



DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHTS



Vandra Parks and Rodques Jones



PADM Issues Forum



City and Regional Planning

Criminology and Criminal Justice

The Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice is partnering with the Shelby County Correctional Center to start an Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program® at the University of Memphis. Started in 1997, Inside-Out brings non-incarcerated and incarcerated students together for a semester-long course to engage in a transformative learning experience. Dr. Haley Zettler will attend the Inside-Out facilitator training in Illinois this summer and will lead the first Inside-Out class in the Fall 2018 semester. Fifteen students from UofM and 15 incarcerated students are enrolled in the course, which will focus on issues surrounding crime and justice.

For more information about the Fall 2018 course, contact Dr. Zettler at hzettler@memphis.edu. Information about the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program is available at insideoutcenter.org.

Social Work Department

The Department of Social Work hosted its 6th annual symposium on April 13. Students and faculty gathered to focus on advancing the practice and profession of social work. A number of UofM students attended breakout sessions and participated in the poster contest. Vandra Parks, social work graduate student, said, "I enjoyed learning about suicide prevention presented by Renee Brown and Tericka Hardy from the VA Medical Center." Hardy sparked my interest when she discussed working at the VA in the emergency room and she stated each day was colorful." She explained that she was able to utilize her skills in a variety of ways when helping the veterans. Rodques Jones, social work graduate student, said, "I was intrigued by the session, Documenting Social Change: Photography as a Tool of Social Work Research. I was enlightened on how photography is a great asset when conducting studies, especially in this era due to modern technology that is frequently updated." Jones accepted the first-place award for the team poster that focused on the Lifelong Initiative for Family Empowerment (LIFE) Project, a program of the Center for the Advancement of Youth Development (CAYD).

Public and Nonprofit Administration Collaboration with ALSAC

On April 3, the Department of Public and Nonprofit Administration hosted a forum, "Issues and Opportunities in the Mid-South," aimed at identifying challenges to addressing issues that impact our communities such as poverty, crime and health disparities. The three panel participants discussed major challenges for area agencies. Shelby County Mayor Mark Luttrell identified three areas to be strengthened: more effective citizen engagement through increased grass roots participation and voting; greater inter-sector and agency collaboration; and improved program evaluation and outcome assessment. Michael Howell-Moroney, professor in Public and Nonprofit Administration, described a program evaluation engaging community residents in housing policy decision-making.

Kevin Dean, executive director of Momentum Partners Inc., and assistant professor, Erin Nelson, described the need to address capacity issues of nonprofits including: stronger intermediary organizations that can provide training and capacity support for the many small nonprofits; and improved program and outcome assessment. Needs across the public and non-profit sectors in Memphis offer education, research and outreach directions for Public and Nonprofit Administration and SUAPP member departments.

City and Regional Planning

Professor Laura Saija and students enrolled in the Urban Resilience and Flash Flooding II class travelled to Boston to learn about innovative water management practices. The class's efforts support the work of a funded interdisciplinary research team focused on "Community-Based Strategies for Urban Resilience to Extreme Rainfall Events." Faculty from the University of Massachusetts-Boston School for the Environment hosted the UofM delegation.

Students learned about university-community partnerships in Boston covering a variety of water-related topics, including community resilience to sea level rise, efforts to restore the Boston Harbor, and the role of the Boston Water & Sewer Department in advancing infiltration and storm water quality. Students and faculty identified possibilities for future research collaborations between the UMASS-Boston School for the Environment and the UofM water resilience team.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Housing and Community Development Fellows

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.



Kala Wilson

Kala Wilson, public and nonprofit administration graduate student, has spent the year working with The Heights CDC. Wilson's work focuses on doing an inventory of the

Heights area properties to identify if they have code violations. She also tracks property vacancies and sales. The data is stored in an app Memphis Parcel Survey, which is used to help with remodeling, rehabilitation and removals. According to the Heights CDC website, the data is used to "track top problem properties to leverage action on behalf of code enforcement, property owners and the environmental court." Jared Myers, executive director, said, "Kala has been hard at work collecting data around an Impact Zone in the Heights neighborhood. With limited resources, Community Development Corporations must be very strategic in how to invest into a neighborhood so that it has the greatest impact."

Dustin Shane

Dustin Shane, city and regional planning student, has been assigned to Frayser



Community Development Corporation. He works closely with the Police Joint Association (PJA), which is a monthly gathering of code enforcement, public safety and health officials, and Frayser resident

activists to collect data about problem properties and other code issues like

boarding up houses, overgrown weeds, and bulky trash pick-up. He enters these issues into a database and shares the data with the appropriate agencies to ensure accountability. Shane said, "This experience has given me an up-close look at how city government provides services to residents, and what problems there are in this delivery process. It's given me a ground-level view of neighborhood dynamics and the real estate market in a depressed area."



Sumita Montgomery

Sumita Montgomery, anthropology graduate student, has been working with United Campus Workers (UCW) on the Tennessee is NOT for Sale campaign. According to its website, UCW

was established in 1999 to advance and defend the interests of all Tennessee higher education staff and faculty, as well as to promote solidarity, democracy and advance social and economic justice in Tennessee workplaces and communities. Montgomery's primary project is the Tennessee Is NOT for Sale campaign which involves political, legislative and community issues. Her assignments center on research projects that help to advance the fight against privatizing higher education. Jayanni Webster, site director, said, "Our fellow, Sumita Montgomery, came during a time of tremendous growth and has played a strategic support role for our Memphis chapter." After the fellowship experience, Montgomery said, "I plan to use the HCD skills and the nonprofit skills learned previously to help me with my long-term goals."



Urban Planner Shares Tips for Memphis 3.0

Planning Matters, launched in 2017 as a partnership between the University of Memphis Design

Collaborative (UMDC) and Urban Land Institute Memphis, is increasing awareness about urban planning. The goal is to help the community understand the impact of the comprehensive planning process for Memphis 3.0 when the city unveils its plan in 2019. On March 28, Kristen Jeffers, the fourth speaker in the series, spoke about how her childhood interests in urban mobility and all things city grounded her choices through college and into her career as The Black Urbanist. Inspired by her experience growing up in Greensboro, N.C., Jeffers draws on her own cultural background and personal experiences to frame her ideas and theorize on issues that challenge the urban experience for many communities. Andy Kitsinger, UMDC Director, said, "Her approach is rare among young planning professionals. She is able to communicate complex planning issues through experiential storytelling, which serves to enhance multi-generational conversations around shared community challenges."

The Planning Matters series will continue to host nationally recognized planning and design experts through spring 2019.

For more information, please contact Andy Kitsinger via email akitsngr@memphis.edu.

Summer symposium scheduled to help ex-offenders

The Public Safety Institute (PSI) will host a symposium on June 14 to discuss job opportunities for ex-offenders. The theme is 'Helping Others Helps Your Company' and will be held at the Fogelman Executive Center. Bill Gibbons, executive director of PSI, said, "At the symposium, Memphis area employers will have the opportunity to learn how they can tap into sources of skilled, qualified workers while at the same time expanding opportunities for ex-offenders and creating a pathway for their success in our community." Guest speakers include Tony C. Parker, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Correction; Burns Phillips, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development; and Mayors Jim Strickland and Mark Luttrell.

For more information, contact Linda Russell: lrussell8@memphis.edu

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



Dr. John Topinka assistant professor in Public and Nonprofit Administration, coordinates the Certificate in Local Government Management. His research focuses on fiscal health, debt, and performance management. He has published articles in the *American Review of Public Administration* and most recently in the *Journal of*

Budgeting, Accounting and Financial Management. He has presented papers on city government retiree pension and health care debt, and total debt of all governments within four metropolitan counties under the theme of fiscal sustainability.



James McCutcheon, assistant professor in Criminology and Criminal Justice, researches environmental criminology with a focus on violent crime. His scholarship focuses on spatial analysis, which examines how specific features such as streets/buildings intersect with socioeconomic characteristics

that contribute to crime. The goal of his work is to use this methodology to better explain crime in the community. He currently partners with the Memphis Police Department (MPD) and Public Safety Institute (PSI) on several different projects including the Technology Innovation Project (TIPS) grant.



Laura Taylor, assistant professor and field coordinator for graduate student placement in the Department of Social Work, is currently working on two projects as the co-principal investigator: the University of Memphis-Le Bonheur Project Launch - Infant Mental Health Grant and Health Resources and

Services Administration Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training (BHWET) Program. She also serves as a member of the Integrated Behavior Health Consortium with Rhodes College, UT Health Sciences and The Healing Center Church.



Steven Soifer, professor in the Department of Social Work, has been busy with several projects. He just returned from India where he led the first-ever workshop on paruresis, or shy bladder syndrome, in Mumbai. He also presented at the UofM's NED talks on "A Movement Action Plan Analysis of the Trump

Resistance Movement," which he also presented at the 6th annual Social Work Symposium in April. Finally, he has been seeking funding for a publicly funded homeless shelter in Memphis.



Reza Banai, professor of City and Regional Planning, and Dr. Youngsang Kwon, of the Department of Earth Sciences, received a faculty research grant to map sprawl and blight in Memphis. Working with a Smart Cities Initiative grant from the City of Memphis and FedEx Institute of Technology, Drs. Banai and Kwon

developed a smart geographic information system model to aid in Memphis comprehensive planning and zoning. Additionally, Dr. Banai's research on sustainability of Memphis as an Aerotropolis is published in the *Journal of Transport and Land Use*.



Amanda Johnson, assistant professor in Criminology and Criminal Justice, conducts research on police issues, drug-related crime, and geographical criminology and profiling. She is currently working on two grants with the National Institute of Justice. She has written an article in the "Journal of Law Enforcement

entitled Policy Recommendations for Improving Use of Force Data Collection". For this research project, she reviewed data from a major police department in Texas. Her goal was to examine the impact of high-profile cases that have been covered in the media.



Michael Howell-Moroney, professor of Public Administration, has expertise in urban policy and administration. He has won numerous externally funded research projects, totaling over \$3 million, including two grants from the National Science Foundation. He is now exploring a new area of research, investigating

the application of neuroscience to public administration. This project utilizes the theoretical and empirical frameworks from cognitive, affective and social neuroscience to issues involving the public workforce and public decision making.

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