

**For immediate release**

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**Urban Studies celebrates 50 years of urban research at UWM**

As one of the oldest graduate programs at UWM and an early pioneer in urban affairs nationally, Urban Studies Programs (USP) is celebrating 50 years of innovative urban research and teaching. Urban Studies, one of the original four “peaks of excellence” at UWM, helped establish the campus in the 1960s as a premier urban university, and continues its commitment to fostering cutting edge urban research and the rigorous training of students to meet the challenges facing urban communities in the United States and around the world.

Urban Studies has been an early and deliberate incubator of interdisciplinary curricula, collaboration, and research. Dr. Margaret Wilder, Executive Director of the Urban Affairs Association, the national professional association of urbanists notes, "The UAA and UWM share a common, long-standing commitment to scholarship and education that advance the well-being of urban communities. Nowhere is this commitment more apparent than the UWM Urban Studies Program. This talented interdisciplinary faculty has made UWM a nationally recognized center for urban scholarship."

“USP has been transformative to my career,” reflects Associate Professor and former Urban Studies director, Amanda Seligman. “Participating in the Urban Studies Programs has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my tenure at UWM.”

USP has conferred over 700 graduate degrees, and continues to train students through its four inter-disciplinary academic programs, (PhD, Master's, BA-CIM, and Certificate). In its 50th year, USP honors its alumni and their important contributions across the diverse fields of government, the nonprofit sector, and academia. Recent PhD graduate Mike Ford who began a tenure track position at UW-Oshkosh remarked, “The multi-disciplinary nature of the program helped me to find new ways to approach research questions…I have no doubt that the training provided by USP will continue to serve me well as I develop as a teacher and researcher.” Urban Studies major Kayla Reithmeyer reflects, “I truly found my passion within the major. In a world that is quickly urbanizing, this multi-disciplinary approach will stick with me in my future endeavors as an urban planner.”

The Department of Urban Affairs at UWM was founded in 1963 through the support of a million dollar Ford Foundation grant at a time when scholarship on cities and urban development was critical in the context of the civil rights movement and urban crisis. The doctoral program soon followed in 1977, with the belief that in order to examine complex urban problems, students must be literate in a variety of urban-focused disciplines. In the mid-1980s, both degrees were folded into the Urban Studies Programs.

To commemorate 50 years of urban research, Urban Studies is holding a year-long series of events. Please join us for our next event, the seventh annual Henry W. Maier State of Milwaukee Summit: *Life After Vouchers: Expansion, Accountability & Outcomes*, on November 14, from 3:30-6:30 at the UWM Hefter Center, 3271 N. Lake Drive. A distinguished panel will discuss new research on the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, the recent expansion of school vouchers statewide, and legislative efforts to create accountability measures for all schools that receive public funding. A reception will follow the panel discussion and Q&A. The event is free and open to the public. For a full list of 50th anniversary events, please go to [www.usp50.uwm.edu](http://www.usp50.uwm.edu)

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