

PERICLEAN NEWSLETTER



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Class of 2021: Sioux Nation.....	1
Class of 2022: Ghana.....	2
Class of 2023: Sri Lanka.....	3
Class of 2024: Structural Racism and Racial Inequality.....	4

Class of 2021: Sioux Nation

BY EMERSON WELLS

As the Class of 2021 prepares to finish their time at Elon, Kitty Helm, an Environmental Studies major and Global and International Studies minor, spoke about her last semester in the Periclean Scholars program.

The senior class has been involved with the Oglala Lakota Sioux Nation in South Dakota, specifically partnering with the Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Though the class originally had multiple trips planned to visit the reservation, they ultimately had to be cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

"That was disappointing as students to not be able to go there firsthand, see the reservation, and meet the people we have been working with virtually," says Helm.

Because of this, the class has shifted to doing a lot of grant work, as a method of making sustainable change from afar. This type of work can be done easily in a collaborative and virtual setting, with the Class of 2021 working equally in partnership with the OLCJC.

Outside of grant work, the class has partnered with Elon Organizations, like Yoga Club, to hold donation-based events and with local food vendors and restaurants to hold profit shares. The funds from these events went on to benefit the class partner.

The class has also worked with NASA, the Native American Student Association, and Paula Patch, professor of a Native American literature class, to both organize and share events.

Helm discussed the struggles the class has faced this semester, including that one of the biggest challenges was listening and communicating with their partner to ensure the class was doing the work that was needed. Helm added that service can look like learning to work with people, rather than for the people.

"It can feel frustrating, like we aren't doing enough or not helping them right now, but we have to respect that we are on their timeline," says Helm, emphasizing the busy caseload and few staff members their partner has that can hinder communication.

For the new Class of 2024 and other Periclean classes, Helm offers this advice: "Even though we've met a lot of challenges and frustrations and, at times, you know you feel like you might not be doing the most good you can do, when you look back you did make an impact. Even the smallest things make a difference."



Class of 2022: Ghana

BY CALLAHAN JOHNSTON

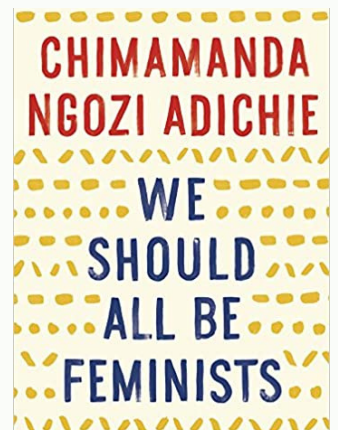
Josie Cousineau, a 2022 scholar, gave some information on what their cohort is up to right now.

Josie reported that the class just finished the book *We Should All Be Feminists* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and had a good discussion on women's rights. With the class of 18 being all female, she feels like it would be interesting to have a male perspective at times. When asked about how she feels about how the group works together, she stated that everyone has their own different skills that can be utilized. She feels like the class as a whole works really well together.

Right now the class is currently researching grant opportunities with partnerships in Ghana. Excitingly, the grant proposal with the Youth Development, Research and Innovation Centre, their Ghanaian Partner, has been accepted by the Canadian Embassy. Now, they are waiting on the next steps with that. They also have a local partnership with Down Home of Alamance County, they are still working with. With this partnership, they encourage people to vote in local and outside elections. Since the election is over, there is not much the cohort can do with that partnership right now, but they still take part in any local events Down Home presents. They also promote any local elections happening in the area.

Right now, they are also working on a presentation for the class of 2024 Periclean's. The presentation includes guidance and advice for the newest cohort in ensuring they have successful years together. The pandemic is proving to make their ability to travel to Ghana a bit more difficult. Right now, the class has no plan to travel over there right now. Since many students were not able to travel through Elon this year, many are traveling abroad in the fall of their senior year, so this makes it a challenge to travel as a group. Regardless, Josie feels like they are able to make a significant impact remotely. Josie reported that getting in contact with their partner in Ghana can be hard at times with both parties living in different time zones and various internet issues, but nonetheless they are still able to communicate with them on a regular basis.

She also feels like Periclean as a whole shouldn't have its primary focus be about traveling to the country because there is a lot that gets accomplished while on campus. All in all, the class is working hard amid all the craziness of covid.



The book Josie Cousineau's class just recently finished.

Class of 2023: Sri Lanka

BY CALLAHAN JOHNSTON

Abigail Fisher, a 2023 scholar, gave some information about what their cohort is up to right now. The class is currently learning more about Sri Lanka. Professor Gendle, their mentor, has assigned some readings for them to get a better background of Sri Lankan history. The class is starting to do some more research on potential local partners. They also are trying to find more information on possible partners in Sri Lanka other than Sarvodaya.

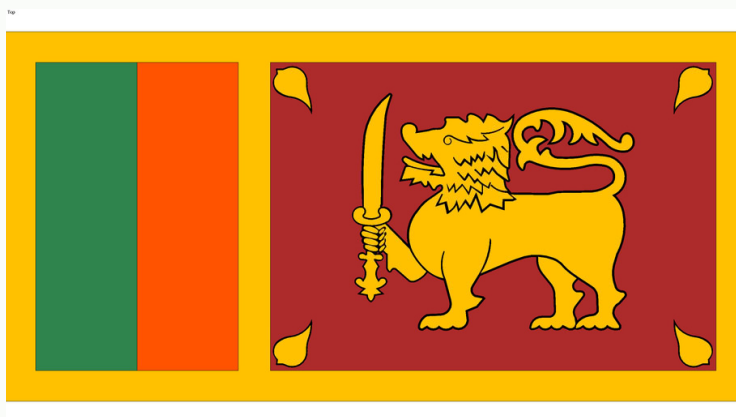
Right now, the class is starting to make a plan for next year by prioritizing possible issues to work with locally and globally. Locally, they want to work with the North Carolina Wildlife Fund as well the Center for Community Transitions, Equality North Carolina, and the Black Family Land Trust. Depending on how everything goes with the pandemic, one of these organizations will be chosen and then the class will be able to create a partnership. Similarly to locally, the class is starting to prioritize global partners. Right now the issues they want to support in Sri Lanka are women's rights, LGBTQIA issues, coral reef restoration, and waste management.

Excitingly, the class's Fund for Excellence grant has been approved. Since this has been accepted, the class is thinking about an event to plan for the next year relating to Sri Lankan culture and new year celebrations

When asked what has been the biggest challenge as a group, Abigail stated that it is a lot harder now because it is a half credit class, so it is a challenge to find time to work on partners, thus making it harder to make an impact. When asked what she is most excited about, she says she is excited to start working with our partners in Sri Lanka. She also feels like Covid is making an impact on the class. She also thinks that a potential issue the class could possibly deal with is Covid and its impacts on Sri Lanka. She feels like it is hard that the class can't travel there, but she is hopeful she will be able to go the J-Term of her senior year.

She feels like class size has impacted projects. She wished that there were 4 more people. She feels like right now the class is going through burn out and it would be helpful to rely on a couple more people to get tasks done.

With the hope of a more normal year in the fall, the class will be able to get to work on these wonderful partners.



Class of 2024: Structural Racism and Racial Injustice

BY EMERSON WELLS

On March 19, 2021, The Periclean Scholars Class of 2024 participated in their induction ceremony. Taking place in an outside tent in the Global Neighborhood, the event featured words from Dr. Shannon Lundeen, class mentor, and Dr. Mat Gendle, Director of the Project Pericles program. This event provided the opportunity for members of the new class, sophomore class, and faculty leaders to get to know each other.

“They really are a diverse group of students,” says Dr. Lundeen. “Historically speaking, most scholars classes are predominantly filled with white women, not that there's anything wrong with that, but it kind of reproduces the majority in terms of the student population that gets involved in things here at Elon.”

Unlike previous classes, the Class of 2024 is topic-focused, rather than location-focused, and will explore the topic of structural racism and racial injustice. Because of the group's diverse interests and academic goals, Dr. Lundeen is excited to see where they take this theme. She continues to monitor the intended country of focus, Morocco, for potential travel, but will not do so until it is safe to pursue community partnerships.

“I think it's going to be really interesting to see what they decide to focus on because advancing racial equity is a really big topic. So even though in some respects, it seems like we're starting off on a more solid foundation, because the topic has been chosen for them... they're all over the place in terms of what they are interested in looking at through a racial equity lens,” says Dr. Lundeen.

Some examples of projects that Dr. Lundeen can see the class pursuing include public health disparities, admissions and access to education in Elon and the greater community, poverty in relation to systemic racism, and community activism.

To help members of the Class of 2024 navigate this topic, Dr. Lundeen presented *Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence: Understanding and Facilitating Difficult Dialogues on Race*, a book of focus of the fall semester, at the induction ceremony.

“The purpose of this book is to help people understand all the psychological triggers and defense mechanisms that we will use to either silence other people or to not speak up for fear of making mistakes,” says Dr. Lundeen.

“It helps normalize that feeling of apprehension and anxiety which can lead to students being more willing to make mistakes and to share and start to do that more difficult work, because if they can't trust each other then they're going to have a really hard time partnering with any community organization,” she adds, including how she hopes the classroom serves as a “brave space” for self exploration.