

# February 2025 Newsletter

## Welcome from the Director

Dear Public Policy community,

With the start of the Spring semester and the calendar year, I am reminded how grateful I am to all of you who make the UMBC Public Policy community exceptional.

Our students, alumni, and faculty have continued to use their expertise and insight in applied policy-making and research over the past year. In such an impactful election year as 2024, data and analysis were more important than ever, and we are proud to be part of the conversation about policy issues that impact the community.

In August we welcomed a new faculty member to our core faculty team: Dr. Chul Hyun Park. Dr. Park's research focuses on cybersecurity policy and Artificial Intelligence Policy. We also celebrated Dr. Susan Sterett as she entered retirement in December. You can learn more about their work later in this newsletter.

Finally, I'd like to introduce myself as the new Director of the School of Public Policy. I began in the role in August. My research interests include diversity issues, stratification and inequality, health disparities, race, class, gender, and sexuality. I am also the current executive officer of the Association of Black Sociologists. I am excited to work with our faculty and students as Director and thank everyone for a great first semester in this role. Welcome to Spring 2025!

*Loren Henderson, Ph.D.*

Director, School of Public Policy



## **\*\*Congratulations\*\* to our December 2024 graduates!**

Natasha Campbell, M.P.P.

Mercedes Opoku, M.P.P.

Ridwan Islam Sifat, M.P.P.

Haley Smith, M.P.P.

Hannah Thurner, M.P.P.



# School highlights

## Judith A. Shinogle Memorial Fellowship and Lecture

In November, the School of Public Policy hosted its 12th annual Judith A. Shinogle Memorial Lecture. The 2024 Fellowship awardee and speaker was **Ph.D. student Shadi Sayedi** who presented her talk “Evaluating the Effects of Affordable Care Act on Health Care Coverage, Utilization, and Outcomes: A Comparison of Foreign-born and US-born Populations.”

The Judith A. Shinogle Memorial Fellow is chosen by a faculty panel and awarded each year to a doctoral student for their notable contribution to research in health policy. Dr. Judith Ann “Judy” Shinogle was a Senior Research Scientist with the Maryland Institute for Policy Analysis and Research and Adjunct Associate Professor of Public Policy, who passed away in May 2012.

## Hello’s and Goodbye’s

In August, we welcomed **Dr. Chul Hyun Park** as the newest faculty member in the School of Public Policy. Dr. Park previously taught at Arizona State University and the University of Arkansas. He is currently leading an interdisciplinary project to develop an AI-powered tool that helps local governments evaluate their cybersecurity preparedness from a holistic perspective, considering technological, behavioral, organizational, and social factors. [Learn more about his research here.](#)

We said farewell to Professor Emerita **Susan Sterett**, who retired in December. Dr. Sterett joined UMBC in Fall 2017 as the School of Public Policy Director, a position she held until 2020. Her work has long concerned courts as governing institutions, with a focus on public policy problems, including immigration, and social welfare claims.



**Shadi Sayedi**

She has also taught extensively about courts and legal governance at multiple levels, from making claims to final courts of appeal. She has served as co-editor of the peer-reviewed [Law and Society Review](#). In addition to holding different positions at universities, she served for three years as a program officer at NSF. In 2023, she published [Litigating the Pandemic: Disaster Cascades in Court](#) (University of Pennsylvania Press). The book looked at key fields with critical claims in court, including the often-overlooked field of insurance. She is currently revising her next manuscript on legal encounters in climate-related disasters, under contract with University of Pennsylvania Press.



**Dr. Chul Hyun Park**



**Dr. Susan Sterett**

## Student highlights

In Summer 2024, **Ph.D. student Taylor West** was selected for the American Meteorological Society (AMS) Public Policy Colloquium (PPC), based on a national competition. She spent a week in DC meeting with congress among others working in science policy.



**Taylor West and Paul Higgins (American Meteorological Society)**

This summer, **Ph.D. candidate Doha Chibani** was awarded the Judy Yin Shih Fellowship for the Advancement of Health Policy Research. Her research explores Federal and State policies that regulate insurance coverage for behavioral health and the role they play in access to care, especially for the economically disenfranchised and people with marginalized identities. Chibani currently runs a joint UMB-UMBC SAMHSA grant funded research and training clinic providing early identification and intervention services to youth and young adults at risk of developing serious mental illness.

**Ph.D. student Hilary Budzinski Betley** was awarded the Gary G. Rupert Scholarship, which supports students pursuing an undergraduate or

graduate degree in Emergency Health Services (EHS) and who have a demonstrated record of community service and leadership. The Gary G. Rupert Scholarship Endowment was established in June 2005 by UMBC to honor Gary G. Rupert for his 27 years of service and dedication to the University and the Emergency and Disaster Health Systems field.

**Ph.D. student Adebola Daramola** published a chapter in The Palgrave Handbook of FinTech in Africa and Middle East: Connecting the Dots of a Rapidly Emerging Ecosystem (Living Reference) on SpringerLink. In the chapter "Fintech Rulemaking: Evidence from Middle East and Africa," Daramola examines the evolution of regulatory frameworks through the lens of policy diffusion and administrative process theory, providing a robust theoretical foundation to enrich our understanding of fintech regulation.

**Ph.D. student and M.P.P. alumnus Ridwan Islam Sifat** published a new co-authored paper in the Journal of Public Health Policy. The article examines the variance in food-based domestic violence and anemia prevalence in women residing in rural versus urban areas. He was featured in UMBC Magazine where he discussed his research and his journey to UMBC.



**Kendra Lyons, Dr. Lauren Edwards, Laura Mateczun, Dr. Nancy Miller, and Tanya Kreutzer Sayyed at the November 2024 Doctoral Candidacy ceremony**

## Faculty highlights

During Summer 2024, **Professor Zoë McLaren** presented two papers "Stormborn: Evaluating the Impact of Facility-Based Delivery on Health and Economic Outcomes Using a Machine Learning Approach" and "Economic Stimulus from Public Health Programs: Externalities from Mass AIDS Treatment Provision in South Africa" while attending the European Society for Population Economics, European Health Economics Association, and Empirical Health Economics Workshop.



Dr. Zoë McLaren (second from left) and colleagues at the European Health Economics Association conference.

**Professor Emeritus John Rennie Short** published an [article](#) on the US presidential election, and his [recently updated article](#) on congestion pricing in *The Conversation* was cited in [The Washington Post](#). Additionally, his 2024 book *Insurrection* just won Book of The Year award from the history podcast "History with Jackson."

**Professor Emeritus George La Noue** published his [article](#) "The Demise of Disparity Studies?" in *Law & Liberty*. Dr. La Noue has been a trial expert or consultant in more than thirty federal lawsuits involving racial preferences in public contracting. When he closed the Project on Civil Rights and Public Contracting at UMBC, 289 disparity studies were donated to the Library of Congress.

In December, Dr. La Noue was a Federalist Society Webinar Panelist for "The Future of Civil Rights Enforcement at the EEOC, OFCCP and the DOJ."

**Public Policy Director and Professor Loren Henderson** was [featured](#) on *The Academic Minute* to talk about her research on Black farmers' experience in light of systemic racism and COVID-19 challenges.

**Professor Lauren Edwards** joined the UMBC Graduate School as the Interim Associate Dean for the 2024-2025 academic year.

## Alumni highlights

**Alumnus Pradeep Guin's (Ph.D. 2015)** co-authored the manuscript "What determines how governance indicators shape policy processes? Evidence from three environmental issues in India" which was published in [Environmental Policy and Governance journal](#). This paper explores the role of governance indicators in explaining the policy processes of three environmental issues (air pollution, extreme heat, and a vector-borne disease, Dengue) in India and proposes new indicators that could be used to explore policy processes from developing nations.

**Ph.D. alumna Dr. Catherine Mata (Ph.D. 2022)** and **Professor Jane Arnold Lincove** published a [working paper](#) with the Annenberg Institute at Brown University. In this working paper, the authors examine the impact of a Maryland state-wide ban on out-of-school suspensions for children in grades preK-2 on behavior. In another new [article](#), Dr. Mata explores the distribution of unpaid work between men and women in Costa Rica.

**Alumnus Justin Vélez-Hagan (Ph.D. '20)** was [appointed](#) Deputy Chief of Staff to Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin. He previously served on the Joint Advisory Board of Economists, to which he was appointed by the Governor in 2022.

**Alumnus Josh Michael (Ph.D. '22)** was elected president of the Maryland State Board of Education, and was featured in [UMBC Magazine](#).

# 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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