

# Spring 2020 Newsletter

## Welcome from the Director

Dear School of Public Policy community,

We wish you and your family well in these difficult times.

We are all looking for hope, and we are all adapting to new circumstances. Now more than ever, UMBC's standing as the House of Grit allows us to contribute to our communities. People are concerned for our families, home schooling children, and relying on imperfect information to guide what we do. Hope as a practice grounded in our daily lives requires that we stretch our skills in public policy: in defining problems and their scope, and thoughtfully recognizing where evidence can improve what we do, and acting in difficult circumstances. We are working daily to keep our community informed, and develop creative solutions to continue providing the exemplary Public Policy graduate education and sense of community we are known for. The world needs more thoughtful, reflective public policy practitioners.

UMBC faculty members have been contributing to reflections on the current public policy disaster.

The Center for Social Science Scholarship has gathered resources [here](#).

Please know that the State of Maryland, UMBC, and the School of Public Policy are committed to serving you as best we can, affirming the importance of flexibility, caring for one another, and keeping in the spirit of #UMBCTogether. UMBC is offering all summer courses online, and planning for the Fall 2020 semester. Updates from UMBC about adapting to COVID-19 are available [here](#).

Despite all of the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic, we have so much to celebrate this Spring!

First, I congratulate our graduating students. This spring, we have thirteen stellar M.P.P. graduates, and we can't wait to see what they'll do next. We toasted the graduates through a special virtual meeting. I hope you will join me in congratulating our graduates with this video. Multiple other M.P.P. and Ph.D. students have recently finished requirements, and will graduate in August 2020.



We are also excited to welcome three new members to our full-time faculty: Fernando Tormos-Aponte, Mir Usman Ali, and Yusuke Kuwayama. You can read more about their teaching and research interests below.

We're also celebrating the retirement of one of our long-time professors, Tim Brennan. Dr. Brennan has been with Public Policy for over 30 years, since it was the Policy Sciences Graduate Program, and has served as Graduate Program Director for the last decade. He continues to represent UMBC in his work on antitrust regulation. We wish him the best, and look forward to his continued work with the School as Professor Emeritus.

In the rest of this newsletter, you'll learn more about what our faculty, students, and alumni have been up to, as well as other developments with the School of Public Policy. With the uncertainty locally and globally, please know that you can reach out to us - all of our faculty and staff are here to help however we can. Now, more than ever, we are glad to stay in touch with you.

My very best wishes to all of you,

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



[Watch the video on YouTube!](#)

**\*\*Congratulations\*\* to our Spring 2020 graduates!**

- Nick Adcock, M.P.P.
- Meghan Carpenter, M.P.P.
- Leah Dubots, M.P.P.
- Katherine Edwards, M.P.P.
- Makayla Gleeson, M.P.P.
- Jose Godoy, M.P.P.
- Ryan Hare, M.P.P.
- Marcus Jones, M.P.P.
- Kielyn Jones, M.P.P.
- Shawana Lachir, M.P.P.
- Felipe Millan, M.P.P.
- Terrence Pinkston, M.P.P.
- Kate Tafelski, M.P.P.



A VIRTUAL TOAST TO THE GRADUATES

# Hello's and Farewell's

## New Faculty Members

**Dr. Mir Usman Ali** was recently hired as an Assistant Professor specializing in Public Management. He joins us from Indiana University, Bloomington. His research interests include: managing public organizations, theories of public administration, political and social context of the policy process, social equity theory and practice, research design and methods, program evaluation, statistical analysis, and police accountability.



**Dr. Yusuke Kuwayama** is also joining us as an Assistant Professor, specializing in Evaluation and Analytical Methods. He joins us from Resources for the Future, where his research focuses on environmental and natural resource economics, water resource management, integrated socio-environmental systems, and science policy.



**Dr. Fernando Tormos-Aponte** joined us last summer as a Postdoctoral Fellow shared between Public Policy and Political Science. He spent his first year at UMBC teaching a course on social movements, writing prolifically about natural disaster response and political activity in Puerto Rico, and researching social movements, identity politics, social policy, and transnational politics. Beginning in August, Dr. Tormos-Aponte will be joining the full-time core faculty as an Assistant Professor of Political Science. Check out this [interview](#) with Dr. Tormos-Aponte about his current research at UMBC.



## External Advisory Board

This spring, The School of Public Policy welcomed two returning members and nine new members to the External Advisory Board. The EAB meets at least twice yearly, and builds partnerships between the School, UMBC, and community organizations and leaders. Each year, we share faculty, students, and alumni successes with the EAB members, and engage them in conversations about curriculum, internships, and building bridges with UMBC and the community. Learn more about our EAB members [here](#).

## Tim Brennan Retires

**Dr. Tim Brennan** has been with the School since 1990, back when it was the Policy Sciences Graduate Program. He taught our required economics course, ECON 600, and other courses for the school and the Economics Department. For about the last ten years, he was the School's Graduate Program Director. His articles and books have primarily involved antitrust, regulation, telecommunications, and energy policy, with numerous forays into other areas. While at UMBC, he had stints as a senior economist with the White House Council of Economic Advisers and Chief Economist of the Federal Communications Commission. He will remain in the UMBC family as Professor Emeritus of Public Policy.

## Student Highlights

**Rudy de Leon Dinglas** participated in the annual NASPAA-Batten Student Simulation Competition held at George Mason University this spring. Similar competitions were held simultaneously at different sites throughout the world. The competition is a day-long event that allows graduate students in public policy and related fields to employ their knowledge in a realistic simulated situation, honing skills in critical thinking, negotiation, and leadership. Rudy and his team won their regional competition and emerged as First Place Global Winners of the 2020 NASPAA-Batten Simulation.

**Ph.D. student Laura Mateczun** recently published a policy brief with the Scholars Strategy Network on the cybersecurity challenges local governments face during COVID19.

Mateczun and **Professor Emeritus Don Norris** have been writing about cybersecurity in local governments, and were quoted in an Emsisoft blog post about the impact of ransomware on the 2020 election.



RUDY DE LEON DINGLAS (SECOND FROM RIGHT) AND HIS TEAM

## Faculty Highlights

**Professor Emeritus George La Noue** wrote an opinion piece for Inside Higher Ed about re-purposing facilities and other changes to campus culture universities are facing in light of COVID19. In March, he published an article in Law & Liberty titled "Bias Response Teams Silence Civic Debate." Tapping into themes from his new book *Silenced Stages*, the article explores the need for civic discourse and debate on campuses nationwide, and the role of the university institution in fostering an exchange of diverse ideas.

**Professor Zoë McLaren** was awarded a Summer Faculty Research Fellowship by UMBC's Center for Social Science Scholarship (CSSS). The Fellowship will support her project "Data Visualization Approaches to Communicate Clearly, Inspire Policy Action and Achieve A More Inclusive Policy Environment." Dr. McLaren has also been quoted in multiple articles as a public health expert, discussing aspects of COVID19, including articles in The Atlantic, The Scientist, Vox, and The Conversation. You can track her media appearances at CSSS's website.

Public Policy **Director and Professor Susan Sterett** has joined the CONVERGE working group on Technology, Policy, and the Public Sector in the COVID-19 Environment. The working group was accepted as part of the National Science Foundation-funded Social Science Extreme Events Research (SSEER) Network. The CONVERGE COVID-19 Working Groups are funded by a philanthropic gift and are based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation. As a 2019 alumni of Baltimore's The Leadership program, Dr. Sterett joined the 2020 class in January to volunteer at the Walk-A-Mile experience.

**Professor Jane Lincove** has been awarded a research fellowship by the UMBC Sherman Center for Early Learning in Urban Communities. With co-investigators, Dr. Lincove will conduct a three-year study entitled, *Judy Centers in Baltimore: Improving Data-Informed Decisions*.

Dr. Lincove also published an article in *Education Finance and Policy's* Spring 2020 issue titled "Apply Yourself: Racial and Ethnic Differences in College Application."

Finally, Dr. Lincove's study "Match or Mismatch? Automatic Admissions and College Preferences of Low- and High-Income Students" was named to Gadfly's list of best education research studies in 2019.

**Professor Emeritus David Salkever** published an article in *The Conversation*, breaking down what wage data shows about current economic growth.

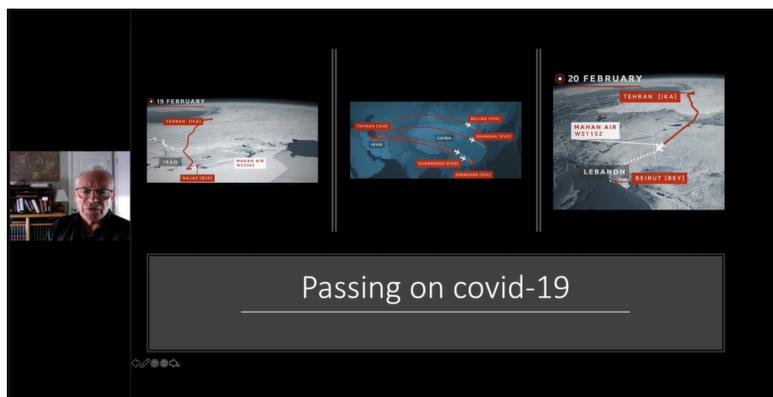


SUSAN STERETT (THIRD FROM RIGHT) WITH 2019 AND 2020 LEADERSHIP COHORT MEMBERS

**Dr. Fernando Tormos-Aponte** was featured on the Scholars Strategy Network's podcast *No Jargon*, where he discussed how organizers are tackling the issue of climate justice at all levels - from the floor of the UN to the hurricane-devastated neighborhoods of Puerto Rico. **Director and Professor Susan Sterett** was also featured on *No Jargon*, where she discussed COVID19 compared to other disasters, and how to we can prepare for a world where they collide.

**Professor John Rennie Short** and alumna **Lina Martínez** recently published an article in the journal *Geography Compass*. The article, "The urban effects of the emerging middle class in the global south," examines the impact of Southern countries' growing middle-class on consumption patterns, housing markets and, urban politics.

Dr. Short published an article in *The Conversation* about how urban planning can help with obesity, and hosted a webinar for Oxford University Press: "Covid 19 in the Context of Human and World Regional Geography." In May, Dr. Short was awarded a Fulbright award for the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Research program for 2021. He will spend two months the University of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur and the University of Philippines Dilman in Manila, and travel to Vietnam and Indonesia to work on a book on conflict in the South China Seas.



JOHN SHORT HOSTING A WEBINAR

# Alumni Highlights

**Bob Cenname**, M.P.P. alumnus and Baltimore City Budget Director, was featured in an article in The Baltimore Sun about the city's projected budget shortfall due to COVID 19.

**Kimberly Rhoton**, who received her M.P.P. in 2018, has begun a new job as Healthcare Analyst with AP Ventures.



KIM RHOTON (RIGHT) WITH PROF. EDWARDS AT GRADUATION IN 2019



DR. TRAUTMAN (RIGHT) AT WH BRIEFING

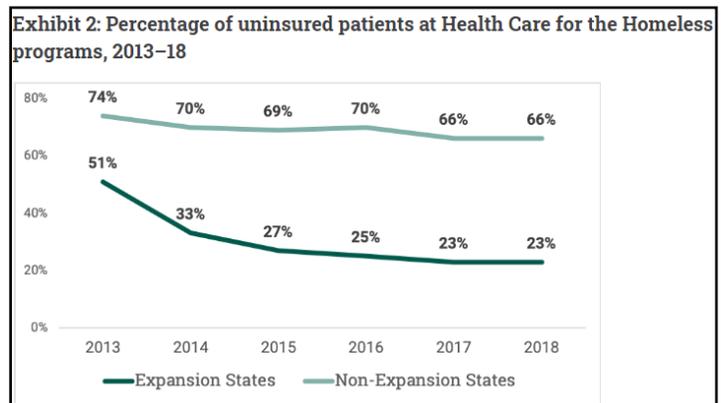
**Dr. Deb Trautman**, who received her Ph.D. in 2004, participated in a White House briefing in March, which was attended by the President, Vice President, and members of the Corona Virus Task Force.

As President and CEO of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), Dr. Trautman represented academic nursing at the briefing, and discussed what measures are needed to keep nurses safe as they respond to the pandemic on the front line.

Public Policy Ph.D. alumna **Deborah Crandall** has accepted a position as the first Executive Fellow for Secretary Robert R. Neall and the Maryland Department of Health. The School of Public Policy and the UMBC Career Center worked with Secretary Neall's staff to develop the Executive Fellow position, and we are excited to see the impact Dr. Crandall will have on public health in the State of Maryland. Dr. Crandall received her Ph.D. in Public Policy from UMBC with a focus on health and regulatory policy.

**Rebecca Postowski**, who received her M.P.P. in 2019, will be starting a new role as the Energy Efficiency Program Manager with BGE, following the completion of her fellowship with the City of Baltimore. In her new role, she will help residents and commercial customers saving money on their utility bills.

**Barbara DePietro**, Master of Policy Sciences and Ph.D alumna, published an article "Five Ways Medicaid Expansion Is Helping Homeless Populations Ten Years After The ACA Became Law" in the journal *Health Affairs* blog.



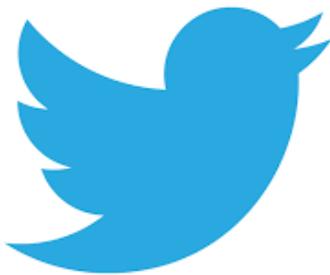
DePIETRO, 2019

# Keep in touch

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) to keep in touch and be featured in an upcoming newsletter.



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