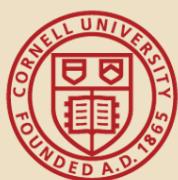




# HIGH ROAD & DEMOCRACY SUMMER FELLOWSHIPS

**2023**



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# FELLOWSHIP INFORMATION

*Application Deadline: February 10, 2023*

## Program Basics

Summer Fellows work through June and July, earning a living wage for 300 hours. Students are given a specific project with their host organizations, working 7.5 hours per day, Monday through Thursday. Every Friday the students as a group are immersed in the city life of Buffalo with neighborhood walking tours, field trips, cultural experiences, and discussions with guest experts and civic leaders. Friday's are also forums for learning from each other by sharing weekly journals, project experiences, research and other accomplishments. There are also specific skill-building opportunities and once/week Fellows get to hear from part High Road Alumni. Group housing arrangements are facilitated for those interested. A mandatory one credit pre-course will take place the second half of Spring 2023 to prepare students for their fieldwork with dates TBD in March 2023.

## Place

Cornell ILR's extension history begins with Buffalo. Since 1946, ILR has played a vital role in the region, working in partnership with businesses, unions, government, education and community organizations to build an economy that works for all. High Road Fellowships were launched in 2009 as a new way to connect students with practitioners who were driving change in the local economy. Undergoing dynamic reinvention, Buffalo is home to a rich array of such creative community leaders and organizations tackling rust belt challenges.

## Community Partner

Each student is placed with a host organization affiliated with the Partnership for the Public Good, a civic organization made up of over 300 community partners promoting more equitable and sustainable economic development in Greater Buffalo. PPG produces action research and policy recommendations on pressing local, regional and state concerns. Students gain hands-on experiences working with organizations in the vital nonprofit sector of the economy where job creation, neighborhood revitalization, and the greening of the economy are everyday reality.

## Student Criteria

High Road Fellows are Cornell undergraduates interested in grassroots democracy and how individuals can help create a more equitable economy. It is a competitive application process.



The term High Road economic development refers to policies and practices that advance economic vitality, sustainability, and equitable economic opportunity through innovation, productivity improvement, constructive labor management relations, environmental responsibility, efficient resource utilization, productive investment, and strong communities. Rooted in the traditional concept of "high road" as an ethically superior choice over "low road" ways, this application to economic development represents a vision of a better social economy.

# PROSPECTIVE HIGH ROAD FELLOWSHIP PLACEMENTS AND PROJECTS

## 1199 SEIU

2421 Main St. Suite 100 Buffalo, NY 14214 | <https://www.1199seiu.org/>

**About:** With over 450,000 members throughout Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Florida, and Washington, DC, 1199SEIU is the largest and fastest-growing healthcare union in the nation. Since our founding in 1932, our mission has been to stand up for quality healthcare, good jobs and social justice for all.

### **Project: “2024 Strategic Work Plan Project / Day-to-day internal organizing work”**

As main focus, Fellow to assist Area Vice President and Administrative Organizers on the WNY NH Team to involve members/member leaders in identifying and developing our strategic work plan for 2024. Also to be assigned to one Administrative Organizer for daily shadowing and hands-on learning for grievances, member meetings, labor management meetings, contract negotiations, etc. Fellow to observe and shadow: political department, new organizing department, communications department, etc. Fellow to observe and assist with grievance handling, labor management meetings, etc. Fellow should prepare a presentation on the 2024 strategic work plan (no specific format necessary—could consider video, paper, slideshow, etc.). This presentation should feature member interviews, data compiled from surveys, and more. The fellow should identify successful strategies from the past that have carried over into the work plan as well as areas that could be improved that require new strategies for 2024. This summary will be used for member and staff education and delegate assemblies and all-staff meetings. It will aid in improving working conditions, wages, and benefits for low-wage healthcare workers in Buffalo—improving economic conditions and empowering workers towards collective action. Project will be helpful in member and staff education to better prepare our team for future negotiations/growing our union.

## Buffalo Center for Arts and Technology

1221 Main Street Buffalo, NY 14209 | [www.buffaloartstechcenter.org](http://www.buffaloartstechcenter.org)

**About:** BCAT's Youth Arts & Technology Program engages high school youth in the arts and technology to keep them motivated, resilient and confident in school through graduation with a plan for their future. Our Youth are often underserved and under-resourced in their schools which prevents them from fair and equitable access to college or career pathways. The work done at BCAT is aimed at leveling the field for them. BCAT's tuition-free instruction builds skills for future success including classes taught in music production/engineering, 3D printing, mobile app development, photography/videography, and public art. Youth develop positive identity and creativity, and gain consistent access to academic support, mentoring, and college/career guidance motivating them to stay in school, graduate, and have confidence in their plans for a productive future.

### **Project: “Data Application and Expansion Project”**

The Youth Arts and Technology (YAT) team is continuing its yearly venture of expanding and developing its data collection and application around its program. We are at the stage now to begin interpreting and applying this information to inform and adapt our programming around it. This year the fellow will be a part of the collection and surveying of this data landscape to evaluate our program's relationship to its constituents, our funders and the larger city around it.

This project will be in itself a coalition towards programmatic self reflection growth for the team. We hope to have long term documentation and language developed through this process to communicate our organization's developed mission. We hope for our fellow to develop an extrapolating document that surveys our program from both data and experimental standpoints, bolstering our and our communities' understanding of our organization's connection to our community. This framework is extremely loose as we would like to leave room for input and for the Fellow to interrupt and adapt this project to their own strengths. We believe that our program, as a part of the city's ecosystem of services, is one of the many stepping stones towards a more equitable home for the youth that we serve and creating a more fundamental understanding of our programs relationship to itself and the larger Buffalo will do nothing but move us forward towards that ultimate goal.

## **Buffalo Prep**

3485 Main St., 105 Allen Hall, University at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY 14214 | <https://buffaloprep.com/>

**About:** With a focus on racially and culturally affirming practices, Buffalo Prep advocates for educational access and equity and provides programming to academically ambitious scholars of color. We strive to nurture our scholars' brilliance while empowering them to engage civically as their authentic selves. Buffalo Prep has been working to close the opportunity and access gaps for talented underrepresented students since 1989. In partnership with our scholars, we cultivate academic preparedness while also focusing on change within the community, striving to affect systemic changes that hinder marginalized and low-income students' performances to begin with.

### **Project: “Evolving Best Practices in Culturally Relevant Sustaining Pedagogy”**

In 2018, we overhauled our curriculum in our academic enrichment programs to integrate a culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogy (CRSP) that not only prepares our students for the academic rigor of our partner college preparatory high schools, but also reflects and celebrates their individuality, culture, and inherent talents while engaging them as democratic citizens. These programmatic and curriculum enhancements aim to better support the cultural diversity of Buffalo Prep students as well as provide increased access to resources and experiential learning, imparting a positive impact on not only our participating students and their families, but also the larger Buffalo community as a whole.

Buffalo Prep's middle school scholars receive accelerated subject matter in four core classes: English language arts, mathematics, science, and global history. Based on the theories and pedagogies of Gloria Ladson-Billings, this model nurtures innovative teaching methods, motivating teachers to affirm students' cultural, racial, and ethnic literacies, evaluating their own cultural positions and knowledge to determine how they can best impact student achievement. This asset-based pedagogy intentionally bridges the knowledge students bring with them into the classroom with the professional expertise teachers have acquired to structure learning opportunities that afford students the chance to demonstrate their (emerging) expertise while displaying a developing knowledge of content. Buffalo Prep's culturally relevant-sustaining curriculum is centered around three pillars: Academic Excellence, Cultural Competence and Critical Consciousness.

All courses feature problem- and project-based learning. A prime example of this curriculum in action is when scholars learned about food apartheid around Western New York in global history. Scholars used math principles such as geometry and ratios to calculate the distances between their home and the nearest corner store and grocery store, as well as the cost difference for fresh produce at each store. In ELA, scholars then used their newfound knowledge to write letters to elected officials and leadership at local grocery store chains, asking them to address the food apartheid city of Buffalo.

Buffalo Prep's staff and faculty received intensive training when implementing the curriculum shift and continue to participate in trainings and professional development each year. The research project for the High Road Fellow will center around CRSP best practices for low-to-moderate income youth. As our programming and organization continues to evolve, we need to continue a critical analysis of our role in order to attain true student achievement, accept and affirm cultural identities, and develop essential perspectives that challenge inequities. Our hopes are to one day develop a teaching academy where we train not only our own teachers but teachers from our partner high schools on CRSP. We also would like to expand the CRSP training in place for our scholars and staff. Working with a High Road Fellow would assist our executive, administrative, teaching, and tutorial staff in providing innovative and supportive programming that is critical for our scholars to ensure success in high school and beyond

## **Center for Self Advocacy**

1021 Broadway, Buffalo, NY 14212 | [https://www.center4sa.org/about\\_us](https://www.center4sa.org/about_us)

**About:** We help people with developmental disabilities work, advocate within their community, and have an independent and productive lifestyle.

### **Project: “Let’s Connect”**

This project is twofold. First, it will require the High Road Fellow to help promote and assist people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to learn computer skills, in a safe way. We use Office 365 to assist people to access medical portals, to communicate with family, to gain knowledge, and potentially to find a job. Our organization is in a disadvantaged area of urban Buffalo, New York, and we also extend our services to those who live in the immediate area (they may or may not have a disability) who are limited in internet access or computer availability. Second, the High Road Fellow will design and implement a means of tracking demographic data and information to ensure that we are reaching the populations we intend to reach as part of the Western New York Digital Equity Coalition. The intersectionality of disability with other populations is something that is often left unrecognized. There has been a tendency within the service system to “do for” people with disabilities. Our goal is always to empower others to “do”.

## **Center for Urban Studies, UB**

3435 Main St, Buffalo, NY 14214 | <https://centerforurbanstudies.ap.buffalo.edu/>

**About:** We are a research, neighborhood planning and community development institute devoted to building a just metropolis by eliminating neighborhood inequality and spatial injustice through the development of a neighborhood regeneration project that turns distressed neighborhoods in shrinking cities and regions. We seek to understand these neighborhoods, cities, and metropolitan regions in order to change them. We conduct original research, develop and implement place-based educational strategies, partner with national and international groups on public policy and collaborate with community-based organizations and local institutions.

**Project:** The High Road Fellow will work on the UB Center for Urban Studies project on Housing Values and Residential Segregation. The work will involve the Fellow in three research tasks. First, the Fellow will conduct an extensive search of the literature on (1) race and

housing appraisals, (2) race and property values, (3) the devaluation of Black homes, (4) racial residential segregation, and (5) the determination of housing values. Second, the Fellow will use EndNotes to develop a working bibliography for the project. Third, the Fellow will review select literature on housing appraisal and the determination of housing values. Fourth, based on this survey, the Fellow will work with Prof. Taylor on developing structural and neighborhood characteristics used to determine housing value and those neighborhood features associated with lower property values.

## **Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo**

726 Exchange Street, Suite 525, Buffalo, NY, 14210 | <https://www.cfgb.org/>

**About:** For more than a century, the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo has enhanced and encouraged long-term philanthropy in the Western New York community. A 501 (c)(3) organization, the Community Foundation's mission is: Connecting people, ideas and resources to improve lives in Western New York. Established in 1919, the Community Foundation has made the most of the generosity of individuals, families, foundations and organizations who entrust charitable assets to the Community Foundation's care.

**Project:** The Community Foundation is exploring how it—as a WNY philanthropic institution—can meaningfully contribute to local efforts targeting climate change. The High Road Fellow will research the various ways that regionally-based philanthropy institutions have assessed and worked to combat local climate impacts. The inventory would identify the most significant impacts and who is working to address them. Ultimately the Fellow's research will identify what role philanthropy could play in climate resilience that would include some examples of the work of peer foundations in the Great Lakes. This project lives in our Community Impact Department and will report to our Executive Director under the Chief of Staff for the CFGB.

## **Cornell ILR Buffalo Co-Lab, Good DEEDS**

617 Main Street, Suite 300, Buffalo, NY, 14203 | <https://www.ilr.cornell.edu/buffalo-co-lab>

**About:** Cornell ILR Buffalo Co-Lab advances an equitable economy and democratic community, collaboratively integrating scholarly and practical understanding to strengthen civic action. Good DEEDS Initiative (Data for Equitable Economic Development and Sustainability) aims to function as a public data repository and, through the HRP blog and quarterly issue memorandum, a public policy forum. Through these interconnected channels, Good DEEDS seeks to:

- democratize geographic, economic, environmental, and social data and provide training on how to use that data;
- generate a set of shared metrics for monitoring change over time;
- conduct original surveys to shed new light on regional workforce, civil society, economic and ecological health, and quality of life; and
- produce original research, memoranda, and reports to advance a High Road policy agenda.

The overarching mission of Good DEEDS is to provide an empirical basis for ensuring that development and community change in and beyond Upstate New York follows the High Road to shared prosperity for all residents, from the present to all future generations.

### **Project: “Data for the Public Good”**

The High Road Fellow in this position will work with a Co-Lab staff member to build new and update and maintain existing digital mapping tools and related interactive data dashboards. Through its various data tools, the Co-Lab has played a prominent role in democratizing information on, as well as leading and informing conversations about, various dimensions of economic, racial, and social inequality in Greater Buffalo and throughout New York State. The Fellow in this role will help to build the Co-Lab’s capacity in these spaces. Initial work will center on generating “data stories” and related public-facing content from existing tools, especially the Co-Lab’s forthcoming New York State Wage Atlas. The Fellow will also support efforts to update the applications available on the New York State Digital Equity Portal, and they will contribute to the conceptualization and/or development of new tools as opportunities arise. Hands-on training in these areas of work will be provided.

### **Field and Fork Network**

487 Main St. Suite 200 Buffalo, NY 14203 | [www.fieldandforknetwork.com](http://www.fieldandforknetwork.com)

**About:** Field & Fork Network (FFN) is a food and farming organization that connects communities to innovative solutions that foster a sustainable food system. FFN is building a thriving regional food system. Our focus is on economic development, food access, youth development and healthy neighborhoods. Since 2009, we've been creating more opportunities for local agriculture, providing greater access to food, building healthier neighborhoods and educating the next generation of food advocates.

### **Project: “Food Policy Agenda”**

Field & Fork Network has been a leader in the development and implementation of local food action plans and regional approaches to improving the food system. The organization wholeheartedly believes that one of the best ways to systemically improve the food system is by addressing and improving food-related policy throughout all levels of government, but starting at hyperlocal level. This proposed project will span all levels of government and will provide a future fellow with a diverse food policy experience, working both at the local level and bridging to the state and federal level of policy.

Field & Fork Network is excited about the opportunity to partner with the High Road Fellowship to advance our work related to food advocacy and civic engagement. Project Goals: Conduct necessary outreach to engage stakeholders in providing feedback to update the priorities of the Niagara Falls Food Advocacy Agenda – a project started by our 2022 High Road Fellow. Work with Field & Fork Network’s policy manager to research and gather information from stakeholders to inform a broader policy agenda for the organization that considers local, regional, state, and federal policy. Assist Field & Fork Network staff in building coalitions around specific, actionable policy items as identified through research and stakeholder engagement. B. The work specific to Niagara Falls is born out of the work of the Healthy Food Healthy People work group – a coalition of more than 35 community partner organizations who have been working together to improve food access in the city of Niagara Falls since 2013. The Healthy Food Healthy People work group led the development of and oversees the implementation of the Niagara Falls Local Food Action Plan.

The broader work will involve building coalitions and campaigns to support policy priorities. The final work product would be: Research report outlining best practices and food policy agendas. Outreach plan able to be used by project partners to build coalitions in support of

the policy agendas. Early data/input collected and catalogued. Draft policy agenda for Field & Fork Network. Updated Advocacy Agenda for Niagara Falls.

Healthy food is essential for a healthy life, and this statement is true regardless of socioeconomic status, race, creed, or any other factor. Food is a basic staple necessary for survival, and food access is a basic principle for equity in communities. Food access is also a social determinant of health and individuals with little to no access to healthy foods often experience a significantly higher rate of food-related health issues (obesity, diabetes, etc.). The purpose of the activities proposed as part of this application is to increase levels of food security, thereby contributing to a more equitable region.

## **Jewish Family Services**

70 Barker St, Buffalo, NY 14209 | <https://jfswny.org/>

**About:** JFS of Western New York empowers people to achieve their unique aspirations by offering culturally responsive and individualized care. Since 1862, Jewish Family Services of Western New York has been providing all members of our community with critical health and human services, regardless of religion, ethnicity, cultural background, gender identification, ability, or age.

### **Project: “Empowering New American Parents and Families in Buffalo”**

Our parent education program works with New American families to share, learn, and connect around topics related to raising children in the US. It is a critical part of how refugees integrate into our community and make strong social bonds. The program is at a pivot point and we would like to have the High Road Fellow do two things: 1. Participate in leading classes and community workshops and, 2. Design and conduct a needs assessment of how and where the program can grow to meet the needs of New Americans coming to Buffalo. Skills/Interests: Fluency with MS Office suite, particularly Excel, required. Video or photography skills would be welcomed but not required.

## **Massachusetts Avenue Project**

387 Massachusetts Ave, Buffalo, NY 14213 | <https://www.mass-ave.org/>

**About:** The Massachusetts Avenue Project works to build a diverse and equitable WNY food system by providing economic opportunities, jobs and leadership development to youth, access to local, nutritious and affordable food and social justice education and advocacy. MAP operates an urban farm, a city-wide Mobile Market, shared-use Commercial Kitchen supporting small scale food entrepreneurs, and a youth training and employment program.

**Project: “Marketing and Communications Fellow”** The Fellows’ time would be split working hands on, working on our urban farm (up to 10 hours per week) and in our commercial kitchen (up to 8 hours a week). Some of this time working on the farm and in the kitchen would be taking photos and crafting communications content for social media, our monthly newsletter and other organization documents. The remaining time each week would be spent under the direction of our Development Director helping to create communication content for social media and newsletter, create program surveys, coordinate translation of program materials and disseminate information to community members. Work may also include designing donor cultivation materials, coordinating organization calendar and assisting with event planning.

MAP works with many food system partners including Grassroots Gardens of WNY, the University of Buffalo's Food Lab, Buffalo Go Green, 20 regional farms, health centers, schools, houses of worship and community centers. We also work with coalition partners including the Good Food Buffalo Coalition (GFBC), the Buffalo Food Equity Network (BFEN) and Greater Buffalo Urban Growers (BUG) on various campaigns and projects to increase food and health equity.

The Fellow will gain an understanding of urban agroecology and regional food systems through their work at MAP. The Fellows work will contribute to building greater food and health equity in Buffalo by helping us to promote, inform and assess MAP's work in the community to increase nutritious, affordable and culturally appropriate food to food insecure residents, to offer commercial kitchen access to small scale entrepreneurs and to offer cooking and food preservation classes to the community and to the youth in our program.

### **Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor Commission**

111 Genesee Street, Suite 401| <https://www.michiganstreetbuffalo.org/our-team>

**About:** The Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor Commission (MSAAHCC) is a coalition of five nonprofits on Buffalo's East Side dedicated to revitalizing the Michigan Street Corridor by stimulating heritage tourism through the rich African American history that is preserved by our anchor organizations. As an advocate for the community, the MSAAHCC endeavors to integrate the African American cultural significance and impact on Buffalo's history through public engagement, community education that will invigorate, inspire and enliven cultural appreciation, preservation and community development.

#### **Project: "Business Incubation Plan for the Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor"**

The Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor Commission is engaged in an ambitious project to create an international tourism destination based on the rich African American history within the corridor and to stimulate economic revitalization of a once thriving neighborhood centered around Black life in Buffalo New York. To accomplish these goals, the Commission first created a strategic plan that involved extensive community input and reflected the hopes and desires of the residents of Michigan Ave. The next step is to implement one critical recommendation of the strategic plan - an economic plan for the neighborhood which includes the four cultural anchors or museums.

The High Road Fellow will help develop a strategy centered on business growth for Michigan Street to attract the types of retail tenants desired by the community and in support of the strategic plan vision. The strategy may include concepts such as business incubator partnerships and business technical assistance. The Fellow would be expected to immerse themselves in the Commission's strategic and economic plan, and research local agencies that assist with business development in Buffalo with a focus on African-American business ownership. It is expected by the end of the experience a resource guide will be developed that will assist the Commission in the next phase of planning.

## **Net Positive Inc. / The Foundry**

298 Northampton St, Buffalo NY 14208 | <https://www.thefoundrybuffalo.org/>

**About:** The Foundry is an active, community-based makerspace committed to regularly programming afterschool arts, STEAM and entrepreneurship sessions for youth; workforce development opportunities for young adults; hands-on classes for adults; and providing local entrepreneurs space and support for developing maker-based businesses.

### **Project: “Marketing Storytelling Content Creation”**

The main goal of this project is to capture the stories and accomplishments of those involved at The Foundry, or ‘Foundry Folks’, so that others are inspired to take action, get involved, and find their own journey with The Foundry. More than just a marketing campaign, this will serve as a showcase of the various avenues towards life and career success one can tap into when getting involved at The Foundry, helping to increase brand awareness and engagement, and spreading the organization’s mission throughout WNY communities & beyond.

This work is part of a general marketing strategy of The Foundry as a whole organization - celebrating the folks and skills that make up The Foundry community, while also illustrating the various paths one could take when getting involved with the organization. This content will be used throughout the year alongside other organizational programming and announcements.

The fellow will create a collection of marketing content and media that will be used for social media posts, fundraising campaigns, and other marketing efforts. This will consist of written blog post-like content, social media captions, website copy, a suite of images and videos, and, if applicable, short edited video clips.

We like to say The Foundry is a ‘place of possibility’. The main audience for this project is to target those who may not be sure what their next step is, may not fit in at school or other social environments, may have a lack of self confidence and self-agency to go after what truly brings them joy and accomplishment. These stories of Foundry Folks will inspire not only the next generation of students, makers, and small business owners of color, but also help to redirect the journey of someone who may have lost sight of their accomplishments due to various socioeconomic factors and systemic racism.

## **NYS Assemblymember Jon Rivera \*DEMOCRACY SUMMER\***

65 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14213 | <https://nyassembly.gov/mem/Jonathan-Rivera>

**About:** To represent and support the 149th NYS Assembly District

### **Project: “Business Analysis on Grant Street”**

The High Road Fellow project includes gathering data and creating a report on current businesses on Grant Street along with building and ownership. The goal is to create a report on the current status of Grant Street in relation to current and potential business growth. The final product of work will be a report that will foster local owned and operated business along the Grant Street Corridor. The goals is to utilize the grant to support policies that will further divulge into local business support such as grants and business services.



## Partnership for the Public Good

617 Main Street, Suite 300 Buffalo, NY 14203 | [www.ppgbuffalo.org](http://www.ppgbuffalo.org)

**About** The Partnership for the Public Good is working to build a more just, sustainable and culturally vibrant Greater Buffalo through action-oriented research, policy development and citizen engagement. With over 290 affiliated partners, PPG develops an annual Community Agenda of policy planks, hosts a weekly radio show, and produces publications and other resources to give the nonprofit community and citizens a stronger voice in public policy.

### **Project: “Deepening Democracy, Redefining Equity, and Renewing our Partnerships”**

Partnership for the Public Good is marking its 15th anniversary this year. Since our founding, we have grown to a network of over 370 partner organizations—community groups and nonprofits that range from large health agencies to small block clubs to theater companies to justice advocates, and much more. When they join PPG, partner groups sign on to our principles, an equity analysis and shared understanding of Buffalo’s strengths and challenges. The High Road Fellow will work on three initiatives connected to our anniversary, democratic model, and principles: 1) research other network and collective action organizations around the country to learn how they build democracy into their decision-making and governance, to inform PPG’s efforts to deepen our democratic processes; 2) create and administer a survey of PPG partners, so that we can map the areas they serve and group them by issues they are addressing; and 3) support the updating of PPG’s founding principles. As we turn fifteen, we are updating our collective vision for the region. The High Road Fellow will help organize partner focus groups and conduct outreach to partners to ensure they affirm their support for our updated equity analysis. The fellow will interact with and interview many community action organizations, draft a research memo, carry out a partner survey and analyze its findings.

## Preservation Buffalo Niagara

617 Main Street, Suite 201, Buffalo, NY 14203 | <https://preservationbuffaloniagara.org/>

**About:** Identify, protect, and promote our unique architecture and historic legacy, and connects people to the places they love in Western New York.

### **Project: “East Side History”**

The goal of this project is to assist with PBN’s East Side History initiative. This program aims to make historic information about Buffalo’s East Side, and the history and experience of Black Buffalonians, more accessible to the community while also collecting more research about the people, places, and events that shaped this historic part of Buffalo. The Fellow’s specific tasks will be to: Help research East Side sites for potential future landmarking. Assist with the preparation of any landmark nominations we pursue during this time. Prepare social/traditional media content based on the information found.

The East Side History project is the next phase of our East Side Historic Context Statement study. This study is a first-of-its-kind research project focusing on documenting the history and culture that shaped the physical development of East Buffalo. Developing accurate and

equitable documentation of the evolution of the East Side will provide a baseline historic narrative and timeline that preservationists and community leaders can use to correctly zero in on particular neighborhoods and do street-level surveys with the hopes of creating more historic districts and protecting a broader range of history with relevance to more communities.

The Fellow's work product may consist of any or all of the following: Organized research materials and notes. Written property descriptions and narratives that will be used as part of local landmark and/or National Register nominations. Social media posts, newsletter articles, etc. presenting research findings to the public.

Less than 5% of Buffalo's built environment is currently locally landmarked, a status that gives properties an extra level of protection from inappropriate development or demolition by requiring an extra review of any proposed exterior changes. Of the properties that are locally landmarked, only a fraction were designated specifically for their association with Black history. This project aims to break down the racial disparity in our landmarked properties by documenting these histories so that we can take action towards preservation planning efforts like local landmarking and National Register listings. It is especially important to move towards nominating resources to the National Register of Historic Places, because it is that designation level that provides property owners access to financial incentives. For areas of the city which were hardest hit by redlining and other racist disinvestment programs, gaining access to available tax credits and grants is critical.

## Say Yes to Education/ Breaking Barriers

1166 Jefferson Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14208 | <https://sayyesbuffalo.org/boys-men-of-color-initiative/>

**About:** The mission of the Say Yes Buffalo partnership is to remove barriers to educational attainment, workforce participation and economic mobility for students in public and charter schools in Buffalo, NY. Our collective impact partnership, centered on racial equity and inclusion, provides a postsecondary tuition promise and cradle to career comprehensive supports to increase the rates of high school and postsecondary completion and the achievement of fulfilling professional employment. The Boys & Men of Color Initiative at Say Yes Buffalo includes working extensively with young males of color through our Breaking Barriers Youth Leadership Council. Breaking Barriers" Youth Leadership Council is a group of young men of color, 12-24 years in age, creating a unified voice that advocates for racial equity, social justice and policy change. The Council will address the practices and systems that hold back males of color. Through civic leadership training and direct lobbying opportunities, Breaking Barriers participants will learn the importance of advocacy and will develop their personal and collective leadership skills to be able to influence positive change, strengthening and improving life outcomes for boys and young men of color.

**Project:** The goal of the "Breaking Barriers: Where Are They Now?" would be to contact and conduct interviews with members previously involved with Breaking Barriers to begin to tell the story of young men impacted by the program. The final product would include documentation of what previous members are currently doing now, things they have been involved in since graduating from Breaking Barriers, testimonials of the impact Breaking Barriers has had on them and what they are planning to do in the future. The work would also include updating contact information in our database, taking photos, working with our data and evaluation

consultant and recording testimonials. The fellow would be aided in video recordings and photos by our communication team at Say Yes Buffalo. This project would also become a part of the narrative change work of Breaking Barriers to highlight males of color in a positive way in an effort to counteract the dominant narrative that currently exists around boys and young males of color.



## Shared Mobility, Inc.

640 Ellicott Street #441 Buffalo, NY 14203 | <https://www.sharedmobility.org/>

**About** We believe that affordable, accessible, and equitable mobility is a Human right. We strive everyday to help build innovative shared transportation programs with local partners across the country that help uplift the communities they serve.

### Project “Engaging Communities through E-Bikesharing”

Shared Mobility Inc. (SMI) was founded in 2009 as Buffalo CarShare, the nation’s first social-equity focused shared mobility program. Since that time, SMI has transitioned its focus to creating equitable, affordable, and accessible programming across the shared mobility spectrum. Presently in Western New York, SMI is the operator of the Reddy Bikeshare system as well as the facilitator for E-Bike Library programming that provides members of the program free access to pedal-assist e-bikes. SMI is continually working to expand its programming with a community controlled focus with partners nationwide.

Moving into 2023, SMI’s Reddy Bikeshare program is planning to add electric-assist e-bikes to its bikesharing fleet. As the e-bikes are programming rolls out in Buffalo, the Reddy team is seeking to be mindful of how this impacts communities that the program serves by accentuating positive aspects that increase people’s personal mobility and mitigate potential negatives such as lack of understanding of the program or lack of access. The Fellow will work directly with Reddy’s Communications Team to conduct outreach and engagement activities that support the e-bikeshare programming and work with the broader SMI team to educate community members and identify areas of improvement for the program based on direct feedback. B. While there are many supporting partners of Reddy’s e-bikesharing expansion in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors whom the Fellow will interact and collaborate with (specifically for outreach and engagement activities), the SMI/Reddy team is leading the operation and implementation of e-bikeshare programming in Buffalo. C. Our Team envisions that the Fellow will create a brief report summarizing their experiences working with Reddy Bikeshare’s Communications Team to conduct outreach and engagement in Buffalo. Specifically, this report will relay what the Fellow has learned about the bikeshare program and share specific impacts that e-bikes have had on program members that they have identified during the Fellowship period. D. By increasing Reddy’s capacity to engage the community at a time when new technology (e-bikes) are being added to the system, the Fellow will help increase our ability to reach out and educate the community about how e-bikesharing can increase their personal mobility. Additionally, the Fellow will provide feedback based on their experiences on how Reddy could continue to increase the effectiveness of this engagement through observation and by collecting feedback directly from community members.

## **Starbucks Workers United**

2495 Main Street, Tri Main Building, Suite 556, Buffalo, NY 14214 | <https://sbworkersunited.org/>

**About:** Work on the Starbucks Organizing/Bargaining Campaign

**Project:** Assist with Workers United in its organizing campaign at Starbucks around the country. Working out of the Workers United Office in Buffalo, the fellow will assist as needed on a variety of tasks around communications, organizing, bargaining, picketing, hand billing, boycott. This work is part of the national campaign by Workers United and baristas to organize, unionize and bargain. The project is more day to day experience and support of a current national and local campaign and less providing a final work product.

## **Ujima Company, Inc.**

429 Plymouth Ave., Suite 2, Buffalo, NY, 14213 | <https://ujima.squarespace.com/>

**About:** Ujima is a Swahili word meaning “collective work and responsibility” and it is from this tenet that we derive our purpose. Ujima Company Inc. (UCI) is a multi-ethnic and multicultural professional theatre whose primary purpose is the preservation, perpetuation, and performance of African American theatre by providing working opportunities for established artists and training experience for aspiring artists. Ujima continues to use theatre to build the beloved community, shape and reflect our lives, participate in civic conversations, and serve as a vehicle for social change.

### **Project: “Theater Behind Bars”**

Fellows will be invited to conduct research and develop a plan to bring Theatre Arts Programming to WNY jails alongside our Program Director. This will include researching similar programs across the nation, possible community partners, & established jail programs that could benefit from arts programming. They will also be asked to develop a plan for initiating engagement with the jails. This program will be an Ujima program but we often connect with other relevant work from community partners. The fellow's final work product will be an engagement plan, briefs on possible community partners, and in-jail program collaborations. Fellows will also have an opportunity to present on all elements they have worked on throughout the summer (research, marketing, evaluation, etc.). Theater & storytelling is known to be a helpful tool in processing experiences that may feel overwhelming and unbearable. Those that are incarcerated will learn ways in which to share their stories and provide order in an environment that can be described as traumatic. Ujima is a collective of storytellers with a mission for improving the lives of our most vulnerable communities and those in our prison system are a major part of this group. Providing incarcerated individuals access to theater and creative expression, something that has traditionally been financially exclusive, creates a more equitable Buffalo. The work the fellows will do will allow us to efficiently target and find groups of individuals that could utilize theater arts programming.

## **WNY Law Center**

37 Franklin Street, 2nd floor Buffalo, NY 14202 | [www.wnylc.net](http://www.wnylc.net)

**About:** The WNY Law Center is a nonprofit legal services organization of legal professionals representing low-income people in a full range of civil matters. We engage in direct representation of homeowners facing foreclosure as well as advocacy and education in fair lending, consumer debt issues, preserving housing, and passing on generational wealth.

### **Project: “NFTA Survey & Policy Recommendations”**

The High Road Fellow project will involve collection and analysis of our recently announced "Rate Your Ride WNY" survey. Working alongside Columbia Law School to create the survey at [rateyourridewny.com](http://rateyourridewny.com), we are collecting rider's experiences across the NFTA's area. We're looking for responses about people's experience with both public and para transit and are working closely with the disability community. Our goal is to have the student at stops around the region, encouraging people to participate and then analyzing the data. We've already discovered that of the over 4,500 bus stops the NFTA has, only 250 or so have actually shelters or seats. The HRF will analyze where those stops are located and the condition of a sampling of the other stops in order to draft policy recommendations for the NFTA. This will be work in both Erie and Niagara Counties.

## **WNY Land Conservancy**

37 Franklin Street, 2nd floor Buffalo, NY 14202 | [www.wnylc.net](http://www.wnylc.net)

**About:** To permanently protect land with significant conservation value in Western New York, for the benefit of future generations.

### **Project: “Health Impact Assessment of the Riverline”**

The Western New York Land Conservancy is developing The Riverline based on a vision created by the community. The Riverline will transform the elevated former DL&W rail corridor along the Buffalo River into a string of vibrant and engaging experiences in nature that everyone can enjoy-right in the city, only minutes from downtown. The vision statement included in the 2018 document entitled "Reimaging Buffalo's DL&W Rail Corridor: A Community Vision" stated "The new trail and linear park will be an inspiring community gathering place alive with the history and voice of the surrounding neighborhoods. More than just a trail, the reimagined rail corridor will be a vibrant, safe, and welcoming place for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to connect with each other, with nature, and with the waterfront, throughout the year. The trail and linear park will be the focal point of a revitalized community and a restored ecosystem." In 2020, the "Equitable Development Framework" was completed, incorporating community input, neighborhood trends and case studies from other cities. The framework presents aspirational mission statements for six guiding focus areas, with a set of strategies for each focus area. The focus area of Nature and Community Wellness noted that pedestrian and bike safety on nearby streets , and overall walkability, need to be improved. Ensuring equitable access to The Riverline extends to broader goals, like improving public health.The proposed work for the fellow will include an assessment of existing health conditions in The Riverline

area, and conducting a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to evaluate potential health impacts and prioritize strategies to promote public health. The final product will be an HIA describing current conditions and potential health benefits of The Riverline. The final product will also include case studies of other similar projects and their impacts on community wellness. This work can serve as a pilot program for evaluating health outcomes in other Buffalo neighborhoods, with the goal of creating equitable access to parks and nature.

## WNY Women's Foundation

742 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209 | <https://wnywomensfoundation.org/>

**About:** Our mission is to create a culture of possibility so each woman can live, grow, and lead to her fullest potential. Today, the Foundation creates a culture of possibility for women of all ages through advocacy, investments, and strategic initiatives. We strive for short- and long-term impact within each of our strategic focus areas: Affordable, accessible, and quality childcare; Family-sustaining jobs for women; Policies and programs that support working women; Equal representation for women in leadership positions.

### **Project: “mPower: From Education to Employment Pathway Program Evaluation”**

We are seeking a High Road Fellow to assist with data collection and data analysis of our mPower: From Education to Employment Health Care Pathway – an initiative to advance women’s economic mobility in the City of Buffalo. The WNY Women’s Foundation designed and administers the mPower Health Care Pathway through partnerships with Harvest House and Lineage Care Group. Harvest House, a nonprofit organization in East Buffalo, hosts the workforce training and provides wrap-around support services. As the employer partner, Lineage Care Group pays participants in the training program, provides the instructor, and ensures graduates’ seamless transition to full-time employment at a long-term care facility. Specific tasks for the potential High Road Fellow include: Playing a role in the ongoing creation of a comprehensive multi-year program evaluation plan for the mPower program. Analyzing existing data. Collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data. Assisting with a community needs assessment in regards to workforce development needs and economic mobility challenges for women in the City of Buffalo. Creating written reports and presentations on the efficacy of the program for a variety of audiences, including funding sources (grants), partner (and potential partner) organizations, as well as policy-makers at the local, state, and national level.

## ADDITIONAL DEMOCRACY SUMMER FELLOWSHIPS

Democracy Summer is designed for ILR undergraduate students interested in enhancing democracy through public service. Democracy Summer provides insight on the issues and access to leaders who are addressing major challenges *through government*. It provides a strong grounding in critical thinking, group dynamics, and problem solving. This summer, Democracy Fellows are considered High Road Fellows but their individual projects are coordinated with a specific public official instead of a not-for-profit organization.

One example of a potential Democracy Summer project this summer is to work with a local elected official and coalition on the Frontline Arts Organizations Sustainability Fund. We anticipate being at the implementation phase of the Frontline Arts Organizations Sustainability Fund, which is a \$2.5M seed fund allocation in the City of Buffalo's federal stimulus funding package for frontline arts organizations and artists. Frontline Arts Buffalo (FAB) was closely involved in seeing that fund proposal through, and we are hoping to use this 3 year spend-down fund as a pilot towards showing the need for the city to invest significantly in the arts and cultural sector. The High Road Fellow will assist with developing evaluation methods and measures that we can use to track impact, and leverage grantmaking in storytelling for us to build momentum around the work.



This painting, titled “Regrowth” (acrylic on paper) was created by Lizzie Taber (High Road ’21) for the High Road Showcase.

The engine represents Buffalo’s position as a rust belt city and Lizzie’s placement with Citizens for Regional Transit. The sky represents the growth and potential Buffalo has.

The 22 Native New York plants associated with spring and early summer represent the 22 High Road Fellows and healthy, sustainable growth.

