

**Student Dialogue Fellows**  
**Dialogue, Inclusion & Democracy Lab**  
Providence College

**2023-2024**



**Reflections & Impact**  
Student Fellows Engagement in  
Conversations for Change

## **D.I.D Mission**

"To create inclusive spaces that support the development of well-informed and engaged students."

### **Conversations for Change**

"Conversations for Change will expand opportunities for students to engage in deep and meaningful civil discourse across campus and in the local community.

The project will strategically embed civil discourse in courses and student life, offer professional development to faculty, staff, and student leaders on facilitating dialogue on disputed questions, and disseminate lessons and tools to foster skills and traits for active citizenship.

Ultimately, this project aspires to educate the next generation of leaders who will make meaningful contributions, address public challenges, and promote the common good."

## **Student Fellows**

Aliyat Adeboye

Lexi Delano

Connor Flynn

Sofia Lamas

Ella McIntire

Rachel Medeiros

Amari Mims

Johandalys Montas

Bryn Morgan

Daniel Singh

## ALIYAT ADEBOYE '24

*POLITICAL SCIENCE, HEALTH POLICY & MANAGEMENT*

### Moore Fellow

This year, as a Dialogue, Inclusion, and Democracy (D.I.D) Fellow, I have been fully committed to fostering inclusive environments and advancing democratic values. I have engaged myself in a path of profound learning and action.

As a D.I.D Fellow, one of the most important things I've done is facilitate conversations that bring together different points of view. I have seen firsthand how effective discourse can be in promoting empathy and understanding among people from diverse backgrounds through participatory workshops and structured conversations. In addition to broadening my personal horizons, these discussions have helped build more welcoming communities where all viewpoints are respected and heard. I have actively worked with various clubs and organizations on campus to plan and carry out diversity, equity, and inclusion-focused projects. Some of which have my Affirmative Action event and my Beginning of Ramadan event. Every activity, whether it be from facilitating an event or creating and putting up a question, has been a step in the direction of creating a society with greater mutual respect and understanding.

Furthermore, I now have a deeper grasp of democratic procedures and ideas as a result of my D.I.D Fellow experience. I have participated in conversations about civic involvement, participatory democracy, and the value of maintaining democratic standards. I have worked to provide people the tools they need to become informed and involved members of their communities by implementing programs that promote civic engagement and active citizenship.

This experience has increased my dedication to social change and has motivated me to keep promoting communication, inclusivity, and democracy in the next chapter of my life. Overall, I would say that being a D.I.D Fellow was a fulfilling and influential experience that helped to shape me into a more proactive, inclusive, and compassionate leader who is committed to promoting democratic principles and creating inclusive communities.

## LEXI DELANO '25

*BIOLOGY*

### STEM Fellow

As I reflect on my work in the D.I.D Lab, I cannot help but acknowledge how one year of learning from such inspiring individuals has helped me grow into a stronger facilitator and leader on campus. I have been fortunate enough to allow my creative side to grow through the planning and cosponsoring of events on campus, coordinate with a partner on tasks that challenged my organizational and conflict management skills, as well as learn tangible skills through workshops and lectures.

As a student aspiring to go into the medical field, I first thought this would be entirely different than my other course work. While on an academic level it may be, I am gathering skills that better me as a human being and will be able to be poured out into my work as a physician in the future. This experience has given me the confidence in myself to tackle the hardships of the world in a positive and meaningful way.

## CONNOR FLYNN '25

POLITICAL SCIENCE

### Feinstein Fellow

I have always been a firm believer in the power of conversations for change. Being a D.I.D fellow at Providence College during my junior year has been one of the most important experiences I have had thus far in my college experience. In a time of great social, political, and cultural division within our nation, our goal as D.I.D fellows revolved around challenging members of our own community, including ourselves, to step out of our comfort zones and engage in crucial conversations with diverse audiences. So often it is easy to shy away and shelter from the work that is necessary to bring people together from vastly different backgrounds, but I believe we have collectively witnessed small but impactful changes at Providence College, during a challenging and contentious time on our campus and in our country.

I am proud that much of our ideals were modeled during the Smith Hill Conversations for Change series that brought together members of the Providence community with members of the college in conversation. Although many of the issues raised remain unresolved, it was inspiring to see both sides come together, face to face, to address each other in a civil and respectful way. Similarly, I am also very proud of the work that went into our With Mutual Respect dialogue this semester and I am incredibly grateful to Fr. Sicard, the faculty planning committee, and my fellow panelists for helping to model what civil and political discourse truly looks like in the age we live in. Although With Mutual Respect was only one night, I sincerely hope that the model we provided, and invited others to engage in, will light our way as we enter into yet another presidential election season this fall. Thank you to Drs. Longo and Bevely for their relentless support of the Civic Engagement Task Force, a student run and faculty supported group designed to sustain and enhance levels of civic engagement at Providence College. We have much more on the way for the 2024-2025 school year!

Often during this year I have found myself thinking of Robert F. Kennedy, a man who is one of my personal heroes for the way that he helped bring together diverse groups of people and reinvigorated countless Americans with a renewed sense of belonging and civic engagement. Bobby Kennedy once said that "few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events." Truly, that is the work of the D.I.D lab, and it must be the work of all of us, in some way, if we are to continue as a free and pluralistic country. The glue of our democracy is found in the quiet and often overlooked corners of our nation and I am immensely thankful that I was able to play my own small role in helping the critical work of the D.I.D lab this year and, hopefully, well into the future.



Engaging in Conversations for Change has been transformative, not only in broadening my perspectives but also in deepening my understanding of the profound significance of shaping our experiences. Having conversations with a wide range of people has given me insight into a multitude of perspectives, each of which offers a distinct lens through which to view the world. Nevertheless, I've come to see the fundamental similarity between all of us as human beings in the middle of this diversity. Connecting with communities and engaging in discussions have not only expanded my horizons but have also fortified my capacity as a leader. Accepting different viewpoints has improved my ability to resolve conflicts and promote teamwork. Ultimately, I have learned that true leadership entails creating an atmosphere in which other views may be heard and appreciated in addition to speaking one's own mind.

## SOFIA LAMAS '24

### HEALTH POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

### Moore Fellow



## ELLA MCINTIRE '24

### HISTORY

### PCSB Fellow

My experience in collaborating with Conversations for Change has solidified the importance of having a human connection when discussing difficult topics. In today's political climate it is really easy to villainize the side you disagree with. When you do this, however, is when you lose the ability to connect with them because you see them as the enemy rather than as a fellow member of the human community. Being involved in Conversations for Change has been really impactful because it has highlighted the importance of infusing a human connection back into the political climate. Working with such a diverse group of student and faculty fellows has showed me that even though we may disagree on things, we are able to overcome those disagreements because we have a relationship that is founded in an authentic and respectful human connection. It is hard to hate someone when you know their story. With the work that Conversations for Change is doing, I am really hopeful for the future because we are giving students the platform to engage in meaningful conversations that are rooted in respect and a genuine desire to learn from their neighbors. What I have learned from these experiences will guide me through life and I hope that others who have participated feel the same way.



## RACHEL MEDEIROS '25

MARKETING & SOCIOLOGY

### PCSB Fellow

My experience with Conversations for Change has been defined through my work as a Dialogue, Inclusion, and Democracy fellow at Providence College. In this role, I have worked collaboratively with other D.I.D Fellows, students, professors, and faculty to promote greater dialogue and civil discourse across campus. As fellows, our approach to this mission has been twofold: we curated biweekly questions for our respective D.I.D Walls and organized dialogue-focused events for members of the student body. We also engaged in other initiatives throughout the academic year, such as participation in the With Mutual Respect series, attendance at multiple guest speaker talks, and conversations with community members at the Smith Hill Library.

This experience has taught me multiple lessons about the importance of engaging in conversation. Promoting dialogue, especially on a college campus, allows for the spread of ideas and the creation of new relationships. It also allows us to bridge divides, which gives us a better understanding of those who are different from us and challenges our perspectives. An essential part of dialogue that I have learned as a D.I.D fellow is active listening. The fruits of meaningful dialogue cannot be achieved if one or both parties do not fully and actively listen to one another. Since becoming a D.I.D fellow, I have tried to implement active listening in my classes, friendships, and work. I believe that this practice has improved my learning, curiosity, and relationships with others.

## AMARI MIMS '25

BIOLOGY

### STEM Fellow

Through the collaboration for change project, this experience has shaped me into a better leader, communicator, facilitator, and overall, a better person. Learning to navigate difficult conversations is a fundamental aspect of life; challenges are inevitable, and not everything will go according to plan. As I embark on my journey as a doctor or leader, and in all aspects of my future, I will prioritize the importance of leadership characterized by vulnerability, creating a comfortable environment for my audience, and sharing relevant experiences that contribute to the conversation. Ensuring that my voice, as well as the voices of those I advocate for, are heard is paramount. Being a D.I.D fellow has underscored the significance of dialogue over debate. True conversations involve listening to both sides and fostering mutual understanding, rather than simply asserting one's opinions. Advocating for change requires respect and open communication, as a confrontational approach only serves to erect barriers between individuals and stifles progress. I will always remember the importance of respectful speech, allowing for meaningful communication, and ensuring that everyone's perspective is valued and heard.

## JOHANDALYS MONTAS '25

### GLOBAL STUDIES & ECONOMICS

### PC-Smith Hill Annex Fellow

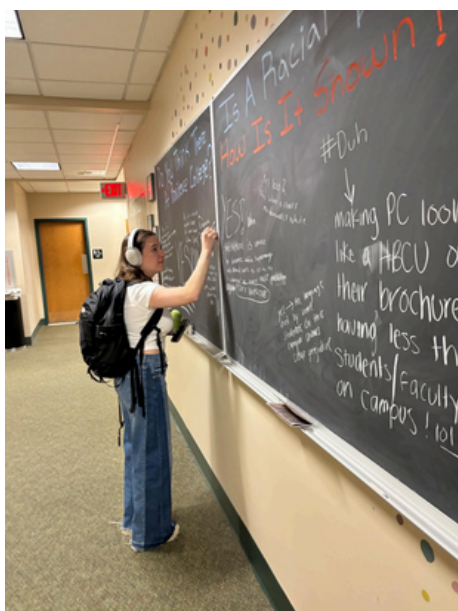
Collaborating with Conversations for Change has been an invaluable experience that has greatly impacted my personal and professional growth. Attending the SNF Ithaca National Student Dialogue, facilitated by the SNF Ithaca Initiative, was a privilege made possible through my involvement with the D.I.D Lab and Conversations for Change. This event brought together students from diverse backgrounds to discuss and develop policy solutions. It provided me with an opportunity to learn from peers across the country, gaining insights into improving campus environments for discussions and dialogue. Participating in this conference has provided me with a multitude of invaluable skills. The lessons learned from the D.I.D Lab and Conversations for Change will continue to deeply influence my future work and studies. Actively engaging with diverse perspectives will remain a priority as I seek to understand different viewpoints and appreciate the complexities of our world. Emphasizing empathy in every interaction will guide my approach, fostering compassionate and understanding conversations. Prioritizing advocacy and action will drive me to use my voice to address social injustices and promote positive change. Continuous education and awareness will remain paramount, as I commit to learning about various cultures, identities, and issues to contribute to creating a more equitable and inclusive society. Through embodying these lessons, I aim to make a meaningful impact and contribute to building a better world for all.



## BRYN MORGAN '24

### MARKETING

### PC-Smith Hill Annex Fellow



Collaborating with Conversations for Change this past year has been a remarkable and unforgettable experience. I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to lead critical dialogues about divisive issues, such as the Dialogue Series at the Smith Hill Library and moderating the With Mutual Respect event. These events took me out of my comfort zone but created the opportunity for me to facilitate meaningful conversations that our community tends to shy away from. What is most impactful to me, however, is watching the overall Providence College community flourish, embrace conversations, and engage in dialogues that previously appeared to be neglected. Watching the impact of our work is very validating, and I look forward to seeing what the D.I.D Lab will do in the future.

## DANIEL SINGH '26 PSYCHOLOGY

### Feinstein Fellow

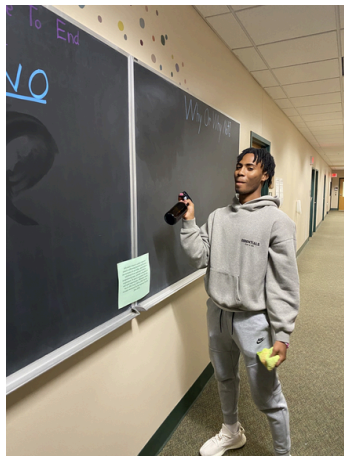
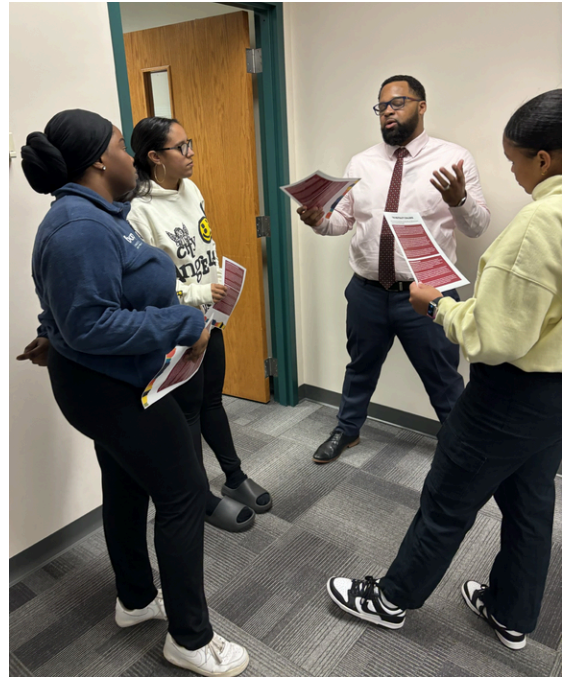
Sometimes all you need to engender change is a single conversation. Through the Dialogue, Inclusion, and Democracy Lab at Providence College however, conversations for change are facilitated on a regular basis, leading to real and lasting changes both on campus and within the greater community. As a student dialogue fellow working mostly in the Feinstein Academic Center, my main job has included transforming the Feinstein building itself into a hub of innovation, entrepreneurship, and excitement that supports and displays the passions of the PC student body. Through the use of insightful and supportive mentors, such as Dr. Beverly, Dr. Longo, and esteemed social entrepreneur Kelly Ramirez, Feinstein has already begun its renovations, as the establishment of Friartown Closet and the announcement of new study spaces have brightened the building from the inside out. In addition to working on campus to provide forums for civil discourse, I have had the opportunity to partner with off campus organizations within PC's surrounding community to bridge campus-community divides and establish a more mutually-beneficial relationship between the school and the city's inhabitants.

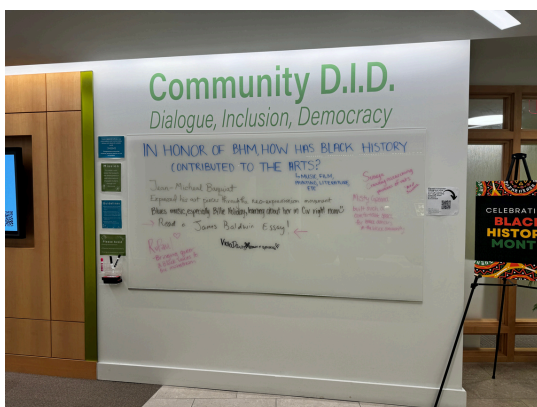
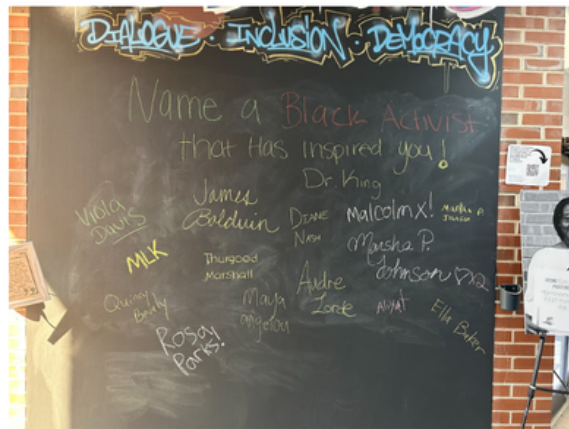
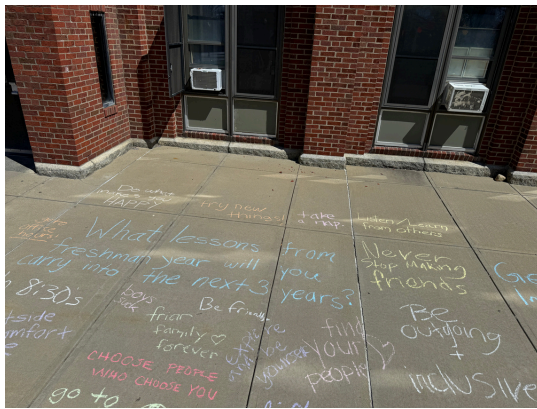
Throughout my relatively small time as a D.I.D fellow, I have undoubtedly seen the climate of Providence College change. While the school is arguably in the midst of one its most divisive periods, opportunities to discuss such relevant issues have become increasingly more available. In creating and leading such endeavors, my leadership and facilitation skills have grown tremendously, and I have been able to form a community of individuals from greatly diverse backgrounds that have a myriad of shared experiences. Moreover, the D.I.D Lab has given me the opportunity to travel to different college campuses, such as the University of Delaware, where I engaged in conversation with school representatives from around the world and mapped out how to bring civil discourse to our respective institutions as efficiently as possible. Such encounters have provided me with excellent learning experiences in leading conversations for change, which I anticipate implementing and improving upon at Providence College through many unique ways.



## FELLOWS IN ACTION







## D.I.D WALLS