

Notes from the Field: FWT 2018

MARCH 8, 2018

36 states. 42 countries. 6 continents. (Antarctica, we're coming for you!) During Field Work Term 2018, Bennington students went everywhere.



Through the help of alumni and faculty connections, the Bennington network continued to expand. This year, 150 new sites were established, including at Joudour Sahara School in Morocco, the Sante Fe Art Institute, and the Vermont Senate.

Shifting Tides: STEM and Healthcare

In 2018, Bennington College continued to see an increased demand for Field Work Term sites in STEM fields, with approximately 10% of students applying their innovative, creative, and ambitious Bennington educations to internships in STEM fields.

Bennington students worked at:

- **Big Tunjunga Veterinary Hospital** (Tunjunga, CA): Caring for animals pre- and post-surgery.

- **FLAS Inc.** (Houston, TX): Providing health programs and social services for the Latino community.
- **Our Climate** (Portland, OR): Organizing a youth summit around carbon pricing.
- **BeWell** (North Bennington, VT): Using telemedicine to deliver health and psychological services to students.
- **VERITAS** (Amado, AZ): Conducting astronomy observations and research.
- **Vapor IO** (Austin, TX): Collaborating on hardware and software development.

Local Impact

Over the past five years, Bennington students have worked for **80 Vermont businesses and not-for-profits** (over 40 in the Bennington area alone) contributing approximately **34,000 hours of work**.

During FWT 2018 alone, 29 students worked for 16 organizations in Vermont, including:

- **Bennington Rescue Squad**
- **Bennington County Regional Commission**
- **Bennington Museum**

- **Quantum Leap**, 8 students tutored at MAUHS, multi-year partnership
- **DREAM Program**
- **Sunrise Family Resource Center**
- **Frost Stone House**
- **Vermont Arts Exchange**
- **The Vermont State Legislature**

Work You Believe In: Public Action

For students studying politics, policy, or public action, Field Work Term experiences spent working in government or social service agencies help bridge the gap between theory and experience. Furthermore, these opportunities challenge students to engage with causes they believe in, inspiring a societally critical “if you don’t like it, change it” call to action.

In 2018, Bennington students spanned the globe, interning for Vermont state senate campaigns, for city planners in Fayetteville, Arkansas, and for the judicial branch of Liberia.

Highlights included:

- **Evelyn Weber '18 at 215 People's Alliance**, a Philadelphia-based organization working with local teachers and parents to campaign for fair and just education.

- **Schyler Norton '20 at Partnership for the Public Good** in Buffalo, NY, addressing the negative aspects of cash bail.
- **Ajsa Udovcic '18 at Forum of Left Initiative in Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina**, collaborating with women, students, and civil organizations within the country on projects that encourage a healthier, more democratic surrounding.

Generations of Bennington: Alumni Organizations

Bennington College's belief in self-directed, hands-on lifelong learning continues to influence students long after graduation. Every Field Work Term, alumni extend internship opportunities to current students, strengthening the Bennington network across generations.

In 2018, Bennington students worked with:

- **American Museum of Natural History** (New York, NY), referred by Jake Adams '01
- **The American Theatre Company** (Brussels, Belgium), referred by Robynn Colwell MFA '13
- **Arnold Arboretum-Harvard** (Boston, MA), referred by Janet Blanding '83 and Tamra Madenwald '90
- **Nikitas Village** (Lipsi, Greece), referred by Chloe Rovitz '16

- **The Martha Graham Dance Company** (New York, NY), referred by Minden Koopmans '05

New Partnership

The College launched **The Lucille Lortel Foundation Fellowships in Theatre**, a pilot grant program offering paid internships during FWT in off-Broadway non-profit theater companies for exceptional Bennington drama students. Made possible by a grant from the Lucille Lortel Foundation, 12 fellows cultivated a deeper, more practical understanding of the theater world. The pilot was so successful it will now be an ongoing partnership

The Fellows worked at:

- **Abingdon Theatre Company**
- **Cherry Lane Theatre**
- **The Flea Theater**
- **The Lark**
- **MCC Theater**
- **Mint Theater Company**
- **New Georges**
- **Rattlestick Playwrights Theater**
- **Vineyard Theatre**
- **Lucille Lortel Foundation**

