

From private to public to nonprofit, MPA grads make good

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

From budgeting to strategic plans, from economics to political science, the Master of Public Administration program at UWM promises its students a broad education to prepare them for a rewarding career – no matter what arena it's in. Hear from three MPA graduates who have forged rewarding careers in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

The public sector

Jim Healy ('09) can talk for hours on everything from zoning codes to snow plowing, and he will if you get him started. Healy is the Village Administrator of Richfield, Wisc., a job that requires him to be on-call 24/7/365.

“Administrators are the day-to-day managers,” Healy said. “One of the things that I really like about working in the Village is you get your hands involved in every facet of local government. Handling the creation of the annual budget, clerking duties, administering elections, business licensing, municipal planning – those are all the hats that I have to wear here.”

Working in local government isn't always glamorous, but it's Healy's passion. He was drawn to the MPA program out of a desire to help others. He completed several internships, including one with then-Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker, and began working in the Wisconsin capitol for State Rep. Pat Strachota (R-West Bend) after graduation. In 2010, he took a job as an intern in Richfield and worked his way up to Community Services Director to Assistant Administrator to Village Administrator.



Jim Healy is the Village Administrator of Richfield, Wisc. Photo courtesy of Jim Healy.

The MPA program was excellent training for all of those roles. Classes focused on real-world examples that impacted local, state, and federal laws, and the skills Healy learned prepared him for life in public service.

“There's no substitute for hard work in the field of public administration,” he said. “There's always new legislation being discussed that impacts municipalities. There are 49 other states and countless other municipalities that are innovating across the country. The ability and desire to continue to learn and be a student of the profession is a key component.”

The private sector

Like Healy, Beth Jacobsen always had an interest in local government. She completed her undergraduate degree at UWM in 2003 and stayed on for the MPA program, graduating in 2006. Jacobsen also worked her way up the ladder, interning for Milwaukee aldermen as an undergrad and then as an administrative intern for the City Administrator of Wauwatosa. After graduation, Jacobsen continued her career as a post-graduate Fellow for the Assistant City Manager of Savannah, Ga. and returned to the Midwest in 2007 when she was hired as the Assistant Village Manager in Elk Grove, Ill. Although she eventually returned to her hometown of Beloit, Wisc. to become the Assistant City Manager, the position wasn't as fulfilling as she'd hoped and Jacobsen found herself burning out and looking for a change.

CONTENTS

Feature Stories

- MPA grads make good..... p.1
- Roebber's innovative weather.... p.2
- Studying abroad in France..... p.3
- Anthropologist at Kohl's..... p.4
- Sociology spotlight..... p.5
- UWM's 3/2 MPA track..... p.7

Columns

- Video story..... p.5
- People in Print..... p.7
- Passings..... p.8
- Laurels & Accolades..... p.8
- Upcoming Events..... p.9
- Alumni Accomplishments..... p.10
- In the Media..... p.11

PUBLISHED THE LAST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH BY
THE COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE.

CONTACT US AT LET-SCI@UWM.EDU OR

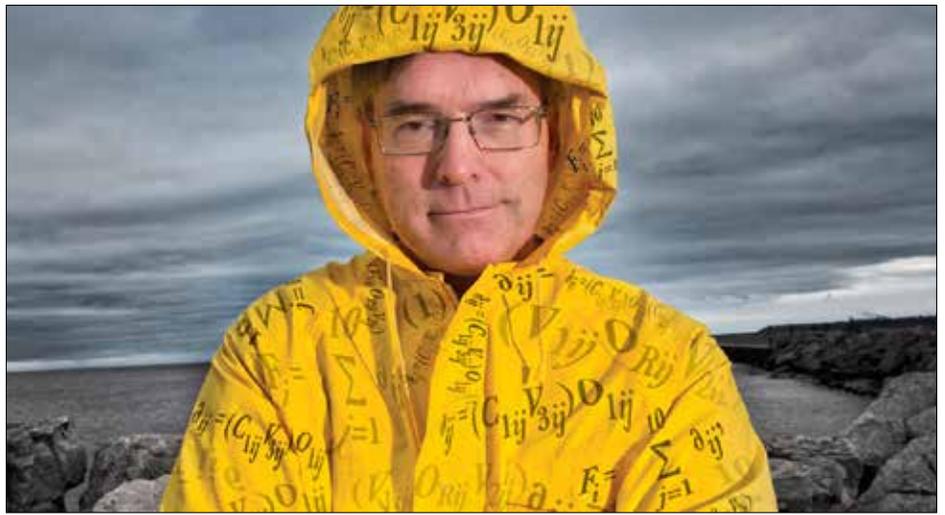
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A man for all seasons

By Laura Otto, University Relations

Paul Roebber sat on the New Jersey beach, looked out at the ocean and let his mind wander. “I started thinking about sharks hunting for prey,” the meteorologist says, “and about predicting dynamic systems in nature.”

It reminded him how computers let scientists simulate complex systems, such as predator-prey interactions. Weather forecasters, too, rely on statistical models to find and sort patterns in large amounts of data. Still, the weather remains stubbornly difficult to predict.

Roebber has a history of making it less stubborn. He’s a leader in bringing new approaches to meteorology, and his research has changed how experts around the world forecast weather. Often, his innovations come from adapting something that has nothing to do with meteorology. And in the summer of 2016, that Jersey Shore reverie about sharks was sparking another one.

Forecasters use “ensemble” models, which average many different weather models, to create more accurate predictions. Roebber wondered if a mathematical equivalent of Charles Darwin’s evolution theory might get more out of ensemble forecasting, and do so without requiring additional data, which can be expensive to gather.

He devised a method in which one computer program sorts 10,000 other ones, improving itself with strategies that mimic nature, such as heredity, mutation and natural selection.

“This was just a pie-in-the-sky idea at first,” says Roebber, a UWM distinguished professor of atmospheric sciences, who had considered it as far back as 2010. “Now, in the last year, I’ve gotten \$500,000 of funding behind it.”

This latest forecasting method outperforms the models used by the National Weather Service. And when compared to standard weather prediction modeling, Roebber’s evolutionary methodology performs particularly well on longer-range forecasts and extreme events, when an accurate forecast is needed the most.

[Continued on page 14](#)

UWM student enjoys French connection

By Zachary Julius, College of Letters & Science

When French and Global Studies major Kati Latta arrived in Lyon, France, the city was in the midst of an extreme heat wave - temperatures rising upwards of 100 degrees. Latta and a French friend wandered the streets in search of shade, and eventually came across the city center, known for its large, majestic fountains. Latta's friend mentioned that people tend to wade in the fountain in order to stay cool, so Latta didn't hesitate to jump in before noticing that she was getting some disapproving looks. She turned around to see her friend, in hysterics, taking photos of her—the American girl had been duped.

Fountains notwithstanding, Latta always dreamed of studying abroad in France, ever since her older sisters taught her the French alphabet and numbers as a child. She is currently finishing her studies overseas and will soon return to the U.S.

The UWM study abroad program enables students to earn course credit in over 170+ programs and reap the benefits of studying in a foreign country.

“Students who have studied abroad not only benefit from the transformative experience, but they are also more likely to graduate, be accepted into graduate school, and may earn a higher starting salary than those who did not study abroad,” said Mark Eckman, director of the UWM Center for International Education. “The benefits of increased cross-cultural competency, greater independence and autonomy, strong problem solving skills, ability to communicate across cultural and linguistic barriers, and a broader global perspective are all traits that employers value.”

For Latta, study abroad is not just a recommended move for her studies, but something she's been working towards her entire life. Upon arriving in France, she had no trouble fitting in, even with English as her primary language – though there are some striking cultural differences.

“I've learned how happy and optimistic America truly is,” Latta said. “We smile at perfect strangers on the street, offer to help someone struggling with their bags, or volunteer to help repair a flat tire. In France, people pass each other with no more than an emotionless glance.”

[Continued on page 13](#)

UWM French and Global Studies major Kati Latta enjoys a view of the Alps from the French city of Gourds during her study abroad. Photo courtesy of Kati Latta.



UWM anthropologist takes research to Kohl's

By Zachary Julius, College of Letters & Science

In the past decade, shopping has changed substantially. Online retailers are dominating many markets, making malls less captivating and leading stores like JCPenney and Macy's to close up shops. So how does the popular retail chain Kohl's stay ahead of the curve without becoming irrelevant?

For one thing, Kohl's established a Customer Insights Team, including Senior Consumer Insights Analyst Karen Esche-Eiff.

Esche-Eiff is a PhD candidate in UWM's Department of Anthropology. She has MS and PhD experience designing and carrying out research projects, such as studying the language of Malayalam in India. Esche-Eiff's journey to Kohl's began shortly after completing her PhD fieldwork. With her passion for empirical research, she started searching for new ways to practice her skills. That led her to the Kohl's corporate headquarters in Menomonee Falls, Wisc., where she was hired primarily because of her qualitative research skills.

"I would tell any one of my peers that if you produced research for your thesis, use that, leverage it," Esche-Eiff said. "I took my thesis into [hiring] interviews and said, 'This is what I can do, this is what I've proven I can do.'"

Esche-Eiff's job involves using qualitative and quantitative research methods to form a comprehensive understanding of Kohl's customers. While collaborating with fellow members of an interdisciplinary team, she studies who customers are, what their everyday lives look like, and how their shopping behaviors change over the course of different life stages or at different times of the year. This is especially important during the holiday season when business is booming.



Karen Esche-Eiff is a Senior Consumer Insights Analyst at Kohl's Department Stores. She sits in her "brainstorming room" where she likes to write her reports. Photo courtesy of Karen Esche-Eiff.

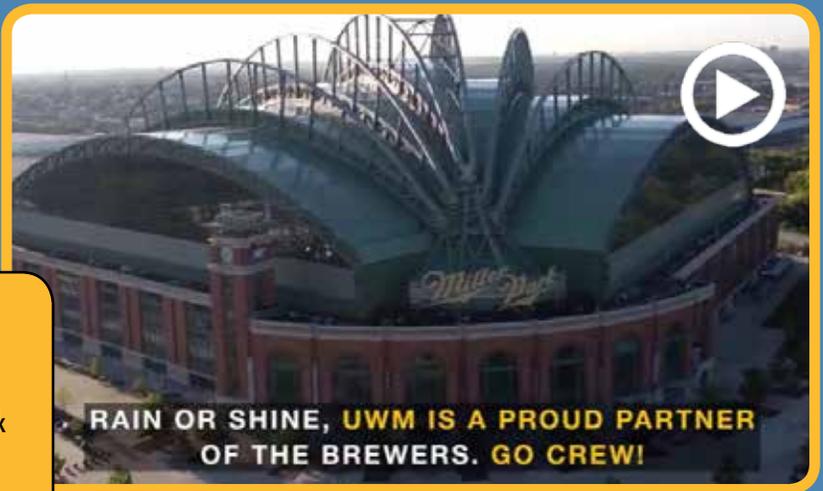
Esche-Eiff makes frequent use of surveys and analytics from areas like sales and social media. While numbers are important to advising any business, numbers cannot tell all the layers of what it means to be a wife, husband, mom, dad, etc. Especially in today's competitive retail environment, understanding and speaking to customers' lives is imperative. Her preferred research method for this is to use classical ethnographic methods, the study of people and their culture.

"Any time there is an opportunity to stay with a [customer's] family and be with them from breakfast to dinner, I jump on it," Esche-Eiff said. "To see the family dynamic and partake in that dynamic is something I really enjoy doing. This helps lead to a compelling story for the angle that I'm trying to prove."

On a typical day, Esche-Eiff has multiple projects running. They range from measuring a marketing campaign's performance to exploring new ways for the company to impact communities through its Kohl's Cares Program. Although varied, all of her projects end up looping back to the customer. Her aim is to make sure that Kohl's communication, products, and experiences reflect what is important to the people who have grown to rely on the company.

[Continued on page 10](#)

Video Stories



Baseball season is in full swing, and so is the Innovative Weather crew. Staffed by members of the Atmospheric Sciences program, Innovative Weather provides customized forecasts for clients like the Milwaukee Brewers, which is important when you're deciding if the roof of Miller Park should be open or closed come game time.

<https://youtu.be/pZ4Txl4bYnY>

Sociology Spotlight

Regional professional associations like the Midwest Sociological Society (MSS) offer local opportunities for faculty and their students to share their interests and learn about the interests of others. This year, MSS held their annual conference here in Milwaukee at the Hilton City Center.

Professor Celeste Campos-Castillo in UWM's Department of Sociology was the local arrangements chair. She, along with six undergraduate and 10 graduate students from UWM, helped host the conference and welcome colleagues from around the Midwest and beyond to Milwaukee.

The experience benefited UWM students from not only Sociology, but from other L&S departments as well. Three undergraduate students conducting research with Professor Campos-Castillo presented posters at the conference, and represented UWM in Psychology, Sociology, and Women's and Gender Studies. Another undergraduate student working with Professor Campos-Castillo, majoring in Psychology and minoring in Africology, participated in a special session for first-generation college students and won a t-shirt.

Pictured on the right at top is Psychology major and Africology minor Raven Wood showing off her t-shirt. On the right bottom, Jeriney Rhone, a double-major in Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies, presents the research poster "Studying the Stigmatization of Smoking and its Effects on the Vaping Community."



MPA graduates make good

[continued from page 1](#)

One of the duties of an Assistant City Manager is to foster relationships with local business owners.

“I think the president of the First National Bank and Trust liked that I would call him directly, even when I had news that he wasn’t going to like. He approached me one day and asked if I was perhaps interested in switching to the private sector,” Jacobsen said. “The possibility of working in the private sector with an eight-to-five job was a nice incentive for me to make a move. It was also a better opportunity for my personal life, and professionally, I liked the challenge to learn a new trade.”

As a Trust Officer, Jacobsen manages personal trusts, estates, agencies, and investment accounts. She works closely with her clients on their estate plans to ensure that their current and future financial needs are met. Even though she no longer works in government, Jacobsen finds herself relying on the skills she learned in the MPA program every day.

“People with an MPA can still switch to the ‘dark side’ later in their career,” Jacobsen said. “A lot of the skills I developed in local government transitioned to the private sector really well... I still work with people, problem solve, and create budget projections to see how long money will last.”

Nonprofits

Joe’Mar Hooper majored in Education at UWM, but when he decided not to be a teacher, his interest in politics and public policy drew him to the MPA program. After several internships, he jumped straight into a job with the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority upon graduation in 2005.

From there, he worked in the executive budget office in the State of Wisconsin Department of Administration; moved back to Milwaukee to focus on budget, policy, and administration work for the city; served as the initial director of Business, Community, and Family Partnerships for Milwaukee Public Schools; and most recently accepted a job as the Wisconsin Market Leader for CommonBond Communities. It’s a nonprofit that develops, purchases, and manages affordable housing for low-income individuals, families, and seniors.

Hooper is responsible for growing the business in Wisconsin, fundraising, and performing development outreach. That can be a challenge; he has to battle to access funding and contend with prejudices against low-income housing.

“One of the things that I learned at UWM is that there’s so many ways to attack problems that we have in our community, and being able to get into an organization and build the framework for attacking some of those problems really attracted me to CommonBond,” Hooper said.

The MPA program is perfectly situated to help its graduates in the nonprofit world, Hooper added. Learning to budget and understanding financials are essential to nonprofit work.

“I also think it helps with the leadership side. ... In trying to be a leader in my organization, I can rely on some of that knowledge I gained back when I was taking the MPA classes,” Hooper said. “There are so many nonprofits in Milwaukee that are going to be needing some youthful leadership in the near term, and I think there are going to be many opportunities for MPA grads to build their careers with these organizations that are doing some great work.”

Want to learn more about the MPA program? Check out the story on UWM's Political Science and MPA 3/2 program on [Page 7](#).



Beth Jacobsen works as a trust officer for First National Bank and Trust. Photo courtesy of Beth Jacobsen.



Joe'Mar Hooper recently joined CommonBond, a nonprofit that funds, builds, and maintains housing for low-income individuals and families. Photo courtesy of CommonBond.

Political Science, MPA 3/2 program gives students a jumpstart

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

At most universities, it would take at least six years for someone to earn both a Bachelor's and Master's degree. In the UWM 3/2 accelerated program for Political Science and Public Administration, it only takes five.

Debuting at the start of the 2016-17 school year, the 3/2 accelerated program intends to help students who know they are on a path towards an MPA save time and money. Starting freshman year, students take a defined curriculum that culminates in both degrees being awarded at the end of the fifth year. It's a good investment; the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that MPA graduates have job placement rates of 85 to 90 percent. Jobs span fields from the public to the private to the nonprofit sectors.

Just because the program is shorter than a traditional Bachelor's and Master's degree doesn't mean it's any less rigorous. Students complete 90 credits to earn their Bachelor's, including all UWM and Letters & Science general education requirements, and at least 18 of the 30 credits required for a Political Science major. During the undergraduate years, coursework centers on comparative and American politics, international relations, and political theory. Graduate work focuses on providing students with practical preparation in human resources and management, budgeting, negotiation, statistics, research, and leadership.

In addition, students often complete internships for their graduate coursework, gaining hands-on experiences in local municipal governments and organizations in the metro Milwaukee area and in the state of Wisconsin.



People in print

Scott Adams (Economics), Chad Cotti, and Darin Ullman. 2017. Seatbelt Use as a Police Avoidance Strategy: A Test Using the Legality of Medical Marijuana. *Safety*, 3(2): 12. <http://bit.ly/2noqzjN>

Julie A. Bowles (Geosciences) and Mike J. Jackson. 2016. Effects of titanomagnetite reordering processes on thermal demagnetization and paleointensity experiments. *G3: Geochemistry, Geophysics, Geosystems*, 17(12): 4848-4858. <http://bit.ly/2noLh2O>

Nancy I. Bird-Soto (Spanish and Portuguese), ed. 2017. *Lecturas para viajar y aprender*. Revista Cruce. <http://bit.ly/2ovm2Lt>

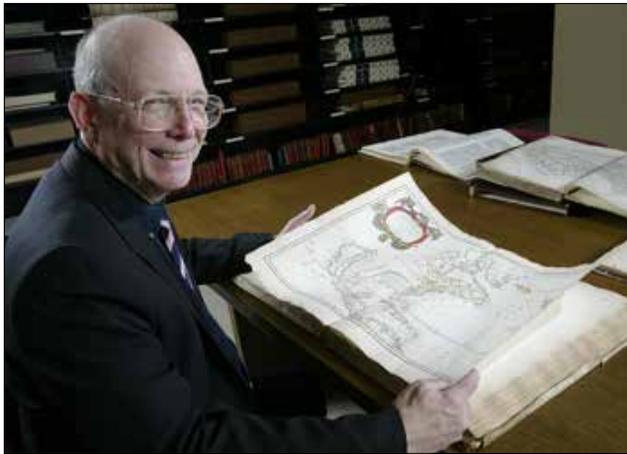
Craig R. Guilbault (Mathematical Sciences) and Frederick C. Tinsley. 2017. "Manifolds that are inward tame at infinity." *Pacific Journal of Mathematics*, 288(1): 87-128. <http://bit.ly/2pHrvAB>

Marcus Filippello (History). 2017. Settling Ohori: Reassessing Rebellion, Gender, and Foundation 'Myths' in Colonial Dahomey. *Journal of West African History*, 3(1): 55-76.

Stuart A. Moulthrop (English) and Dene Grigar. 2017. *Traversals: The Use of Preservation for Early Electronic Writing*. MIT Press: Cambridge, Mass. <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/traversals>

Amit Prasad and A. Aneesh (Sociology), eds. 2017. *Special Issue: Global Assemblages of Technoscience*, 22(1). <http://journals.sagepub.com/toc/stsa/22/1>

Laura P. Villamil and R. Jason Sherman (Anthropology). 2017. Ancient Maya Settlement, Interaction Spheres, and Geopolitics in South-Central Quintana Roo, Mexico. *Ancient Mesoamerica* (online). <http://bit.ly/2pWOrv2>



Bruce Fetter

Bruce Fetter, Professor Emeritus of History, passed away in April, having taught at UWM since 1967. His service to the university included a term as History Department chair from 1995 to 1998.

He held a PhD in African History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His books included *Colonial Rule and Regional Imbalance in Central Africa*, *The Creation of Elisabethville, 1910-1940*, and *Demography from Scanty Evidence: Central Africa in the Colonial Era*. He was the editor of the social science journal *Urbanism Past and Present*, a publication that reinforced UWM's reputation as a center of urban scholarship.

In his later years, Professor Fetter's research interests turned toward matters of public health and historical demography. In addition to teaching African History, Bruce developed and passionately taught a course on the use of maps as historical sources, sharing the treasures

of UWM's American Geographical Society Library with generations of students. In addition to having devoted his career to UWM, Bruce was a generous supporter of the university's History and French departments, the L&S New Directions Fund, and the Libraries. He was central to the reinvigoration of the UWM Retirees Association.

Members of the UWM community who are interested in information about a future memorial service should write to Amanda Seligman (seligman@uwm.edu), Chair of the Department of History.

Laurels, Accolades, and Grant Awards



Julie Bowles

Julie Bowles (Geosciences) recently published an article in *G3: Geochemistry, Geophysics, Geosystems* that was chosen as an “editor’s pick” and highlighted on EOS.org, a site featuring earth and space news. <http://bit.ly/2ntNMmr>

Graduate student Soham Patel (English) was one of six finalists chosen from a pool of more than 200 submissions for the Lindquist & Vennum Prize for Poetry for her piece “To Afar from Afar”. <http://strib.mn/2nEOKuB>

Students in the Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies department recently earned several honors, including two first place awards for Best Website (www.mediamilwaukee.com) and Best Multi-Media Team Reporting for “How the Mississippi Valley Turned Red (www.election2016.mediamilwaukee.com) at the Eric Sevareid Awards from the Midwest Broadcast Journalists Association. They were competing against every other university in a six-state region of the Midwest for these honors.

In addition, student journalists also won six first-place regional awards at Society of Professional Journalists’ *Mark of Excellence* awards, and will advance to a national-level competition in those six categories. Seven other UWM journalism stories won finalist awards. A complete list of awards and more details are available at <http://bit.ly/2nUBfXz>.

Postdoctoral researcher Sarah Caudill (Physics) received the Honorary CUR (Council of Undergraduate Research) Fellows Award during the CUR’s 2017 Posters on the Hill event on Capitol Hill for her contribution to the discovery of gravitational waves. <http://bit.ly/2oJ0QCS>

Student Clare O’Donnell (Global Studies), a sergeant in the U.S. Army, recently returned from deployment to Kuwait and Iraq. Welcome home, Clare! <http://bit.ly/2nbArfP>



Sarah Caudill



Upcoming Events

April 27-29

Ctr. for 21st Century Studies: The Big No. 3:30 p.m. Curtin 175. C21's annual conference features plenary speakers Joshua Clover, Katerina Kolozova, François Laruelle, Ariana Reines, and Frank B. Wilderson III. Register at <https://www.c21uwm.com/bigno/>.

April 27

Geosciences Colloquium: Recent to contemporary stress of the West Antarctic Rift from drill core and volcanic alignment studies. 3:30 p.m. Lapham 160. Timothy Paulsen, UW-Oshkosh. <http://bit.ly/2kkd5G2>

Masters of Language, Literature, & Translation Student Symposium. 5:30 p.m. Bolton B95. Presentations by Jesús Albertom Garcia Bonilla, Ana María Casas Olcoz, Dominique Flannagan, Jenna Busha, Andre Sydnor, Hannah Martin, Erich Jones, and Elias Sepulveda. Free and open to the public. <http://bit.ly/2pWQ7oO>

April 28-30

Italian Film Festival. Various times. Union Theater. Eight critically-acclaimed Italian films from dramas to documentaries make their local debuts. Films are shown in Italian with English subtitles. Free and open to the public. Sponsored by the Italian Cultural Institute of Chicago, the dental offices of Dr. David Paris, and the Italian Community Center and presented in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. For a full schedule and list of films, visit <http://www.italianfilmfests.org/>

April 28

Urban Studies Program's Annual Student Research Forum 2017. Noon. Union Fireside Lounge. Urban Studies students present original research and keynote speaker, Stefanie DeLuca, speaks on "Coming of Age in the Other America." <http://bit.ly/2qboPud>

Math-Sci Colloquium: RNA Folding Prediction Revisited: 30 Years and Counting. 2 p.m. EMS E495. Peter Hinow, UWM, hosts. <http://uwm.edu/math/events/>

Geography colloquium: Harold and Florence Mayer Lecture - Unboxing economic geography. 3 p.m. Trevor Barnes, University of British Columbia. <http://bit.ly/2oEUPI4>

Japanese Festival and Planetarium Show: Evening in the Land of the Rising Sun. 6 p.m. Manfred Olson Planetarium. Learn about Japanese culture and customs before a planetarium show featuring Japanese celestial folk stories at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$4. Show runs Friday April 28 and Friday May 5. <http://bit.ly/2lhSXSG>

Science Bag: Symmetry and the Alhambra Mosaics. 8 p.m. Physics 137. Free and open to the public. Ric Ancel, UWM Mathematical Sciences, talks symmetrical figures and patterns. <https://uwm.edu/science-bag/>

May 4

Geosciences colloquium: Effects of colloids on the bacteria transport in saturated porous media. 3:30 p.m. Lapham 160. Haiyan Yang, UWM. <http://bit.ly/2kkd5G2>

May 5

Neuroscience Seminar: Forces that shape the brain and eye in the early chick embryo. 2 p.m. Lapham N101. Larry Taber, Washington University.

Philosophy Colloquium: Theoretical Conservatism in Metaphysics. 3:30 p.m. Curtin 175. <http://bit.ly/2nld7Po>

Ctr. for Celtic Studies 2017 Certificate Awards Ceremony. 6:30 p.m. Hefter Center. Presentation by Josh Discoll and music provided by Athas. Free and open to the public.

MAY 2017						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

★ Alumni Accomplishments

Ossie Kendrix ('97, BA Sociology; '05, Certificate in Nonprofit Management) was named president and CEO of the African American Chamber of Commerce of Wisconsin in April. He takes over the job from Eve Hall and is stepping down from his previous position as the deputy state director for U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin. <http://bit.ly/2pjFOy2>



Ossie Kendrix

Melinda Waite ('13, Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management) received the Evolving Eagle award for Association Acumen. Waite, a membership and marketing manager at Association Acumen, was chosen as being “the individual who has grown the most professionally and consistently demonstrated excellence in her position.”

Howard Schoenfield ('68, BS History) was listed among the Top 100 Trial Lawyers in Wisconsin by the National Trial Lawyers Association. Schoenfield is an attorney with DeWitt Ross & Stevens S.C. <http://bit.ly/2o76NMR>



Chris Swartz

Chris Swartz ('83, MS Urban Affairs) was presented the 2017 Frederick C. Pearce Award at the Governor's Conference on Economic Development held in February. The award recognizes Swartz's 36 years of leadership and commitment to economic development activities that have created jobs and revenue for the communities he has served. Swartz is the village manager of Shorewood, Wisc. and has announced plans to retire in October.

Therese Fitzpatrick ('09, PhD Urban Studies) was named a senior vice president in Kaufman Hall's strategic cost transformation practice. Kaufman Hall provides capital, financial, and transaction advisory services and software tools. <http://bit.ly/2ndAl6v>

Melissa Zimdars ('08, BA Political Science and Journalism and Mass Communication; '10, MA Media Studies) was an invited panelist for an April 5 discussion on “News: The Changing Landscape of Journalism in the 21st Century” at a conference hosted by the Concord-Carlisle Adult and Community Education Advisory Committee in Concord, Mass. <http://bit.ly/2oixSwk>



Alice Rocke

Alice Rocke ('81, BS Medical Science) was announced as one of the top 50 doctors in her state in the most recent issue of the *New Hampshire Magazine*. <http://bit.ly/2nh8Aih>

Linda Hamaker ('95, PhD Chemistry & Biochemistry) was hired as the chief administrative officer at Community Reach Center in Colorado where she will lead support divisions and enhance the strategic vision of the organization. Community Reach Center is a mental health care system. <http://dpo.st/2nP4xXL>

Anthropologist at Kohl's

[continued from page 4](#)

Admittedly, this is a tall order, and it comes with its fair share of difficulties. For example, Esche-Eiff's business partners might expect her research to say one thing only to find it tells a different story.

“When the results aren't what corporate expected, it can actually be more of a hurdle than the research itself,” Esche-Eiff said. “Thankfully, my business partners are very customer-first and will try to find a way to implement that research. This takes a while, but it's worth it.”

Despite any difficulties that she might encounter, Esche-Eiff finds her job rewarding.

“The best part about my job is being able to utilize the [research] methods that I've been schooled into and, when I shop at Kohl's, I get to see someone's life being made easier by a change that my team implemented,” Esche-Eiff said. “It's very satisfying.”

In the Media and Around the Community

Nicola Ciurro ('95, MA History) discussed the challenges and rewards of preparing her daughter with special needs for adulthood on the TMJ4 show Morning Blend.

<http://bit.ly/2nbl6fb>

The Turner family of Milwaukee has shaped the city's political landscape over the years, and Aims McGuinness (History) explained how during a talk in April at Turner Hall.

<http://bit.ly/2orLB07>

Amanda Seligman's (History) book covering the history of Chicago block clubs was cited on The Block Club, a blog about Chicago neighborhoods: <http://dnain fo/2n8Et85>

Merry Wiesner-Hanks (History) delivered the 2017 Town and Gown lecture at the University of Arizona in late March. Her talk was titled, "To the Ends of the Earth: Religious Transformations in the Age of the Reformation." She also was a guest on the Buckmaster Show on Tucson radio discussing the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. (<http://bit.ly/2obKE06>)

Drinking coffee now may lead to a lowered risk of dementia later in life for postmenopausal women, research by Ira Driscoll (Psychology) suggests, as reported on in the *Pakistan Daily Times* (<http://bit.ly/2nDV5b2>) and in *Reader's Digest* (<http://bit.ly/2opllQx>).

Rust-Oleum Paint turned to Bruce Wade, Lei Wang, and graduate student Emmanuel Asanate-Asamani (all Mathematical Sciences) to explain why some of their paint products were rendered unusable during shipping, according to industry website DurabilityandDesign.com. <http://bit.ly/2oCJFC2>



Kristen Murphy

If you hear a familiar voice during The Cosmic Recipe planetarium show at the Milwaukee Public Museum, it's because Kristen Murphy (Chemistry and Biochemistry) narrates part of the show. <http://bit.ly/2odzvwz8>

Rebecca Dunham (English) delivered a reading of her work at the Mystery to Me independent bookstore in Madison, Wis. in late March. <http://bit.ly/2oHB5Cc>

Switchgrass could be the next main source of biofuel thanks to research by Dave Zhao (Biological Sciences), the *Bangalore Mirror* reported. <http://bit.ly/2o2dcYJ>

Rapper Snoop Dogg recently released a controversial video that depicted him shooting a fake gun at a character named "Ronald Klump," drawing both criticism and praise. Student Nyesha Stone (Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) offered her take in an opinion piece in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. (<http://bit.ly/2p1uF0T>). Stone, grateful for the experiences she's had at UWM, also tipped her hat to the JAMS department in a piece for the *Milwaukee Courier*. (<http://bit.ly/2oP2oxl>)

Jobs in mathematics are the wave of the future, Joanna (George) Jacobs ('06, BS Atmospheric Sciences) told the *North Platte Bulletin*. <http://bit.ly/2oRg387>



UWM students literally made sure Wisconsin women had a seat at the table. Krista Grensavitch's (Women's & Gender Studies) Fall 2016 class "History of Women in American Society" asked students to recreate Judy Chicago's "The Dinner Table" using women in Wisconsin history. The result was a thought-provoking art exhibit and a newfound knowledge of the contributions of Wisconsin women. Documentary creator Allen Daigle showcased the exhibit in the short film above, also accessible at <http://bit.ly/2ooDS07>.

[Continued on page 12](#)

In the Media

[continued from page 11](#)

William Holahan (Emeritus Economics) urged Alabamans to rethink opposition to a gas tax in an editorial for the *Montgomery Advertiser* (<http://on.mgmadv.com/2oncSBX>), which was reprinted by *USA Today* (<http://usat.ly/2oyRGLg>).



Gladys Mitchell-Walthour

Checking boxes to indicate your race is an important research tool when it comes to racial disparities, Gladys Mitchell-Walthour (Africology) told Fox 6 News. (<http://bit.ly/2nxLrbo>) She also presented her paper “An Intersectional Analysis of Bolsa Família Recipients’ Presidential Approval of Dilma Rousseff in 2012 and 2014” at the Citizens and the State: Public Opinion, Democracy, and Development in Brazil Conference at the University of Notre Dame in early April. This was a joint Video Conference with the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul.

The Thomas A. Greene Geological Museum, run by the Geosciences Department, was featured as one of Milwaukee’s “little museums” in the *Shepherd Express*.

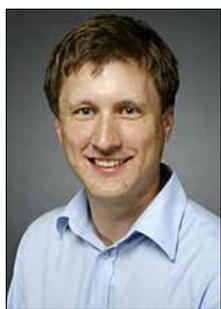
<http://bit.ly/2pdNNtm>

Julia Robson ('12) and Alyssa Armbruster ('16, both BA Conservation and Environmental Science) kicked off a fundraising campaign to raise money for their Walk to Sustain the Great Lakes with a warm-up hike in April, the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reported. <http://bit.ly/2oabfXt>

The person analyzing all of the data that Nielsen collects about your TV viewing habits is Molly (Simmerman) Poppie ('04, BA; '07, MA Sociology), who was featured on Nielsen’s website in April. <http://bit.ly/2pffeFA>

Patrick Ravines ('81, MS Chemistry) brings his passion for art conservation to Buffalo State University as a professor, and was featured on the college’s website for his work.

<http://bit.ly/2ozgWB7>



Jason Puskar

The push button has become such a staple in modern technology that we hardly think about it, but Jason Puskar (English) does – and presented on the topic for the Switch-Holtz Center Brown Bag Series in Madison, Wisc. in April. <http://bit.ly/2o6Rqmz>

An international collaboration of scientists, including members of the UWM Physics Department, observed, for the first time ever, the strong cosmic magnification of a class of supernovae called Type Ia, which can be used to measure the expansion rate of the universe, the blog Before It's News reported.

<http://bit.ly/2oEINOS>

The teenage years when young brains are growing and changing is the worst time to use cannabis, Krista Lisdahl (Psychology) was quoted as saying in an article in *The Cannifornian*. <http://bayareane.ws/2oWGecq>



In January 2017, The Next Four Years Milwaukee selected a poster design by Marc Tasman (Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) and printed and distributed an edition of 500 for the Women's March on Washington, D.C. and other gatherings around Wisconsin and the globe in March. The poster's main design element, a charcoal drawing of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, is derived from Tasman's drawing series "Transformative Commentary," in which he mashed together lyrics from Leonard Cohen's 1988 album "I'm Your Man," with portraits of contemporary political figures. This design uses a quote from a plaintiff's brief that Ginsberg wrote as an attorney in her first case before the Supreme Court, *Reed v. Reed*, 404 U.S. 71 (1971): "The pedestals upon which women have been placed have all too often, upon inspection, been revealed as a cage." A paraphrasing of Susan B. Anthony, "Our Rights, No Less," appears in hand-drawn letters.

Student's French connection

[continued from page 3](#)

Beyond the French's disinterest in others, Latta has also noticed their unusual way of forming friendships.

"The French approach friendship vertically, whereas Americans tend to approach friendship horizontally," Latta said. "Americans often value quantity over quality; we have many acquaintances, but very few close friends. It takes a long time to build a relationship with a French person, but once you become friends, it is expected to be a lifelong engagement."

Academics were another hurdle that Latta had to overcome. French professors approach teaching far differently from American educators. She finds it challenging and stressful, but rewarding.



"French teachers don't highlight students' strengths, but rather their weakness, and make a spectacle out of it for the entire class to learn from," Latta said. "I wasn't expecting to be torn apart in front of my peers, but it actually has benefited me to learn from others' errors as well as my own."

It's not all troubles and hard times however. France is exceptionally geared toward youth, offering programs that defray the cost of travel for students under 25, which makes it easy to book weekend trips to virtually anywhere in Europe. Latta has spent time in cities like Brussels, Amsterdam, Budapest and Paris.

Her favorite landmark is Mont Saint Michel, a rocky tidal island with breathtaking castle-like structures. She enjoys the incredible architecture, fascinating history, and even the quicksand.

Yes, quicksand.

"The quicksand was nothing I've ever felt before. At first it was dry and chalky, then as we got further away from Mont Saint Michel, it turned into a mucky clay texture," Latta said. "At one point we were knee deep in a strong, slippery current that had the power to take your breath away. The quicksand is something you can't miss if you visit France and to me, it was a perfect day."

During one of her weekend trips to Barcelona, something happened that dramatically changed Latta's view on human behavior. On her plane ride home, she sat next to a Muslim woman. During the ascent, Latta heard the woman gasp for air and cry out because of the turbulent plane.

Everyone around her tried to tune the woman out with their headphones. Without thinking, Latta reached across the aisle to hold the woman's hand and talk to her until they were flying smoothly. After the flight was over, the woman gave her phone number and insisted that Latta come to dinner with her family.

"That day was one the most affecting moments of not only my time here in Europe, but my entire life," Latta said. "Even though French isn't my native language, nor is Islam my religion, kindness is something that everyone understands and appreciates. I never would have realized this had I not done this program, and for that, I am forever grateful."

Kati Latta smiles outside of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France during her study abroad trip. Photo courtesy of Kate Latta.

Weatherman Roebber

[continued from page 2](#)

The importance of meteorology goes far beyond advising people to pack an umbrella for work or send the kids to school in warmer clothes. About 40 percent of the U.S. economy is somehow dependent on weather prediction. Even a small improvement in the accuracy of a forecast could save millions of dollars annually for industries like shippers, utilities and agribusiness.

It's not the first time Roebber has been involved in breakthrough work. In 2007, he launched Innovative Weather, which provides custom weather-related services to clients such as We Energies, the Milwaukee Brewers, and the Lake Express ferry. Now in his 22nd year at UWM, he credits natural curiosity and a persistent personality with framing not only his prominent career, but also carrying him through a personal battle with cancer.

With his latest research, Roebber is taking another brick out of the wall between forecasters and accuracy: the flaws inherent in ensemble modeling.

Lacking the addition of new data, models used in a group tend to agree with one another rather than the actual weather. In other words, the information in each model is often too similar, and in the absence of more diversity, it's hard to distinguish relevant variables from irrelevant ones – what statistician Nate Silver calls the “signal” and the “noise.” Roebber's solution applies Darwinian evolution principles.

In nature, species diversity foils the possibility of one threat destroying an entire population at once. Darwin observed this in a population of Galapagos Islands finches in 1835.

The birds divided into smaller groups, each residing in different locations around the islands. Over time, they adapted to their specific habitat, making each group distinct from the others.

Roebber decided to use evolution to engineer more variation in forecasting models. He began by subdividing the variables into conditional scenarios: The value of a variable would be set one way under one condition, but be set differently under another condition.

The computer program then picks out the variables that best accomplished the stated goal and recombines them, and does so in meteorological “niches,” just as the finches did in their Galapagos niches. The offspring models have the most successful traits.

“We dig deeper into the data by configuring the variables in a different way,” Roebber says. “One difference between this and biology is, I wanted to force the next generation to be better in some absolute sense, not just survive.”

He is already using the technique to forecast minimum and maximum temperatures for seven days out. And the evolutionary computer program does as well or better than the most skilled human expert forecasts. In a 2010 paper, Roebber calculated \$2 million in potential annual savings for Ohio electric utilities if they'd substitute this evolutionary method for ensemble forecasts.

Despite all of his innovations and advancements in his field, for Roebber, his legacy comes down to his students.

“My research has always been important to me,” Roebber says. “But when I was sick, I thought about the impact I've had on my students. To me, that's the lasting contribution I give.”



Paul Roebber consults with student Lily Chapman at Innovative Weather. (UWM Photo/Elora Hennessey)