CAPSTONE STUDENTS ATTEND SEMINAR AT TRINITY COLLEGE ON A NEW SCHOLARLY TEXT ABOUT HARTFORD

By Kenneth DiMaggio

“Hartford’s history is shaped by fundamental global patterns or changes.” A compelling example of Hartford’s present immigrant statues was made by Trinity College anthropologist Dr. Janet Bauer, whose chapter looks at recent refugee settlement in the city. “I found that Hartford was a good case study for immigrants and refugees,” Dr. Bauer said.

Many of the students themselves noted their own immigrant backgrounds, with some coming from countries such as Jamaica, Sudan, and Vietnam. The theoretical and statistical evidence of a historical economic divide often drawn on racial and cultural lines resonated with a number of students, who talked about their own experiences and frustrations with this divide. Students also showed how they were doing research on the topic of Hartford’s immigration, both in the classroom and in the field.

As one student observed, the class will soon take a field trip to the Catholic Migration and Refugee Services, a center to help aid refugees, and a center that Dr. Bauer also used for her research.

“Hartford is more diverse than the larger metropolitan area,” Dr. Bauer posed about the city she had just written about. In a similar scholarly focus, Dr. Partridge’s Capstone class continues to study and write about Hartford’s past and present as an immigrant city.

Asked about their next stop, Dr. Partridge said, “Students will go to the Connecticut Historical Center and the Connecticut Historical Society to do more research.”

Students from Dr. Jeffrey Partridge’s 2013 Fall semester Capstone class focusing on Immigration and six Capital faculty traveled to the Center for Urban and Global Studies at Trinity College on October 9 to discuss several essays from Confronting Urban Legacy: Rediscovering Hartford and New England’s Forgotten Cities. They had the opportunity to hear several short presentations by the book’s co-editor Dr. Xiangming Chen and contributing Trinity professors Dr. Andrew Walsh and Dr. Janet Bauer. Hartford has been a special topic of study in Dr. Partridge’s course. In addition to reading traditional texts about immigration, Dr. Partridge has also focused on field trips to local Hartford landmarks of note or symposiums noting Hartford’s role as a city with long historical roots in the American immigrant experience. “This book couldn’t have come at a better time for us,” Dr. Partridge said, adding that the students are currently researching the history of immigrant communities in Hartford.

Dr. Chen noted that the selected chapters look at Hartford’s role as an immigrant city in a global context. As the presentations showed, the history of this “under-studied” city was profoundly influenced by immigration, and in-coming groups, changing industries, and social factors have shaped and reshaped its communities. According to Dr. Walsh,