



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**MEMPHIS**

# School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy

WINTER NEWSLETTER





# DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS



Social Work

## City and Regional Planning

Graduate students in Dr. Laura Saija's Urban Resilience and Flash Flooding class are working with North Memphis neighborhoods to develop urban resilience solutions for extreme rainfall events. Professors Claudio Meier (Civil Engineering) and Dorian Burnette (Earth Sciences) are co-instructors of the interdisciplinary course.

Dr. Saija said, "Resilience has become one of the dominant conceptual frameworks in planning and considers the capacity of communities to deal with both environmental and socio-economic disturbances." According to climatologists, rainfall is likely to increase in the next decade and flash flooding will have a higher relevance for urban residents. For the spring semester, students will work on an integrated research methodology, including rainfall analysis, qualitative methods, watershed delineation, and basic rainfall-runoff modeling. The research team has identified areas of focus in North Memphis that might benefit from a small-scale, low-tech, and short-term community project in collaboration with community partners.

*To learn more about the research project, contact Dr. Laura Saija at [lsaija@memphis.edu](mailto:lsaija@memphis.edu).*

## Criminology and Criminal Justice

The Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice has received national recognition and ranking for its online bachelor's and master's degree programs. In January, U.S. News and World Report ranked the online graduate program between #51-67. This ranking is based on student engagement, faculty credentials, training, student services, technology, peer reputation and admission selectivity. Criminology and Criminal Justice is one of four programs at the University of

Memphis to receive this esteemed recognition.

Affordable Colleges recognized the online bachelor's program. They ranked the program #11 based on accreditation, affordability and online learning. Finally, Great Value Colleges ranked the program #16 out of 50 other colleges and universities. This ranking considers tuition value, student to faculty ratio, national recognition for education excellence, and discounted tuition for online students.

*For more information, contact Dr. K.B. Turner at [kturner@memphis.edu](mailto:kturner@memphis.edu).*

## Public and Nonprofit Administration

The Institute of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership (IPNL) is re-launching and re-branding its focus for students who want to pursue careers in Public and Nonprofit Administration. The mission is to promote effective philanthropy, advance nonprofit leadership practice, and strengthen the nonprofit sector through education and research. Dr. Sharon Wrobel, public and nonprofit administration chair, said "IPNL will house collaborative partnerships to support sector-wide initiatives and encourage effective practice among nonprofit professionals. This includes serving as a gateway for area nonprofits to access departmental and university expertise, as well as providing students and faculty opportunities for engaged scholarship, service learning, and applied experiences."

The Institute will house four nonprofit academic programs: Nonprofit Minor, Nonprofit Professional Certification, Graduate Certificate in Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership, and the Nonprofit Concentration within the Master of Public Administration.

*For more information about IPNL contact Dr. Sharon Wrobel at [swrobel@memphis.edu](mailto:swrobel@memphis.edu).*

## Social Work

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA awarded a \$1.9 million dollar grant to Drs. Susan Neely-Barnes (principal investor), Elena Delavega, Laura Taylor, Steve Zanskas, and Chloe Lancaster to fund Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training (BHWET) program.

BHWET will fund 30 master's level students per year for four years from the fields of social work, school counseling, mental health counseling and rehabilitation counseling. It offers students trainings on interdisciplinary team work, experience in integrated behavioral health settings, and selecting evidence-based practices, as well as opportunities to identify emerging mental health conditions and promote cultural and linguistic competency. Dr. Susan Neely Barnes said, "The program builds on the success of the Mid-South Social Work Professional Development Initiative (MSW-PDI) and expands that program to both social work students at the Lambuth campus and counseling students at main campus."

Allison Prescott Rogers is one of the students benefiting from the BHWET. "As a member of the sixth MSW-PDI cohort, I was given the opportunity to attend six didactic and experiential trainings, focusing on the needs of transition age youth in Memphis," said Rogers. The \$10,000 stipend allows her to focus on her studies and not have to worry about covering living expenses.

*Story written by Paula Anderson. To learn more about BHWET, contact Dr. Susan Neely-Barnes @ [snylbrns@memphis.edu](mailto:snylbrns@memphis.edu).*

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Housing and Community Development Fellows Address Blight and Health

The HCD Fellowship program, funded by the City of Memphis' Division of Housing and Community Development, supports the work of selected community agencies while enhancing the education of student fellows.



Austin Harrison, public and nonprofit administration graduate student, is paired with Steve Barlow at Neighborhood Preservation Inc., (NPI). The nonprofit organization was formed in 2016 to help eliminate blight in Memphis. According to Harrison, "NPI promotes neighborhood revitalization by collaboratively developing practical and sustainable resolutions to blighted properties and to the systems that lead

to widespread neglect, vacancy and abandonment of real estate."

As an HCD fellow, Harrison has had opportunities to be involved in many aspects of NPI's work, from board meetings to tree plantings to participating in city-wide projects like Memphis 3.0 and the Bluff City Snapshot 2.0 parcel survey.

Harrison said his experience at NPI has been invaluable and allowed him to directly apply many of the principles and theories discussed in his classes. "I have had the experience of working with some of the most experienced and accomplished professionals and this has been the most rewarding aspect of the HCD fellowship," stated Harrison.



Aubrey Leigh Toldi, city and regional planning graduate student and HCD fellow for Clean Memphis, is responsible for assisting with fundraisers and working with community leaders. Since 2008, the mission of the organization has been educating youth, engaging leadership, and empowering communities to sustain a cleaner Memphis.

Clean Memphis helps identify code enforcement issues, keep public green spaces clean and provide environmental education. Toldi said, "The best part of my placement at Clean Memphis as an HCD fellow is being able to play an active role in the interdisciplinary rehabilitation of Memphis and understanding unity within a diverse community is needed in order to achieve change." She is committed to helping rebuild her community and this role helps express her passion and pride for the city.



Hannah Early, anthropology graduate student, is working with Le Bonheur Community Health and Well-Being on the Green Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI). The primary goal of GHHI is improving health outcomes by improving housing conditions. Early explained, "GHHI is a public awareness campaign guided by a coalition of local public agencies, nonprofit

organizations, and other institutions interested in public health to encourage families in Memphis and Shelby County with young children to adopt healthy habits around breastfeeding, diet choice, physical activity and screen usage."

Early said, she has made a lot of connections between her coursework and her fellowship; "I have been able to make connections with the work Le Bonheur does and anthropological theory, as well as develop technical skills and has shown me that studying anthropology can and will benefit the professional work I hope to do."

## Center for Research on Women Conducts Study on Birth Planning Choices

The Center for Research on Women (CROW) recently completed a study on birth control decision-making and the impact of an education intervention that provided supplemental contraceptive counseling over a three-year period. Graduate students and faculty from Anthropology; Counseling, Psychology, and Public and Nonprofit Administration participated in the research. A Step Ahead Foundation, funded the study in partnership with Christ Community Health Services (CCHS).

A total of 272 patients were enrolled from two CCHS clinics. Participants reported using a variety of contraceptive methods over the course of their lifetimes and provided diverse reasons for starting and stopping methods. Approximately half of the participants received the education intervention facilitated by CROW-trained clinic staff.

To learn more about the research, contact Ace Madjlesi @ [fmdjlesi@memphis.edu](mailto:fmdjlesi@memphis.edu).

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## SUAPP Abroad - Summer 2018

Dr. Elena Delavega will lead a Social Work study abroad course in Paris, France, July 22-29. The course will provide students with a comprehensive overview of Social Work in France, the issues facing society in France and Europe today, and how French social workers address them. For more information contact Dr. Delavega at [mdlavega@memphis.edu](mailto:mdlavega@memphis.edu).

Drs. Laura Saija and Katherine Lambert-Pennington will lead a participatory-research based program in Sicily, June 9-20. Students will work with community partners from the Simeto River Valley to identify the most culturally appropriate and feasible reuse of a historic building in the medieval town of Adrano.

For more information contact Dr. Saija at [Isaija@memphis.edu](mailto:Isaija@memphis.edu) or Dr. Katherine Lambert-Pennington at [almbtrpn@memphis.edu](mailto:almbtrpn@memphis.edu).



# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



**Dr. Bert Burraston**, assistant professor in Criminology and Criminal Justice, recently published a book chapter entitled, "When Parents Are Incarcerated: Interdisciplinary Research and Interventions to Support Children," in *Programs Promoting the Successful Reentry of Fathers from Jail to Prison to Home to*

*Home in their Communities* (C. Wilderman, J. Poehlmann-Tynan & A. Haskins, eds.). He is currently working with the City of Memphis Police Department to evaluate the impact of automatic license plate readers (ALPRS) and gunshot detection cameras (GSD) on violent gun crime in the Memphis and Shelby county area.



**Dr. Gregory Washington** The University of Memphis Alumni Association recently awarded Dr. Gregory Washington in the Social Work Department the Distinguished Research Award for Excellence in Engaged Scholarship. Dr. Washington has spent his professional career in the social work field working

with youth. He leads the Center for the Advancement of Youth Development, which was established to formally conduct translational research for promoting youth development for underserved and underrepresented youth and families.



**Dr. Haley Zettler**, assistant professor in Criminology and Criminal Justice, is currently working on an interdisciplinary grant with faculty from Clinical Mental Health, Public Health and the UT Health Science Center to evaluate the use of neurofeedback therapy for the treatment of adolescents exposed to Adverse

Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The outcomes she will evaluate include changes to impulsivity, aggression, and self-control, as well as program compliance and recidivism after program completion.



**Dr. Susan Elswick**, assistant professor in the Department of Social Work, was awarded the Gary Lee Shaffer Award for Academic Contributions to the Field of School Social Work. The award is one of the highest honors that can be bestowed on a school social worker. It will be presented at the national conference of School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA).



**Dr. Erin Nelson**, assistant professor in Public and Nonprofit Administration, focuses on nonprofit career development, from reasons for initial entry into the nonprofit workforce to talent development through nonprofit management education. Her research was most recently published in the *Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership*. She

presented for the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action in November 2017 and will present at the International Society for Third Sector Research conference this summer in Amsterdam. Dr. Nelson also provides leadership for the Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership and Philanthropy.



**Dr. Charlie Santo**, associate professor and chair of City and Regional Planning, is partnering with researchers across the university to improve quality of life in cities through emerging technologies and data analytics. As co-chair of the FedEx Institute of Technology's Smart Cities Research Cluster, Dr. Santo is coordinating

ten different university-community research partnerships that focus on technology solutions to urban issues, ranging from public safety to suburban sprawl. He is also leading an interdisciplinary team that is developing metrics to understand how cities can prepare for and best utilize driverless vehicle technology.

## SUAPP LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

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