

URBAN STUDIES UPDATE

Fall 2022

Newsletter for Alumni and Friends

Director's Letter

Dear USP Community

As I write this letter summer is winding down and many of us are looking ahead to fall semester. Readings are being selected, course syllabi finalized, lectures planned, last minute vacations squeezed in. Summer seems to sail by a little faster every year.

Here at USP, we're hoping for more of a return to normal after two years of pandemic related disruption. One of our goals this year is to create more opportunities for students and faculty to get together informally outside the classroom. With fewer events and fewer people on campus the past two years, these kinds of interactions have occurred less frequently. Hopefully this will begin to change this year, but we understand we need to do more to nurture and sustain our USP community. We have a number of things in mind for this year so stay tuned!

As usual, we have an impressive cohort of new graduate students joining us this fall along with a few others who began the program last spring. We're happy to once again be welcoming a number of international students—from Ghana, India, and Israel. You'll find profiles of our incoming students later in this newsletter.

We're sad to be saying goodbye to one of our most active and well-liked faculty members. Ivy Hu has left UWM to take a position in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Florida. Ivy advised a number of our students over the years and played a key role in the recently established accelerated master's program operated in partnership with Urban Planning. Both Ivy and fellow planner Bob Schneider have been instrumental in strengthening ties between USP and Urban Planning during the past several years, something we all benefit from.

For the many alumni who have made contributions to USP this past year, we thank you for your support! Your generous gifts have enabled our students with limited financial resources to complete fieldwork and other costly activities. We hope you have fond memories of your time at UWM, and that you will continue to keep us in mind as you plan your future charitable contributions.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy, and productive year.



Joel Rast
Director



Thank You for Supporting Student Research!

All of us in Urban Studies would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our donors whose gifts go directly to support undergraduate and graduate student research.

Aaron Wolfe Bertling '79 MS
Pam Clemons
Jeff Eagan '78 MS
Dr. Carolyn C. Keith '91 PhD
Kenneth Robinson '80 MS

Dr. Linda F. Scheible '91 PhD
James Sponholz '89 MS
Pauli Taylor-Boyd '02 MS
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Program Updates from the Associate Director



Dr. Jamie Harris

Greetings,

I share Joel's optimism as we start the new school year and the unmistakable movement toward a campus that resembles the period before March, 2020 and all that followed. It has been wonderfully gratifying to see our library, student union and public spaces bustling with student activity again. This year we have returned to in person events and we are excited about several coming up. (see page 6).

And we continue with a baby boom in USP during the 2021-22 school year! Doctoral students **Danny Benson** and the birth of his son, Rowan; **Ayodeji Obabomi** and the birth of his son, Adedotun; and **Sai Sun** and the birth of her daughter and son twins, Madison and Ryan. **Congratulations to all of them and their families!**



Madison & Ryan

Incoming Graduate Students



Nadia Adusei (Master's Student)

I am a Ghanaian student and enjoy sewing, cooking, and traveling worldwide. I have decided to pursue my Master's in Urban Studies after finishing my Bachelor of Arts in Economics. As an economist, the well-being of individuals is of much concern to me. Living in an urban community and environment, I realized how much interest and passion I have developed for this field. With much knowledge in urban studies, individuals' economic well-being will improve, increasing the per capita income of many lives. Therefore, I am ready and excited to be part of the USP Team. I believe pursuing my Master's degree in Urban Studies will equip me with much knowledge and skills to help with the economic growth and impact of the urban environment in Ghana. Looking forward to a great semester.



Russell Star-Lack (Master's Student)

I received my BA in History from Carleton College in 2020, where I wrote my senior thesis on housing discrimination and Jewish-Black relations in postwar Twin Cities. During my time in college, I collaborated with the University of Minnesota's Mapping Prejudice project on an award-winning story map, tracking the suburbanization of North Minneapolis' Jewish community. These experiences, combined with graduating in the midst of a global pandemic and the aftermath of the George Floyd protests, drew my focus to community-based activism and social services relating to issues of affordable housing and racial equity, and I consequently served two Americorps terms of service immediately after graduation. The first was at Neighborworks Home Partners, a community development corporation based in St. Paul, while the second was at Chicago Rehab Network, a citywide coalition of neighborhood and community-based development

organizations. Following these positions, I joined Spanish Coalition for Housing, a Chicago-based housing counseling agency, as a grant-writer. During my two years in the affordable housing space, I have learned that support from community-based housing organizations in the form of housing counseling, rent and mortgage assistance, and affordable housing development in communities most at risk of displacement is crucial, and much more supportive programming and community activism needs to be devoted to erase the fundamental inequities in the housing market faced by these communities. I hope to take this experience with me to UWM, where I plan to continue my study of the effects of redlining and other forms of lending discrimination on racialization and community relations. In my free time, I enjoy playing guitar and seeing live music, as well as playing board games and tabletop RPGs with friends.



Incoming Graduate Students (cont.)



Maria Rose Francis (PhD Student)

I come from a small riverside town in Kerala, India. I received my bachelor's degree in Architecture from Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Technology, Kottayam, and my master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology, Shibpur. Both the programs laid a firm background and evoked a strong interest in further researching inclusive and people-friendly neighborhoods. I have been lucky enough to travel and stay in different cities of India. The experiences I gathered from each journey were diverse and unique as each city had its own social as well as cultural setting and each space told a different story. Being a resident near the river coastline, I have personally experienced the challenges of a natural disaster like floods. All these have been a motivation to pursue my research in the field of sustainable, energy-efficient, and resilient urban settings. I am very excited to further my studies by pursuing a PhD in the

Urban Studies program because of its outstanding faculty and interdisciplinary approach.



Truphosa Mwololo (PhD Student)

I was born in Kenya. I received my bachelor's degree from UW-Madison in Economics and an MBA from Edgewood College. After my MBA, I worked for the WI Department of Commerce in the Bureau of Minority Business Development, the WI Department of Administration Supplier Diversity Program, the Milwaukee County Community Business Development Program and currently with Wisconsin Procurement Institute (WPI). My focus has been on supplier diversity and disadvantaged businesses in Wisconsin and nationwide. I am a member of the African Association of Madison and volunteer at the African Community Center for Community Development. I speak 5 languages fluently and I am conversational in Italian and Spanish. My hobbies include hiking, yoga and travelling. Two years at the United World Colleges of the Atlantic, in Wales (UK) opened opportunities for travel in Africa, Europe, Asia and Latin America.



Tehila Cohen (Master's Student)

I was born and raised in the city of Jerusalem, Israel. Recently I moved with my family to Milwaukee. In my professional background, I am a Community Program Manager with almost two decades of experience directing urban sustainability and environment-focused projects at the federal, district, and local government levels. Prior to my move to Milwaukee, I worked at the Jerusalem Municipality as a Head of the Social Sustainability Department and promoted my belief in inclusive and resilient cities and communities through various projects such as community gardens, community-street libraries, placemaking, green spaces cultivated by community and more. I have worked with diverse demographic groups in the geopolitically complex city of Jerusalem, including Ultraorthodox Jews, Israeli Jews, and Palestinians. I hold a BA in Education Management and Leadership from Bar Ilan University in Israel, and I'm happy to be part of the Urban

Studies program at UWM. Through the program, my hope is to add dimensions and broaden my understanding of cities in an academic way in addition to the knowledge I gained through my professional background. I would want to apply the skills and tools I'll acquire in the program to my professional life in the future.



Nathaniel Tease (Master's Student)

I grew up in Green Bay and attended UW-Madison for my undergraduate studies, earning a BA in German and Philosophy in 2013. The following year, I moved to Berlin, Germany, where I spent a few years working as an English teacher and bartender. I began my graduate studies at UWM in the Urban Planning department in 2020, but recently transitioned over to the coordinated degree program in MLIS (Library Information Science) / MS in Urban Studies. My primary areas of interest are urban history, labor history, and archival preservation. My hobbies include bicycling, playing cribbage, collecting cassette tapes, and obsessing over 80s electro.

Student News

Congratulations to all of our recent graduates!

Graduate Students

Madeline Brenner, Master's degree (Advisor, Amanda I. Seligman) Urban Studies & Library and Information Science, Thesis title: "Neighborhood Library Modernization: Public Library Expansion in Milwaukee during the 1960s and 1970s." See page 7.

Hamideh Moayyed, PhD (Advisor: Robert Schneider), Dissertation title: "Assessing the Impact of Urban and Suburban Settings on Seniors' Travel Behavior in Milwaukee County, Waukesha County, and Ozaukee County." See spotlight on page 7.

Joseph Moore, Master's degree (Advisor, Amanda I. Seligman) Thesis title: "White Resistance to Public School Integration in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Prince Edward County, Virginia."

Emily Yates, Master's degree, (Advisor, Joel Rast), Thesis title: "The development of Do-It-Yourself Skateparks in Contemporary Urban Environments."

Undergraduate Students

Colette Brown, Certificate

Edgar Leon Gomez, BA, *Magna Cum Laude*
(See spotlight on page 8)

Hayley Jasinski, BA, *Magna Cum Laude*

Sierra Shae Osowski, BA, *Cum Laude*

Sergio Pulido, BA

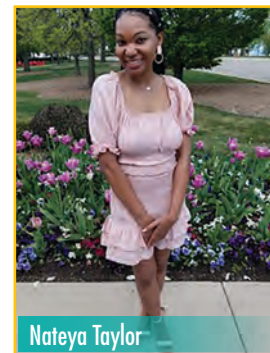
Anne Sheard, BA

Sedgewick Smith Jr., BA

Racial Justice Community Project Grants

As part of the work of USP's Racial Justice and Equity Task Force, a new grant program for Urban Studies students was created to help students pursue community-based activities that further racial equity and racial justice, broadly defined, in Milwaukee. The program provides student grants of \$500 to support work on a project with a community partner or partners.

MS student **Nateya Taylor** used the funds to support her upcoming four-part docuseries tentatively titled, "Shifting the Narrative MKE" which highlights Black Milwaukee leaders who are promoting wellness in their communities through innovative solutions. See a [summary of her work](#) along with photos of the community leaders she interviewed.



Undergraduate Awards

Major, **Liam Farin**, received a Gold Ribbon for his oral presentation, The Value of Urban Agriculture: A Community's Perspective, at the 2022 UWM Undergraduate Research Symposium (mentor: Prof. Arijit Sen).

Major, **Henry Wehrs**, received the Best Capstone Poster Presentation Award for his project, "Out of State Landlords and Single Family Rentals: Investment Behavior in Milwaukee's Rental Market."

Sedgewick Smith Jr.'s capstone paper, "A Case Study of Modern Milwaukee Neighborhoods: Characterizing the Landscape Through Redevelopment, Race, and Citizen Participation" earned Best Capstone Paper and can be viewed in the most recent issue of [e.polis](#).



Faculty News

Anne Bonds & Derek Handley's work on [excavating and mapping racial restrictive covenants in Milwaukee](#) before and after the Supreme Court declared racial covenants unenforceable has been covered extensively and is important to understand how covenants shaped Milwaukee area neighborhoods.

Amanda I. Seligman's 450 course, Growth of Metropolitan Milwaukee, was featured in two [Milwaukee Journal](#) articles for its innovative approach that engages students with urban history in novel ways like twitter reenactments.

Ryan Holifield and fellow co-PIs were [awarded a \\$2.8 million Innovations in Development grant](#) from the Advancing Informal STEM Learning program of the National Science Foundation. The four-year project, entitled, "WaterMarks: an Art/Science Framework for Community-Engaged Learning and Environmental Stewardship" will support programming, research, and evaluation for a collaboration among artists, scientists, and residents "to develop an inclusive and urban-scaled vision for the City of Milwaukee, and to help people better understand their relationships to the water systems and infrastructure that support their lives."

Joel Rast and the staff at the UWM Center for Economic Development (CED) received a \$350,000 Congressional Earmark to study and produce an environmental justice report focused on Milwaukee. The funds will allow the Center to hire two post-doctoral researchers.

Bob Schneider & Ivy Hu along with Yaidi Cancel Martinez received a million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation for their regional transportation initiative, [Flex Ride Milwaukee Project](#). The project uses a microtransit model to bridge the spatial mismatch and connect workers with job centers to complement existing bus routes and build more equity into the transit system.

Rina Ghose and Amir Forati were interviewed by [WUWM Lake Effect](#) for their research on Covid misinformation cases.

Lynne Woehrle was awarded the Robin Williams Award for Distinguished Contributions to Scholarship, Teaching, and Service by the American Sociological Association 2022 Section on Peace, War and Social Conflict. This award recognizes significant contributions to Peace Studies, conflict analysis, and the study of war/violence.

Experiential Learning Highlights

Major **Leean Le** [recounts her experience interning at the Milwaukee County Transit System's Planning Department](#) this last summer. She explains how her internship allowed her to gain critical GIS map-making skills and learn the ins and outs of transit planning, particularly as it relates to racial equity in Milwaukee.

Major, **Ann Seigfreid** told us about the [3 weeks she spent studying at The University of Applied Sciences in Darmstadt, Germany](#) over the summer, with a focus on green infrastructure and sustainability.



Jack Rongstad

Alum, **Jack Rongstad**, presented a paper drawn from his senior thesis ([A History of Mitchell Park in Three Eras: 1890-2021](#)) at the 2022 Urban Affairs Association in Washington DC.

Major **Natalie Hernandez** was one of eighteen participants that made up the first cohort of NextGenPop. NextGenPop offers undergraduates a two week on-campus research training experience over the summer. During the academic year, there are virtual research, mentorship, and networking opportunities with population scholars and practitioners who have diverse research focuses. The program encourages students to pursue graduate school in the social sciences. This year NextGenPop was hosted by UW-Madison.



Leean Le



Natalie Hernandez



Ann Seigfreid

Events Recap - Out and about with Urban Studies

New Student Welcome Reception



Boat Sightseeing Tour on the Milwaukee River & Lake Michigan



City Hall Tour



2022 Urban Affairs Association in Washington D.C.



The UAA national conference returned to commemorate its 50th Anniversary conference event that had been cancelled in 2020. Some USP faculty and students attended the conference and special events like a boat tour on the Potomac. USP is the institutional home of the UAA - their offices are just down the hall from the USP main office.

Capstone Last Class Reception, Spring 2022



This fall, in addition to speakers and panels, we're also organizing a number of events that focus on community building and that provide opportunities for students and faculty to connect after two years of isolation.

Capstone Students presenting at the 2022 Undergraduate Research Symposium



Mark your Calendar - Urban Studies Student Research Forum

Friday, May 5, 2023 noon – 5pm

Poster and panel presentation, and keynote by Claire Dunning, assistant professor of public policy and history at the University of Maryland, College Park, and author of *Nonprofit Neighborhoods: An urban history of inequality and the American state* (University of Chicago Press, 2022).

In the Media

PhD student, **Ayodeji Obayomi** published an op-ed on gender inequity in street naming in the Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service which was included on WUWM's [Lake Effect](#).

Kacee Ochalek was interviewed on [WISN](#) on the Healing Spaces Initiative that she is working on in her job with the City of Milwaukee, and which is the subject of her master's thesis.



Kacee Ochalek

Alumni - In Their Own Words



Hamideh Moayyed, PhD '22

As an international student coming to the U.S. from Iran, it was initially challenging for me to adjust to the new culture. However, the diversity at the school and the welcoming atmosphere of the Urban Studies Programs paved the way for me to build a life in one of the United States' most thrilling and vibrant cities – Milwaukee.

With my background in urban planning and design, I have always been passionate about changing communities for the better in practical ways. The interdisciplinary PhD program in Urban Studies along with the professional and knowledgeable professors really intrigued me as they gave me the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of other interrelated fields such as environmental studies, transportation planning, housing, and geography. Seeing all these connections under one roof was really inspiring.

During my PhD, I simultaneously earned a certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to gain hands-on experience in using mapping and geospatial technologies to solve challenging urban environmental problems.

My interest in the field of transportation planning, motivated by a desire to serve the community and vulnerable populations in particular, led me to investigate the travel behavior of older adults and their transportation barriers for my dissertation research. I took a mixed-method approach using statistical analysis, machine learning, and content analysis. My research provides policymakers and urban planners with a better understanding of older adults' travel behavior and the key barriers that discourage them from using non-automobile modes and make policy recommendations that could make walking, bicycling, and transit use more feasible, accessible, and attractive for older adults.

I will start a full-time position as a GIS analyst and urban planning researcher at Communities Unlimited, Inc. this fall. As a graduate who conducted many projects and published academic papers in the field of urban planning, I am thrilled to contribute my knowledge and expertise to support the mapping of environmental systems; creating map products for communities; and deploying GIS mapping and data resources to conduct data analysis and research to support community development projects.



Madeline (Maddi) Brenner, MS-MLIS '22

I enrolled in Urban Studies through the coordinated degree program at UWM for my MLIS in Library & Information Science and MS Urban Studies because I was eager to learn about the role of libraries and urban communities. This interest impacted my study through an interdisciplinary lens and allowed me to gain expertise in challenging and insightful ideas about the city overall. It broadened my knowledge of multiple stakeholders and situations in which a library and city runs and encouraged more effective thinking of libraries and the library profession post-graduation. My master's thesis explores public library development in Milwaukee during the 1960s and 1970s when population and city boundaries were increasing. My exploratory study used many unprocessed archival collections at the Milwaukee Public Library, where I was able to learn how neighborhood dynamics challenged library growth, government interest and community partnerships. I am excited about the work I conducted and am happy to have contributed to the little known history of U.S. public library expansion.

I want to say thank you to USP faculty and staff, especially Amanda Seligman, who were thoughtful, critical, and deeply engaging in class and during my research. In the fall, I will officially be a Reference & Outreach Librarian for the University of Iowa and I look forward to the next steps in my professional career. Hopefully, I will come back to academia for a PhD in the near future.

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appreciated at give.uwm.edu/UrbanStudies

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Edgar Leon Gomez, BA '22, Magna Cum Laude, McNair Scholar

Prior to becoming an Urban Studies major, I had explored four other majors with a feeling of uncertainty. Once I took the introductory course for the major however, I found myself to be fascinated with the study of urban issues, especially since I have always lived in an urban area. The interdisciplinary approach of the major allowed me to take courses in different subjects that matched my personal and academic goals. Its interdisciplinary approach also gave me the opportunity to take courses in subjects I would have never thought to take before (GIS, physical geography of cities, etc.). Based on these experiences, I was able to secure an internship with the City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works during my senior year. The internship was a tremendous experience that allowed me to better understand and apply what I learned in the classroom to my own experiences. My capstone course allowed me to create my own research project that centered around Business Improvement Districts in Milwaukee and the processes involved within BIDs in the city. I used archival research to examine the services provided by BIDs, business marketing, and community response to BIDs with special focus given to Historic Third Ward (BID-2), Historic King Drive

(BID-8), and Cesar Chavez Drive (BID-38). My current plans are to attend graduate school at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities for a master's in Urban and Regional Planning. While my previous research has focused on housing and community development, I also hope to expand into sustainability during my time at U of M. I can certainly state without a doubt that my experience with the Urban Studies major at UWM has prepared me to continue my studies at the graduate level.