruiting poster was also posted in New London High School by Higher Edge and was/will be used in recruiting efforts as a form of direct advertising. Finally, the Scholarship Infographic will be delivered through a variety of medium, possibly including print posters, an interactive website, or flyers.

CONTINUATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PROJECT (LEARN)

Higher Edge, in possession of the original design files, will update and improve upon the work for future use. The infographic, in particular, will require yearly updating as deadlines, availability, and other details about scholarships change. •

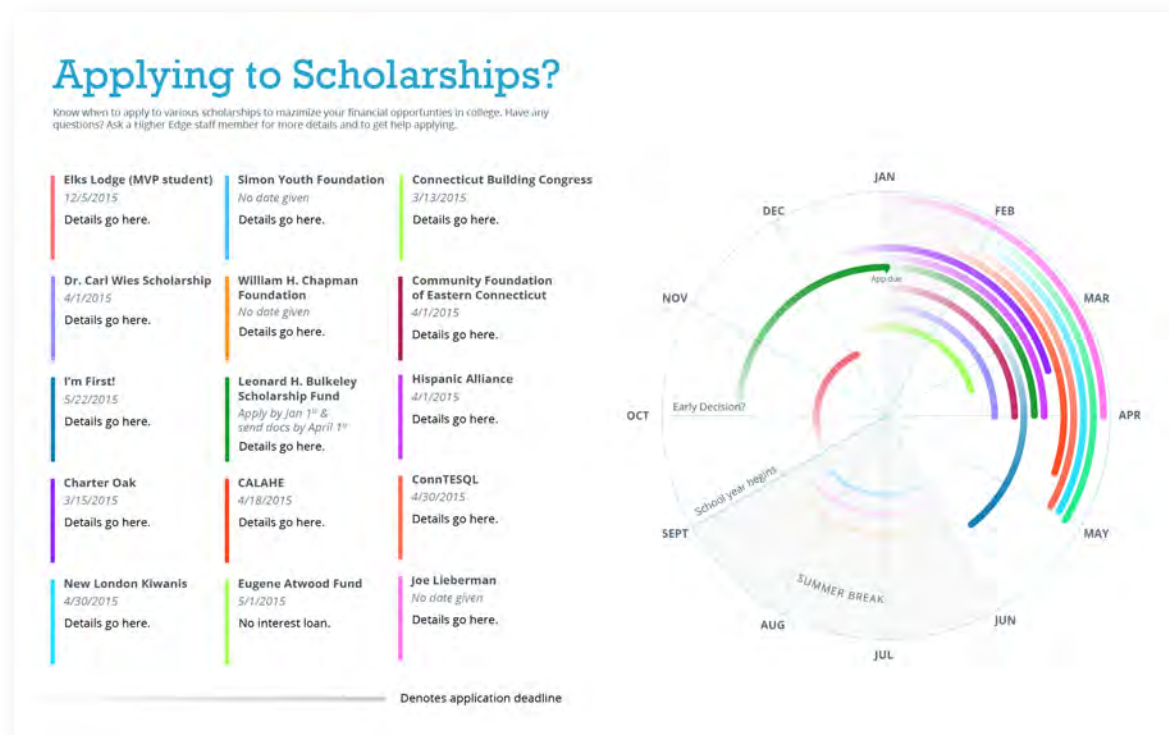


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Acceso al éxito. Apoyo para graduarte.

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COLOPHON

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