UMBC
THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY

May 2025 Newsletter

Welcome from the Director

Dear UMBC Public Policy Community,

As we face times of uncertainty both within UMBC and outside of it, I am grateful for the brilliant and inclusive community we have built at the School of Public Policy. In a time like now when evidence-driven policymaking are more important than ever, our students, faculty, and alumni continue to provide insight and action across sectors and specializations. We are incredibly proud of the work they all do, while representing the values UMBC holds dear of inclusion, diversity, and excellence.

I am thrilled to welcome a new cohort of Masters and Doctoral graduates to those alumni ranks. You might notice that we have a larger than usual class of graduates. I think this is a testament to the strength and importance of the School of Public Policy. I can't wait to see what we do next.

Uncertainty is never comfortable, especially when it hits close to home in our university, state, and country, but I am heartened by the camaraderie and kindness shown by my students, colleagues, and friends in the School of Public Policy and UMBC every day.

Congratulations to our graduates. Thank you for being an amazing part of this community.

All the best,

Loren Henderson, Ph.D.
Director, School of Public Policy

Congratulations to our Spring 2025 graduates!

José J. Del Toro Domínguez, M.P.P.
Demetrie M. Garner, M.P.P.
Jason Michael Mascelli, M.P.P.
Gloria Adoma Seshi, M.P.P.
Zachary Raymond Starr, M.P.P.
Carlo Rama Vakas, M.P.P.
Mary Kathleen Catlin, Ph.D.
Corris P. Davis, Ph.D.
Sundiata Jangha, Ph.D.
Kendra Elizabeth Lyons, Ph.D.
Laura Kathleen Mateczun, Ph.D.
Theophilus I. Ogune, Ph.D.
Tanguy Ringoir, Ph.D.
Luis Diego Rojas Alvarado, Ph.D.

School highlights

We celebrated our Ph.D. and M.P.P. graduates with our semi-annual graduation toast. Even though we were forced inside due to rain, it was wonderful to honor the graduates and their friends and family.

Dr. Lauren Edwards toasting the graduates.

Student highlights

Ph.D. student Liran Laor's new article "Hoping for a Brighter Future: Making the Case for a Publicly Funded Early Childhood Education System in the United States" was recently published by Exchange Press in the Winter issue of Exchange Magazine. In the article, she argues that early childhood education deserves the same level of public attention and investment as K-12 education, as they are oriented toward similar goals.

M.P.P. graduate Demetrie Garner is on the Baltimore City mayor's Restitution Advisory Board as part of city's ongoing implementation of Mayor Brandon Scott's Executive Order on Opioid Restitution Funds.

Ph.D. candidate Ridwan Islam Sifat has published a commentary article in the journal Politics & Policy. His piece "AI and Public Policy: Navigating the Possibilities and Limitations" discusses potential benefits and challenges of integrating Artificial Intelligence into the policy-making landscape. He was selected to receive a Public Administration Theory Network Fellowship and as one of the recipients of the 2025 Marilyn Demorest Love of Learning Award from The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi at UMBC. He also received Also received 2025 inaugural Asian Culture Award in the Changemaker Category for his research on social equity and policy, and his leadership and community involvement within UMBC communities.

The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) team published **Ph.D. candidate Tanya Kreutzer Sayyed's** submission about how her research team used ACS data while they evaluated and worked on a COVID-19 health outreach and health literacy project titled "Lifting All Voices: Promoting Health Equity and COVID-19 Public Health Objectives in Frederick, Maryland."

Faculty highlights

Public Policy **Professors Nancy Miller, Zoë McLaren, Mir Usman Ali,** and **recent M.P.P. graduate Zach Starr** published a new working paper with the Retirement and Disability Research Center. The paper "Assessing the Prevalence of COVID-19 and Post-COVID Condition in Adults with Disabilities in the United States: A Systematic Review" explores how COVID-19 impacts the health of people with disabilities compared to the general US population, through a systematic literature review.

Professor Chul Hyun Park has published a new article examining the impact of a group prenatal care model that provides pregnant women with risk assessment, education, and social support.

Professor Emeritus John Rennie Short published an analysis of a potential fiscal crisis looming for US cities, and hosted a workshop for social science faculty on writing and publishing books.

Professor Emeritus George R. La Noue published multiple analyses of recent judicial developments on higher-education student admission policies in designed to promote equity.

Alumni highlights

Dr. Grace De Oro (M.P.P. '19, Ph.D. '24) recently published a research article in the *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs.* In the article, Dr. De Oro examines reviews literature on how nonprofit organizations can define and build resilience so that they can continue to meet public needs in the face of adversity.

Dr. James P. Kruger III (Ph.D. '21) published an open letter to new Department of Energy Secretary Chris Wright advocating the US to adopt an integrated solid waste infrastructure that is based on the international waste management hierarchy.

Dr. Rudy de Leon Dinglas (Ph.D. '23) joined the University of Virginia School of Continuing and Professional Studies' teaching team as a lecturer in the Public Administration certificate program. He was named #4 on a list celebrating a group of outstanding public servants: the Top Influencers in Local Government.

Dr. Rudy De Leon Dinglas

Representative Johnny Olszewski (Ph.D. '17) was profiled in a *UMBC Magazine* article about his first year in Congress. He represents Maryland's 2nd District in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Rep. Johnny Olszewski in front of his office on Capitol Hill. Photo by Marlayna Demond'11/UMBC

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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