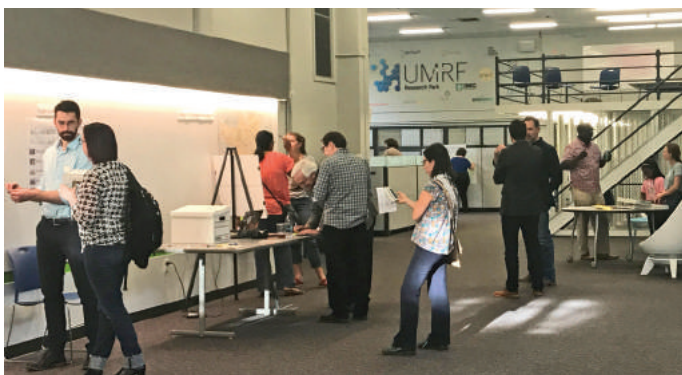




DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Planning for Shared Prosperity

In spring 2019, the Department of City and Regional Planning convened the Planning for Shared Prosperity Studio. Students and faculty in the Comprehensive Planning (PLAN 7006) and Design Collaborative Studio (PLAN 7801) courses developed strategies that would allow the University of Memphis to act as an anchor in creating equitable growth and change within the broader University District. The course was a partnership between the University of Memphis Design Collaborative, the UofM Office of Government Relations and the University Neighborhoods Development Corporation. It was connected to the national Shared Prosperity Partnership – a collaboration of the Kresge Foundation, the Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, the Urban Institute and Living Cities. Students identified best practices for anchor institutions and researched approaches to creating equitable economic development and avoiding gentrification. The classes combined this research with a robust community engagement effort that involved residents, business owners and institutional leaders to identify and shape specific steps that can be taken to make equitable and sustainable changes within the University District.



Planning for Shared Prosperity

City Fiscal Health Study

Dr. John Topinka, assistant professor of Public and Nonprofit Administration, and students in his 2018 Public Budget and Finance course (PADM 7602), completed a fiscal health assessment of the seven cities in Shelby County. They examined five years of financial data for Memphis, Collierville, Germantown, Lakeland, Arlington, Bartlett and Millington to create ratios to illustrate the fiscal health of these cities. They tracked eight dimensions of fiscal health over time, including fiscal solvency related to cash, budget, long-term debt and service levels. They also measured property tax wealth by city. This type of study is designed to help elected officials accomplish a key goal: to leave their city in better fiscal health than when they were elected to office. For a copy of the full report email jptpinka@memphis.edu.



Criminal Justice Student Trip to Birmingham

Criminal Justice Student Trip to Birmingham

In April, the Criminal Justice Student Association (CJSA) took its annual trip. They visited the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Ala. Among its aims, the EJI seeks to end racial injustice, excessive punishment and mass incarceration. The Legacy Museum displays art exhibits and interactive media that explore the issues of racial injustice, spanning from enslavement to mass incarceration. The National Memorial for Peace and Justice is a large outdoor memorial that depicts the history of racial violence in America. Students toured both the museum and memorial and were joined by **Dr. Margaret Vandiver**, whose work centers around capital punishment and lynching sites in Memphis. Additionally, several students had the opportunity to meet Kuntrell Jackson, whose case was argued in the Supreme Court decision *Jackson v. Arkansas*. Participants described the trip as extremely powerful and impactful.

Social Work Faculty Support the Wellness and Stress Clinic of Memphis

The Wellness and Stress Clinic of Memphis opened in April 2018. This free clinic is a partnership between the Healing Center Baptist Church, the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, the University of Memphis, Rhodes College, Memphis Area Legal Services and the West Cancer Clinic. The goal of the Wellness and Stress Clinic is to assist low-income, uninsured residents of Memphis with basic primary care and other resources that support their journey toward better physical and emotional health. UofM Social Work faculty, **Dr. Melissa Hirschi**, **Cherry Malone**, **Maggie Landry** and their students provide supportive services including needs assessments, assistance with applications for rent and utility assistance, resource referral and follow-up. Building on a student-centered volunteer model, the Wellness and Stress Clinic assists members in the underserved community and affords students the opportunity to provide services within their scope of practice. This enables them to discuss, shadow and learn through interdisciplinary collaboration. The Wellness and Stress Clinic is located at 3885 Tchulahoma Road and is open three days a month.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Isaac Adjei (City and Regional Planning) worked with The Works Inc., a community development corporation (CDC) serving south Memphis and the greater Memphis area in housing, economic development, education and advocacy. Adjei participated in field inspections and community stakeholder meetings where he connected with people from different organizations

that are partnering to address the needs of homeowners in south and north Memphis. "The HCD fellowship has been one of the greatest opportunities for me. Being a fellow of The Works Inc. has offered opportunities to gain practical experience outside of the classroom while helping to meet pertinent needs within the community," said Adjei.



Lauren Kirk (Social Work and City & Regional Planning) worked with BLDG Memphis, a coalition of organizations and individuals that support the development and redevelopment of healthy, vibrant, attractive and economically sustainable neighborhoods throughout the Memphis region. As a fellow, Kirk primarily worked with BLDG Memphis' capacity building

program, which seeks to build capacity at local community development corporations through technical support, assessment, trainings, networking and other services. "My experience at BLDG Memphis reinforced how much community development is truly dependent on community," said Kirk.



Clarissa Mitchell (City and Regional Planning) served as a fellow with Frayser Community Development Corporation (CDC), which offers homes for rent and sale by acquiring blighted houses and fully renovating them to provide safe, affordable housing opportunities. "As a recent Memphis transplant by way of Tunica, Miss., it has been eye-opening to see the vast

blight in the Frayser area," Mitchell reflected. She has worked with concerned residents to document, catalog and report structures open to casual entry. She has also helped the CDC acquire properties through the Tennessee Neighborhood Preservation Act and worked with the Police Joint Agency.



Sumita Montgomery (Anthropology) worked with United Campus Workers, an organization that unites Tennessee's higher education staff, faculty and graduate students to address critical issues facing public education workers. In her role, Montgomery has focused on legislation, research and organizational development for the union. Throughout her time as a

fellow, her legislation work has been focused on learning research strategies and researching political and corporate networks. "This experience has given me a new perspective on community development, and I continue to gain knowledge and skills in applying what I have learned in applied anthropology," said Montgomery.



Lucas Skinner (City and Regional Planning) worked with Shelby Farms Park to implement new survey techniques throughout the park to get visitor feedback on amenities. While doing this, he advocated to bring GIS software to park operations. "I'm so thankful to have been placed at Shelby Farms Park. The bubbly personalities of all the employees helped to

make the work environment wonderful. On top of that, the overall experience helped open my eyes to the nonprofit sector and how to manage a successful, large urban park," said Skinner.



Alexis Wade (Anthropology) supported the work of the Center for Transforming Communities (CTC), which engages, equips and mobilizes individuals, organizations and congregations to be agents of holistic transformation in their neighborhoods and communities. Wade primarily focused on outcome measurement and evaluation. She performed a variety of tasks such as, data

collection, organization and interpretation. She has helped assess how CTC can better accomplish its mission. "CTC and the HCD Fellowship has been a wonderful opportunity and experience that has allowed me to grow in a multitude of ways," she reflected.

PUBLIC SAFETY INSTITUTE UPCOMING EVENT

On June 11, the **Public Safety Institute**, Greater Memphis Chamber, Tennessee Department of Correction and Memphis Shelby Crime Commission will co-sponsor a forum on ways to connect skilled ex-offenders to jobs in the Memphis Area. The event will be held on the University of Memphis main campus from 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. in the University Center Ballroom. Registration is free. Register at memphis.edu/psi/register.

ACCOLADES AND ACHIEVEMENTS



SUAPP Outstanding Student Engagement Award

Lauren Kirk, a 2019 graduate of both the City and Regional Planning and Social Work graduate programs, is the inaugural recipient of the SUAPP Outstanding Student Engagement Award for her work with the Clayborn Temple Restoration Project. During her time on the project, she helped secure and manage over \$2 million

in funding to support Clayborn's strategic partnerships. Through her research and coursework, she was able to develop community engagement and site plans to support Clayborn's upgrade on the National Register of Historic Places and secure its nomination as a National Treasure from the National Trust for Historical Preservation. "This recognition was such an encouragement to me after pouring so much of myself into the Clayborn Temple Restoration Project," said Kirk. "It was not only a recognition of the value of my work, but also recognition of the importance of the project as a whole." The SUAPP Outstanding Student Engagement Award is given annually to a student in her/his final year whose engagement activities have contributed to understanding and addressing some issue impacting the Memphis and Mid-South community.



Dean's Outstanding Employee Award

Vickie Peters received the College of Arts & Sciences Dean's Outstanding Employee Award. Within SUAPP, Peters plays a crucial role as the school's business officer, tracking grant budgets, adjunct contracts and staff coordination. Beyond SUAPP, she is recognized as a leader on campus. She frequently serves on University-wide

process improvement teams, is a past president of Staff Senate and provides a point of contact for numerous staff beyond SUAPP.



Excellence in Engaged Scholarship

Dr. Elena Delavega, associate professor of Social Work and associate director of the Benjamin Hooks Institute for Social Change, received the 2019 University of Memphis Alumni Association Excellence in Engaged Scholarship Award. Her focus on poverty is a common thread

throughout her research, teaching and service. She produces the annual Memphis Poverty Factsheet, which is widely used in the Memphis community. In 2018, she collaborated with the National Civil Rights Museum to produce a report on the state of Black Shelby County for the MLK50 commemoration. Students in Delavega's Social Welfare Policy classes complete the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) training and apply it through service learning. In 2018, they helped prepare 1,835 tax returns, which resulted in \$2.2 million in tax refunds and saved approximately \$725,000 in commercial tax preparation fees. Additionally, she serves on the board of JustCity, Inc. and the Memphis Coalition for the Homeless. Her body of engaged scholarship includes numerous academic publications, reports, newspaper articles and translations, as well as local, national and international presentations and a TEDx Talk.



Fulbright Award

Aubrey Toldi, a 2019 graduate of the City and Regional Planning program, received a nine-month Fulbright Open Research Award to build a best practice framework for how mobilization around water management can bring multiple benefits to the Memphis community. Her project, (New) Memphis Blues:

A Holistic, Community-Led Reconnection to Our River and Blue Spaces, will allow her to work alongside partners from the City and Regional Planning department's summer study abroad program to conduct a qualitative study of the Simeto River Agreement. She will be studying how community-led approaches to water management can promote proactive measures that cultivate both ecological and social benefits.