



# Maryland Population Research Center

in the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences  
University of Maryland

## Newsletter

Spring 2015

Volume 7, Issue 2

### New Faculty Associates

**Michel Boudreaux**, Assistant Professor, Health Services Administration, has two primary areas of interest: The first is in survey methodology with a particularly focus on the design and appropriate methodological use of federal population surveys that measure health and health care access; the second is the connection between early life health and long-term health and economic outcomes, with an emphasis on the impact of public policy on health and economic attainment over the life-course. He also maintains an active interest in current health policy topics, including implementation of the Affordable Care Act. All of his work centers on measuring and interpreting patterns of health and economic attainment in and between populations.



**Vanessa Frias-Martinez**, Assistant Professor, Information Studies, focuses on the development of algorithms and techniques to extract behavioral information from mobile digital traces. She combines

machine learning and data mining techniques to identify relevant behavioral features and build general models that allow us to understand human and social behaviors at large scale. Additionally, her research explores how to enhance the behavioral models with other datasets including socioeconomic or land use information.

**Craig Fryer**, Assistant Professor, Behavioral and Community Health, uses mixed methods to examine the sociocultural context of health and health status, with an emphasis in community-engaged research.



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### Director's Note

It is with pleasure again that I welcome everyone back to an exciting semester of activities at MPRC, beginning with the Monday February 9th Center meeting and continuing with our first speaker of the Spring seminar series on Monday the 16<sup>th</sup>. I first want to thank all of you who were able to come to our grand opening for our new space in Morrill Hall, and to inaugurate the Suzanne M. Bianchi meeting room, on October 27. I especially want to thank Vice President for Research Patrick O'Shea and Deans Greg Ball (College of Behavioral and Social Sciences) and Jane Clark (School of Public Health) for taking time out from their very busy schedules to celebrate with us, and for their encouraging remarks about the future of the inter-disciplinary enterprise which is MPRC. I encourage Associates and Affiliates among both the faculty and students to take advantage of the new facilities as much as possible. Flexible working space including two computer rooms, a meeting room with state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment, and collaboration spaces are all available to the MPRC community on Morrill Hall's second floor. Dedicated space is also available to host visiting researchers and for research assistants and associates on MPRC-administered grants, and a restricted-access data facility is available on the third floor for researchers working with those data.



I wish to congratulate the inaugural MPRC summer graduate student grant awardees of 2014, Hyeeyun Chung and Tyler Myroniuk, both of whose summer work efforts resulted in papers being accepted for presentation at the 2015 Population Association of America Annual Meeting (see note on page 4). We will be continuing this program this coming summer. One of the two summer graduate student research award awards is henceforth to be named in honor of Suzanne Bianchi, and to ensure the viability of this award in subsequent years, I invite you to contribute generously to the fund set up for this purpose at <http://ter.ps/BianchiFund>.

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### University of Maryland to host new Census Research Data Center

**New Research Data Center provides social science researchers with secure access to restricted data sets**

MPRC Faculty Associates Sandra Hofferth, Judith Hellerstein, John Haltiwanger, and Katherine Abraham have been instrumental in spearheading a project to open a new Census Research Data Center (RDC) on the University of Maryland's College Park campus in 2015. Currently, there are 15 such centers hosted by major research institutions across the country, and the new facility at the University of Maryland will be the 16th.

At the new RDC, qualified researchers with approved projects will receive restricted access to selected non-public Census Bureau data files. University-subsidized, local access to restricted Census data is a boon for social scientists, who will now be able to conduct research using data that is not available to the general public. (See story on page 3.)

Faculty members from a number of departments, including the School of Business, the Department of Economics, and the School of Public Health, already have approved projects or are interested in submitting proposals. The RDC will also be available to researchers from other nearby universities such as Johns Hopkins and George Washington University.

Data will be available only to highly qualified researchers with approved projects, and RDC researchers will be subject to stringent data security and confidentiality requirements in order to make sure that confidential information stays private. The new RDC will be staffed by a Census Bureau employee and will meet all physical and computer security requirements for access to restricted-use data.

The RDC is a joint project of the Robert H. Smith School of Business, the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, and the School of Public Health. **Rajshree Agarwal Tronetti** will serve as RDC Director. Professor Liu Yang ([lyang@rhsmith.umd.edu](mailto:lyang@rhsmith.umd.edu)) will serve as Faculty Director. Please contact her for help with potential projects.

## MPRC Works for Students

The MPRC facilities are fantastic and have enabled me to work effectively, meet with other grad students and faculty members, and simply be around other population scholars who I can bounce ideas off of. I often use the labs because they have fast computers that run models in HLM very quickly, StatTransfer software, and a high quality scanner. The Suzanne Bianchi Conference Room has been a great space too for when I have needed to use Skype for job interviews or meet with scholars before or after they present their work at the MPRC.

— Tyler Myroniuk (Sociology)

During my time at the MPRC, I have found the graduate student workspace to be a fantastic place to get research done. Even though I am a visiting affiliate, members of the MPRC have helped me grow my professional network at the University of Maryland and beyond.”



Journal Club members in the Suzanne M. Bianchi Meeting Room facility at MPRC

— Mahesh Somashekar (visiting from Princeton)

### New Faculty, continued from page 1

His work focuses on racial and ethnic health disparities in substance use and dependence, specifically tobacco and marijuana use among urban youth and young adult populations. He is currently in his fifth year of an NIH “K” award, “Correlates of Nicotine Dependence among Urban African American Youth.”



**Cristina Getrich**, Assistant Professor, Anthropology, has two different research trajectories, one examining the effects of anti-immigrant sentiment and enforcement activities on second-generation Mexican youth’s identity formation processes and senses of social belonging, and the other on health disparities among U.S. Latinos the areas of cancer screening / prevention and behavioral health, and culturally concordant health care delivery. She is broadly concerned with the health and well-being of Latino immigrants and their families in the United States.

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**Amy Lewin**, Assistant Professor, Family Science, has worked with teen parent families focusing on family formation, parenting, co-parenting, and positive father involvement. She has also worked on transformations of pediatric primary care in order to more meaningfully integrate mental health into the primary care medical home, thereby increasing needed access to mental health services.



**Mona Mittal**, Assistant Professor, Family Science, is engaged in prevention and intervention research aimed at improving health outcomes of women with experiences of intimate partner violence (IPV). Her research interests

include physical, emotional, and sexual health of women and children in the US and internationally, with a specific focus on psychological trauma, interruption of the intergenerational cycle of violence, and physiological mechanisms linking IPV and adverse health outcomes across the lifespan.

**Lauren Porter**, Assistant Professor, Criminology. Her research revolves around three key areas: punishment and inequality, the demography of incarceration, and crime and place. She focuses on the effects of incarceration on health, and what the implications of these effects are for population health and family well being. She also examines the relationship between population age structure and incarceration patterns. This work explores why the prison population is aging from a demographic perspective and also how differential age structures across racial / ethnic groups may contribute to disparities in incarceration. Finally, she examines how offenders navigate their neighborhood environment (or another neighborhood environment) to choose targets or areas to conduct criminal activity.



**Natalie Slopen**, Assistant Professor, Epi-

## Spring Seed Grant Award

The Executive Committee announced one Seed Grant award from three proposals reviewed at its December 2014 meeting.

### Kerry Green, \$15,000

*Substance Use and the Aging Experiences of the Woodlawn Cohort: Pathways to the 50s.*

Professor Green, Behavioral and Community Health, is investigating the factors affecting health and substance use among mid-life African Americans, a group which is more likely to experience poor health and have nearly twice the mortality rate of Whites. They are also less likely to quit smoking. Although it is purported that these adverse outcomes are due to a combination of disproportionately greater adversity over the life course (e.g., poverty, crime, discrimination) and unhealthy coping behaviors, few studies have prospectively examined these aspects of the lives of African Americans from childhood into the 50s or beyond to understand the processes that lead to unsuccessful (and successful) aging. Dr. Green has been awarded a seed grant in order to conduct a pilot study to explore the feasibility of re-contacting members of the study cohort now aged 55, who were first interviewed at age 6 in 1966 and again at ages 16, 32, and 42. This developmental epidemiological study proposes to fill major gaps in with in-depth explorations of life course predictors of patterns of substance abuse, and long-term consequences for health declines.

demology and Biostatistics, focuses on social influences on health, health disparities, and



psychological and biological mechanisms through which childhood experiences are embedded to increase risk for later chronic diseases. She is interested in how childhood adversity shapes populations’ patterns of

disease, and disparities by race / ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

**Jing Zhang**, Assistant Professor, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, conducts meta-analysis and clinical trials which are directly related to population research. She is currently overseeing a project on HIV / AIDS, especially as it impacts women.



## Use of restricted Census data sets by MPRC Faculty Associates

### ***New Research Data Center will eliminate logistical difficulties accessing restricted data***

In 2011 MPRC faculty associate Julie Park (Sociology) and her co-author William Frey (University of Michigan) used data from the 2006-2008 Multiyear American Community Survey in order to evaluate how migration processes are leading to the dispersal of Hispanic and Asian racial / ethnic groups across

metropolitan areas. The use of restricted data from the US Census Bureau's Research Data Center (RDC) in Suitland, Maryland, made it possible for Park and Frey to do the first post-2000 analysis of inter-metropolitan migration for Hispanic and Asian groups using the detailed demographic and geographic attributes available with these files.

Gaining access to this data was logistically challenging. The detailed demographic and geographic data necessary for this project was only available by special clearance from the Census Bureau's Research Data Center in Suitland. Due to security restrictions, all work with the restricted data had to be done onsite at

the secure facility.

The new University of Maryland Census Research Data Center (see story on page 1), set to open on campus in fall 2015, will eliminate logistical barriers for qualified local researchers who want to do comparable work with restricted Census data. Researchers will still need to apply for approval to work with restricted data, and they will be subject to stringent data security requirements, but they will be able to do their work here on campus instead of commuting back and forth to Suitland in order to access the data. The new facility will be conveniently located in Van Munching Hall not far from MPRC's offices in Morrill Hall.

## MPRC Inaugurates Morrill Hall Facility



## Notes from the field

### Sangeetha Madhavan

The official start of our recently funded NIH project "Measuring Kinship Support for Single Mothers in Nairobi, Kenya" offered both trepidation and excitement. On the terrifying end of the spectrum was the panic that struck when we timed the



Field work in Nairobi, Kenya

length of the interview and found that it was too long and that we could not find any of the respondents we were looking for in this highly mobile slum community. The excitement came from the fact that nothing like this had been done in this context or for that matter in any.

We accomplished a lot in this one week mainly because of the amazing team made up of seasoned researchers and interviewers from the African Population Health and Research Center (APHRC), my graduate student from UMD, Mark Gross, and my co-investigator, Shelley Clark

## Grant Submissions

Between September and December MPRC Administrative Core personnel helped Principal Investigators and their collaborators to propose over \$1.7 million in new funding.

### Meredith Kleykamp

*"Military Service, Disadvantaged Youth, and Health and Mortality in Project Talent," NIA*



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### Director, continued from page 1

Finally, I welcome the nine new Associates from seven departmental units who have joined the Center since our fall Newsletter. Their research interests are described in the first pages of this newsletter. Applications to join the Center as a Faculty Associate are encouraged from all University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) faculty with demonstrated population research records. Increasingly, we are receiving applications from faculty whose recent research is in other topic areas, but who are interested in linking with MPRC Associates to apply their skills and perspectives to a variety of population research topics. Bringing new researchers to population science, as we broadly define it, is a major goal of MPRC. The Executive Committee accordingly have responded by broadening our criteria for Faculty Associate status, previously limited to non-UMCP population researchers who are doing joint work with one or more of our Faculty Associates, to now include UMCP faculty who are beginning collaborative work in population research with a Faculty Associate. This status has already served to make available resources, including access to our restricted-access data facility, to newly-appointed UMCP Faculty Associates.

(McGill Univ) providing input through Skype. Together, we set out to pilot an instrument that we believe is not only innovative but urgently needed to help us answer some basic questions about family connections and urbanization and the well being of single mothers and their children. The training included, among other things, a systematic examination of both the English and Swahili questionnaires, gaining familiarity with the use of tablet computers which proved to be more of a training for me, the least technologically savvy member of the team, and administering

### Melissa Kearney

*"Early Childhood Educational Interventions over the Long-Term: Lessons from the Introduction of Sesame Street," Smith Richardson Foundation*

### Terence Thornberry

*"Spatial Proximity and Well-Being Among Adult Family Members," NICHD*

### Wei-hsin Yu

*"Work Characteristics and Family Formation in Japan," NICHD*

### Jerome Dugan

*"The Impact of State Patient Protection Laws on Population Access to Health Insurance and Affordable Medical Services," NICHD*

### Michael Rendall

*"Women's sequencing of employment before childbearing and its relationship to child poverty: Comparing cohorts before and after Welfare Reform," NICHD*

### Alok Bhargava

*"Health Status, Food Security and Productivity of AIDS Patients in South Africa," NICHD*

## Summer Student Research Fellowships

### Myroniuk, Chung going to PAA

Congratulations to Tyler Myroniuk and Hyeun Chung, the two awardees of last spring's Summer Student Research Fellowship competition whose papers have been accepted for the upcoming PAA Annual Meeting. Chung will present a paper in Session 118, "Asian Cultural Expectations, Family Conflict, and Mental Health in Asian American Adolescents: A Focus on Subgroup Differences." Myroniuk will present a poster in Poster Session 4, "The Influence of Marital Dissolutions on Self-Reported Health Metrics of Older Individuals in a Rural African Context."

MPRC plans to offer Student Research Fellowships again this summer.

**MPRC offers comprehensive support for grant proposal development and management**

**Seed Grant opportunities for the coming year will be announced soon**

an interactive spatial mapping component using Google Maps.

The pilot needed 30 women, not a major challenge but, in the context of a community that lacks basic infrastructure (see picture), is composed of informal housing with no addresses and a highly mobile population, it becomes a herculean task. I left Nairobi feeling exhausted but energized about getting back to the field!!

## Recent Awards

Two proposals submitted through the Proposal Development service offered by MPRC's Administrative Core were recently funded.

### Sangeetha Madhavan

*"Measuring Kinship Support for Children of Single Mothers in Nairobi Kenya," R21 / NICHD, \$358,278*

### Andres Villarreal

*"Mexico-U.S. Migration during the Great Recession, 2005-2012," R03 / NICHD, \$148,972*

## Population Working Papers Series

MPRC participates in the Population Working Paper Series project hosted by California Center for Population Research at UCLA. Faculty Associates can make papers available to an audience of population researchers. Info: [mprc-support@umd.edu](mailto:mprc-support@umd.edu).