



# Signs & Symbols

Fall 2021 • VOLUME 21

Newsletter of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology

## Notes from the chair

*Dr. Joan Brehm, department chair and professor of sociology*

I continue to be honored to serve as chair for the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and appreciate the support, confidence, and encouragement from my fellow colleagues and peers in the department. That support and encouragement meant more in this past year than ever before.



To say that this past year has been a challenge seems to be a significant understatement. The pandemic created hurdles and obstacles that none of us could have ever imagined when we embarked on a career in higher education. The social, mental, and phys-

ical challenges of the past year spared no one, touching every single faculty, staff, and student. However, we also saw even more clearly how social disparities and social injustice fueled significant chasms in how different people experienced those challenges and how they were able (or not able) to access key resources to help address them. We saw how our fellow community members of color suffered greater losses from the virus and reduced access to critical care and vaccines.

Many of our students struggled to have a safe place to learn, to meet their basic food and housing needs, and to have the necessary technology to support remote learning. And faculty and staff were faced with challenges of trying to work while also caring for children and extended family and providing significant additional support (both emotional and physical) for their students that were struggling. The mental health challenges from isolation, anxiety over the unknown, and increased workloads often felt insurmountable and were complicated by many additional physical challenges and demands. We also faced continuing and growing challenges of institutional and structural racial and social injustices, particularly those inflicted on Black communities.

These issues and injustices are not new, but they are no less significant today than they have been in the past. In fact, I would argue that they are even more significant today, as we find ourselves at a critical tipping point in time where direct and consistent action is needed. I am immensely proud of how our faculty and students have continually engaged in these actions and discussions, even in the face of a pandemic, fighting for social justice and helping to move us forward toward the positive change that is needed.

As I write this in June 2021, we are starting to see the light at the end of what seemed to be a very dark tunnel over the past 18 months, which is wonderful news. However, as we begin to see that light and return to “normal,” we must not lose sight of the fact that we now have a critical opportunity to question how we define that “normal” and how we can shape that definition to more directly benefit those who have been long left out of critical systems and related benefits. Perhaps we do not want to return to exactly how things were before the pandemic. Perhaps there are valuable lessons from this experience that we can use to actively shape a future that is more just, equitable, and compassionate.

As we eagerly move back toward teaching in person, engaging with each other in more direct ways, and renewing those social connections that are so vital, we also need to continue to commit ourselves to being the change we want to see and emulate for each other and our students.

Despite these many and complex trials, our students, faculty, and staff continually found the strength and commitment to persevere, and not only survive, but in many ways thrive. Faculty committed thousands of hours during the summer of 2020 and into the next academic year to learn new technologies and pedagogies to retain their high standards of academic excellence and engagement with their students in a remote environment. Staff also learned a diversity of new skills to continue to provide the outstanding work that they are known for.

Students demonstrated exceptional resiliency and flexibility as they worked to stay engaged and on track with their educational goals. We were thrilled to celebrate the class of 2021 that recently graduated, conquering the pandemic and completing their degrees under some of the most challenging of circumstances.

As you will see in the following pages, we have much to celebrate this year as we continue to grow and thrive at Illinois State University and beyond, even in the face of an unprecedented pandemic and significant social injustice. We are excited to introduce our newest faculty member, Dr. Intan Suwandi (pg. 8), we celebrate and honor so many of our student award recipients and even have videos to share (pg. 2), we reflect on this past 18 months in our COVID-19 considerations (pg. 9), and so much more! There are so many accomplishments to celebrate among students, staff, and faculty and reasons to have hope for the future, hope that can lead to a more collective worldview, both economically and socially. We also share the bittersweet news of several retirements, Dr. Tom Gerschick and Dr. Maria Schmeckle, both of whom leave big holes in our department and will be deeply missed.

I hope you enjoy reading about our successes and join me in congratulating everyone in our department on the multitude of outstanding accomplishments and milestones.

## Program notes

### Student recognition and awards

The department's 21st-annual student awards ceremony and luncheon was canceled again this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but we still have much to celebrate. Our students continued to work hard and deserve much recognition for that. A special article was written up to honor their accomplishments and can be found [here](#). You can also watch videos celebrating our award winners on our [SOA YouTube channel](#).



### Undergraduate advising news

By Ryan Gray, director of Student Services

To say the 2020-2021 academic year was interesting would certainly be an understatement! Courses, advising appointments, meetings, etc., were done online for the most part. We did have a few in-person classes in our department and across campus.

This virtual environment we've all experienced for the last year and a half has had a significant impact on the world of work. Students have navigated virtual career and internship fairs, interviewing, and starting new jobs/internships. This has opened up new possibilities in the professional world and accelerated changes in the workplace that were a few years down the road. The virtual work environment is probably here to stay, although it



Ryan Gray, undergraduate advisor

will likely be a hybrid one. Our Career Services office has done a great job helping students navigate this new world of work. Speaking of careers, if you are a sociology and anthropology alum and are interested in sharing your professional experiences, either in-person or virtually, in the careers class, please contact me. Sharing your experiences is extremely valuable for current students.

During summer Preview orientation, I met with our new class of sociology and anthropology majors for this fall. Preview remained virtual over the summer, for the most part. There was a chance for new students to visit campus in-person in July.

ISU is planning for a more normal fall semester. Vaccines have allowed for us to have the vast majority of our classes in-person. In our department, we only have two courses online, the rest are meeting in-person. We will also be hosting more in-person events such as Festival ISU, athletics, career fairs, and student programming in person.

Please check out our department Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram pages. You can link to them at [SOA IllinoisState.edu](#). Do stay in touch and let us know what you are doing. We love to hear from you and would enjoy sharing your story! If you'd like to be featured on our webpage highlighting what you are doing, please [contact me](#). Feel free to drop by and visit us anytime when you come back to campus!

### Sociology undergraduate program

The undergraduate sociology program continues to thrive and evolve to meet the changing needs of our students, thanks in large part to the efforts of our hard-working faculty and students. We had 33 graduating seniors in May 2021, which is always something to celebrate. However, this year was even more significant as they all completed their final senior year, complete with a thesis project, via a fully remote experience.

The students, along with faculty, exemplified perseverance, and a commitment to completing their degree in ways that we never could have imagined! We also welcomed 20 students into the Alpha Kappa Delta Sociology Honor's Society in recognition of their scholarly accomplishments. We had 25 sociology and anthropology majors on the Dean's List, which is further testament to their academic successes. Finally, we had 11 sociology and anthropology students in the Honors Program, which is very impressive considering all the challenges of the past 18 months.

The sociology program continued discussions about our curriculum and how best to meet the changing needs of our students to better prepare them for a changing future while also staying true to our core values and learning outcomes. Those discussions were enlightening, engaging, and exciting as faculty shared many insights and thoughts on how to retain the rigor and intellectual



challenges of our program while also responding to an evolving student body and student interests. In the end, we decided to make SOC 200: Doing Sociology (which was revised in the previous year from SOC 206) an elective, which will give students greater flexibility in how they structure their program and meet their unique goals and visions for their future. It also frees up faculty to create some new and exciting electives that our students have been asking for. The future is very bright for the sociology undergraduate program, and we are excited to continue our growth and development in the fall, when students will finally be returning to classrooms IN PERSON, which is something we all have been waiting for!

## On the lighter side

This from Dr. Mike Dougherty, regarding a collection of jokes gathered from his sociological inquiry class from 2012-2016:

Part of the goal in teaching Sociological Inquiry (SOC 206), is to develop, on the part of the students, a collective identity as sociology majors. The inside joke is a common emblem of group belonging. To that end, I assign my SOC 206 students in the last weeks of the semester to write two sociology inside jokes.

Here is a small selection of such jokes:

Q: Why was the sociologist late for his flight?

A: He was too busy unpacking.

A man is on trial for committing a crime. The judge asks the man what he pleads, to which the man replies: "Not guilty by reason of my sociological imagination." The judge looks confused, and the man finally follows with, "I have recently become aware that society is controlling my actions, so I cannot be held personally responsible."

Q: Why do sociologists only fill in C on multiple choice tests?

A: Because C is always Wright.

## Anthropology undergraduate program

By Dr. Logan Miller, associate professor of anthropology and undergraduate program coordinator

The undergraduate anthropology program enjoyed another strong year thanks to the efforts of our hard-working students. While our graduating seniors may never have pictured spending their final year at ISU largely on Zoom, they demonstrated the adaptability inherent in anthropology majors as they continued to thrive despite new challenges. As a result, the faculty had a particularly difficult time choosing recipients for the end-of-year awards from this year's talented cohort.

Kim Stahl was awarded the Edward Jelks Outstanding Senior Award. Stahl is an anthropology major who has maintained a perfect 4.0 GPA not only in anthropology, but in all of her classes at ISU. In the deliberations for this award, several faculty noted that Stahl earned near perfect scores in some of our



Logan Miller

toughest classes, and that she sets a high bar for herself in classes covering all four fields of anthropology. Her senior thesis, entitled, "Politeness in Japanese Culture," is a comparative study of social values in Japanese and American cultures through an examination of popular forms of the martial arts in the two countries. Anyone who may be a bit surprised at the connection between politeness and martial arts anticipated Kim's findings that politeness is not a component of American martial arts but is in Japanese practices like Judo and Kendo.

The Robert Dirks Senior Thesis Awards were given to Kelly Kennedy and Luke Gallagher. Kennedy earned the award for her thesis entitled "Radiogenic Strontium Location Analysis of Elk Remains from Noble-Wieting." She received a grant from the Undergraduate Research Support Program of the Office of Student Research to support her project. As a result, Kennedy was able to measure strontium isotope values from elk and deer teeth from the Noble-Wieting archaeological site via facilities at the University of Illinois. Her results demonstrated that elk came from a wider range of environments than deer, and therefore were hunted over longer distances.

Gallagher earned the award for his thesis entitled, "Anthropological Studies on Japanese National Character During WWII: Methodological Shortcomings and Concerns of Bias." He completed a critical examination of two ethnographies of Japanese culture written by prominent anthropologists John Embree and Ruth Benedict during WWII. His analysis noted the difficulties inherent in conducting ethnography of wartime adversaries, especially the issue of 'anthropology at a distance' in this important historical case study.

Among other points of pride, the department welcomed 16 anthropologists into the Lambda Alpha National Anthropology Honor Society in recognition of their scholarly achievement. In closing, while virtual class meetings via Zoom certainly provided many lasting memories, it is safe to say that everyone is looking forward to getting back to a more traditional in-person experience in the fall of 2021. Of course, this return to normalcy will all be made possible by the widespread distribution of the vaccine, so GET VACCINATED!



## Society of Student Anthropologists

By Dr. Logan Miller, SOSA club advisor

The Society of Student Anthropologists (SOSA) is a registered student organization that is open to all students majoring, minoring, or just plain interested in anthropology. Despite the obstacles presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, SOSA hosted virtual meetings every other week during the school year. The sole in-person event was the traditional initiation bonfire, generously hosted by Emily Koranek at her family farm, which provided plenty of room for social distancing. During initiation, new members are randomly assigned the name of an influential anthropologist they are to carry with them until graduation. It is the students' job to research their namesake and be ready to answer questions about the anthropologist prior to graduation. Other SOSA events included a Q and A session with Sean Sherman of The Sioux Chef,



Grad School Night with Dr. Jim Stanlaw, and trivia night. In celebration of World Anthropology Day 2021, SOSA invited the anthropology faculty to share stories of why and how they became anthropologists. SOSA members also designed their official 2020-2021 T-shirt to wear with pride for many years to come.

## Sociology graduate program news and updates

By Dr. Michael L. Dougherty, sociology graduate program coordinator

We welcomed five new students in the fall of 2020—Courtney Ebersole, Alexis Lange, Natasha Moodie, Dani Park, and Maria Ross. They joined the two students that started in January of 2020—Molly Ricci and LaVance Walker. This cohort includes five students in the Academic Sociology Sequence and two in the Applied Community and Economic Development Sequence (ACED). Our new students came from undergraduate programs at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, Cal State Long Beach, the University of Michigan, and Illinois State University with undergraduate degrees in sociology, anthropology, kinesiology, journalism, and Spanish.

Five of these students worked as teaching assistants in our department, assisting with Social Psychology, Introduction to Sociology, Senior Experience, American Family, and other courses. Two of our students were funded outside of the department—Ebersole through Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) and Walker through Educational Administration and Foundations (EAF). While Ross served as a teaching assistant in sociology this past year, she won a competitive and coveted assistantship position in Student Counseling Services for next academic year, working with The Body Project. While we will miss her contributions to our undergraduate program next year, it's a great opportunity that is closely connected to her research area, and we're exceedingly proud of her.



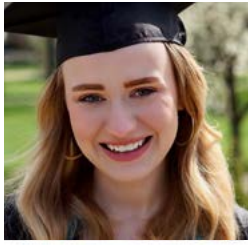
Michael Dougherty

Our two ACED students have completed the classroom portion of their degree programs and are off to their respective professional placements. Moodie is working with the Housing Assistance Council in Washington, D.C.; and Park is working with Edu-Futuro in Arlington, Virginia. It's a nice coincidence that they both ended up in the D.C. area. They never met in person on ISU's campus. Maybe they will now!

A number of students in our 2019-2021 cohort graduated in May 2021. Others are planning thesis defenses over the summer for an August 2021 graduation date. Their theses include studies of democratization, housing and poverty, immigration and social movements, international humanitarian aid, and dating and masculinity, among others. Among the students in this cohort, Erik Carlson has accepted an offer of full-time employment with the Aurora Regional Chamber of Commerce as a workforce development specialist. Jalal Fettrati has accepted admission into the Ph.D. program, with full funding, in sociology at the University of New Mexico.

We deepened our close working relationship with the graduate certificate program in WGSS this past academic year. Four of our students in the academic sociology sequence are pursuing that certificate as an add-on to their degree programs. Combining the M.S. in sociology with the grad certificate in WGSS is a fitting way for our students to add value to their graduate studies, and we're grateful for the partnership.

While we never expected to offer an almost-all-remote version of our masters' programs, the 2020-2021 academic year proved that we could do so successfully. Our students rose to the challenge of the pandemic with an all online curriculum in the fall. One of our spring courses, Social Statistics, was offered in a hybrid format, and some students chose to attend in person. But otherwise, the 2020-2022 cohort got to know each other entirely through



gram were radically transformed. Most of our classes were held remotely with a few classes meeting occasionally in a hybrid format. Some individualized work with graduate students and research continued face-to-face as faculty and students were able to do so safely and according to changing conditions throughout the year.



Liv Stone



Despite the pandemic, however, we had another outstanding year of graduate students. We had a first-year class of five M.A. students (pictured below) who bravely decided to begin graduate school under very difficult conditions: two historical archaeology students (**Jordan Buffington** and **Tyler Mantia**), one prehistoric archaeology student (**Laura Erickson**), one Japanese Studies student (**Sophia Pressler**), and one ACED student (**Kenyetta McGowens**). Congratulations for making it through your first year! The day that we can all be together to celebrate is within our grasp!



Clockwise, from top left, Courtney Ebersole, Alexis Lange, Dani Park, Molly Ricci, Maria Ross, Natasha Moodie

Zoom and messaging. We look forward to an in-person 2021-2022 academic year so that our students can get to know one another, and the faculty, in person. While we've advanced by leaps and bounds in our remote teaching this past year, there's no substitute for the dynamism of face-to-face learning.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me with ideas or resources for our graduate students and alumni. And continue to spread the word to any interested individuals about the high-quality and well-funded master's degrees in sociology at ISU. Contact me at [mdoughe@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:mdoughe@IllinoisState.edu) for brochures (redesigned and hot off the presses) and other promotional material. Thanks in advance!

### Anthropology graduate program news and updates

By Dr. Liv Stone, anthropology graduate program coordinator

The pandemic year was a difficult one for anthropological research and study. Field schools and international research seasons were postponed and canceled, conferences were canceled, and internships for our Applied Community and Economic Development (ACED) pro-



Clockwise, from top left, Jordan Buffington, Laura Erickson, Kenyetta McGowens, Justin Woods, Sophia Pressler, Tyler Mantia

Congratulations also to the eight outstanding students who completed their degrees during this challenging year:

- **Triston Brown** (Cultural Anthropology: “Dance and know you are a part: The Politics of Performative Arts and Their Role in Identity Formation, Social Memory, and Agency”) won first place in the ISU 2021 Image of Research Competition for her research images. Brown will be working with an educational nonprofit in the Greater Bay Area as a CareCorps (family and school climate) coordinator.
- **Genesis Buendia** (ACED: “Creating a Culture Change: Sector Trainings for Dementia Friendly Communities for East Central Illinois Area”) will continue to work with nonprofits on issues of immigration in the coming year.
- **Zach Fabos** (ACED: “Ensuring Equitable Access: Theory and Methodology on Future Grant Application Design for the City of Bloomington’s John M. Scott Health Care Commission”) plans on pursuing his Ph.D. in anthropology in 2022.
- **Denavious Hoover** (Cultural Anthropology: “Privacy and the Digital Divide: Investigating Strategies for Digital Safety by People of Color”) is currently the rapid re-housing/homeless management information system lead for the PATH Crisis Center.
- **Maria Kitchin** (Cultural Anthropology: “The Value of an Anthropology Degree: Students Talk About Life After College”) will be volunteering for City Year in Denver in the coming year.
- **José Molina** (ACED: “How Can a Nonprofit Organization Empower Women through Childcare?: An Analysis on the Impacts Childcare and Workforce Development Have on the Lives of Immigrant Women”) will continue to live in the Washington, D.C., area working on issues important to Latinx communities there.
- **Jack White** (ACED: “Community Development, Health, and Wellness: The City of Bloomington Township’s Wellness Lifestyle Series”) is moving to Washington, D.C., to pursue a job in government or nonprofit while his partner is in nursing school.
- **Justin Woods** (Historical Archaeology: “The Significance of Significance: Decolonizing Cultural Resource Management Practices”) has been hired as review and compliance archaeologist at the South Dakota Historical Society.

Our graduate program will be growing significantly in 2021. We received more applications for admissions this year than we have ever received before and are expecting a fall 2021 cohort of 13 outstanding new graduate students!

Finally, please reach out and join our [new private Facebook group](#) for alumni, faculty, and friends of our

master’s programs. If you would like to join, find us through our [main Facebook page](#) under GROUPS.

## Archaeology Field School, May-June 2021

By *Katie Sampeck, professor of anthropology*

In June, five graduate students and one recent grad from ISU attended the 12th year of the Colonial Cherokee Landscapes field school. ISU undergraduate anthropology major and 2021 graduate Luke Gallagher and graduate students Jordan Buffington, Colum Coleman, Laura Erickson, Tyler Mantia, Justin Woods—as well as incoming graduate student Chell O’Doran—first completed three weeks of online lessons focused on southeastern archaeology and Cherokee history and culture as preparation for working on the Qualla Boundary, the ancestral homeland of the Cherokee people. During two intense weeks, students investigated two historic Cherokee cabin sites in the Wolf Town area near Cherokee, North Carolina. Although many mornings started with a misty fog, the cool temperatures quickly warmed up each day. Students worked hard, completing shovel testing and 2-by-2-meter test units that yielded a variety of 18th- and 19th-century household items. Staff members of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office instructed students on



Sampeck Field School

drone use, as well as regularly checked in on the progress of the excavations. Some of the most interesting finds include many examples of imported European ceramics, Cherokee-made earthenwares, metal tools and parts, as well as a bear claw!

Students visited the Museum of the Cherokee Indian and the living museum of Oconaluftee Village. In the village, they saw how people make different kinds of items—baskets, beadwork, ceramics, and projectile points, for example—and also toured full-scale examples of Cherokee homes from different historic periods. In the evening, students saw the first half of the play *Unto These Hills*, a drama about Cherokee history, especially the politics and suffering that resulted from attempts to remove Cherokees from their lands during the 1830s, an event referred to as the Trail of Tears. The artifacts from one cabin site indicate occupation at around this time. It was fascinating to discover more about this important period in history.

## News from the Stevenson Center

A complete listing of all the fascinating activity from the Stevenson Center can be found [here](#). Beverly Beyer has moved from the Stevenson Center to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. Beyer is enjoying the new challenge and learning about interesting initiatives happening on campus, but it leaves a significant hole at the Stevenson Center.

### Beverly Beyer (M.S. '03)

*By Frank Beck, director of the Stevenson Center*

The Stevenson Center, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and Illinois State University were quite lucky in 2001. With bachelor's and master's degrees in English from William and Mary, where she graduated sixth in her class; with experience in the National Civilian Community Corps, Red Cross Disaster Relief, and Peace Corps; and with a spouse that grew up in Central Illinois, Beverly Beyer arrived at Illinois State University as a Peace Corps Fellow in the sociology graduate program. While commuting every day from Peoria, Beyer completed the master's degree with flying colors. She impressed all her instructors and mentors: They still talk about her 20 years later.

In the fall of 2003, Beyer defended her thesis on feminist consciousness and social capital and chose to take a position with the Stevenson Center. From there, it was Beyer's talent, work ethic, integrity, love of service, and care for our students that made the center what it is today. Because of Beyer, we grew from cohorts of six to 12; we expanded our program to students in anthropology and KNR; the center established the Peace Corps Prep Program for undergraduates pursuing any degree; and we are in our 15th year of offering AmeriCorps positions



Frank Beck and Beverly Beyer celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Stevenson Center in 2019

to ISU students. In this format, it is not possible to fully document Beyer's years of accomplishments. Indeed, when Beyer first came to ISU, the Stevenson Center was called a diamond in the rough. Now we are considered a gem in the crown of Illinois State. None of this was possible without Beyer. And personally, I am a better person for knowing her and calling her a friend.

In April 2021, Beyer took on a new challenge—helping faculty, staff, and students secure external funding. She became a new assistant director for pre-award services in the Research and Sponsored Programs Office. In short, Beyer is providing more service to this institution. With her writing talent and track record of grant-writing success, Beyer is sure to increase Illinois State University's award rate and external funding level. The students, staff, and faculty of the Stevenson Center and SOA wish Beyer the best on this newest journey.

## Features

### Student Ambassadors

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology is happy to announce the second wave of Student Ambassadors this year. The Student Ambassador Program helps with student recruitment and peer advising, both from their Schroeder Hall office and from Zoom this year. More



Luke Gallagher, left, Dani Lamb, Fiona Fleming, and Anna Tully wave their pom-poms in true creative spirit for the spring 2021 Homecoming parade!

about the 2020–2021 ambassadors can be found [here](#).

Many thanks to the ambassadors who represented our department spirit by entering a “float” for the spring Homecoming virtual parade.

## The fifth-annual Schroeder Hall Gallery exhibit

*“Performing Color: Participatory Photo and Community-Based Research in a Modern U.S. Circus”*

Welcome to the Schroeder Hall Gallery on the second floor of Schroeder Hall! As you enter the gallery from the west wing, you will see the entrance sign to the gallery and the exhibit poster by this year’s gallery artist, Radiance Campbell. Campbell is a 2020 sociology alum, and this exhibit was her research project, a study of the



Entrance wall to the gallery.

experiences of circus performers of color. As you circle the lounge, you will be encouraged to interact with the exhibit by following the QR codes that provide links to online readings, photographs, and music. Follow the link [here](#) to see more of this creative exhibit and a compelling study on race within a performance venue.

Up next: *“The Visual Culture of a Pandemic”* to be opened in the fall of 2021.

## Meet the new faculty for 2020-2021

*Dr. Intan Suwandi, assistant professor of sociology*

Starting a new job during a pandemic, in a new town where my family and I don’t know anyone, is surely difficult. This year was also my first time teaching online courses, and I had to learn how to make these classes work, often by trial and error.

But the experience has been valuable. Teaching a grad course on the political economy of global production in fall 2020 was especially rewarding. I got to meet a group of bright, critical students who were enthusiastic and genuinely interested in the topics that were presented in class. I also got to know our sociology majors in spring 2021, since I taught Introduction to Sociological Research, and I appreciated their openness and commitment in

addressing current political issues and challenging various forms of inequalities. I also had a great first experience serving in a graduate thesis committee at ISU for a student from the Department of Politics and Government, who successfully defended his thesis in May 2021. Last but not least, it is great that I could witness the strength of the [Graduate Workers Union](#) my first year here. I fully support their struggle and wish them victory.

## Academic works and presentations

My interview was published in *Textum*, a journal based in Turkey, where I discuss the topic of neoliberalism and imperialism. I was invited to talk in two events: The first was a seminar held by the Department of Economics, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, in December 2020, where I gave a talk about Global South suppliers and the new economic imperialism. The second one was a couple of panels for “The Other Davos” (an event based in Switzerland), where I addressed issues regarding COVID-19, global commodity chains, and the capitalist world economy.

The article I co-authored with John Bellamy Foster, “COVID-19 and Catastrophe Capitalism,” has been published in several languages, including German, Chinese, Korean, Indonesian, Spanish, and French. A version of the article was also published as a chapter in the *Routledge Handbook of Marxism and Post Marxism* (2020). In addition, my book *Value Chains* (Monthly Review Press, 2019)—the



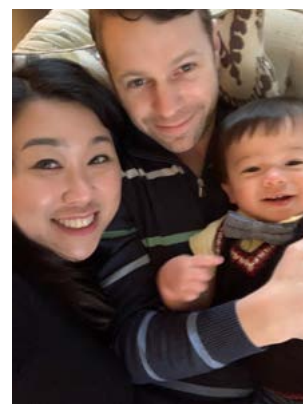
I just survived my first year.



Suwandi’s son Keagan supporting the 2021 May Day rally

2020 co-recipient of the Sweezy Award of the Marxist Section of the American Sociological Association—was reviewed in several journals, including *Contemporary Sociology*, *Space and Polity*, as well as *Journal of Labor and Society*.

Since the pandemic is not over, it may take a while for my family and I to experience a normal life in this new town.



Suwandi with son Keagan and husband Eli



But I'm looking forward to getting to know more people, making new friends, and exploring more of Illinois.



## COVID-19 considerations

### Professors with kids presents pandemic pandemonium

**Q. What was the biggest challenge this year?**

**Dr. Intan Suwandi, assistant professor of sociology:** I worked so much my first year, even on weekends, so I lost a lot of time with my son. The first semester was especially challenging, and my son had a difficult time since he had to adjust to our new schedules and to get used to seeing both of his parents working at home. And having a very energetic toddler means that I had to wait until he slept to, say, record lectures for my online classes. So, the “working day” was sure long.

**Dr. Shelby Putt, assistant professor of anthropology:** The biggest challenge was the schedule and feeling like I was on house arrest. We didn't feel comfortable putting Phoenix, our infant son, in any type of group setting because of the risk of COVID-19. So, we hired a part-time nanny to be with him in the afternoon while we both worked. I was with him in the morning while Mark (my partner) worked, and Mark was with him in the evenings while I worked. We went to bed soon after the baby, so I barely got to see my partner this last semester. And there were many days that I never even left the house.



Shelby, Mark, and Phoenix Putt

**Dr. Liv Stone, associate professor of anthropology:** It was much more difficult than my most difficult years doing fieldwork or writing my dissertation in graduate school. Abby (my wife and assistant professor of anthropology) and I mostly traded days: I got to work M/W/F and Abby



Liv, Eli, Paul, and Abby Stone

would work T/Th/Sat. Even though we were trapped in the same house all together, Abby and I could rarely occupy the same space at the same time. Someone had to be on kids at all times, and someone had to be working at all times. We generally fell asleep when the kids did around 7:30 or 8. There were no days off, no moments alone and not working. Showering was an unaffordable luxury. In the early days of the pandemic, when it was thought the virus could live on surfaces, I was fraught to even leave our house or backyard for a daily walk because my then 4-year-old put his mouth on everything.

**Q. What was the best thing that came out of this pandemic school year?**

**Suwandi:** The best thing? I'm not sure—but I know that we have learned how to navigate juggling work and life under challenging circumstances, and an egalitarian household is the first and foremost condition for this.

**Putt:** Phoenix is a morning person, as most kids are, so I got to spend time with him when he was his happiest. I would have missed all those happy mornings and bonding moments if not for teaching from home.

**Stone:** The best thing to come out of it was being able to (being obligated to, actually) be “in” the classroom over Zoom while our 4-year-old had his first experiences in school at Metcalfe's Pre-K program. We also were there when our younger child took his first steps; something that I'm pretty sure our older child did for the first time at daycare. But make no mistake: Would I trade these fleeting moments for a year of sanity, regular showers, and our children not internalizing the message that their parents would much rather be working than hanging out with them? Absolutely.

### In contrast, single professor cites serious isolation

**Q. What was the biggest challenge this year?**

**Dr. Joan Brehm, chair of the Sociology and Anthropology Department:** Personally, the biggest challenge was isolation and not seeing anyone. As a single person and an admitted introvert, one might think that

pandemic quarantine would be a piece of cake! But in reality, I truly struggled with not seeing my friends and colleagues in the department and across campus, and I realized how those more informal and daily interactions truly fueled my soul and my energy.

Academically, my biggest challenge was trying to maintain the student engagement and discussions that I know are central to student understanding and a more complete mastery of key concepts, while the majority of my students were remote on a Zoom link. This took a considerable amount of additional time to learn some new tools and technologies like NearPod that created platforms and mechanisms to facilitate those kinds of discussions in a remote space.

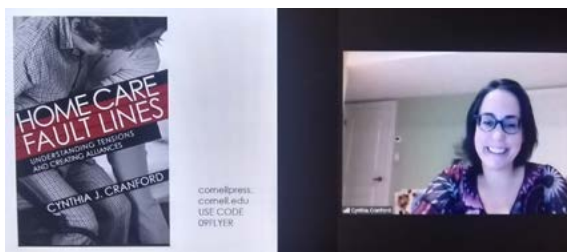
**Q. What was the best thing that came out of this pandemic school year?**

**Brehm:** I think the remote aspect and some of the technologies that had students type in responses rather than speak actually benefited some students who may not otherwise have felt as comfortable speaking in person in front of a large group. I was surprised by the level of engagement in some of the tools that I used and found that even more students seemed to actively participate on a regular basis compared to when I would have the discussions in person. I am considering how I can incorporate more written engagement in collaboration with the verbal discussions in future classes that will be all in person.

## Special department programs and presentations

The SOA Department Research Series, organized by Dr. Aaron Pitluck, associate professor of sociology, continued into this last school year with great research talks of various alumni, professors, guests, and grad students. These are presented periodically throughout the year, and all are welcome to attend. This past year the presentations were done solely on Zoom, which manifested in high attendance for each of the amazing presentations.

- Dr. Maria Schmeeckle, associate professor of sociology, presented “Rebels With a Cause: Understanding Children’s Rebellion Against Parents” on September 11.
- Dr. Cynthia Cranford, associate professor of sociology, University of Toronto, presented “Home Care Fault Lines” on October 16.



Zoom session with Dr. Cranford

- Dr. Frank Beck, associate professor of sociology, with Alexis Swanson, CJS graduate student, presented “African Americans Spend More Time in Our Jail Than Whites. Why?” on January 29.
- Dr. Nobuko Adachi, professor of anthropology, presented “Yellow Peril Redux: Reformation of Racial Assaults Toward Asians in Diaspora During the Pandemic” on February 19.
- Dr. Shelby Putt, assistant professor of anthropology, presented “Combining Tools and Combining Words: An Evolutionary History of Hierarchical Cognition” on March 19.

Sampeck co-organized the Native American Film Series this year. Participants screened the films independently and then met online at the designated times for discussion with various facilitators, one of whom was Dr. Katie Sampeck.

- September 17, 2020 — *Who Owns the Past?* (2000), directed by Jed Riffe
- October 22, 2020—*America Divided: Who Controls the Land* (S2E2), directed by Lucian Read
- November 16, 2020—*Return: Native American Women Reclaim Foodways for Health & Spirit* (2019), directed by Karen Cantor
- February 16, 2021—*The Cherokee Word for Water* (2013), directed by Charlie Soap and Tim Kelly
- March 18, 2021—*Gather* (2020), directed by Sanjay Rawal
- April 19, 2021—*Finding Dawn: Missing First Nations Women and the Highway of Tears* (2006), directed by Christine Welsh

Sampeck, co-director of the new food studies program in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology—along with major support from the Alice and Fannie Fell Trust and the Harold K. Sage Fund—sponsored a Normal Food Summit with Chef Shawn Sherman, founder of The Sioux Chef. Several events were held virtually April 14-15, including a cooking demonstration where meal kits were provided to the participants. More about the events can be found [here](#).



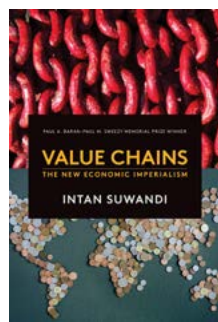
Chef Sean Sherman, founder of The Sioux Chef (Photo by Heidi Ehalt)

## Faculty publications

**Joan Brehm**, published “‘Bring Fishermen at the Center’: The Value of Local Knowledge for Understanding Fisheries Resources and Climate-Related Changes in Lake

Tanganyika” in *Environment, Development and Sustainability*; “Exploring the Agentic Power in Fishery: Reflections from Fishing Communities of Lake Tanganyika, Kigoma, Tanzania” in *Maritime Studies*; and “Co-Management in Crisis? Reflections from Beach Management Units (BMUs) of Kigoma Fishing Communities, Tanzania” in the *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology*.

**Logan Miller**, authored “Bladelets and Middle Woodland Situations in Southern Ohio” and co-authored with Edward R. Henry “Toward a Situational Approach to Understanding Middle Woodland Societies in the North American Midcontinent,” *The Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology*; published online October 15, 2020. Miller also published “Ritual, Labor Mobilization, and Monumental Construction in Small-Scale Societies: The Case of Adena and Hopewell in the Middle Ohio River Valley” in *Current Anthropology*.



**Intan Suwandi**, published *Value Chains: The New Economic Imperialism* (2019) and co-authored a book chapter “COVID-19 and Catastrophe Capitalism: Commodity Chains and Ecological-Epidemiological-Economic Crises” in the *Routledge Handbook of Marxism and Post-Marxism*. Suwandi also published a journal article, “COVID-19 and

Catastrophe Capitalism,” in *Monthly Review* 72.2 (2020): 1-20.

**Katie Sampeck** co-authored with Carla D. Martin, “From Cocoa Farms to Candy Chutes.” *Anthropology News* website, January 8, 2020.

**Susan Sprecher** authored “Attachment Orientation and Reasons for and Reactions to ‘Virginity’ in College” and “The Role of Expectation for Liking and Other Positive Affiliative Outcomes in the Get-Acquainted Process Occurs over Computer-Mediated Video Communication” for *Current Psychology*. “Closeness and Other Affiliative Outcomes Generated From the Fast Friends Procedure: A Comparison With a Small-Talk Task and Unstructured Self-Disclosure and the Moderating Role of Mode of Communication” for the



Dr. Sue Sprecher



Dr. Marion Willetts

*Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*.

**Susan Sprecher** and **Marion Willetts** co-authored the article “Perhaps It Was Too Soon: College Students’ Reflections on the Timing of Their Sexual Debut” for *The Journal of Sex Research*.

**Marion C. Willetts**, “An Exploratory Investigation of Companion Animal Custody Disputes Following Divorce,” *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* (Vol. 62, 2021— Issue 1)

**Jason Whitesel** co-edited with Stefanie Snider “Fat Activism” in a special double issue of *Fat Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Body Weight & Society*, Vol. 10, No.3 (September). Whitesel and Snider also co-authored in *Fat Studies*: “Interactive Nature of Fat Activism and Fat Studies Within and Outside Academia.” Whitesel published a chapter “Review of Scholarship on Fat Gay Men” in the *International Handbook of Fat Studies*.

## Faculty presentations

**Katie Sampeck** participated in a panel discussion for ReVista Launch: All Things Chocolate, where they discussed chocolate, social justice, and labor. The event was hosted by ReVista, *The Harvard Review of Latin America*.

**Intan Suwandi** presented “The Flexible Seamstress: Global South Suppliers and the New Economic Imperialism” at the University of London’s SOAS Economics Webinar Series 2020-2021: Intensifying Inequalities and the Limitations of Global Capitalism.

**Chris Wellin** presented “Negotiating Research Partnerships with Community Agencies: Lessons from an Innovative Capstone Seminar” at the annual meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems in New York City.

## Tip of the hat

**Nobuko Adachi**, professor of anthropology, was interviewed by [WGLT](#) and also featured on [ABC News](#) about her research on xenophobia and racial hatred against Asian Americans.

**Triston Brown**, anthropology M.S. ’21, tied for first place in the [Image of Research competition](#) for her submission “Dance and Know You Are a Part.”

**Katie Bruce**, history and anthropology ’21, was awarded the Illinois State Student Laureate Award by the Lincoln Academy of Illinois.

**Mike Dougherty** was promoted in the fall of 2020 to full professor of sociology.

**Jalal Fetрати**, sociology M.S. ’21, was selected as a Lela Winegarner fellow by the Graduate School.





Brown's research image, which tied for first place in the graduate student category

**Logan Miller** received tenure in the fall of 2020 and is now an associate professor of anthropology.

**Tenaya Muhammad**, junior sociology major, was the first recipient of the Milner Library's [Dr. Thomas D. Wilson Student Assistant Scholarship](#).



Dr. Katie Sampeck, professor of anthropology

**Melissa Quimby**, sociology ACED master's student, was chosen by the graduate office to be the December Grad Bird Scholar because of her outstanding research.

**Rachel Sabella**, anthropology '21, was the recipient of the 2020-2021 Grabill-Homan Peace Prize. It is presented annually to a student minoring in peace studies.

**Kathryn Sampeck** will be promoted to full professor of anthropology in the fall of 2021. Sampeck was also [award-ed a Fulbright](#) for the 2020-2021 school year where she will work with the British Library, specifically the Eccles Centre, which is a collection of Americana. Sampeck will be researching the relationships of race and food, particularly with regard to chocolate and vanilla as tropes of race.

**Liv Stone** received tenure in the fall of 2020 and is now an associate professor of anthropology. Stone also received an International Wenner-Gren Foundation grant that will support her ongoing research. Stone was elected to the first executive board for ISU's new Queer Coalition.

**Intan Suwandi**, assistant professor of sociology, received the ASA Paul Sweezy Marxist Sociology Book Award.

**Anna Tulley**, anthropology '22, and **Tenaya Muhammad**, sociology '22, were selected as Bone Scholars for 2021-2022.

**Jason Whitesel** will be awarded tenure in the fall of 2021 to become an associate professor of sociology.

## Department awards

### *ISU The Impact Award*

Frank Beck and Chris Wellin

### *CAS Distinguished Lecturer for 2020-2021 (lecture postponed until 2021-2022)*

Maura Toro-Morn

### *CAS New Faculty Initiative Grant*

Shelby Putt

Abigail Stone

### *CAS 2021 Outstanding Administrative Professional Staff Member*

Ryan Gray

### *CAS Outstanding Researcher Award for 2020-20201*

Katie Sampeck

### *CAS 2019-2020 Shaw Teaching Fellowship*

Sue Sprecher

### *CAS 2020 Teaching Initiative Award*

Abigail Stone

### *Rise To The COVID-19 Challenge Recognition by the Provost:*

Jason Whitesel and Abigail Stone—fall 2020

Winfred Avogo, Aaron Pitluck, and Marion

Willetts—spring 2021

### *Most ISU Spirited Pet and Creative Pandemic Pandemonium—2020 Homecoming Workspace Decorating contest:*

The Sociology and Anthropology Department, featuring Jessie Brehm

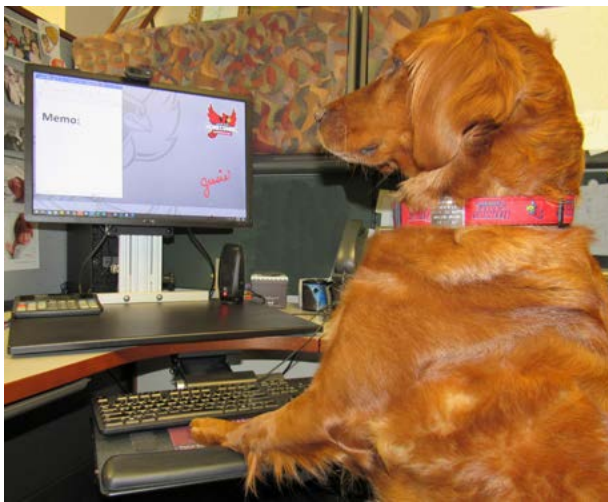
Special thanks to Dr. Brehm for her fabulous idea, to Jessie for her amazing patience and willingness, and to Trish Gudeman for the award-winning photos.



Jessie, rescue service dog of Dr. Joan Brehm, was in charge of pandemic support for the department.



Jessie follows safety protocol



Jessie types a memo

## The RISE Award—What did you do during COVID to help the students succeed?

By Aaron Pitluck, recognized for his Rise to the COVID Challenge

Frankly, this pandemic long year has been a tough one, where students had to re-learn how to be students and instructors had to re-learn how to be instructors. Many of my students were attempting to do so while completing their semesters—or for my seniors, their college careers—under extremely difficult circumstances. Some students moved back and forth during the semester to be closer to (or move further away from) their families, or to care for siblings going to school from home, or to attend funerals that they otherwise could not have joined. I've



found the experience humbling. Last semester I taught two dissimilar classes: A class full of sociology students conducting research projects in Senior Experience, and a nearly 300-student general education class in Introduction to Sociology.

For Senior Experience, I used my pom poms and my red pencil. I encouraged students to turn in something—anything—in any given week so that they wouldn't fall behind. I waved my pom poms to celebrate these weekly victories. However, I also had to pull out the red pencil to ensure that at least over the medium-term they were on the right track to complete their final research papers. This was a challenging balancing act to accomplish via video calls and emails, where social cues are harder to convey and easier to misread. I was immensely relieved and gratified that not only did each of my students who remained in the class finish the class, but all completed their Senior Experiences with As and Bs. I couldn't have accomplished that without a truly gifted graduate teaching assistant, Natasha Moodie.



Dr. Aaron Pitluck

Introduction to Sociology is another kind of course altogether. I had nearly 300 students, almost none of whom I could see—a dark auditorium with the lights out for 16 weeks. In such an environment, the risks of alienation are high. It is easy, I think, for students to feel that they are invisible and unheard. I couldn't successfully reach everyone, and this summer I am feeling that regret, even as the days grow longer and the weather sunnier. I tried numerous strategies to reach out to students, some of which worked. I interspersed lectures with poll questions and invited students to send fuller responses via chat—which I then read or invited students to share. Weekly, I sent emails 'out of the blue' to students who had made interesting comments in chat during lecture or in our electronic weekly discussions. I tried other things too, less an intellectual engagement and more of an outstretched hand. I had lots of help in Chia-Hang Hsu and two brilliant undergraduates—Jen Fishman and Hala Abdelrazek. They juggled, and I juggled, and despite the Zoom room's darkness, I think students may be surprised at how much I could see.

Next semester I'm scheduled to teach my classes in person, in what I envision will be crowded and bright rooms. Although this will be so much easier—and I hope ease communication and inhibit misunderstandings—it will also bring fresh challenges as my students re-learn yet again how to be students, and I will need to discover how to reach out and connect in these new old classrooms.

## Alumni

**Christian Casanova**, sociology and political science '17, is currently a graduate student in public policy at the University of Michigan. Casanova recently got a significant grant from International Policy Center (IPC) and Weiser Diplomacy Center (WDC) at the University of Michigan to support extended research projects with a focus on international policy. He is using this support to help with current research regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the cocoa-chocolate value chain. Dr. Katie Sampeck is helping to conduct this research via the Fine Cacao and Chocolate Institute.

**Kelby Cumpston**, sociology and economics '13, ran in 2021 as a Bloomington City council candidate representing Ward 7. The cultivation of his political engagement started at ISU and in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. His story can be found [here](#).



Iwona Franczak

**Iwona Franczak**, sociology M.S. '18, has been teaching Introduction to Sociology classes as an adjunct and a high school dual credit instructor at Richland Community College while also substitute teaching at public schools in Champaign. During the last two years, she also volunteered with the ProjectREAD as an

ESL tutor. She will begin the Ph.D. program in sociology at Syracuse University in Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs this fall.

**Ethan Fridmanski** '13, history with sociology minor, received his Ph.D. in the sociology of religion from the University of Notre Dame. Fridmanski is employed as a tenure-track librarian in data services at Indiana University Bloomington.



Marissa Hettinger

**Marissa Hettinger**, sociology '20, was accepted to the University of Arizona's Ph.D. program in family and consumer science researching overconsumption and climate change.

**Christian Maynard**, sociology '20, presented "From Smoke Clouds to Vape Clouds: A Study of Substance Use and Delinquency" at the 2020 ASA Honors Round Table Program before heading to Washington State to pursue a Ph.D. Maynard has since published *Vaping in the Context of Delinquency Among Adolescents: A Cross-Sectional Comparison Among Alcohol and Cigarette Use*, March 26, 2021.

**Christopher Nicosia**, anthropology M.S. '17, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Geography and Anthropology at Louisiana State University, is a social bioarcheological anthropologist studying human skeletal remains in archaeological contexts of communities that formed in the ancient Andean region of South America and the southeastern United States. Nicosia has also been chosen to be a part of the design team for long-term planning for the Society of American Anthropologists.

**Cori Elise Rich**, anthropology '14, is the senior archaeology project manager at Trileaf Corporation. Rich currently develops and manages the cultural resources department with a staff of 13 cultural resource specialists spread across the country who complete Phase I telecommunications projects in 35 different states.

**Robert Shorty**, sociology '08, recently completed his Ph.D. in organization development at Benedictine University with the dissertation topic "Managing Whiteness for Inclusion: A Proposed Theoretical Framework Using Contact Theory & Critical Race Theory in Reducing Racial Bias." He was awarded



Robert Shorty during a photo shoot for being awarded 40 Under 40 by Columbus Business First

The Leadership Consortium's Social Impact Scholarship, which allowed him to participate in the TLC's Leaders Program for 2021. Shorty is currently the director of Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Nike.

**J. Dalton Stevens Jr.**, sociology, '15, is currently finishing his dissertation as a Research Excellence Doctoral Fellow at Syracuse University. Stevens' article on cause of death patterns of adults with cerebral palsy with colleagues in *Annals of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine* will be out in 2021. Stevens will present findings from his research on disability, adulthood, and suicidality at ASA '21.

**Aaron Tester**, sociology M.A. '13, defended his doctoral thesis, "Extending the State: Administrative Decentralization and Democratic Governance Around the World," at University of California-Irvine.



Aaron Tester

**Lisa Thompson**, sociology '96, M.S. '02, is the current executive director of Project Oz. She was interviewed by [The Pantagraph](#) regarding COVID-19 and its effect on young people in Bloomington.

**Jessica Vinson**, anthropology, M.S. '19, was accepted into a Ph.D. program working with the Strong Coasts program in food, energy, and water at University of South Florida.

**Katharine C. Woollen**, anthropology '17, M.S. '19, co-authored with Maria O. Smith "Squatting Facets and Arthritic Changes of the Foot in the Late Woodland Schroeder Mounds sample (11He177) of Illinois" in *Bioarchaeology International*. Woollen is a Ph.D. student at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.



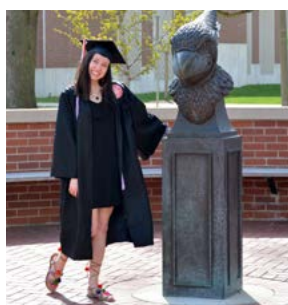
Teagan Bohlen



Maria Kitchin



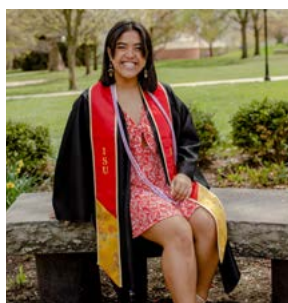
Dani Lamb



Rachel Sabella



Gabriella Salgado



Katherine Torres

## 2020-2021 graduate pursuits

**Teagan Bohlen '21**, anthropology with a sociology minor, will be moving to Champaign to pursue a master's degree in social work after working at Carle.

**Maria Kitchin**, anthropology M.S. '21, completed the accelerated master's program in anthropology this year. She and **Joe Kennedy**, sociology '20, will both work with AmeriCorps City Year program in Denver.

**Dani Lamb**, sociology and public relations '21, Cum Laude, secured a full-time position working remotely for the University of Texas at Dallas as the coordinator for the education programs and outreach team in the Office of Research.

**Rachel Sabella**, anthropology '21, has been accepted into Prescott College's master's in resilient and sustainable communities this fall.

**Gabriella Salgado**, sociology '21, would like to work with victims of human trafficking.

**Katherine Torres** sociology '21, hopes to have a career working in the airline industry when COVID-19 begins to die down.

## Alumni spotlight

**Molly Cook**, sociology M.S. '18, plans to use sociological theories and perspectives to learn how to best promote equitable opportunities for individuals experiencing homelessness. Here are her words:

I am so thankful for my experience as a graduate student in the sociology department at ISU. From 2016-2018, I was a student in the sociology department and also a community and economic development fellow through the Stevenson Center. During my time at ISU, I had the opportunity to take enriching classes through the sociology department, received a scholarship from the department to travel to Peru to study human rights and democracy, and completed a year-long fellowship at Missoula Economic Partnership in Missoula, Montana. These experiences shaped me immensely personally and professionally, and I am so grateful for the amazing opportunities the sociology department and Stevenson Center provided me.

I was nervous to attend graduate school at first. Having grown up in a small town and going to a small liberal arts college for my undergraduate degree, I remember arriving at ISU and being shocked at how large it was. I wondered if I would ever make friends or actually know my professors. I quickly learned that I had a home in the sociology department. During my first week of classes the members of my cohort were asked by every single professor what our research interests were. While I got nervous each time, wondering how I could frame my interests in the most academic way possible, I learned by the end of the week that they asked not to test me, but because they genuinely cared deeply and wanted each of us to succeed while pursuing our passions.

I found my home in the department through my relationships with other graduate students, professors who



Molly Cook

were willing to spend the extra time explaining challenging concepts or just discussing further areas of interest and who helped me navigate social life in Normal by pointing me to yoga classes or group runs.

The sociology department at ISU left such a strong impact on me that I knew I wanted to return to ISU in the future. I currently work for the Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support at Illinois State University. As a workforce research coordinator, I use the skills I learned in my sociology classes every day to promote educational and workforce equity. I am so grateful for my time in the Sociology Department—for my professors who provided me with hands-on experience and workforce skills; for my cohort that continues to support and share wisdom with me beyond our time at ISU; and for the Stevenson Center community that continues to be a network of connections, inspiration, and opportunities.

In the future, I hope to continue diving deep into the field of sociology. My passion is working in the field of homelessness, specifically within the field of employment for individuals experiencing homelessness. I plan to continue using sociological theories and perspectives to learn how to best promote equitable opportunities in that space. I'm so grateful for my experience in the ISU Sociology Department, and I am always happy to connect with current and future students.

**Ronald Pikes**, sociology M.A. '15, will be pursuing a Ph.D. in sociology at the University of California, Davis, in the fall of 2021. From there, he hopes to teach and use his research and music interests to help assist independent music artists.

Since he graduated in 2015, Pikes has been very busy pursuing these music interests. He interned in New York City for a company that used an online platform matching musicians with performance venues. From there he moved back to his home in Flint, Michigan, where he did marketing work with an independent record label and trained as an audio engineer, and thus began recording and mixing records. At this time, he also worked at a children's home as a quality assurance coordinator. His music



Ronald Pikes

pursuits led him to Los Angeles, where he assisted a few independent musicians with their businesses by providing templates and checklists, as well as production and marketing. For a steady income, Pikes found a job teaching remedial education classes. He is also involved in founding a book club, writing a series of do-it-yourself personal finance articles, co-producing an interlude on a recently released hip-hop album, developing the marketing strategy for a small podcast, and teaching music theory one-on-one online.

Pikes has much to say about the program at ISU that influenced his journey. "Going to Illinois State University for a master's degree in sociology was one of the best educational decisions I have made in life. The program led to opportunities that helped me flourish as both a teacher's assistant and a student."

He specifically recognizes his teacher assistant advisor, Dr. Mike Dougherty, and other department professors: Dr. Marion Willetts, Dr. Aaron Pitluck, and Dr. Susan Sprecher. Pikes is especially grateful for his thesis committee, Dr. Burr, Dr. Wellin, and Dr. Hunter for all their advice, instruction, guidance, and encouragement—specifically the courage to follow and incorporate his interests with sociology.

Pikes explains: "With help from the faculty, and especially my thesis committee, I developed the foundations for thoughts and ideas that I will continue to pursue at the University of California, Davis. I cannot imagine there would have been a master's in sociology program better suited for me than the program at ISU."

**Kamie Schladenhauffen**, sociology '18 with a minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies with a concentration in Queer Studies.

"While studying sociology at ISU, I participated in a variety of research projects with Dr. Sprecher, Dr. Gill, Dr. Wellin, and Dr. Beck, all who helped me develop skills in analyzing data and sharing my findings/ideas with my peers. The

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program, along with my concentration in Queer Studies, helped me learn more about the LGBTQ+ community and led me to discovering and embracing that I am non-binary.

Starting in August 2018, I served as an AmeriCorps member at College Possible, a nonprofit dedicated to helping students from diverse backgrounds get into college and persist through graduation. There I organized the logistics of college campus visits for the high school students in our program, as well as solicited in-kind donations for our programs. I was even fortunate enough to make a visit back to ISU and lead our students on a tour of our campus!



Kamie Schladenhauffen



In July 2019, I began my career at NCH Marketing Services as an account coordinator. I am a member of an account team providing our retailer clients with solutions for the redemption, audit, settlement, and analysis of coupons.

In my free time, I have been taking online acting classes at Acting Studio Chicago with the goal of becoming a voice actor. I greatly look forward to honing this craft and working on projects in the future!"



John and Mary Waller

**John Waller** sociology '69, M.S. '72, and **Mary Lynn (Chesus) Waller**, special education '70, came to campus to visit the old stomping grounds and shared with us the following story:

In the summer of 1971, I returned to ISU for graduate school after teaching high school for two years.

That February my wife and I had our first child, a daughter. She was about six months old when we moved to Bloomington, and I started the year as a teaching assistant for Dr. Robert Walsh. One of my duties was to come for work in the office several days a week. My wife had taken a full-time teaching position at LeRoy. Sometimes our babysitter was not available to care for our daughter, so I had to bring Jennifer to work with me. I had no car, so I rode my bike from our apartment on Linden Street to campus a couple of miles away. Unlike today we had no safety seat for the baby, so I placed her in a plastic baby carrier on the wire basket on the bike handle bars. On one trip, I recall hitting a bump going over the Virginia Street bridge. The plastic carrier and the baby bounced nearly a foot in the air and landed safely back on the wire basket. After that, I secured the carrier to the basket. Never a peep out of Jennifer on any bike ride.

She loved sitting on the floor of Dr. Walsh's office, chewing on used IBM data cards. The experience



Jenny and the bicycle in the background

must have been ingrained on her psyche since she has gone on to earn two master's degrees and a Ph.D. from Texas A&M.

After graduation, I sought a job at a junior college. When that was not available, I taught a couple

years at the high school level. I switched careers and went into retail and wholesale hand tool business. I worked 20 years for an international hand tool manufacturer in sales, marketing, quality assurance, and logistics, traveling to Europe and China.

After all of these years, I still value the education and experience I received at ISU. I value the items I learned and the individuals I met.

## Look who retired

By Chris Wellin and Sue Sprecher

### Dr. Maria Schmeeckle, 2001-2021

After a two-decade career in our department, Professor Maria Schmeeckle is stepping away from her faculty position at Illinois State University.

This is only a partial retirement, to be sure, given that she is at work on a book manuscript and also collaborating with a colleague in the theatre department, Janet Wilson, to compose a play based on her recent interviews with adult children who were involved with or considered "rebellions" against their parents earlier in life. As will be clear, her current work reflects rich and long-standing themes in her research, teaching, and service, as well as her practice of embracing innovative topics, methods, and modes of presentation that span the social-behavioral sciences and the humanities.



Maria Schmeeckle

Schmeeckle's career has been exceptionally generative as well, having left a lasting mark on the globalization of the curriculum and culture at ISU; the field of children's studies (which is now a minor that she helped to develop and maintain); and the culture of excellence in teaching that has distinguished the department, as reflected in her many awards and grants for enriching her work with students, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. She taught many courses for the sociology program over her 20-year career at ISU including American Family: Change and Diversity, Marriage and Family; Contemporary Social Problems in Global Perspective; Introduction to Sociological Research; Children in Global Perspective; and Senior Experience. Since she often taught large classes, several thousand students would have had Schmeeckle for an instructor. At a recent Zoom celebration of Schmeeckle's retirement, faculty commented on how they rarely would walk by Schmeeckle's office door without seeing Schmeeckle in a deep conversation with a student, and often with other students lined up outside her door.

A resident of Vermont from a young age, Schmeeckle earned her B.A. in sociology at the University of Vermont and moved on to graduate study at the Andrus School at the University of Southern California. As a leading center

for research on aging and the life course, USC allowed Schmeeckle to integrate her interests in families and life-course trajectories with the guidance and collaboration of the late Vern Bengston—among the most influential and prolific figures in the sociology of aging over the past several decades.

In a career retrospective article, Schmeeckle wrote: “It was my interest in family relationships that brought me to gerontology. Coming from a large, complex, troubled family, I was eager to learn more about family boundary complexity and other family topics” (Schmeeckle, 2018:



Schmeeckle introducing a speaker at one of the International Seminar Series sessions.

193). Aware that the sociology of families had not as of the early '90s fully examined more diverse family forms, Schmeeckle joined a team that administered the Longitudinal Study of Generations (LSOG), a longitudinal questionnaire study of more than 300 four-generation families that was launched in 1971. Building on her methodological and theoretical training, Schmeeckle completed her dissertation, entitled “Rethinking the Ties that Bind: Adult Children’s Perceptions of Step, Ex-Step, and Biological Parents,” in 2001. Given demographic changes in American family forms and the accompanying cultural and legal debates, she was in the vanguard of expanding and renewing sociological attention to families in the U.S., an abiding interest that she has shared and refined with thousands of students in her classes during her ISU career. Her approach has integrated social psychology, sociology and more recently comparative legal and political analyses as she developed an interest in the global rights and welfare of children, especially those who are most vulnerable, such as “street children” who continue to struggle to survive in many developing nations. Indeed one achievement that Schmeeckle can claim is having helped to develop a global database and website that centralizes and organizes such data in order to advance progressive policy and advocacy.

A current, ambitious project that grew out of her interest in children’s welfare and rights involves “rebellions” by children against their parents or guardians. Moving beyond a narrower legal definition of rebellion, which might result in children being formally emancipated from family situations that are oppressive or dysfunctional, Schmeeckle has conducted some 60 semi-structured interviews that investigate the causes, processes, trade-offs, and longer-term consequences of

these dramatic breaches of family comity. As much as the interviews are retrospective, her research can illuminate social structural, cultural, and interpersonal dynamics affecting emotions and conflict within families and the longer-term implications of such rebellions for the course of adult lives. Though daunting, this agenda fulfills the promise of life-course studies to link micro- and macro-level factors in understanding how lives unfold. The book project, *Rebels with a Cause*, is well underway and promises to be a distinctive and important capstone to Schmeeckle’s research trajectory.



Though trained in cutting-edge methods of statistical analysis, Schmeeckle has employed qualitative/narrative approaches in this project, the preliminary findings of which she presented in a departmental presentation this past spring. The often intense, emotional tenor of the interviews led Schmeeckle to collaborate with a colleague in the Theatre Department, Janet Wilson, who has completed the first draft of a play—based on but independent of the academic project—that features a select subset of the interviews and displays the heterogeneity of the informants. This collaboration ensures that Schmeeckle’s ties to our department and the larger ISU community will remain strong in the years to come.

Schmeeckle also collaborated on many earlier projects related to topics about family and personal relationships with Dr. Susan Sprecher, another faculty member in our department. Most recently, they just finished a chapter on



Schmeeckle, teaching assistant Luke Ploessl, and the Senior Experience Class from 2019

extended families and social networks, which includes a discussion of the interactive connections between wider circles of social networks and immediate family dynamics in the context of new communication technologies and the prevalence of increasing diversity in family structures and norms.

As a teacher, Schmeeckle has sustained a truly distinguished career. Among her awards are the John Dossey

# Sociology-Anthropology Donor Roll: January 1–December 31, 2020

Anonymous

Wallace and April Anderson

Jennifer and Anthony Arms

Marcus and Julie Auble

Robert and Kirsten Bishir

Marlene and Charles Black

Christina Boehle and Brian Fuller

Adam and Karen Brady

William and Phyllis Brown

Lee Bullwinkel and Barbara Devignier

Kacey Burton

Karlene and Charles Cappell

Anne and Thomas Carr

Michaeline and Anthony Chulick

Maxine Cordell-Brunton and Scott Brunton

Deborah Craig

Beverly Dale and Lawrence Souder

Sharon Draper

Rhonda Dugan

David and Anne Eaton

Alexis Econie

Mark Esarey

Janet Fildes

Patricia and Ronald Fogle

John Frattinger

Jacquelyn Giaimo

Thomas and Ann Hayner

R. Douglas and Janice Irvine

Robert Jenkins and Suzanne Morrah

Dennis and Janice Johnson

Jeremy Johnson

Klauer Foundation Trust

James and Nancy Klauer

William Klauer

Katie Kurtenbach

Daniel and Dianna Lienard

Erica Lockett

Wayne and Nancy Lucas

Stephen and Sara Luse

Alice Morrissey

Donna and Martin Nickels

Bob and Stacy Ramsey

Douglas and Mary Roley

Tina and Michael Rowe

Mike and Maggie Santinavat

Amber Servey-Dorman

William Specht

Susan Sprecher and Charles Fisher

Abigail Stone

William Tolone

Nicole Truong and Jason Keller

Barbara Vines

Joan and Bill Warrick

Zettie Wesley

Michael and Terri Wiant

William Wonderlin and Linda Shuster

Kathy Yelton

Tyler Zimansky

Award for Outstanding Teaching by a Tenured Faculty Member, and the Kenneth A. and Mary Ann Shaw Teaching Fellowship, which helped facilitate Schmeeckle's commitment—reflected campus-wide—to internationalizing the curriculum and integrating global perspectives more effectively in specific courses and curricular programs. This commitment is also reflected in Schmeeckle's international travel, such as with students to Brazil in a study-abroad trip; and presentations of her research, for example, through the International Sociological Association World Congress held 2018 in Toronto. A final teaching initiative, part of an ongoing departmental process of designing innovative and community-based capstone projects—the semester-long Senior Experience in Sociology seminar that is required of majors—warrants mention here. Schmeeckle designed and guided groups of students in collective research projects addressing the “Cosmopolitan Students at ISU,” and more recently, another semester-long capstone project on Black residents' experiences and concerns regarding Black Lives Matter demands for reform: jail contact, school climate, and voting in Bloomington-Normal, the findings of which were



Maria and Scott

shared with a local chapter of this national group. The strands of Schmeeckle's research, teaching, and service have been carefully and diligently woven through her 20 years of service to ISU.

Having lived in Los Angeles during her graduate school career, Schmeeckle maintained her affection for and contacts with people in Southern California. Her love of hiking, the natural world, and the diverse cultural and spiritual resources of the area led Schmeeckle to make greater LA. her home. We wish her all the best in this next chapter. Despite her many and distinctive achievements, Schmeeckle is a person of exceptional warmth, openness, and generosity. Her spirit has infused our departmental community with these qualities, a spirit and tangible impact that will remain despite her physical absence from Schroeder Hall.

## Reference

Schmeeckle, M. “How Thinking about Children from a Global Perspective Can Fortify Social Gerontology.” Pp 193-207 in C. Wellin (Ed.) *Critical Gerontology Comes of Age*. New York, NY: Routledge.

## Emeriti news

**Kathleen McKinney** and **Bob Wazienski** delayed international and most domestic travel this past year due to COVID-19. They loved, however, spending extra time with their daughter who temporarily moved back from Chicago for a few months during the pandemic. They worked on and enjoyed their cabin near the Shawnee National Forest. McKinney's mother moved to town from

Dallas last March and grandbaby No. 3 (a girl!) arrived last September in Arizona.

**Fred Smith**, co-presented “What if Anything is Australopithecus Afarensis?” at the Smithsonian Institution Seminar Series on Human Evolution, and presented “The Neandertals—an Evolutionary Perspective” for the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center Seminar Series in Greenbelt, Maryland. Smith co-authored “A Palaeoecological View of the Last Neanderthals at the Crossroads of South Central Europe and the central Mediterranean: Long Term Stability or Pronounced Environmental Change with Human Responses” for the *Journal of Quaternary Science*.

**Maria O. Smith** co-authored with Katharine C. Woollen, M.S. '19, “Squatting Facets and Arthritic Changes of the Foot in the Late Woodland Schroeder Mounds Sample (11Her77) of Illinois” in *Bioarchaeology International*. Smith also co-authored with Tracy K. Betsinger “Patterns of Antemortem Tooth Loss in Late Prehistoric West-Central Tennessee” in *Dental Anthropology* and “Osteology as Archaeology: The Research Legacy of the McClung Museum Collections. IN: Whispers from the Ground: Explorations in Southeastern Archaeology” in *Tributes to the Career of Jefferson Chapman*.

## Did you know?

Chris Wellin, associate professor of sociology, is an accomplished musician, songwriter, and arranger? He formed the pop noir band Whispering Campaign, which released a CD in 2016 and two music videos that can be found on YouTube: [Another Day](#) in 2017 and award-winning video [Wrong Man On Your Mind](#) in 2020. Check it out!



Chris Wellin

Leo Dougherty, third-grade son of Dr. Mike Dougherty, is a published online [poet](#)!



For more information, visit [Homecoming.IllinoisState.edu](https://Homecoming.IllinoisState.edu)

## More pet therapy pics



The office gets a visit from the tiny new pandemic pooch, Norberta Frances Mango (“Frankie”), of Drs. Liv and Abby Stone.



Buzz Gudeman giving himself therapy.



Georgio Willetts, Marion Willett’s rescue yellow lab mix, who always carries a toy.

Published annually

Trish Gudeman, editor  
Jeff Higerson, designer

Department of Sociology  
and Anthropology  
Campus Box 4660  
Normal, IL 61790-4660



**ILLINOIS STATE  
UNIVERSITY**  
*Illinois' first public university*

Make a difference in the lives of future sociology and anthropology students at Illinois State University. Every gift counts and enhances the educational experience for students and faculty. From annual gifts that support the department’s general fund to a personal investment in a student through an endowed scholarship, you can enrich the educational experience of current and future Redbirds majoring in sociology or anthropology.

As the cost of higher education increases, our most pressing need is to provide additional scholarship monies for our undergraduate students. It is our hope to raise \$20,000-\$25,000 over the next five years to provide new, merit-based scholarships for our most deserving students.

For more information about how to leave your legacy in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, please contact Kate Childs, director of development for the College of Arts and Sciences, at (309)438-7682 or [kachildr@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:kachildr@IllinoisState.edu).

Thanks for your support. We appreciate it!

Illinois State University, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding affirmative action, nondiscrimination, and anti-harassment. Illinois State University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, order of protection, gender identity and expression, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, genetic information, unfavorable military discharge, or status as a veteran in employment, educational programs and activities, or admissions. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed by contacting the director of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access by email at [EqualOpportunity@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:EqualOpportunity@IllinoisState.edu), by calling (309) 438-3383, or by mailing to the office at Illinois State University, Campus Box 1280, Normal, IL 61790. • University Marketing and Communications • 22-18057

## HELP REDBIRDS KEEP RISING!

### GIFT DESIGNATION

- SOC. & ANTHRO. (4665261)  MARTIN NICKELS (4666068)  
 JOHN KINNEMAN (4666945)  BEN KEELEY (4666251)  
 COLLEGE/DEPARTMENT/OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

### PAYMENT OPTIONS

\_\_\_ **OPTION 1:** Check. A check for my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to Illinois State University Foundation is enclosed.

\_\_\_ **OPTION 2:** Credit Card:

VISA  MASTERCARD  DISCOVER  AMERICAN EXPRESS

- A single gift in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 A recurring gift in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_,  
ending on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year),  
to be paid:  monthly  quarterly  semiannually  annually

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name on card

\_\_\_\_\_  
Account number      CVV      Expiration date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_ **OPTION 3:** Make a gift online at [Giving.IllinoisState.edu](http://Giving.IllinoisState.edu).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
State

\_\_\_\_\_  
ZIP

\_\_\_\_\_  
Preferred email address

( \_\_\_\_\_ )

mobile     home

\_\_\_\_\_  
Preferred phone number

### OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT ISU

I (and/or my spouse/partner) work for a matching gift company:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please send me information about ways to support ISU through a provision in my will, trust, retirement plan, or other deferred gift arrangement.

I have already included ISU in my will, trust, retirement plan, or other deferred gift arrangement.

*Please mail this form to:*

***Illinois State University Foundation***

***Campus Box 8000***

***Normal, IL 61790-8000***