IPCR Students Roleplay as Aid Workers during Simulated Humanitarian Crisis

October 15, 2021 • Daniel DiPrinzio (Https://Www.arcadia.edu/Profile/Daniel-DiPrinzio)

Nick Villareal, Rachel Kuria, and Bonnie Laufer in active simulation; photo by Lauren Pupillo ’19.
The students worked with the non-governmental organization Forage Center for Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Education (https://www.foragecenter.org/) in role-playing as aid workers assisting refugees who have been displaced by a wildfire. Students who participated talked about how the simulation provided direct insight into the duties and responsibilities of aid workers and noted the realism that Forage brought.

“The most interesting moment was probably having our ‘camp’ [classroom] raided by ‘federal police’ [actors] at one in the morning and having our stuff searched. I was unsure how far the Center would go with the simulation given the circumstances, but this was impressive realism,” said Nick Villareal ’22.

The students had to adapt to dealing without the comforts to which they and millions of others are afforded each day -- warm food, cell phones, and showers, for instance. The simulation, dubbed the “Boyer Hall Experiment” by members of the student group, gave a firsthand look into possible career opportunities at the intersection of international peace and conflict resolution and humanitarian relief.

“I am disabled, and I wanted to see if being an aid worker was something that would be feasible for me,” said Rachel Park ’22. “Having this simulation in a place where I knew I was safe was a great opportunity to figure out if I felt like I would be able to manage working on the field and see what kinds of accommodations or resources I might need if I do end up being an aid worker.”

Arcadia’s Homecoming and Family Weekend celebration on Oct. 9 included fireworks over the Castle. For the student-aid workers, though, the fireworks were an explosive event that they had to respond to in kind.

Students participating were:

- Samuel Wragg, III
• Bonnie Laufer
• Rachel Kuria
• Rachel Park
• Tyanna Taylor
• Nicholas Villareal
• Thomas Myers
• Sarah Marsh
• Iddy Brown
• Jakub Kovar
• Professional photographer Lauren Pupillo ’19 was on hand to take photos.

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