

URBAN STUDIES UPDATE



Fall 2024

Newsletter for Alumni and Friends

Director's Letter

Dear USP community,

Depending on how quickly we're able to finalize this newsletter and get copies printed, you are either in the process of making the adjustment from summer break to Fall semester, well into the semester groove, or (worst case scenario) starting to make Thanksgiving plans. Whatever the case, I hope your semester is going well so far.

Last year was an eventful one for Urban Studies. A few highlights: We decided to shake things up a bit and hold our annual student research forum at Milwaukee's City Hall. It was a great success, and you can read more about it in the pages that follow. Special thanks to **Arijit Sen** for helping to coordinate this event. We also brought a large contingent of graduate students to the annual conference of the Urban Affairs Association last spring, held in New York City. Students presented their research and had great fun exploring the city.

There have been some comings and goings in the past year, including the retirements of long-term USP faculty **Joe Rodriguez** and **Linda McCarthy**. Joe served as program director of USP from 2005 to 2009, advised many of our graduate students over the years, taught USP 980 – Growth of Urban Society, and was a regular participant at many of our events. Linda was a USP faculty affiliate for the entire 23-year period of her employment at UWM, also advising many students and supporting the program in other ways. We hate to say goodbye, but we wish both of them long and happy retirements! On a happier note, Associate Professor **Andrew Kincaid** from the Department of English has joined USP as a faculty affiliate. Andrew has a diverse set of urban interests, and I encourage graduate students to visit his website to learn more.

There are a few changes around the office folks should know about. I'll be taking a long-overdue sabbatical during spring semester 2025. In my absence, **Jamie Harris** will be serving as interim program director. His appointment will run from January through August 2025. Also, **Carrie Beranek** has agreed to serve jointly as office manager for both USP and Political Science, so she is now dividing her time between both units. If you're looking for Carrie and don't see her in the USP office, try the Political Science Department office on the 6th floor.

Thanks to all of the USP alumni who have made generous donations to the program during the past year. We continue to use these funds to support graduate student research, and our students are very grateful. We deeply appreciate your support, and we hope you continue to have fond memories of your time at UWM.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel Rast".

Joel Rast
Director
Urban Studies Programs



Janice Wilberg (MS '77, PhD '86) is one of two recipients of this year's "Impact Alumni Award." Dr. Wilberg also was the 2006 recipient of USP's Scott Greer Award for Postgraduate Contribution to Urban Affairs. You can see the list of award winners at the link: <https://www.give.uwm.edu/s/1902/m19/interior-dev.aspx?sid=1902&gid=3&pgid=2407>

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Program Updates from the Associate Director

Please join me in congratulating our graduates!

Undergraduate Students

Christopher Drazek-Loosier, Certificate, Honors in the Major

LoriAnne Flaherty, Certificate, Summa Cum Laude, High Honors in the Major

Georg Frisch III, BA (See Spotlight on p. 7.)

Jayne Kilander, Certificate, Honors in the Major (see incoming graduate students on p. 4)

Susan McClung, BA, Cum Laude

Hassan Richardson, Certificate, Summa Cum Laude

Aidan Sodermann, BA

Isabella Wineke, BA, Summa Cum Laude



Dr. Jamie Harris

Graduate Students

Nadia Adusei, Master's degree, (Advisor: Joel Rast), Paper Title: "Childhood Lead Poisoning in Milwaukee (1990-Present)."

Katherine Kocisky, PhD, (Advisor: Ryan Holifield), Dissertation Title: "Urban Rail-Trails as Spaces of Distributive, Procedural, and Recognitional (In) Justice." (See Spotlight on p. 6.)

Alexis Nehmer, Master's degree, (Advisor: Jamie Harris), Paper Title: "A Review and Analysis of a Municipal Pilot Study of a Shared Micromobility Program." (See Spotlight on p. 7.)

Nathaniel Tease, Master's degree, (Advisor: Amanda I. Seligman), Thesis Title: "The 1946-47 Allis-Chalmers Strike and the Unraveling of the Popular Front."



Bella Wineke



Liam Farin

Undergraduate Awards

Urban Studies majors **Isabella Wineke** and **Liam Farin** won the Undergraduate Student Best Poster Awards for their posters: *Shades of Green: A Spatial Analysis of Tree Canopy Disparities in Milwaukee's Urban Landscape* by **Isabella Wineke** and *Imagining a New City Partnership: How Modern Milwaukee Navigates Citizen Participation, Planning, and Public Safety* by **Liam Farin**.



Russell Star-Lack

Graduate Awards

Russell Star-Lack, Master's Student in Urban Studies, received the Graduate Student Best Poster Award for his poster: *Break Down the Walls: The Milwaukee Jewish Council and Jewish Civil Rights Activism in Postwar Milwaukee*.



Capstone Last Class
Reception & Speaker, Spring 2024

This spring's last capstone class included a virtual visit from BA alumna, **Natalie Hernandez ('23)**, who has been working for the City of New York as part of the Urban Fellows program.

This year's dissertation research grant recipient is **Jesse Campa** for his dissertation: *The Experiences of Students with Disabilities from Varying Sociodemographic Identities in Higher Education to Inform Universal Design for Learning and Instruction at Urban Serving Universities*.

PhD Candidate, **Yuchen Zhao**, received a Project Fellowship to support his work with this summer's Field School.

Congratulations to you both!

26th Annual Student Research Forum



Milwaukee City Hall Attendees

Urban Studies Programs' 26th Annual Student Research Forum took place at the Milwaukee City Hall Rotunda on May 3rd and showcased student research poster presentations along with a panel discussion with elected and city officials and community leaders on the role and importance of hearing community voices and community member participation in urban governance.

The event was jointly sponsored by the Buildings-Landscapes-Cultures Field School, and Prof. Arijit Sen moderated the panel session. The poster session included majors enrolled in the 600 Capstone Seminar in Urban Studies course who presented their semester-long research during a juried poster session along with graduate students in urban studies. The panelists included:

Sharaka Berry, Community Organizer;

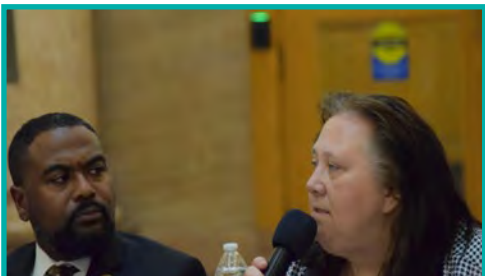
Lafayette Crump, City of Milwaukee Commissioner of City Development;

Evan Goyke, Wisconsin State Representative for Assembly District 18 & Milwaukee City Attorney;

Stephanie Harling, Executive Director at Havenwoods Neighborhood Partnership and BID 31 and Urban Studies MS Alumna '20;

Camille Mays, Community Leader;

Supreme Moore Omokunde, Wisconsin State Representative for Assembly District 17.



Lafayette Crump & Stephanie Harling



Evan Goyke & Camille Mays



Sharaka Berry & Evan Goyke



Attendees during the poster session

Experiential Learning Highlights

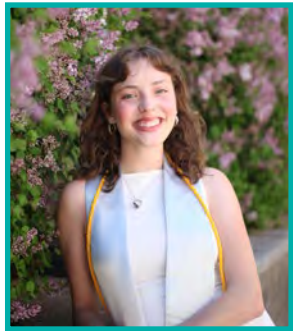


Urban studies major, **Henry Maes**, offers some reflections on his study abroad experience this summer in Marburg, Germany. "The most apparent thing I noticed is just how vibrant this city is. I sat in a café after classes for about two and a half hours the other day and saw hundreds if not thousands of people walking by me enjoying the city. I think by far the most interesting thing I have noticed in my short time in Marburg is the incredible balance between the car, bicycle, bus, train, and pedestrian in the city, and country. It seems that for the first time in my life, I have seen a place where all can exist in somewhat decent harmony. I've very much appreciated this study abroad experience. It has shown me not only what I love so much about cities, and what I hope the United States can get closer to, but it also has shown me things I thought I would like, or I think would be good, that sometimes aren't as good as I initially thought they would be. I still have much more exploring to do and am very excited to see what Germany and the rest of Europe has to offer, and what I could bring back to assist in my growth as an Urban Studies student at UWM!"

Urban Studies major, **Liam Farin**, recounts his summer internship experience working as a Transportation Operations Assistant with the Multimodal Unit within the City of Milwaukee's Department of Public Works. Full story can be found at the link: <https://uwm.edu/urban-studies/undergraduate/Internships/>



Incoming Graduate Students



Jayne Kilander (Master's Student)

I am a master's student pursuing a coordinated degree in Urban Studies and Library and Information Science. I received my undergraduate degree in Sociology and Urban Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and I am excited to continue my graduate studies here. I am deeply rooted in the Milwaukee community, working with organizations like the ACLU, and volunteering with Beckum Stapleton Little League. I am excited to continue to study place-making and the role of public space within cities, with a focus on Milwaukee in particular. I have the privilege of working with the Urban Affairs Association and was able to attend their annual conference this spring in New York. It was an incredible experience and allowed me to explore burgeoning ideas in the Urban Studies field, as well as being able to attend presentations from my fellow Urban Studies students at UWM . I am excited to continue my work with UAA as a Project Assistant

throughout my graduate program. I am also a Reference and Public Services Intern at the American Geographical Society Library, working with the UWM community and beyond, to open access to their amazing collections. Through the coordinated degree program, I look forward to examining the role of libraries as they function in the urban environment and working to engage more urban communities in collections like the AGSL, as well as public libraries more generally.



Allyn Lottouzee (PhD Student)

I wish to study the current existence and future emergence of eco-neighborhoods, helping to define the term through a critique of the versions that currently exist - how they are classified, where they are located, what determines their optimal state, and where sites are most suitable. So far, I see them as green corridors within existing municipalities that achieve carbon neutrality through environmental sustainability measures and by instilling and insulating quadruple-bottom-line market systems. I also wish to introduce novel terminology to this field: participatory capitalism; market insourcing; all-encompassing tax incremental districts; community investment trusts; general community funds; sidewalk centrism; and cooperative incremental infill. Research would be further informed by a historical narrative of capitalism as it links to systemic racism, disposability (the arms race of) development, and centralized bureaucracy. From this, I aspire to build an online toolkit to

inform hopeful practitioners in implementing just transitions toward eco-neighborhood development.

I am a non-traditional student – born in a barn to a high school dropout, I was emancipated at fifteen, dropped out of college at 20, and became the father of two boys by 22. I returned to college at 29 to study the crossover of political policy and climate justice, completing a BA in Political Science and BS in Conservation and Environmental Studies from UW-Milwaukee, followed by a masters in Urban and Regional Planning from UW-Madison. I am currently a housing specialist for the Cathedral Center, an organization dedicated to preventing homelessness for women and families through services for prevention, sheltering, and transitional housing. Through the Lubar Entrepreneurship Center, I intend to establish businesses such as CLIPP - a system designed to clip battery-powered engines in and out of semi-trucks along interstates, powered by solar and wind power collectors lining roadways; Society Builders, a think-do tank that brings environmentally-sustainable ideas and ideators together; HotBoks, a low-cost industrial vessel capable of composting in 48 hours or less; Bokses, utilizing reusable containers kept within a closed loop of distribution; and Palletable, a hard case that clips into custom-made pallets, eliminating shrinkwrap.

[Incoming students continued on next page](#)

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.



Dr. Lisa K. Berger (PhD '05)
Aaron Wolfe Bertling (MS '79)
Dr. Gregory Carman (PhD '10)
Lana M. Carman

Jeff Eagan (MS '78)
Patrick Donald Fendt
Pamela S. Fendr (MS '96)
John C. Huettner (MS '69)

Kenneth Robinson (MS '80)
Dr. Linda F. Scheible (PhD '91)
Michael C. Scheible
James K. Sponholz (MS '89)

Dr. Martin L. Tanck
William Tisdale (MS '89)
Harry M. Weiner (MS '75)
Nancy Yttre (MS '93)

Incoming Graduate Students Cont'd



Mostafa Naderi (PhD Student)

I am Mostafa Naderi, an urban planning and design enthusiast whose main concern is social and spatial justice. I come from Iran, a nation located in the Middle East. Having grown up and studied urban planning and design in this context, I am interested in delving into power relations and political economy of urban development and redevelopment projects leading to massive displacement and condition of displaceability in the cities of the Global South.

I hold a bachelor's degree in urban and community planning from Ferdowsi University of Mashhad (2019) and a master's degree in urban design from University of Tehran (2021). I have gained various experiences while being involved in academia as a teaching assistant at the University of Tehran, and practice as an urban designer in Mashhad City Municipality, and private urban planning and design consulting firms.



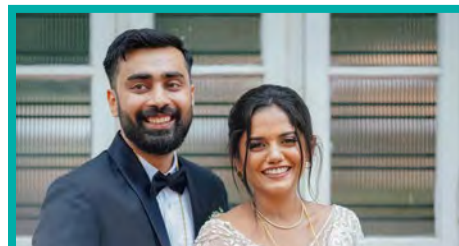
Melissa Prentice (Master's Student)

I am excited to begin my second Master's degree in Urban Studies this fall. I am originally from the Chicago area and completed my BA in English and Women's Studies at Northern Illinois University. I received a Master's in Library and Information Science from Wayne State University in 2012 and have been the Public Services Manager at Mead Library in Sheboygan since 2014. My personal and professional passion is working to improve the quality of life for all by strengthening our public institutions and their role in contributing to vibrant, resilient, and welcoming communities. The forces of capitalism and neoliberal development have shaped our cities in ways that often exacerbate social inequalities, diminish community cohesion, and prioritize profit over people. My decision to continue my education in Urban Studies is informed by my commitment to both critiquing these ideologies and exploring alternative paths toward just and inclusive urban spaces as well as my belief in the

transformative potential of libraries. While public space is a primary interest of mine, housing justice is a strong secondary interest. Safe, affordable housing for ALL is foundational to creating just, thriving communities and I am especially interested in exploring alternatives to the real estate industry paradigm (and all associated aspects: landlords/investment property, personal asset/ownership models) dominating the conversation around housing issues. I am looking forward to learning from and collaborating with like-minded students and faculty in the Urban Studies program. In my free time I enjoy gardening, hiking and camping, traveling, and seeing live music.

SEE STUDENT, FACULTY, AND ALUMNI NEWS
AT:

<https://uwm.edu/urban-studies/category/news/>



USP Dissertator Maria Rose Francis & Tarun Thomas Eapen were married May 26, 2024.

We have to report some sad news about two USP alumni:

John Hagedorn (PhD '93) was Professor Emeritus at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) in the Department of Criminology, Law, and Justice, long-time affiliate of the Great Cities Institute and in 2016 was given the official title of James J. Stukel Senior Faculty Fellow. He was well known for his research on gangs and published several books on the topic.

Obituary: https://obits.cremationsocietyofmilwaukee.com/john-martin-hagedorn-sr?fbclid=IwAR1udlpPV8pfiNViq6xNishUhg3VB9GELQJBrmP4GgD8ldvmQs-snYIJeoaemAQ3SXpqs-yHllcwjIbCaIMCZRDXDisc53w_cLflhbh_P6yUqfuCYqQ90CDV9N7msdM0

Steven R. Byers (PhD '04) worked at the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel as a columnist, reporter and section editor for three decades, and later became an assistant professor of journalism at Marquette University and their Media Advisor for nearly a decade. He was the partner to longtime USP faculty affiliate and history professor emerita, Genevieve McBride.

Obituary: <https://schmidtandbartelt.com/obituaries/detail.aspx?id=17974>



Events Recap - Out and About with Urban Studies

2024 Urban Affairs Association Conference in New York, NY



UAA dinner cruise



USP students (Yuchen Zhao, Sana Avar, Jayne Kilander, Russell Star-Lack and Jack Ronastad) on the subway in NYC

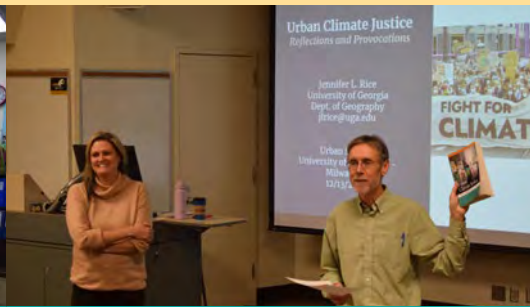


Jack Rongstad presenting his paper at the UAA

Urban Studies Fall Lecture: Climate Justice in the City



Invited Speaker, Dr. Jennifer Rice meets with Students



Dr. Jennifer Rice and USP Director Joel Rast

Oral History Workshop



Urban Studies co-sponsored event featuring Dr. Kavita Panjabi who presented: "Memory, Ethics, Affect, Trauma: A workshop on doing oral history under difficult circumstances."

Alumni - In Their Own Words



Kat Kocisky, PhD '24

My time with USP has been incredibly fulfilling. One of my favorite parts has been getting to know my fellow students and USP faculty. Through teaching opportunities, project assistantships with **Professor Joel Rast**, **Professor Anne Bonds**, and the Urban Affairs Association, coursework across disciplines, and years of dissertation research and writing, I've grown immensely as both a scholar and person. One thing I've really come to appreciate about Urban Studies is the opportunity to understand how different disciplines, including geography, sociology, architecture, and history approach urban issues differently. In turn, I was able to consider and apply unique perspectives from each in my own research.

My dissertation, under the supervision of **Professor Ryan Holifield**, focused on urban rail-trails, specifically the challenges and opportunities of developing them equitably in a way that minimizes displacement and enhances belonging for historically excluded communities. First, I developed an equity index to analyze the content of equitable development plans of urban rail-trails in the U.S to understand how practitioners perceive equity. Then, I used Milwaukee's Beerline Trail (specifically the B-Line Park) as my case study to understand the challenges, including the trail's many landscapes and organizational tensions, that practitioners face in efforts to mitigate cultural displacement and cultivate belonging along a trail surrounded by two communities with different racial and economic backgrounds.

For now, I plan to continue working with the Urban Affairs Association, make up lost time with my family, and take some time to reflect on future career pathways. Thank you to my advisor and colleagues for helping me accomplish something that I am truly very proud of!

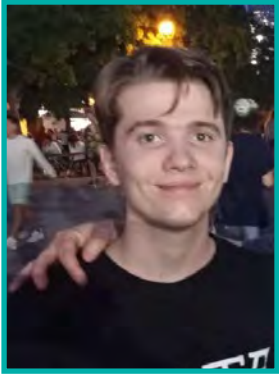
Alumni – In Their Own Words - Cont'd

Alexis Nehmer, MS '23 (Dec.)



As a first generation college student, earning my Master's degree in Urban Studies was a huge accomplishment and a very challenging one. Graduate school was not only about academic education, but also about finding myself. This journey taught me discipline, responsibility, and how to overcome mental obstacles of motivation and perfection. The Urban Studies Program (USP) expanded my knowledge of community within the school and in Milwaukee. There were opportunities around every corner to partake in, even if the topic was new to you. I was a Project Assistant for three different professors over three semesters in the fields of non-profit administration, environmental science, and journalism. Even though these areas were new to me, I loved being able to help the professor's project research through small tasks, while developing relationships along the way. During my first semester of grad school, I applied for an internship that was sent out by the USP program. This internship position was with the City of Milwaukee - Department of Public Works Multimodal Unit. Throughout grad school and for the next few months post-grad, I have been interning as a Transportation Operations Assistant. Embarking on this internship was so valuable to my personal, academic, and professional growth. This experience allowed me to bridge the gap between theory and practice, applying the knowledge I gained in class to real-world situations. It exposed me to the complexities and challenges of urban planning, transportation, and community development. I chose to do my master's paper reviewing one of the main projects I was assigned to during my internship: the Dockless Scooter Pilot Study. I am very thankful to USP and I look forward to continuing to make a meaningful impact in the field of Urban Studies while contributing towards building sustainable and inclusive cities. Slow down, take note, and ride bikes.

Georg Frisch, BA '24



In my time in UWM's Urban Studies program has reshaped the way I see Milwaukee while also giving me a better understanding of the Urban Planner I want to be. Throughout the past few years, I've learned about the historical significance of planners, both in Milwaukee and nationwide. I've also learned the importance of intentional, thorough planning. My experience with Urban Studies has given me a historical background I can always recall wherever my career takes me. My first two years at school were challenging, as I was rarely at school because of the pandemic, and I didn't make the connections I thought I would. However, over the past two years, UWM has brought me out of my shell, and I've been lucky enough to find a real connection, not just to UWM, but to the city of Milwaukee. I'll never forget the time I spent in the classroom or the time I spent with my friends.

My senior year I was lucky enough to apply my general knowledge of housing policy to Milwaukee. My capstone project focused on Opportunity MKE, a collaboration between the Housing Authority (HATCM) and Fair Housing Council to intentionally move tenants into higher opportunity neighborhoods across Milwaukee and Waukesha County, which they would otherwise be priced out of. It was really interesting learning about the history of voucher policy, and the pros, and cons of vouchers, while also staying up to date on the criticisms of the HATCM. It was an amazing opportunity to present my project in front of so many community leaders and activists at City Hall.

I plan on continuing my education at UWM, getting my Master's degree in Urban Planning (I start this fall in UWM's MUP program). My long-term goal is to make a positive impact on Milwaukee County, through housing development. I currently work as an intern with Milwaukee's County Executive David Crowley, a role that has put names and faces to broad issues. Being able to answer calls and connect constituents in need with programs and services has given me perspective on how integral local government is. I'm forever grateful to UWM for helping me become a better professional, community member, and person.

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