Public Praxis student advocates fair trade

By Michael Garofalo

Students from Professor Peter-Bastida’s Public Praxis I: World Poverty, Trafficking and Solidarity class gathered last Thursday, Sept. 18 in a public open setting to discuss fair trade goods.

The main speaker, Alanna Hennemeyer, a public praxis minor, showed video and discussed how consumer goods are often made by workers who are treated poorly and barely make a living wage. She advocated for fair trade goods which are made under better conditions and are more environmentally sustainable. These products can usually be identified with a fair trade symbol.

"Once people realize how products are made, I think it’s natural for people to want to buy products that are made fairly and to know the stories behind them," Hennemeyer said.

Tickets for the event were available at the Center of Multicultural Affairs (Library Suite 207) where $10 of each ticket will go to the HROP Alumni Fund

The Higher Education Opportunity Program is a "comprehensive in the offices - it’s fun to see him let loose in the ring. We all think it’s great he can be himself at work and then be himself in a different way when he wrestles."

For Santiago, it’s about putting on a good show and making sure he has a good time as he anticipates to be his final event.

"I don’t really throw any other goods."

Professor of Psychology Sherry Dingman, who attended the meeting, believes that while fair trade may cause small price increases, they are usually negligible to consumers and noticeably beneficial for workers.

She said that 1.2 billion people live on less than $2.50 each day. Dingman believes that college students in the Hudson Valley are “a significant driving force of the economy in the Dutchess County,” capable of creating enough of a demand to warrant a response.

She said that the decision to buy fair trade is “absolutely voluntary.”

"I don’t think it works to dictate from on high," Dingman said, because it usually just creates black markets.

It doesn’t make sense that apples grown in the Hudson Valley are more expensive than those shipped from China, Dingman said, until you consider wage differences.