

# December 2019 Newsletter

## Welcome from the Director

It has been a busy semester at the School of Public Policy, and we are happy to learn of all the work our community does. As you will see in the pages that follow, students and alumni have made strides with promotions, presentations at conferences, and publications on their own and with faculty. We are celebrating the graduation of seven students from the Ph.D., M.P.P. and M. ECPA programs, and we can't wait to see how our new graduates will impact the region and beyond.

We are also celebrating an evening honoring Judith A. Shinogle during her annual namesake memorial lecture. This year's award winning graduate student is Erin Dorrien, a doctoral candidate and advisee of Prof. Nancy Miller. Erin presented her research to a packed house in November.

At the beginning of the fall semester, I wrote to you about the role civic engagement plays in the School of Public Policy, and how it drives our mission in educating leaders in public policy. In October, the United States lost Rep. Elijah Cummings, one of the greatest public policy leaders of our time. A staunch advocate for Baltimore, the state of Maryland, and civil rights across the country, Representative Cummings was known for always asking whether something was the right thing to do. We hope that as a School, we can honor his legacy and all that he has done for the Baltimore region by educating future leaders in his spirit.

As the year comes to a close, we hope that you have some restful time with your families and friends. Happy holidays, and happy new year from all of us at the School of Public Policy at UMBC.

Susan M. Sterett, Ph.D.  
Director, School of Public Policy



**CELESTE VALENCIA, THOMAS GOWER,  
AND SAMSON WAKJIRA (August 2019 graduate)**

## December 2019 Graduates

- Thomas Gower, M.P.P.
- Stephen Johnston, Ph.D.
- Matthew Kachura, M.P.P.
- Salar Khaleghzadegan, M.P.P.
- Stacy Mathew, M.P.P.
- Celeste Valencia, M.P.P.
- Logan Johnson, MECPA

**Congratulations to all of our graduates!**

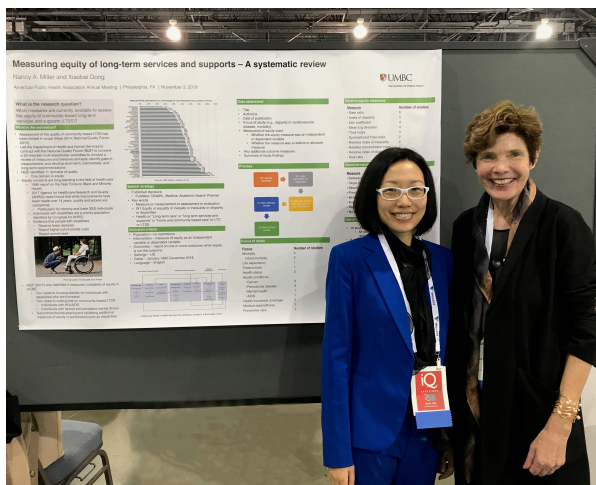
## Student Highlights

**Interested in Policy matters related to Science and Technology?**

**See Samantha Tapia ([stapia1@umbc.edu](mailto:stapia1@umbc.edu)) for more information about the GSO for Science and Technology Policy that will be forming Spring 2020.**

Ph.D. student **Rudy de Leon Dinglas** accepted a position with the Johns Hopkins Center for Government Excellence at the start of the fall semester. As Senior Advisor for the center, Rudy brings almost a decade of experience of improving service deliveries in local Baltimore-DC governments and advising government practitioners across the country on data use and performance management.

In November, Ph.D. student **Xiaobei Dong** and Public Policy faculty member **Dr. Nancy A. Miller** gave poster presentations at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting in Philadelphia to share findings from two systematic reviews they conducted. One review examined equity measures of long-term services and supports, and the other synthesized empirical evidence about the effect of Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act on health insurance coverage, health care access and use for working-age adults with disabilities.



**XIAOBEI DONG AND DR. MILLER AT APHA MEETING**

Ph.D. student **Diego Rojas Alvarado** published two papers this past year: "The volatility of world trade in the 21st century: Whose fault is it anyway?" in The World Economy, and "Latent Trade Diversification and Its Relevance for Macroeconomic Stability" in The World Bank Economic Review.

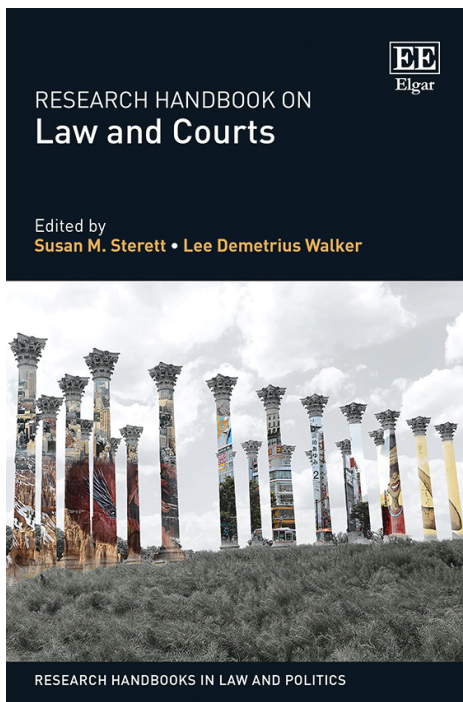


**DR. MILLER AND ERIN DORRIEN, SHINOGLE AWARDEE**

In November, we were honored to host the annual memorial Shinogle Award Lecture, in memory of the late Dr. Judith A. Shinogle. This year's lecture featured Ph.D. candidate **Erin Dorrien**, who presented her research "The Affordable Care Act's Contraception Coverage Requirement and the Impact on the Unintended Pregnancy Rate." Each year, the Shinogle award is awarded to a PhD student for their remarkable contribution to health policy research. Congratulations Ms. Dorrien, and we are grateful to the Shinogle family for making this award possible.

## Faculty Highlights

Public Policy Director **Susan Sterett** and Professor Lee D. Walker (Political Science, University of North Texas) recently published their co-edited Research Handbook on Law and Courts (Edward Elgar). It contains 32 chapters from 50 authors, representing multiple continents. Around the world, courts have been increasingly significant in governing in public policy: in immigration and asylum seeking, in environmental law, and in domestic violence, to name just a few fields. The digital world has changed both how people are monitored under law, and how scholars get access to records. People also see judges as significant public figures, and political officials have been paying attention to how diverse their judiciaries are. Chapters in the book pick up these new themes in how courts govern, in settings around the world. M.P.P. alumna **Rebecca Postowski** was integral in the editing process, and **Maya Sterett** designed the book cover.



In October, Professor **Pamela R. Bennett** co-authored an article published in the Journal of Law and Social Policy (JLSP). The article, "How Affirmative Action Context Shapes Collegiate

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Outcomes at America's Selective Colleges and Universities," examines how affirmative action context relates to academic outcomes in US universities. In the article, the authors compare outcomes before and after the US Supreme Court's 2003 Grutter decision, in which the Supreme Court ruled that affirmative action is constitutional, but should be implemented via holistic evaluation of applicants. This research is particularly relevant in light of the recent federal court decision finding that Harvard University did not discriminate against Asian American applicants during the admissions process.

Professor **John Rennie Short** has published multiple items over the past few months, including the book World Regional Geography (Oxford University Press) and the book chapter "Housing Policy and The Suburban Metropolis: A Focus on the United States and France," published in *The Routledge Handbook of Housing Policy and Planning*. His article "What Nigerian cities can learn from the rest of the world" was published in The Conversation. He also gave a talk at the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam in Hanoi, Vietnam, and has been a frequent commentator in Vietnamese press on South China Sea policy issues.



**DR. JOHN RENNIE SHORT AND AUDIENCE IN HANOI**

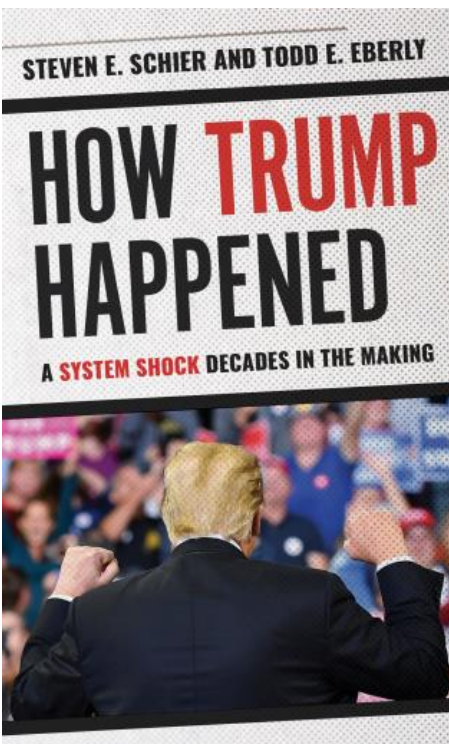
Professor Emeritus **George R. La Noue** spoke at an event hosted by the American University chapter of Students for Free Expression. The event focused on the value of open discourse on campuses and feature Dr. La Noue discussing his

## Faculty Highlights continued

recent book "Silenced Stages: The Loss of Academic Freedom and Campus Policy Debates." He also discussed the book in a podcast, available via the [American Council of Trustees and Alumni](#). Dr. La Noue's most recent article "The Price of Individual and Institutional Self-Censorship" was published in the journal *Society*.

Postdoctoral fellow **Fernando Tormos-Aponte** received a grant from the Union of Concerned Scientists for his work titled, "Strengthening Science Advocacy." Tormos-Aponte will work with the Union of Concerned Scientist's Center for Science and Democracy to convene an interdisciplinary working group of experts on social movements, public policy, and science advocacy that will review the state of scientific knowledge on social movement building, diversity in social movements, movement persistence, and political influence. The group will draw insights from this literature to develop briefs and reports to be shared broadly with the scientific community.

## Alumni Highlights



**REBECCA POSTOWSKI (SECOND FROM RIGHT) AND BALTIMORE CITY COWORKERS**

M.P.P. alumna **Rebecca Postowski** received a year fellowship by Strong City Baltimore which places social change workers in City organizations to increase capacity and make impactful organization change. Rebecca is placed as an energy analyst within the City of Baltimore Department of General Services. She is working on an energy plan to decrease carbon emissions in municipal operations and improve operational efficiencies to support other city agencies' programming needs. Along with her colleagues, which comprise of a team composed of data scientists, fiscal officers and facilities management, she presented at Johns Hopkins Urban Spaces in Baltimore: Data Science in the City Symposium (pictured above). Their project involves using Python code to clean, manage, and analyze city-owned building utility data. From the utility dataset project, Rebecca created a project scope for Code in the Schools where Baltimore City middle school students learn python and work with a meaningful dataset to calculate energy usage indices in and visually display trends across Baltimore in GIS.

Ph.D. alumnus **Todd Eberly** is expecting the publication of his new book in Spring 2020. The book *How Trump Happened* will be published by [Rowman & Littlefield](#).

## Alumni Highlights continued

Dr. Eberly a Professor of Political Science at St. Mary's College of Maryland.

**Martin Smith**, an alumnus of both the M.P.P. and Ph.D. programs, will be recognized during the Maryland Department of Health's Annual Service Awards Ceremony on December 10, 2019, for recently completing 35 years of Maryland State Government Service. He is currently assigned to the Anne Arundel County Department of Health as Managing Administrator for the Bureau of School Health and Support, which employs over 300 nursing and health care support staff serving 83,000 students in 128 Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

In August, Ph.D. alumnus **Nadwa Mossaad** published a paper with Economics professor and Public Policy Affiliate faculty member **Tim Gindling** and David Newhouse of the World Bank. The paper "Self-employment earnings premiums/penalties and regulations: evidence from developing economies" was published in the journal Small Business Economics.

M.P.P. alumnus **Mike Auerbach's** start-up Kinful was recently featured on CBS This Morning.

Ph.D. alumnus **Sam Rowe**, a statistician for the U.S. Department of Labor, recently presented at the Bureau of Labor Statistics's Government Advances in Statistical Programming (GASP!) Workshop. He presented on "Using the Current Population Survey to Answer Department of Labor (DOL)-Relevant Research Questions: Applications in R." In his talk, Dr. Rowe discussed how the CPS can be used to estimate coverage and exemptions of individuals under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Furthermore, different agencies may have different research questions from this data set, such as estimating minimum wage violation rates and estimating policy impacts from proposed rule-making ideas.

## We want to hear from you!

Do you have an achievement or event you would like to share with UMBC public policy community?

Send highlights and news to  
Myriam Ralston  
**([myriam@umbc.edu](mailto:myriam@umbc.edu))**  
to keep in touch and be featured in an upcoming newsletter.



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