



Maryland Population Research Center

in the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
University of Maryland

Fall 2015

Newsletter

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New Faculty Associates

Oscar Barbarin,

Professor and Chair, African American Studies, has focused, among other areas, on early childhood development emphasizing socio-emotional and academic development in ethnic minority children; development of culturally sensitive methods for early detection and prevention of emotional and behavioral problems; and cross-national research on effects of poverty and violence on the social emotional and academic development of children of African descent, particularly in South Africa and the United States.



Devon Payne-Sturges, Assistant Professor, Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health, plans to develop expertise in applying systems thinking and systems dynamics to understand the joint effects of multiple

chemical and social stressor exposures on population health and to apply this information to improve environmental policies and decision-making as well as health outcomes.

Lesliam Quiros-Alcala,

Assistant Professor, Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health, conducts research in underserved / low-income communities in Maryland to understand how the environment in the homes and workplaces in these communities predisposes people to exposure disparities and subsequent potential adverse health effects.



Jennifer D. Roberts, Assistant Professor, Kinesiology, has research and teaching interests that focus on the relationship between the built environment and physical activity in addition to its impact on obesity and other public health outcomes. Much of her research

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Director's Note

On behalf of the MPRC team, it is with pleasure that I welcome everyone back to an exciting new year. A special welcome to our new Faculty Associates: Oscar Barbarin, African American Studies; Devon Payne-Sturges, Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health (MIAEH); Lesliam Quiros-Alcala, MIAEH; Jennifer Roberts, Kinesiology; Julia Steinberg, Family Science; and Mary Zaki, Agricultural and Resource Economics.

The first of our weekly seminars will be this coming Monday, and I thank our Associate Director, Sangeetha Madhavan, for once again bringing to our campus and from across the campus an intellectually diverse and stimulating set of speakers and topics. This begins our second year in the new Morrill Hall space. We are now at full capacity in our attractive visiting and resident population scholar space on the second floor, with the arrival of new resident population researchers Marian MacDorman and Tony Panzera and visitors Yuying Tong in the fall semester, and Xiaohong Ma in the spring semester. The new flexi-space computing labs have allowed us to accommodate visitors and Student Affiliates in much improved conditions over those offered at our previous space in the Cole Student Activities Building. MPRC is already benefiting from new collaborative opportunities afforded by the space and infrastructure support. In addition, the expanded space in our new Secure Data Lab on the third floor, plus secure-computing through remote access and remote cold-room computing, continues to facilitate research on a wide array of population research topics. Faculty Associates and Student and Research Affiliates of the MPRC using the secure data facilities now come from seven departments and access eleven different restricted data sources through the MPRC. Our Data and Computing Core Coordinator, S. (Bandy) Bandyopadhyay (sbandy@umd.edu) is the first point of contact for obtaining secure data and secure-data access.

Finally, I wish to congratulate our inaugural Suzanne M. Bianchi summer graduate student fellowship recipient, Mark Gross, whose project "Collective Efficacy and Community-Level Causes of Vigilante Violence in South Africa" was evaluated very highly by

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An Interdisciplinary Intellectual Enterprise

One of the hallmarks of an interdisciplinary center is a robust program for involving researchers from outside the University of Maryland to work with MPRC Faculty Associates. MPRC once again will host several visiting scholars and students for academic year 2015-16.

Visiting Scholars

Marian MacDorman, formerly of the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), working with Sandra Hofferth to explore the relationship between maternal risk factors and infant morbidity and mortality using recent linked birth-death files from the NCHS;

Yuying Tong, Assistant Professor at Chinese University of Hong Kong, working with Feinian Chen on the role of gender in migration strategies;

Anthony Panzera, post-doctoral scholar from the University of South Florida, working with Edmond Shenassa to develop population related research in the area of Child and Maternal Health and Social Marketing of Health Promotion;

Jenny Cho, post-doctoral scholar from the University of Warwick, working with Sergio Urzua and Soohyung Lee on human capital in Korea and the U.S.

Visiting Students

Janet Kuo, Ph.D. candidate, UT Austin, worked this summer with Wei-hsin Yu on the

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Research Profile Jessica Goldberg

"The Impact of Improved Borrower Identification in Malawi," NSF

Dr. Jessica Goldberg's NSF-funded research will quantify the impacts of improved personal identification of borrowers in a developing country setting. The research implements a randomized controlled trial on technology to collect digital fingerprints of microloan borrowers in Malawi. Owing to the absence of alternative effective means of establishing personal identity, fingerprinting allows a significant improvement in the ability of Malawian lenders to implement dynamic repayment incentives, which involve conditioning future credit access on a borrower's past repayment performance. Previous research has shown that fingerprinting leads to higher repayment and fewer behaviors related to adverse selection and moral hazard among Malawian borrowers, with impacts concentrated among the "worst" borrowers (those in the bottom quintile of credit scores.) To answer additional key questions, Dr. Goldberg proposes a larger sample size, a longer time frame, and local-level variation in treatment intensity. In addition, participating microlenders will provide fingerprint-matched credit records to commercial credit reference bureaus, which should increase the impact and practical relevance of the intervention. Impacts will be assessed using administrative data from microlenders in combination with two years of survey data on borrowers and loan officers.



New Faculty, continued from page 1



has explored the dynamic relationship between environmental, social and cultural determinants of physical activity and using empirical evidence of this relationship to infer complex health outcome patterns.

Julia Steinberg,

Assistant Professor, Family Science, pursues research at the intersection of psychology and reproductive health and has used national data sets to examine the relationship between unintended pregnancy and mental health. Current work examines the role of depression in contraceptive behaviors, one key to understanding unintended pregnancies.



Mary Zaki, Assistant Professor, Agricultural and Resource Economics, is a public economist whose research in household finance and household consumption is specifically concerned with studying low income and fragile

populations. Specific interests include daily budgeting and spending decisions, issues surrounding unbanked and underbanked populations, and the impact of various credit forms into their consumption and savings decisions.

Student News

Bina Ali (Behavioral and Community Health), is preparing an article based on her dissertation work examining apparent interaction between motivation and distress tolerance in substance abuse cases;

Tyler Myroniuk (Sociology) completed his Ph.D. in May and was selected for a postdoctoral research position at Brown University's Population Studies and Training Center;

Giordano Palloni (Economics) has taken a post as Associate Research Fellow at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI);

Magda Tsaneva (Agricultural and Resource Economics) has taken up a post as Assistant Professor at Clark University in Massachusetts;

Kriti Vikram (Sociology) completed her Ph.D. in August and will take an Assistant Professor post at the University of Singapore; her husband Abhijit Visaria, a visiting student at MPRC, is pursuing a post-doc opportunity also in Singapore;

Po Yin Wong (Agricultural and Resource Economics) has begun a post-doc assignment in Norway;

Ben Zou (Economics) has taken a position as an Assistant Professor at Michigan State University beginning this Fall.

PAA Deadline

The PAA Annual Meeting will be held in Washington DC Mar. 31 to Apr. 2, 2016. Presentation proposals are due Sep. 25 - see the website for information: popassoc.org

Spring Seed Grant Awards

The Executive Committee announced two Seed Grant awards from five proposals reviewed at its Spring 2015 meeting.

Liana Sayer, \$15,000

Intergenerational time connections among grandparents, mid-life children, and grandchildren in global perspective.

Professor Sayer, Sociology, states that changes in family structure, living arrangements and population aging are altering life course work and family trajectories, time transfers up and down the generational ladder, and social integration. The project will focus in particular on relationships between grandparents and adult children's social and economic participation, and linkages with grandchildren's well-being.

Mary Zaki, \$15,000

Geographic food acquisition choices within the SNAP cycle

Dr. Zaki notes that researchers have documented a spike in food spending of households that receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits around SNAP disbursement dates and the corresponding unsmooth food consumption patterns of this population. Her project will use the USDA's newly collected National Household Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey (FoodAPS) to document food geographic shopping patterns of households throughout the SNAP month; to assess the degree that food acquisition costs drive the SNAP month patterns; and to analyze the possible benefits or harms of increasing SNAP benefit disbursement frequency.

Important Anniversary Celebrations

National Longitudinal Surveys turn 50

The Bureau of Labor Statistics will host a day-long celebration to mark the 50th anniversary of the National Longitudinal Surveys on September 17 at BLS offices in Washington DC. Faculty Associates Katharine Abraham and Sergio Urzua will contribute to the program. Complete information is at NLSat50.org.

The NIH OBSSR marks 20 years of progress

The NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research (OBSSR) celebrates its 20th anniversary this year and commemorated its accomplishments in a research seminar in June. Videos from the event are available at https://obssr.od.nih.gov/obssr_20th_anniversary/

Faculty News

Christine Bachrach, Sociology, is part of a small group that has founded the Interdisciplinary Association for Population Health Science (IAPHS) and is serving as the initial Secretary Treasurer (see profile, this page).

Oscar Barbarin, new Faculty Associate and chair of the African American Studies Department, was named the 2016 recipient of the Wilson S. Elkins

Professorship.

Philip Cohen, Sociology, begins a three-year term as Secretary Treasurer of the ASA Population Section; **Rashawn Ray** is serving on the ASA National Committee on Nominations.

Melissa Kearney has returned from her fellowship at the Brookings Institution and published work this summer on the impact of availability of Sesame Street, which generated strong media inter-

est. The paper, written with Phillip B. Levine of Wellesley, employs a natural experiment relating to availability of the program in various areas and “finds that the show has left children more likely to stay at the appropriate grade level for their age, an effect that is particularly pronounced among boys, African Americans and children who grow up in disadvantaged areas,” writes Jim Tankersley of the *Washington Post*.

MPRC Faculty Associates, students active in professional meetings

Strong presence at PAA, ASA

At the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America Faculty Associates chaired three sessions, served as discussants for two others, and presented or co-authored 18 papers and 9 posters. Student affiliates presented 5 papers and 6 posters.

Student Joanna Pepin and Faculty Associate Liana Sayer’s poster “Mothers’ Marital Status and Time Use : Child Care, Housekeeping, Leisure and Sleep” was awarded one of the best of session posters for Session 4.

Michael Rendall recently joined the PAA Board and Finance Committee; Liana Sayer continues to serve as PAA Secretary Treasurer and Board member.

Eight Faculty Associates and 11 Student Affiliates presented at the American Sociological Association annual meeting. David Segal chaired two sessions that he was asked to organize: a Presidential Panel on Women on the Battlefield: Integrating Women into the U.S. Military; and a Thematic Session on The Military

and Sexuality. Also, David attended the American Psychological Association meetings in Toronto to accept the Julius E. Uhlaner Award for Outstanding Research on Military Recruitment and Selection.

Rashawn Ray organized the Masculinities Regular Session at ASA; he was invited to present at a Thematic Session on Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality in College; and one of his papers was presented in the Race and Ethnicity Regular Session.

On another front, Monica Das Gupta



Joanna Pepin with her “Best of Session” poster at PAA 2015

was invited speaker at the celebration of 40 years of the journal *Population and Development Review*, held by the Population Council; she also presented two papers at the Asian Population Association Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Summer Student Fellowships

Includes inaugural Suzanne M. Bianchi Award

Seven Student Affiliates proposed research projects for MPRC’s second Summer Research Grant competition during Spring 2015. Two projects were chosen for funding, including this year’s winner of the Suzanne M. Bianchi Summer Research Grant, Mark Gross. His project is entitled, “Collective Efficacy and Community-Level Causes of Vigilante Violence in South Africa”.

Also selected was Joanna Pepin’s project, “Cross-National Differences in Cohabiting and Married Couples’ Financial Commitment”.

The awards are used to fund students to conduct summer research which will allow them to propose papers for the upcoming Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America.

Profile

Christine Bachrach

Interdisciplinary Association for Population Health Science (IAPHS)



Faculty Associate Christine Bachrach is one of the founding members and current Secretary-Treasurer of IAPHS, a new organization dedicated “to advancing an integrative understanding of the multiple pathways – from the biological to the behavioral to the societal – that interact to produce health.” IAPHS will provide an interdisciplinary forum in which scientists in the emerging field of population health science can work together toward this goal. Specifically, the new organization will :

support conferences, workshops, and resources that create a shared professional space for scientists from different disciplinary backgrounds, fostering communication and collaboration;

provide opportunities for scientists to connect with stakeholders, decision-makers, and practitioners to encourage knowledge exchange;

increase the visibility of population health science by communicating advances in scientific knowledge to multiple audiences and promoting the importance of population health research.

“Population health science requires scientists from different disciplinary backgrounds to combine their knowledge and expertise to answer questions individual disciplines alone cannot answer - for example, questions about the causes of health disparities, the mechanisms through which toxic stress produces disease, and the reasons as to why specific policies work or fail to improve health,” Dr. Bachrach noted.

2015 Fall Seminar Series to host 13 scholars



Starting Monday, September 14, MPRC will hold a series of 13 seminar talks in the Morill Hall conference room (1101 Morill Hall). All talks have been scheduled on consecutive Mondays at noon in the same venue, and the series will conclude on December 9. The first speaker will be Sonalde Desai, Professor of Sociology, who will illuminate the impact of India's public policy regarding rural labor markets, using unique panel data from the India Human Development Survey.

Through this series, MPRC will have the opportunity to host prominent visiting scholars including Jennifer Glass, University of Texas at Austin, and Christopher Browning, Ohio State University. Other visiting scholars will be Jessica Cohen, Harvard University; Stephen McGarvey, Brown

University; Evelyn Patterson, Vanderbilt University; Philip Anglewicz, Tulane University; Yuying Tong, Chinese University of Hong Kong; Julia McQuillan, University of Nebraska at Lincoln; I-Fen Lin, Bowling Green State University; and Fernando Riosmena, University of Colorado at Boulder.

Other University of Maryland speakers will include Monica Das Gupta, Sociology, and Alok Bhargava, Public Policy.

The complete seminar schedule and relevant, detailed information on topics and speakers can be found on the MPRC website.

Grant Submissions

Between January and September MPRC Administrative Core personnel helped Principal Investigators and their collaborators to propose over \$3.3 million in new funding.

Oscar Barbarin

Family Life, Early Childhood Services and Development of Boys of Color, Administration for Children and Families

Alok Bhargava

Health and productivity of South African AIDS Patients, NIH

Feinin Chen

Adding Gender to Contextual Data in a Longitudinal Study of Health and Aging, Brown University / NIH

Sonalde Desai

Pathways Linking Economic Transformation to Women's Access to and Control Over Resources in India, International Development Research Center

Frauke Kreuter

Investigating the Utility of Interviewer Observations on the Survey Response Process, Univ of Michigan / NIH

Michael Rendall

Women's Sequencing of employment before childbearing and its relationship to child poverty: comparing cohorts before and after welfare reform, NICHD

BIGDATA: Collaborative Research: IA Population Reproduction of Poverty at Birth from Surveys, Censuses, and Birth Registrations, NSF

Intergenerational Reproduction of US Trends in Obesity and Obesity Disparities, RAND / NICHD

Modeling Disparities in Unintended Pregnancies and Unmet need for Infertility Services using Combined Survey Multiple Imputation, Univ of Nebraska / NIH

Liana Sayer

Time Use Across the Life Course: Family Inequality and Multigenerational Well-Being, NICHD

Recent Awards

Submitted through MPRC's Proposal Development service

Jessica Goldberg

Collaborative Research: fingerprinting to Reduce Risky Borrowing, NSF, \$65,142

Judith Hellerstein

Did Residential Labor Market Networks Help Workers recover from the Great Recession?, UC Irvine, \$136,822

Lesley Turner

Race equity and diversity in public higher education, Lumina Foundation, \$38,623

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our award committee, Chris Bachrach and Sandy Hofferth, as "unique" and "an interesting and important topic." As described in greater detail below, we have reached an important fundraising milestone for this award, now set up for the next five years. I encourage both the University of Maryland community and the much wider circle of colleagues and friends of Suzanne to help us ensure her legacy will be maintained permanently in this named award.

Suzanne M. Bianchi Fund Reaches Milestone

Thanks to generous contributions from 24 donors and the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences at the University of Maryland, the Suzanne M. Bianchi Research Support Fund reached its initial endowment threshold this summer. Initiated by MPRC just under one year ago, the fund acknowledges Suzanne's commitment to mentorship by offering research support to promising students in population science. William Falk, Joan Kahn, and Liana Sayer led the effort to create the fund, in cooperation with Suzanne's husband, Mark Browning.

We are very close to reaching an endowment level of \$25,000, at which point the fund will become a permanently endowed fund at the University of Maryland. We will continue to seek contributions to grow the fund so that it will be able to provide new and innovative mechanisms to encourage young scholars. Contributions are gratefully accepted - just visit <http://go.umd.edu/bianchifund>

Visitors, continued from page 1

motherhood penalty in the U.S. by examining how work contexts shape / intertwine with employers' expectation of or discrimination against women with children;

Léa Pessin, Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain, is doing dissertation research on changes in family behaviors regarding partnership and fertility decisions; while at MPRC, Lea is also working with Michael Rendall on a cross-national fertility project in collaboration with scholars from Australia, France, and Norway;

Heather Randell, Brown University, is working on dissertation research on the relationship between migration, development, and environmental change, specifically on forced migration due to the Belo Monte Dam in the Amazon basin ;

Mahesh Somashekar, Princeton University, continues dissertation research analyzing immigrant-owned businesses and ethnic economies in U.S. suburbs; while at the Center he is also working with Andres Villarreal on a Migration Lab project to identify immigrant entrepreneurs.



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