2018 Upstate Institute Summer Field School Fellowship

**Title:** The Impact of A Public Speaking Curriculum on a Child’s Self Confidence  
**Community Partner:** Fiver Children’s Foundation

*Research on the importance of and methods of developing strong public speaking skills in youth, appropriate for a student interested in working with at-risk youth in a residential summer camp setting in the area.*

**Project Description:**
The public speaking program at Camp Fiver, a residential summer camp in nearby Poolville, was initiated by Larry Geller, a retired judge and Colgate University graduate ('67). Larry responded to an outreach from Colgate classmate and Fiver founder, Tom Tucker, when Camp Fiver was first getting off the ground. Thanks to Larry’s efforts, the public speaking program has evolved into an extensive collection of activities and lessons that teach Fiver youth the skills they need to present themselves with confidence.

A Fellow matched with the Fiver Children’s Foundation will work at Camp Fiver this summer to document and enhance all components of the camp’s public speaking program, in an effort to sustain and continue this essential program through anticipated staff transitions. The goal of the Fellowship is to document the components of the public speaking program including: all-camp announcements, handshakes, graduation speeches, mock-interviews and formal curriculum. This “road map” will be a guide and training tool for staff that will be used to ensure accurate and consistent implementation of the program in future years. The Fellow will observe and assist in the public speaking curriculum areas to accurately document each class and add necessary elements to the curriculum. Additionally, the Fellow will conduct an evaluation of the program, which will include both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The Fellow will then connect the evaluation of the curriculum to relevant research on the benefits of public speaking skills.

As a result of this work, Fiver will be able to adapt and adjust the public speaking program to best support and prepare their young Central New York students that attend camp each summer. This will give them a plan to sustain the program and ensure that future campers also receive the benefits of this program. Additionally, Fiver will be willing to share the public speaking curriculum with other youth development nonprofits in the area. Lastly, the evaluation summary and analysis will be used to leverage financial support for the program in future years.

**About the Community Partner:**
The Fiver Children’s Foundation is a comprehensive youth development organization that makes a 10-year commitment to children from underserved communities throughout New York City and central New York. Through character-building summer and year-round cocurricular programs, Fiver empowers children to make ethical and healthy decisions, to become engaged citizens, and to succeed in school, careers, and life. Fiver provides children from the central NY area with a residential camp experience every year from age 8 to 18, free of charge. Children have the opportunity to interact with diverse peers from New York City, allowing them to learn the skills necessary to succeed in a multicultural world.

**Required Skills:**
The Fellow should be comfortable interacting with children of all ages, and be able to work both in and outdoors in a camp setting. The student should have strong writing skills, confidence to conduct interviews with teens, and an analytical mind. An interest or skills in education, youth development programming, curriculum development or evaluation is a plus. The Fellow will be encouraged to come to Fiver’s week of staff training prior to the arrival of campers, as well as in-service trainings throughout the
summer. Through this experience the Fellow will gain an insight into youth development, the nonprofit sector, curriculum writing, program development and program analysis. The Fellow will also have the opportunity to practice and further develop the following skills: leadership, taking initiative, team work, productive communicating, and problem solving. Fiver is seeking an individual who is comfortable working as part of a team as well as independently. Lastly, Fiver requests a Fellow that is flexible and appreciative of diversity.

**Logistics:**
This is a full-time paid research position (35 hours per week) to last approximately 10 weeks, conducted under the joint supervision of the Upstate Institute and the Fiver Foundation, to take place at Camp Fiver. Working at camp will allow the Fellow to be immersed in Fiver culture, resulting in the most positive experience. The Fellow will be directly supervised by Michael Ward, Fiver’s summer Program Director as well as Mary Lee Dinski, Camp Director. Field School Fellows receive a research stipend of $4500 plus reimbursement for any costs associated with transportation for this project.