



# INTERSECTIONS

A PUBLICATION OF THE CENTER FOR GENDER IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

TWENTY  
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## MEET THE 2021

# WSG GRADUATES!



### **Simone Coverly** (*she/her/hers*)

During her time at MSU, Simone conducted research on sexual violence through both independent projects and as a Provost Undergraduate Research Initiative-funded research assistant. Simone was also involved in the Lansing community, as an intern at the Women's Center of Greater Lansing and as an ESL tutor at the Refugee Development Center. Simone plans on continuing her research in graduate school by pursuing a master's degree in gender studies at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Simone's favorite experience during her undergraduate career was studying abroad in the Gender, Sex and Feminism program in London, under the mentorship of Lucy Thompson.



### **Kristin Mertz** (*she/they*)

At MSU, Kristin was involved in the Honors College, Kappa Alpha Pi Pre-Law Fraternity, and served in numerous leadership activities in Alpha Xi Delta. One of the most rewarding internships they completed during their time as an undergraduate was working with the Saginaw County Youth Protection Council, which works with runaway teens and teen parents. By shadowing the CEO, they learned how to do community affirming nonprofit work, such as outreach events, grant writing and fundraising. They also worked as an undergraduate learning assistant for GenCen in fall 2020, which was one of their favorite memories at MSU. Kristin has always wanted to teach, and all the students they worked with were amazing! Teaching ended up being such an affirming and safe space for them during the pandemic. After graduation, Kristin will be attending University of North Carolina Chapel Hill with a full-ride scholarship to pursue their master's degree in global studies. However, they will always be a Spartan at heart—Go Green!



### **Katie Paulot** (*she/her/hers*)

Katie graduated with a triple major in Comparative Cultures & Politics, Anthropology, and Women's & Gender Studies, finishing with a 3.9 GPA. In her time at MSU, she worked with many organizations, one of which was the Center for Survivors where she volunteered as a part of the Sexual Assault Crisis Intervention (SACI) team for four years and served as president of the SACI student organization for two years. In 2019, Katie won the Tracy Dobson Award for Undergraduate Student Feminist Activism for her work at MSU regarding sexual violence. In fall 2021, she will attend the University of British Columbia, Okanagan to get a master's degree in the Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies program with a theme in conflict, power, and ideas. Her research in this program will focus on access and experience with contraception, particularly for fat people.

Katie's favorite WGS memory is from her study abroad experience on the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, & Sexual Politics in Amsterdam. This program opened her eyes in so many ways and the coursework pushed her to be more critical of gender and sexual norms. Being able to study in Amsterdam also opened her up to the possibility of studying internationally in the future, and propelled her to apply to graduate school.

# INTERSECTIONS

## ON THE COVER

Cover artwork created by Gwen Lindberg.

The 2020-21 academic year was unlike any other. The Center for Gender in a Global Context (GenCen) faced many challenges navigating through a virtual world, but also sought out new opportunities. Our lives were confined to headshots in a Zoom meeting room. GenCen took what might have been a mundane experience and transformed it into a space for creativity, collaboration, and inspiration. The cover art is a reflection of GenCen's determination to keep their work energized throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. While the world has changed in many ways, GenCen's commitment to feminist knowledge and social change remains strong.

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# INSIDE GENCEN



*Stephanie J. Nawyn*

**Stephanie Nawyn**

Co-Director for Academic Programs,  
Outreach, and Engagement



*Wenda K. Bauchspies*

**Wenda Bauchspies**

Co-Director for Global Research  
and Engagement



*We are guided in our work by the belief that the world can be a more just and compassionate place. We are grateful to share that value with you.*

**It goes without saying** that this past year has been like no other, for our local community and for the world. Looking back at the director's message we wrote for the 2019-2020 issue of *Intersections*, we are struck by how many of the challenges we faced at that time continued into this year. Not surprisingly, those challenges have not been evenly distributed, with people already made vulnerable by overlapping systems of oppression bearing a greater burden during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, one of our priorities has been staying in touch with our students and associated faculty and staff to support their overall well-being by increasing professional development programming, creating online networking opportunities, and providing spaces to have meaningful discussions on social justice issues and the impact of COVID-19.

In addition to the changes required by the pandemic, MSU has been in the midst of leadership change. Our new president, Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D., completed his second year and was joined in August 2020 by our new provost Teresa K. Woodruff, Ph.D. On December 1, 2020, MSU hired a new vice president and chief diversity officer, Jabbar R. Bennett, Ph.D. This new leadership team has put a focus on institutional transformation that prioritizes academic excellence, diversity and inclusion, and open communication. In particular, we have appreciated the support and recognition that our new central administrators have given to the GenCen because our mission supports their priorities for MSU.

Through all the changes we have experienced this year, we are proud of how our center personnel, students, and affiliated faculty and staff persevered to create meaningful learning experiences, produce transformative research, maintain social connections with one another, and support social justice through practice and engagement. Our physical office closed but our community remained strong. We weathered budget cuts, moved grant proposals forward, and graduated a record number of students. Restrictions to travel meant that our strategic partnership grants looked a bit

different this year, but we found new ways to build relationships in **Uganda, Malawi, Peru, Kenya, and Afghanistan**. Looking forward, we are cautiously optimistic that the resilience we developed during the past year can be mobilized to make the GenCen even stronger.

Here are just a few highlights of GenCen activities, some of which you will read about in this issue of *Intersections*:

- **The Gender, Women's Suffrage, and Political Power** conference was a resounding success, with over **300 registrants** from around the world and a keynote by Michigan's governor Gretchen Whitmer.
- Collaborating with the **Grain Research and Innovation project**, GenCen staff developed a tool to help agricultural researchers assess gender responsiveness in their work.
- We expanded and strengthened the GenCen curriculum to include a **new course (WS 102 - Navigating Sex and Gender in Everyday Life)**, instituted a Social Justice Conversations series, and developed faculty-led innovations in online teaching.
- We contributed to **22 grant proposals** authored by our affiliated faculty, ranging in size from **\$10,000 to \$15 million**.
- We provided **\$9,000 in scholarship aid** to our undergraduate students and over **\$90,000 in dissertation research grants and fellowships**.

This has been a tough year for all of us, which is why we deeply appreciate the support that we continue to receive from our community. We are guided in our work by the belief that the world can be a more just and compassionate place. We are grateful to share that value with you.

**Thank you for your commitment, for your support, and for all the good that you are doing, supporting and facilitating in your communities both locally and globally.**



# GENCEN STAFF BIOS

## MEET THE GENCEN TEAM



### **Stephanie Nawyn** *(she/her/hers)*

Stephanie Nawyn is the **Co-Director for Academic Programs, Outreach, and Engagement**. She directs the GenCen Faculty Fellows Program, as well as both the undergraduate and graduate Women's & Gender Studies academic programs. She and Wenda Bauchspies engage with GenCen's Community Board members, alumni, and donors. Stephanie is excited to continue working with a variety of GenCen constituents to develop innovative new curriculum and activities.



### **Wenda Bauchspies** *(she/her/hers)*

Wenda Bauchspies is the **Co-Director for Global Research and Engagement**. During fall 2020 Wenda was active in GenCen strategic plan discussions, updating Gendered Perspectives on International Development (GPID), and working with partners on new projects. In addition, she taught a GJEC course and graduated her first MSU master's student, Emily Kotz. In January 2021, Wenda went on temporary loan to the National Science Foundation as a Program Director for Ethical and Responsible Research and Science and Technology Studies. She is supporting GenCen research activities from afar and dreaming up new initiatives for her return.



### **Rebecca Irvine** *(she/her/hers)*

Rebecca Irvine joined GenCen as **Interim Associate Director** in January 2021 and joined ISP's newly formed Global IDEAS team to support gender inclusion in international development work in the autumn of 2020. Rebecca was also honored as a Distinguished Mentor by ASMSU Senior Class Council this year for her work on GenCen's Research Internship Program. Rebecca is currently the program director for faculty research development at the University of Michigan.



### **Caitlyn Vader** *(she/her/hers)*

In May 2021, Caitlyn Vader joined GenCen as the **Communications Coordinator/Office Manager**. In this role, Caitlyn works with the co-directors and ISP Communications on planning, designing, and implementing GenCen's communications strategy. She will also assist the GenCen team with a wide range of office management tasks, including preparing reports, developing a budget tracking system, and supervising student employees.



### **Patrick Arnold** *(he/they)*

Honored with MSU's Outstanding New Advisor Award for 2020, Patrick Arnold helped lead the undergraduate and graduate programs through a full year of remote learning as the **Undergraduate/Graduate Advisor**, reaching record levels of total GenCen students enrolled, as well as record students graduating with GenCen programs in one year. In fall 2020, Patrick also taught GenCen's new large intro course, WS102: Navigating Sex and Gender in Everyday Life.



### **Mae Crowell** *(she/her/hers)*

Having held a variety of staff and administration roles across campus, Mae Crowell has been a proud employee of MSU for 20 years. She joined GenCen in April 2020 as the part-time **Fiscal Officer**, in addition to her position with several other centers in International Studies and Programs. Mae enjoys the variety of programs and people she gets to work with and is looking forward to updating GenCen accounting processes and assisting with projects and events.



### **Lucy Thompson** *(she/her/hers)*

During 2020-21, Lucy Thompson co-planned the Gender, Women's Suffrage, and Political Power: Past, Present, and Future conference and supported the qualitative research components of the GenCen's GRAIN and CGIAR research consultancies as GenCen's **Senior Research Fellow**. She also managed the qualitative research component of the State of Michigan's COVID-19 Mortality Review in partnership with a team of research assistants and colleagues in MSU's Department of Epidemiology.



### **Danielle Dalimonte-Merckling** *(she/her/hers)*

In 2020-21, Danielle Dalimonte-Merckling worked closely with Rebecca Irvine as a **Research Fellow** to gain experience in research and grant administration; continues to collaborate with GenCen staff analyzing Article 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; delivered the quantitative results of the CGIAR, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research evaluation; and assisted with strategizing around how best to use data gleaned from the affiliated faculty and staff needs assessment.



### **Rebecca "Becca" Kammes** *(she/her/hers)*

Becca Kammes is a postdoctoral researcher through MSU's Center for Research in Autism, Intellectual, and Other Neurodevelopmental Disabilities. Her area of expertise is sexuality education and reproductive rights for individuals with disabilities, and she has a background as a couple and family therapist. Becca is a GenCen **Research Fellow** and works on multiple projects related to disability, reproductive rights, and body positivity.



### **Alyssa Morley** *(she/her/hers)*

Alyssa Morley is a **Research Fellow** with GenCen as well as a postdoctoral research associate in the College of Education. In these roles, Alyssa contributes to research projects focused on gender and education and teacher experiences in both international and domestic contexts.



### **Katie Paulot** *(she/her/hers)*

Katie Paulot graduated in spring 2021 with triple majors in Comparative Cultures & Politics, Anthropology, and Women's & Gender Studies. She has worked with GenCen since the fall of 2019 when she started as a research intern. She has since been promoted to **Senior Research Intern** and worked on various projects in the last year including the creation of a gender toolkit for agricultural researchers, preparation for the Gender, Women's Suffrage, and Political Power conference, and a Twitter study on body positivity narratives.







### Emily Khan (*she/her/hers*)

In February 2021, Emily Khan left her role as GenCen **Communications Coordinator/Office Manager**, moving to a new role as marketing & communications specialist with MSU University Services. While still at GenCen, Emily worked closely with Ginny and Rebecca on developing a communications strategy; assisted in the transition of GPID from a working papers series to a journal; and co-planned the GWSPP conference in November 2020.



### Ginny Lindberg (*she/her/hers*)

Ginny Lindberg graduated in spring 2021 with a degree in environmental biology/zoology and a minor in Science, Technology, Environment and Public Policy for environmental public policy. She joined GenCen in fall 2020 as the **Communications Intern** and spent the year crafting social media campaigns, designing digital and print content, managing the website, and coordinating the 2020-21 edition of *Intersections* as co-editor-in-chief. Looking forward, Ginny hopes to work in environmental and reproductive justice advocacy and organizing.



### Andala Yakubu (*she/her/hers*)

Andala Yakubu graduated in spring 2021 with a dual major in Psychology and Women's & Gender Studies. In September 2020, Andala joined the GenCen research team as a **Research Intern**. In her most recent project, she coordinated a gender policy project in which GenCen collaborated with the Alliance for African Partnership to develop a virtual archive/repository of gender policy and guidance documents as a resource for African higher education institutions. Andala is pursuing her master's in social work at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



### Alison Shereda (*she/her/hers*)

As a **Research Intern**, Alison Shereda worked closely on a number of projects, including *Intersections* and GPID. Alison provided support to create a gender toolkit for agricultural researchers in Afghanistan and has also worked on research regarding rights of persons with disabilities. After graduation, Alison is pursuing her master's in environment and sustainability at the University of Michigan, with a concentration in sustainability and development.



### Caryn Shannon (*she/her/hers*)

Caryn Shannon graduated in spring 2021 after studying Criminal Justice. In July 2020, she became a part of the GenCen team as a **Research Intern** for human rights and gender representation. She worked closely with GenCen staff on various tasks, including the global implementation of the UN Convention, creating presentations on grant opportunities, and writing articles for *Intersections*. In fall 2021, she will be attending the University of Pennsylvania.



### Taylor Belyea (*she/her/hers*)

Taylor Belyea is a rising senior studying social relations and policy as well as Women's & Gender Studies. She joined the GenCen team in February 2021 to work as an **Academic Programs Intern**. In her role, she helped Patrick to develop recruitment strategies for the department's Women's & Gender Studies major. Taylor drafted email copy and graphics with helpful information for students interested in women's studies and helped strategize with the communications team about where best efforts could be spent in major recruitment across campus.





# CAITLYN VADER

Communications Coordinator  
and Office Manager

## WELCOME CAITLYN!

In May 2021, MSU's International Studies and Programs welcomed **Caitlyn Vader** to the Center for Gender in Global Context as the new **communications coordinator/office manager**. In this role, Caitlyn will work with GenCen co-directors and ISP Communications on planning, designing, and implementing GenCen's communications strategy. She will also assist the GenCen team with a wide range of office management tasks, including preparing reports, developing a budget tracking system, and supervising student employees. She is excited about the diversity of responsibilities this role brings and hopes to create efficiency within the unit to better serve students and faculty at MSU.

Caitlyn comes to GenCen from the Grain Research and Innovation (GRAIN) project in MSU's Global Center for Food Systems Innovation where she served as the program coordinator. There she oversaw communications and assisted with project management for various activities within the research project.

Caitlyn holds a bachelor's degree in public relations from Western Michigan University and a master's in integrated marketing communications from Eastern Michigan University. Apart from work, Caitlyn is also an avid reader, golfer, and loves to kayak. She also helps run her family's tree farm in Gaylord, Michigan.

## Q&A with CAITLYN

### What attracted you to the position at GenCen?

I have always been drawn to positions that have the opportunity to create positive change in my community. I was attracted to the amount of helpful opportunities GenCen creates for students, faculty, and the community.

### What's your favorite thing to talk about?

Traveling—my goal is to visit all 50 states! I love to hear about other people's experiences while traveling.

### If you were to have a career other than your current/planned one, what would it be?

I would want to be a baker. I love baking different breads and would be so happy to get to do it daily.

### What's your favorite joke?

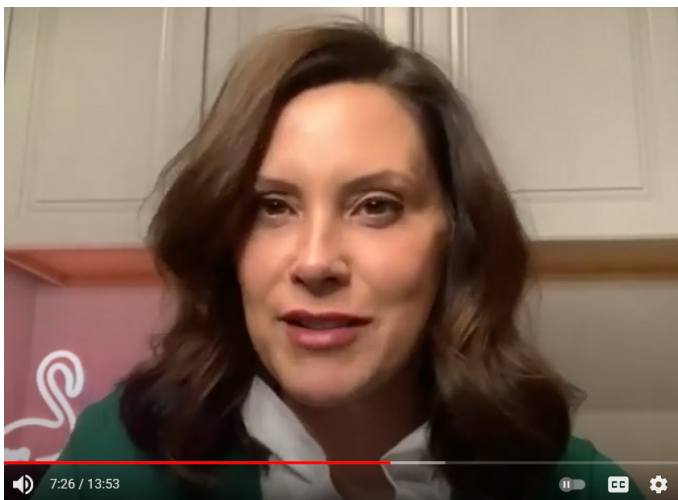
How does NASA organize a party?  
They *plan-et*.

# GENDER & POLITICAL POWER

## THE 2020 GWSPP CONFERENCE

In exploring how to recognize the historic 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, GenCen's Stephanie Nawyn, MSU Department of History's Lisa Fine, and University of Michigan's Institute for Research on Women and Gender's Anna Kirkland knew they wanted to break from the celebratory tone often used to talk about this amendment and create space for critical discussions. With this in mind, they began planning the 2020 **Gender, Women's Suffrage, and Political Power** (GWSPP) conference.

While the 19th Amendment is remembered as giving women the right to vote, that oversimplification ignores the continued disenfranchisement of people and women of color in the 1920s and beyond. Consequently,



The GWSPP Conference featured keynote speaker: Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer.

the conference organizers wanted to host an event interrogating ideas of progress and voting, highlighting the racial divide and continued struggle for voting rights and representation today.

"We had very in-depth framing conversations for the conference right from the start," Fine explained. "This was not going to be a celebration of the 19th Amendment, but rather a critical commemorative event regarding it, taking it in, warts and all. That was established right from the start, following the nature of feminist scholarship around these issues and especially historic considerations."

The GWSPP conference brought together activists and academics to explore the critical history of women's suffrage and political power, and the future possibilities for expanding gender equity in political participation and representation in the United States and across the globe.

Nawyn, Fine, and Kirkland were deep into planning the conference when the coronavirus pandemic began, sending everyone to work from home and grapple with how to live in a global pandemic. The planning team knew they didn't have to continue planning the GWSPP conference. "There was some conversation about whether we should do [the conference] or not and it wasn't an easy decision," said Nawyn.

However, the murder of George Floyd and subsequent international protests during the summer of 2020 highlighted the continual, deep-seated power of white supremacy and racism in America. At the same time, the 2020 U.S. presidential election loomed in the fall. "It actually felt all the more important to have these



conversations and create these spaces for critical reflection on voting, equity, and political power now, even in a somewhat disconnected, online way,” Kirkland said.

“Moving online, the goal of the conference didn’t change, we just had to de-prioritize the kinds of things that are hard to do virtually,” added Nawyn. Even so, and especially in 2020, what was gained from the online conference dramatically outweighed what was lost.

“In this format, you lose the informal hallway conversations, but gain people being able to participate from around the world who otherwise wouldn’t have been able to make it,” said Nawyn. It was also much easier to record and archive digital presentations, and now the entire GWSP conference is available on GenCen’s YouTube channel, creating a long-lasting educational resource on top of the live conference experience.

Thinking back, each organizer has different takeaways from the conference. Her curiosity sparked by presentations on topics she previously knew little about, Fine walked away from the conference wanting to read, learn, and engage in more conversations. She also took away, from a historical perspective, “how important engaging and facing these difficult pasts is and especially through the contemporary period and everything we’ve been living through. The spirit of this conference and what we were able to accomplish really fit into that national conversation.”

Struck by the connections between these pasts and contemporary struggles for justice from voting rights to racial equity and beyond, Nawyn was also inspired by how GWSP showed strength in the pandemic and how we can all still learn from each other and have these important conversations in digital spaces. “There are a surprising number of things we can still do together when not in a physical location at the same time and I’m really grateful for that,” Nawyn expressed. “I also think even when we don’t have to stay six feet apart we’ll still have ways of interacting like this that are productive and vital.”

Adding on to Nawyn’s point, Kirkland wants to remember that right now just persisting through a global pandemic is a major feat, let alone continuing the learning, reflection, and conversations fostered by the conference.

## Gender, Women's Suffrage, and Political Power Past, Present, and Future

HOSTED BY



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RESEARCH ON WOMEN & GENDER  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



Department of History  
College of Social Science  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Looking forward, the GWSP conference won’t be an annual event, but that doesn’t mean these three leaders are stepping away. They all look forward to working more with each other and bringing their centers and departments together for other important work and conversations. In the immediate future, they’re exploring joint research proposals and brainstorming sessions as well as contemplating work on gender-based violence.

There were many reasons to have let the GWSP conference fall away in the midst of a pandemic, but Nawyn, Fine, and Kirkland came together around the stronger reasons to continue and are so glad they did.

“We think of this conference as the culmination of not only our work, but of the organizing, the activism, and the knowledge production of the people participating in this conference and all of those who came before us,” Nawyn shared at the conference opening.



For 2020 Gender, Women’s Suffrage, and Political Power conference videos, visit:  
[gencen.isp.msu.edu/gwspp](https://gencen.isp.msu.edu/gwspp)

# RESEARCHING INTERSECTIONAL PANDEMIC EXPERIENCES



## SEXUAL AND GENDER MINORITIES, HEALTH CARE, AND COVID-19

Ning Hsieh, Ph.D. and stef shuster, Ph.D.

“In the last 18 months, many of us have become poignantly aware of the durability of health inequalities among marginalized people in modern medicine and how the pandemic exacerbates existing disparities,” said Ning Hsieh and stef shuster. “Sexual and gender minorities (SGMs), however, seem to be relatively absent from these public conversations, media reports, and political advocacy efforts.”

Hsieh and shuster are attempting to address that oversight in their research. Conducting in-depth interviews with SGMs in the Lansing area, they are building on their other research to “explore how sexuality, gender, and race/ethnicity interact to shape SGMs’ health and social experiences during the pandemic.”

Collaborating with each other in this work, Hsieh and shuster bring together complementary backgrounds and methodologies. Hsieh quantitatively studies how stigma, stress, and social relationships influence the health of sexual minority populations; shuster qualitatively studies how medical professionals evaluate evidence to make decisions in uncertain areas, such as trans medicine. This specific project builds on other work they have done for a co-authored, “Health and Healthcare of Sexual and Gender Minorities” for the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* (forthcoming). Hsieh and shuster were wrapping up data collection when the call came out for small grant proposals for COVID-19 research from the MSU College of Social Science and immediately recognized the importance of reformatting questions they were already asking about SGMs health care experience into the

context of the pandemic. Conducting research on the COVID-19 pandemic while simultaneously living through it, however, doesn’t come without its challenges for both researchers and participants. It’s a difficult time to ask people to participate in a study, especially people who are being disproportionately affected by the pandemic like BIPOC LGBTQ+ communities. Hsieh and shuster are well aware that many people lack the bandwidth, time, space, or mental capacity to participate and in interviews, they’ve found people struggle to reflect on their individual perspectives as those experiences aren’t in the past, but something they’re experiencing in their daily lives. In response, Hsieh and shuster shifted to asking questions about how participants have seen the pandemic affect the broader LGBTQ+ community instead of just themselves, which has expanded the conversation.

However, it’s not only the participants struggling to be a part of research on the pandemic while living through it. “From a researcher’s perspective, it can also be exhausting to study the thing [COVID-19] that already permeates every aspect of one’s life,” said shuster.

Throughout these challenges, however, Hsieh and shuster emphasized some of the “beautiful moments” from their interviews. They remarked on how so much health research focuses on the inequities, violence, and disparities marginalized communities experience, but miss out on the rest of people’s stories. For example, in Hsieh and shuster’s interviews, they ask people about coping strategies. With wide-ranging answers such as throwing dance parties, cooking together over Zoom, to creating art, spending time with pets, and calling old friends, these moments show the real connection between people, even without being in the same physical spaces. All of these moments are typically left out of health disparities research.

Hsieh also brought up the complexities of health care journeys for LGBTQ+ people, and especially in the pandemic: “For some, COVID-19 has amplified concerns about accessing adequate health care services; for others, being able to use telemedicine during the pandemic has lowered certain barriers to care. Perhaps not so surprising, there’s still much



work to be done so the quality of care we receive does not depend on who we are.”

Looking ahead, Shuster and Hsieh are continuing to conduct interviews with diverse voices in Lansing’s LGBTQ+ community and hope to share their findings with health care providers and community organizations to create positive change. With additional funding, they’d also love to expand their scope from the Lansing area to conduct interviews around Michigan or even the country.

“What we are finding at the intersections of race, class, sexuality, and gender is such a complex story of how inequality is sustained by the health system and experienced by individuals that it warrants considering how geographical location may also shape those experiences,” they said.

Hsieh and Shuster enjoy working together and look forward to continued collaboration on this and other projects, asking questions to fill the gaps in what we understand about health and health care experiences.



## ORAL HISTORY IN THE PANDEMIC: MI DIARIES PROJECT

Betsy Sneller, Ph.D. and Suzanne Evans Wagner, Ph.D.

“Sometimes exposure to lots of other people can increase rapidly...and then we see rapid language change as well. The COVID-19 pandemic presented a very unusual and sudden case of the opposite: a shutdown of face-to-face interaction almost everywhere, all at once,” write Betsy Sneller and Suzanne Evans Wagner. Sneller and Wagner are the principal and co-principal investigators for the MI Diaries project, a longitudinal study conducted by the MSU Sociolinguistics Lab that tracks changes in language during the COVID-19 pandemic. The MI Diaries project will run for at least another two years and will continue to recruit new diarists of all ages.

Each week, participants audio record themselves talking on their cell phones or other devices, responding to prompts sent out that week, such as: What are you grateful for? Is there anything you can’t find at the store this week, like toilet paper? Was there ever a time when you got lost somewhere? The prompts are tailored to different

age groups and the responses provide thought-provoking or even light-hearted insights about the current situation in Michigan. The recordings and transcripts are anonymized and archived with the Library of Michigan and will be part of Michigan’s historical record of the pandemic and its aftermath, as well as used for future research on language change.

The project began after a phone conversation between Wagner and Sneller at the start of the pandemic. Sneller had just accepted her position as an assistant professor of sociolinguistics four weeks after MSU transitioned to virtual work and instruction. At the time, Sneller noted, “these lockdowns are going to have a huge impact on social interaction, which means there’ll be an effect on language. We should somehow try to capture it!” Wagner had a similar thought but didn’t believe kick-starting a new research project would be feasible, however, they “felt the weight of the moment and...were determined to try.”

Despite the considerable obstacles to conducting research in a pandemic, the MI Diaries project moved forward. This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to study the impact of rapid social isolation on language and Sneller and Wagner felt they had to be a part of that work. There was additionally a strong social history aspect pulling them in: “capturing people’s thoughts and everyday experiences in the midst of the pandemic will provide an important record for the future, for other researchers and for Michiganders in general.”

Throughout the data collection process, Sneller and Wagner realized that we really are more similar to one another than we are different, which has felt refreshing in such polarizing times. “Often in our team meetings we talk about how the diarists’ pandemic experiences are not unlike our own. Diarists sometimes tell us that the project has provided a sense of community during a difficult time; that’s been true for us as well,” said Sneller.

As the initial data processing and analysis continues, Sneller and Wagner hope to begin answering questions about the linguistic effects of social isolation. Sneller in particular is interested in the speech of children and youth. Both envision the project acting as an ongoing resource for other researchers, as they’ve adapted their mobile recording app for other digital ethnography projects, including one on Judaism. Most importantly, they “see the project as continuing to provide an outlet for the Michigan community to share thoughts and experiences, as well as a historical resource for future generations.” ■

# GLOBAL ADVOCACY, EDUCATION, AND MOBILIZATION IN GREATER LANSING

**GenCen's Community Board** is a collective of representatives from local organizations, created in order to strengthen the relationship between the university and the broader mid-Michigan community around global issues related to gender and sexuality. These partnerships not only work to bridge the gaps between academia and activism, but also support GenCen's outreach and community-based activities.

One of these Community Board members is the Greater Lansing United Nations Association (GL-UNA). It was founded in 1959 by internationally experienced members of the community, many of whom were affiliated with Michigan State University. Its founders aimed to inspire people in Lansing, by educating them about the work of the United Nations, as well as encouraging support and advocacy for the UN and its agencies. Originally working as an independent organization, GL-UNA shifted its focus nearly two decades ago to

establish partnerships and connect with MSU and businesses in the community. Lynn Bartley became president in 2013 and further pushed the organization and its board to reach out to nonprofits and continue to build connections with partners.



GL-UNA is engaged in both advocacy and education. GL-UNA and the national organization, the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA), provide regular programs,

information, and emails for advocacy. In terms of education, GL-UNA works in schools in the Lansing area to inform students about the existence of the United Nations. The organization hosts World Friendship Day to bring international migrants to interact with students in non-diverse communities, allowing kids to interact with people they would have never met otherwise. Additionally, GL-UNA supports the initiation of Model United Nations clubs in local schools and has given scholarships for teams to travel and compete.

*The work of the United Nations is about peace and justice in the world.*

GL-UNA also hosts a number of events throughout the year to celebrate major international commemorative days. For Human Rights Day, GL-UNA highlights MSU's Hubert H. Humphrey Fellows, who are experienced professionals from developing and transitioning nations that travel to campus for ten months of non-academic study and professional development opportunities in the field of economic development. Fellows discuss human rights issues in their home nations, highlighting issues that are disappointing or in need of change, while some also discuss positive human rights developments. In 2021, for United Nations Day—unable to do their annual sit-down dinner—GL-UNA collaborated with UNA-Greater Detroit to award 17 individuals and organizations across Michigan for their work in advancing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Ranging from Bell Global Justice's efforts in promoting gender



equality (SDG 5) to MSU's carport solar array for enhancing affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), awardees were celebrated for their efforts in taking action to make these global goals into a reality.

Throughout this tumultuous year, GL-UNA made sure to continue its involvement in the community. Following in the footsteps of the international community, GL-UNA and UNA-USA worked to address the issues of police violence, human rights abuses, and racial oppression against Black Americans.

"After the murder of George Floyd, the [National Council] Chair of UNA-USA came out with a statement calling for justice. The work of the United Nations is about peace and justice in the world, so we used this statement and have sent out advocacy statements and information to get involved in addressing these issues. We really worked to be out there and directly discuss this," said Bartley. Additionally, the organization held a Java Cafe, a casual opportunity to discuss world issues and events related to the UN. The event, titled "The Connection Between UN, UNA and Black Lives Matter: What is Happening Nationally and Locally" featured Rachel Bowen Pittman, the

executive director of UNA-USA, and Angela Waters Austin, founder and CEO of One Love Global.

Finally, the UN celebrated its 75th anniversary this year, and GL-UNA honored this milestone through a consultation with the UN in collaboration with UNA-USA, which drew people in from the Lansing community and across the state of Michigan. This project, initiated by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, allowed for input from the world about global needs and what the UN should be doing differently, serving as an opportunity for communities across the globe to discuss potential improvements for this intergovernmental organization.

Bartley emphasized that "75 years is monumental. [The UN] has continued non-stop, and we know it isn't perfect. This is a good opportunity to look forward and make decisions, and figure out where we go from here." Through this consultancy, Barnhart added, "we did a lot of contact with people who weren't members [of GL-UNA]...which was a very rewarding experience. We were able to lift up the UN to people who may not be aware of it, so hopefully in the future they'll continue to pay attention and appreciate what the UN does." ■



The 2020 GL-UNA Board of Directors. Back row (L to R): Hakan Yildiz, Yasmina Bouraoui, Tom Bartley, Terry Link, John Metzler; middle row (L to R): Banjor Musa, Kathy Gut, Emily Wisniewski, Lisa Berg, Bob Barnhart, Thasin Sardar; and seated (L to R): Dave Wiley, Lynn Bartley, Mary Ann Ferguson, Joseph Hess. Not Pictured: Lia Bommarito, Stacey Nill.

 [gluna.org/officersandboardmembers](https://www.instagram.com/gluna.org/officersandboardmembers)

## IN THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM:

# CONNECTING THEORY AND PRACTICE

**Aminda Smith**, an expert in modern Chinese history, studies the social and cultural history of Chinese communism and Global Left movements. In particular, she's interested in how these movements are gendered, and how preconceptions of gender and sexuality impact activists. Smith became interested in China during a study abroad program while she was an undergraduate, and despite knowing very little about the country when she arrived, she began to learn the Chinese language and really enjoyed it.



**Aminda Smith** *Ph.D., Advanced Seminar in Women's & Gender Studies (WS 492)*

Smith always knew she wanted to pursue a career in teaching—she found it inspiring to watch people discover new things about the world. When she decided to get her doctorate in East Asian Studies, Smith knew she wanted to teach at the collegiate level and work directly with students, while also having access to the resources and opportunities for projects at a research university. This made Michigan State University an ideal environment. Currently, she teaches courses in history, women's and gender studies, integrative arts and humanities, and integrative social sciences.

One of the courses taught by Smith in the spring 2021 semester was WS 492, Advanced Seminar in Women's & Gender Studies, in which she focused on the intersection between theory and practice. The course revolves around the notion that everything we do needs to be informed by practice, and practice has to be theoretically informed. By broadening student's understanding of and working to combat resistance to theory, she hopes to demonstrate how complicated power structures truly are.

"There's still so much that needs to be done, especially since systems of power continue to replicate themselves," said Smith. "Without theory, you're not going to fully understand power: it should never be apart from practice."

A unique case study that WS 492 analyzed this semester looked at how universities are entangled in systems of power, perpetuating the very social injustices they're trying to combat. Smith further connected this example to imprisonment and



incarceration, as both institutions target disciplinary action towards marginalized populations. These institutions, whether universities or prisons, are designed to benefit only certain groups of people and attempt to fit people into specific boxes. Through this section of the course, Smith challenged students to not only think about prison reform and policing, but also the parallels in the relationships between policing and prisons and universities and funding.

Smith is also working to promote student portfolios as a major assignment and component of the course. Through this project, students are given the flexibility to decide what they want to do with their women's and gender studies education and to create something during the semester that showcases their talents. Students have drafted op-eds, written job and graduate school application letters, and even designed projects to implement in the local community. One student designed a veggie box program for the Allen Neighborhood Center bringing awareness to food security as a feminist issue.

*I have an incredible group of students that are really committed to making class great.*

While teaching virtually can be difficult, Smith says that her students in WS 492 are amazing. "I have an incredible group of students that are really committed to making class great," she said. In order to make sure students are continuously engaged, Smith encourages students to take breaks, turn off their camera if that's what they need, and frequently checks in with her students.

Ultimately, Smith hopes her students take away an understanding of the importance of theoretically-informed practice and practically informed theory, while working to bring these concepts together and understand people's experiences. In her teaching, Smith has encountered a resistance to theory as it "doesn't help people on the ground;" however as systems of power continue to replicate themselves, having a strong theoretical foundation will be extremely valuable as students become practitioners, researchers, advocates, and policymakers. ■

## EXPLORING SOCIAL JUSTICE

Alongside teaching a new introductory course in fall 2020, GenCen Undergraduate/Graduate Advisor, Patrick Arnold, hosted weekly Social Justice Conversations (SJC) as a place for students to learn from each other outside of the classroom, discuss their lived experiences, and be supported in their identities. As a teacher, Patrick always hopes that students are learning; however, in the midst of a pandemic, he wanted to create a space where students could be their authentic selves and explore the issues they are passionate about. The SJC, with the support of Patrick's undergraduate learning assistants Kristen Mertz and Madison Totty, spanned 11 weeks. Some of the topics explored throughout the semester were intersex rights and identities, feminist advocacy through voter engagement, and the experiences of students of color at predominantly white institutions.



*"The Social Justice Conversations...were one of the only ways I had to meet other MSU students from off campus, and they provided a safe space in which I felt comfortable sharing my ideas and stepping outside of my comfort zone. They made a big difference in how I view social justice issues and motivated me to want to change things for the better...Basically, the Social Justice Conversations were my favorite part of the semester."*

**- Kara Mackenzie**



*"My favorite part about participating in the SJC has been the sense of community. I always feel welcome and accepted every week...I have learned a lot about intersectionality from other students with different social identities and backgrounds than my own...[and] I [could] always count on hearing new perspectives every week."*

**-Emily Bourgeois**





RESEARCH

# SUPPORTING GENDER RESEARCH

## GENDERED INTERSECTIONS WITH GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

The Center for Gender in Global Context is committed to supporting and promoting the impactful and diverse gender research of our 350+ affiliated faculty and staff members and 400+ graduate and undergraduate students. In Michigan and across the globe, MSU scholars are undertaking research that raises awareness about gender, sexuality, and related social issues, pushes the boundaries of gender scholarship, and makes a difference in lives and communities around the world.



## COMBATING GLOBAL CHALLENGES: COVID-19 AND INTERSECTIONALITY

Soma Chaudhuri, Associate Professor,  
Department of Sociology

*GenCen Core Associated Faculty/Staff Member  
GenCen Faculty Fellow 2018-2023*

**Soma Chaudhuri**, a GenCen faculty fellow of three years, joined Michigan State University in 2008 after she completed her doctorate in sociology. “As an immigrant in the United States, I have always been excited about global challenges and gender. Michigan State University recognizes and promotes research that is truly global,” said Chaudhuri. “As one who is passionate about such challenges, coming to MSU was the right choice.”

GenCen’s faculty fellowship launched just a few years ago under the leadership of GenCen co-director, Stephanie Nawyn. The program’s goal is to bring faculty from across different departments and disciplines at MSU to teach women’s and gender studies courses and support their research. “With this fellowship, I was able to come to the realization that our teaching informs our research and our research informs our teaching,” says Chaudhuri. “Every class is a learning opportunity for me. Class became a very rich engagement of ideas and methodology which is helpful to me and the students.” As one of the first recipients of this fellowship, Chaudhuri has been with GenCen as the program has grown and witnessed its impact in academia and research at MSU.

*Given the kind of times we are going through, it is important to recognize how race, gender, and sexuality affect people in our society...*

Chaudhuri researches women and poverty by studying women in grassroots communities in India. “India is known for its programs to empower women. I wanted to study what impact these programs had on their lives and the lives of others. Those who take part in these programs, I ask what do they do with the training,” Chaudhuri explained. As part of this research, she also



Soma Chaudhuri poses in front of Berkey Hall, the home of MSU’s Department of Sociology.

trained student contributors in data analysis and these students are now in the process of publishing their findings.

Chaudhuri’s most recent research focuses on the COVID-19 pandemic. Alongside professors at George Washington University and the University of Connecticut, she is studying how the pandemic has affected those in India.

“I was horrified by the images of migrants traveling by foot in India,” says Chaudhuri. “With India being a country that experienced the harshest lockdown, they have no means of going back to their homes.” Already this project has resulted in a toolkit for studying migrant precarity in pandemics. While the official launch of this research won’t be until 2023, this toolkit is already aiding physicians, academics, and student researchers.

Centering intersectionality in her own work, Chaudhuri was drawn to GenCen because of the focus on global and intersectional ideas of gender research. “My research lies at the intersection of gender, development, social movements, and violence. Given the kind of times we are going through, it is important to recognize how race, gender, and sexuality affect people in our society,” said Chaudhuri. “Intersectionality is very much part of our political dialogues as well as our personal identity. This is shown through our women’s studies courses. We try to acknowledge such intersectionality in our courses and in our research. If we only could recognize that we thrive in diversity, that we thrive in equity, that we thrive in social justice.”

## CHANNELING LIVED EXPERIENCES INTO LITERATURE

**BRIONA SIMONE JONES, Ph.D.**

Graduate, Department of English and Graduate Specialization, Women's & Gender Studies  
WGS Fellowship Recipient 2020-2021

**At MSU, Briona Simone Jones** recently earned her Ph.D. in English with a graduate specialization in Women's & Gender Studies.

"Coming to Michigan is one thing, but staying in Michigan is another," Jones explained, saying she was first drawn to the interdisciplinary approach of MSU's English department but stayed for the relationships she built that were shaping her perspective, like with her advisor, Yomaira Figueroa.

Jones added the WGS specialization to her English degree because GenCen gave her the opportunity to engage with topics she not only explores academically but lives every day. She also loves the curiosity that GenCen fosters because her "curiosity and imagination have been the greatest aids in [her] life and graduate career."

Jones' research has taken her around the world to university archives including those at Spelman College, Howard University, and Freie Universität Berlin to learn more about the Black lesbian writers who were formative to societies, schools of thought and political movements but had a fraught relationship with the academy and publishers. As Jones explained, "even work that hasn't been published has impacts...so I'm studying the underside of knowledge" to capture the experiences missing from classroom pedagogy. Jones is committed to Black people, Black liberation, and Black struggle in her academic work, her life, and for her community.

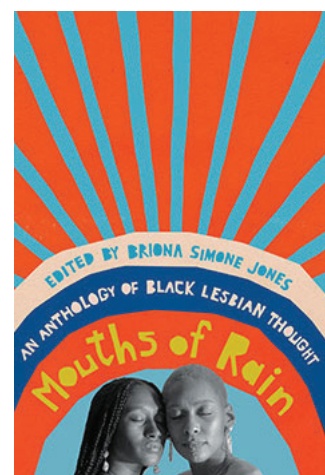
Jones compiled and edited *Mouths of Rain*, an anthology tracing the history of Black lesbian writers and their work throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. When Jones' mom introduced her to Audre Lorde's work at the age of 19, her curiosity started to burgeon and she's since explored the work of other authors; "Lorde is not the only Black, lesbian writer who's ever written a thing. She's part of a cohort with a rich history and predecessors she's building from," said Jones. She started teaching these other authors in her courses, but wanted their work to be accessible to




Briona Simone Jones

people when they weren't just required reading. In 2018, she started compiling the anthology, working with Beverly Guy-Sheftall at Spelman College who describes Jones' book as "an audacious, unapologetic, transgressive collection of Black 'queer' writing across genre, time, identity, age, and political leanings...It bears witness to the necessity and power of the field of Black lesbian studies and is a love offering to us all." In the summer of 2020, in the midst of blatant anti-Blackness and policy brutality, Jones put the final touches on her book and sent it off for production.

Since her book officially released in February 2021, Jones did a virtual book tour, graduated with her doctorate, and landed a job as assistant professor of English and Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies at the University of Connecticut. She hopes to continue researching Black lesbian authors and is working with the founder of the Black Lesbian Archives, Krü Maekdo, to bring the unpublished works she's been gathering as a graduate student to a tactile, on-the-ground queer community space like the archives. Jones hopes to also build a digital hub to house these works that is accessible to people around the world.



Briona Simone Jones' book, *Mouths of Rain*, published by the New Press.  The New Press



## CONQUERING FOOD INSECURITY IN VANUATU AND FLINT

**CHELSEA WENTWORTH, *Research Assistant Professor***

*GenCen Core Associated Faculty/Staff Member  
GenCen FY20 Strategic Partnership Grant Recipient*

**Chelsea Wentworth's** journey to conquer food security started 10 years ago in Vanuatu, a stretch of islands in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. She used her GenCen Strategic Partnership Grant to promote food security through urban gardening projects. In Vanuatu, working with the participants of urban gardening projects, she was able to discover their concerns of soil quality and obtain gardening knowledge about the urban space.

"Research should be able to improve lives, provide the community with answers to questions that are important to them, and help them achieve their goals," said Wentworth. "This type of research maintains and promotes long-term research partnerships. GenCen's grant allowed me to highlight the importance of new partnerships to view different aspects of food insecurity."

With the grant, Wentworth was able to partner with an existing intervention in the Vanuatu Ministry of Agriculture focused on urban garden programming. "We were able to learn about the challenges they face implementing these types of programs and support their efforts to gather information from participants about their experiences and motivations for urban gardening," said Wentworth. Wentworth's project revealed new elements in gendered dynamics in small-scale agriculture and gardening that are important when trying to understand how these projects can be encouraged and sustained in the future.

Unfortunately, this research was disrupted due to COVID-19. Although the project end date was initially August 2020, the design of her work in Vanuatu allowed Wentworth to look past an intervention cycle and learn about the community's visions for the future after participating in these types of programs.

"MSU's Strategic Partnership Grant was essential to our development because it gave us an opportunity for collaboration that we can now build upon in future work," said Wentworth. In the effort to pursue this project further, Wentworth plans to apply for a larger grant from National Geographic.

Wentworth, a former MSU Honors College student, came to MSU after working at High Point University

in North Carolina. While there, she was an assistant professor of anthropology—a strict teaching role. She came back to MSU in January 2019 because she wanted to do more research and engage with scholars. "MSU has provided me with an invigorating experience," said Wentworth. "Through the collaboration of faculty, undergraduate students and graduate students, you receive very different vantage points about very innovative topics."

GenCen prioritizes issues that are not widely discussed, such as gender, sexuality, and intersectionality. Its mission is to increase awareness of how multiple identities impact people in society.

"Being affiliated with GenCen has provided me with a place for that experience to occur. It is an interdisciplinary center working to advance gender, sexuality, critical race theory, indigenous studies and more," said Wentworth. "Remembering that we all have intersecting identities is important in how we operate within our world. Identities are important to how we live, work and play with one another. They are a part of who we are."

Wentworth advises students and faculty to use their identities to strengthen their work and partnerships going forward. Increasing awareness of structural issues like institutionalized racism, sexism and discrimination will help achieve balance in the workplace, research, partnerships and other aspects of life.

Wentworth also works on a project called the Flint Leverage Points project. "We try to build models that help community partners decide the ways in which they want to enact leverage points to improve the food system in Flint," she said.

Which is her favorite? "Asking what's my favorite research project is like asking who is your favorite child." Wentworth devotes so much heart, time and effort into these projects that it really is hard to choose one.

More information on the Flint project can be found at [canr.msu.edu/flintfood/](https://canr.msu.edu/flintfood/).



Chelsea Wentworth

## UNDERSTANDING THE IMPLICATIONS OF GENDERED DYNAMICS ON CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN THE DRC

AALAYNA GREEN, *Undergraduate Student*  
*Zoology and Women's & Gender Studies*

**An unapologetic scholar-activist,** Aalayna Green constantly connects her major in zoology and her passion in women's and gender studies through her research. Historically, there has been a huge disconnect between wildlife conservation and gender, but by exploring how gender is a factor in wildlife crime, Green is working to bridge that gap. With her faculty mentor, Meredith Gore, Green is currently researching the gendered dimensions of urban meat trafficking in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to understand the different roles men and women have in this setting, the meaning behind those differences, and implications for conservation efforts.

In the past, wild meat was mostly eaten in rural areas out of necessity; however, the industry has recently migrated to urban areas, with consumers choosing to buy and eat wild meat over farmed meat sources. The markets where wild meat is sold are sites of concern for conservationists due to the populations of wild animals being hunted to send to urban consumers, as well as disease risk. Putting many species that naturally live in different areas in close proximity in markets vastly increases potential for disease spread between the animals and from animals to humans.

Working with a Wildlife Conservation Society team on the ground in Kinshasa, the capital city of the DRC, Green and Gore analyzed data on the meat being sold and the people working with it. Green then translated the data into binary codes



Green and colleagues hiking in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



Aalayna Green

to compare how men and women are engaged in sourcing, handling species, and their roles in the market. Having wrapped up the project, she found that men and women have very different roles in the urban meat trafficking industry, such as handling different species. She also realized just how little we understand about the way gender and gender roles impact conservation and understands the need for more research.

*All of my work has some component of gender or women's empowerment in it...and anytime I try to drift away and look at something else I'm always drawn back to gender as my study focus and my study subject.*

With this project ending, Green is looking forward to continuing to explore the gendered dimensions of wildlife crime and conservation and potentially exploring non-binary gender-environment interactions in the future. By understanding how gender impacts relationships with the environment and conservation, Green thinks conservation can be more meaningful, more effective, and better connect with the communities being impacted. Green now attends Cornell University, pursuing a Ph.D. in Natural Resources. She knows gender and conservation will continue to be her focus. "All of my work has some component of gender or women's empowerment in it...and anytime I try to drift away and look at something else I'm always drawn back to gender as my study focus and my study subject," she said. ■



# WHAT IS GLOBAL REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE?

## A CROWDSOURCED CLASS PROJECT FROM WS491: SEMINAR IN REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

In the spring of 2021, 26 students—advanced undergraduate and graduate students—participated in an intensive, collaborative WS 491 special topics seminar on understanding and expanding reproductive justice. Led by BIPOC women, reproductive justice is a social justice movement fighting for the human right to have children, not have children, determine one’s own birthing options, and create the social, political, and economic conditions necessary for these rights to be guaranteed to all.

From the racist origins of gynecology outlined in *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology* to the staggering disparities in maternal health outcomes for Black women, reproductive justice as a tradition of scholarship and storytelling centers on the voices of women of color who have historically experienced reproductive and sexual injustice, and continue to do so today.

However, there’s work to be done in expanding reproductive justice, particularly for queer, trans, and intersex bodies, and for reproductive health and rights to be applied on a global scale. This is a daunting task—and one that even the icons of the reproductive justice movement, like Loretta J. Ross, approached with humility. As Ross and other members of the SisterStrong Women of Color Reproductive Health Collective put it: “The key benefits [of making connections between reproductive health in the U.S. and global women’s movements] will come from not what we offer women in other countries, but what we have to learn, specifically in the application of economic, social and cultural human rights to our organizing to address the issues faced here at home” (Ross, 2006).

“This mindset of humility—that we have so much to learn about the meaning of reproductive justice from others in different cultural and intersectional contexts—is how I approached the difficult pedagogical implications of having students work to expand reproductive justice on a global scale in our class,” explained WS 491’s instructor, Patrick Arnold.

The global reproductive justice project was the main collaborative product of the course, and involved dividing students into teams that were charged with researching and reporting

on reproductive justice within different global regions. Crucially, it was up to each team to then figure out how to divide their region, and how to define reproductive justice in a way that does not involve an imperialist, American-centric framework imposed on others. After looking at case studies as well as hearing from guest speakers—such as the medical scientist Parnian Kheirkhah who spoke to the class about understanding reproductive and maternal health outcomes in Iran—teams worked in Zoom breakout rooms over multiple class periods to define and then start to research questions such as: What would reproductive justice mean in, say, a South Asian context, and how do we center local voices in how we collect data to inform that research? In the following weeks, student teams then presented their collective findings.

“The hardest part about this project wasn’t actually giving the presentation, but all of the decisions we had to make as groups over how to approach it. From what countries and facets of reproductive justice we would cover to how to find sources that actually represented people’s experiences in their own cultural contexts, the process is where I learned the most,” shared student Ginny Lindberg.

In total, the class covered a half-dozen issues relevant to reproductive justice—from maternal health outcomes to sex education policy to access to abortion and contraception.

“I was incredibly impressed with how thoughtfully each team defined reproductive justice within their regional contexts—but what I was not expecting was just how incredibly thorough and well-researched their final products would be,” reflected Arnold.

The final collection of presentations resulted in a 191-page product covering 37 countries and using over 100 sources of research and data to inform these results. The complete document is available for download [gencen.msu.edu/ws491](https://gencen.msu.edu/ws491).

Crowd-sourcing this massive project, the WS 491 students epitomized GenCen’s focus on gender in global contexts and pushed the boundaries of your typical class project to create this snapshot of global reproductive justice.

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH VOTING & HEALTHCARE

VANESSA NAJJAR, *Undergraduate Student*

*Women's & Gender Studies and Human Biology  
MSU's 2020 Board of Trustees awardee*

**Classes and the rest** of the student experience have looked very different this year with everything online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but Vanessa Najjar didn't let that stop her from taking full advantage of her last semester at MSU. While wrapping up classes for her women's and gender studies major, her second major in human biology, and her minor in bioethics, Najjar was also a fellow with the Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP) ahead of the 2020 election and started an internship with the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS). She graduated in fall 2020, and is looking forward to beginning medical school at MSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine and continuing her work with LLS.

As a CEEP fellow, Najjar was part of the MSU Vote collaboration in fall 2020 doing non-partisan work to increase student voter engagement across the board. Young people have the power to decide elections but, as Vanessa explained, "people our age are the least likely to vote and then they graduate and go out into the world and are affected by things they didn't vote on." Voting and student engagement were both harder in 2020 with events pushed online and extra safety concerns at the polls. Navigating these challenges meant getting creative, Najjar explained, but she knows they made a real difference "empowering people to feel empowered to go into voting."

Najjar first starting doing voter engagement work because it was something very different than her other undergraduate experiences, but walked away understanding "how important it is to empower people to advocate for themselves" and she hopes to carry that into her future as a medical professional: "I hope to be an advocate for my patients but also helping them advocate for themselves with their vote."

After the 2020 U.S. presidential election, Najjar started an internship with the LLS focusing on health disparities and LGBTQ+ experiences with cancer and treatment. One of her main projects is Myeloma Link, working with trusted individuals and leaders in Black communities to distribute information about myeloma and the resources LLS offers. Black and African American individuals

are twice as likely to be diagnosed with myeloma but are less likely to have access to state of the art treatment. Working with Black community leaders like Baptist pastors in Detroit, Najjar and her team distribute information to those most affected, helping them catch myeloma earlier with potentially better outcomes. Najjar's other project focuses on cancer and relationships for adolescents and young adults and she's working to incorporate LGBTQ+ specific health into an event with panels of experts, patients, and survivors.

Najjar began medical school in June 2020. While she's not sure what specialty she wants to pursue, she's hoping to focus on LGBTQ+ health. The average time of hours in medical school focused on LGBTQ+ health is only five hours, something Najjar hopes to challenge.

"What I learned through all my classes and interacting with my peers and the work they are doing is: you don't need to accept things as they are...being a member of this degree has helped me feel empowered to take the situation I'm in and know there's things I can do about it."

Najjar's ultimate goal is to open a free clinic with health care specifically geared toward LGBTQ+ health, creating a safe space and "an office where they feel they are seen and heard." Najjar noted that LGBTQ+ people face dramatic health care disparities, and if their personal health care experiences aren't validating and affirming, it creates even more barriers to accessing care. As a health care professional, she hopes to work to create safe, affirming, affordable spaces to care and advocate for her patients. Najjar has known she wanted to study medicine, but her experience as a WGS major shaped her mission and her focus as a future health care provider: "I gained so much from my classes so I know that [my WGS experiences] will help me be a better physician in the future and help me care for the people I want to care for who are often overlooked...I learned more about the type of doctor I want to become through my WGS classes than my bio classes," said Najjar. ■



Vanessa Najjar



# CONGRATS 2020-2021

# GRADUATES

## SPRING 2021 GRADUATES

### WGS MAJORS

Jenna Bridgewater  
Simone Coverly  
Kristin Mertz  
Katie Paulot  
Samiksha Prakash  
Andala Yakubu

### WGS MINORS

Brianna Aiello  
Anitria Allen  
Madison Bartula  
Julia Bazner  
Priyanka Bhoopathi  
Cydni Bonds  
Nikebia Brown-Joseph  
Emma Burke  
Laura Catron  
Imani Cole  
Chloe Damon  
Erin Debono  
Mallory DeMott  
Gasana Ingabire Gasana  
Sarah Greenwald  
Julie Kiger  
Chelsea Lewis  
Brooke Maher  
Lauryn McDaniel  
Jake Nessel  
Deja Pittman  
Emily Schinker

Julia Sedatole  
Joan Sirigiri  
Jessica Sterna  
Bailey Tjolsen  
Amanda Tuttle  
Christopher Tyson  
Carson Yenchar  
Alice Beilfuss  
Samantha Berman  
Lauren Bowens  
Catana Brooks  
Lucy Ching  
Brandy Coates  
Mackensie Combs  
Olivia Dinkins  
Madeline Gattis  
Lauren Harris  
Ashley Highland  
Paige Iwata  
Caitlyn Jamieson  
Bella Jodzis  
Amy Kalaja  
Alyssa Kaminski  
Gabby Kindig  
Carolyn King  
Riley Kluck  
Joel Kotyk  
Patty Krause  
Rory McKelvey  
Kaylee Mullen  
Katlyn Nieman  
Delia Raymond  
Brittani Ricks  
Katie Root  
Morgan Sanford

Kayla Withers  
Erica Schaeffer  
Maddie Smith  
Emmerson Unger  
Jackelyn Wilhelm  
Emma Zichi

### LGBTQ MINORS

Alice Beilfuss  
Jenna Bridgewater  
Scott Fletcher  
Quinn Harrison  
Riley Johnson  
Maria Knott  
Kristin Mertz  
Abigale Mumby  
Samiksha Prakash  
Zoe Schultheiss  
Elisha Smith

### WGS GRAD SPECIALIZATIONS

Rachel Robinson  
Sapna Naik  
Morgan Pettyjohn

## WINTER 2020 GRADUATES

### WGS MAJORS

Vanessa Najjar  
Alyse Holt-Briggs

### WGS MINORS

Katrina Basel  
Tammi Cervantes  
Maryrosa Clark  
Gabe Feddema  
Casey Halas  
Cheyenne Jagers  
Kitae Jung  
Lance Kehr  
Maggie Lapointe  
Alexandra Lopez-Diaz  
Chenxi Lyu  
Alex Morales  
Brianna Muzzall  
Maryam Naeem  
Roselyn Schaefer  
Rachel Supanich-Goldner  
April Thompson  
Alex Weiss  
Emily Marsden Wiltz  
Aidan Winters

### LGBTQ STUDIES MINORS

Maryrosa Clark  
Sarah Vamvounis

# UNDERGRAD ALUMNA

## MEGAN HAVRILLA DEHOOG



**Megan Havrilla DeHoog, MSW**

*Education Manager for Western and Northern Michigan Planned Parenthood of Michigan*

**When Megan Havrilla DeHoog** first came to MSU's James Madison College, she intended to study political theory, but quickly discovered that wasn't a good fit for her. Her second semester courses were focused on social issues, such as race, socioeconomic status, gender, and sexual orientation, which were topics she was more passionate about. After declaring her major in social relations and policy, Megan decided to specialize in women's and gender studies.

"I found myself the most passionate about issues around gender, issues around orientation. When we would really dive into those subjects I was the most curious and the most engaged and the most passionate," she said. Because of the overlap with her SRP courses and her interest in the subject, Havrilla DeHoog was able to turn her specialization into a second degree.

During her time in the WGS program, one of Havrilla DeHoog's favorite courses was her capstone, Advanced Seminar in Women's & Gender Studies (WS 492). This course, taught by GenCen associated faculty Amy DeRogatis, focused on gender and religion. It intersected well with her curriculum from James Madison College while providing a different take on women's and gender studies since the realms of religion and culture aren't always discussed. Additionally, Havrilla DeHoog studied abroad in London, participating in the Gender, Sex, and Feminism in the UK program. She wanted to study abroad during her time at MSU and was excited to use this experience for WGS.

Havrilla DeHoog worked for a semester as an intern at the Women's Center of Greater Lansing, which provides counseling services and other resources for women in the Lansing area that are targeted

*I found myself the most passionate about issues around gender, issues around orientation. When we would really dive into those subjects I was the most curious and the most engaged and the most passionate.*



by discrimination and systematic disadvantages. While working at the WCGL's front desk, she was able to think more about what she wanted to do in the future by seeing what employees and staff were doing. Also assisting with fundraising and the center's professional clothes closet, this was her first experience seeing what she was learning in the classroom implemented in the real world.

"Seeing people coming in and needing different types of assistance and how different laws and policies and situations impacted their ability to get a job or to care for their children or to be in a healthy relationship, and to really be a part of that and experience that, and also being a part of an organization that not only recognized that but supported them was a really unique opportunity," said Havrilla DeHoog.

After graduating, Havrilla DeHoog worked as an adjunct professor at Gogebic Community College in Ironwood, Michigan, teaching both a freshmen orientation course and an online sociology course. Her experience teaching, coupled with her internship at the Women's Center of Greater Lansing, led her to pursue her master's of social work at the University of Minnesota, Duluth. As a part of her program, Havrilla DeHoog interned with Planned Parenthood, which sparked her interest because reproductive rights and advocacy were components of WGS to which she hadn't been exposed. This position allowed her to work in education, which consisted of working with high school students in sexual health, as well as advocacy and public policy. Havrilla DeHoog described her internship at Planned Parenthood as "Perfect—it combined everything I was excited about in women's and gender studies and social work, and allowed me to be more comfortable on the meso-and-macro-level issues." She realized in this internship that this was her path.



Currently, Havrilla DeHoog is working at Planned Parenthood as an education manager for West and Northern Michigan and focuses on both management and supporting educators across the state. Her primary duty is to deliver



comprehensive sex education programs to various community groups, generally working in schools and with young people, as well as hosting parent programs, providing medically accurate, non-judgmental, and sex-

positive curriculum. Additionally, Havrilla DeHoog works on programs centered around the opioid crisis, identifying the link between substance abuse and sexual health and helping individuals in high-risk counties stay in recovery and provide them with sexual health resources.

For Havrilla DeHoog, the most exciting part about her current position is working with young people to help them realize that sexual health is their right, and seeing them get excited about these topics. Although she's only with students for a short period of time, she is able to make a quick connection with them, and to ensure that they feel comfortable with the subjects being discussed. She particularly enjoys seeing her students grow—some students are uncomfortable in the beginning, but quickly become engaged as they lean into the discomfort. However, Havrilla DeHoog also encounters several challenges, particularly due to misconceptions about Planned Parenthood and sexual health. "Sex education law is not uniform, there are no national policies or laws and is instead a state-by-state process," Havrilla DeHoog said. "The information varies across districts so we work hard to ensure schools have some uniformity. Sex-ed law only requires HIV be taught in school, and across the nation, people are given different answers."

Havrilla DeHoog's education in WGS helped her understand the importance of the field she's working in, especially since she grew up in an area that didn't provide her comprehensive history. A sexual politics course (MC 388) provided her with history, and now that she has the knowledge and experience, she's seeing what she learned in the classroom play out every day. "The classes I took helped me to look at issues and subjects from all angles. They taught me to not take anything as a single issue, and has shown the importance of intersectionality for me and my students."

# GRAD ALUMNA

## DORI PYNNONEN HOPKINS



**Dori Pynnonen Hopkins** *Ph.D.,  
Evaluation Specialist, Center for Healthy Communities,  
Michigan Public Health Institute*

**Before beginning her career** at the Michigan Public Health Institute as an Evaluation Specialist, Dori Pynnonen Hopkins pursued her Ph.D. at Michigan State University in Forestry, with specializations in Gender, Justice and Environmental Change and International Development. Within forestry, she focused on the social science—related components in the field and studied issues related to gender and race.

Looking to complement her interests in social sciences and nature, Pynnonen Hopkins was excited to find the GJEC specialization. After one course, she was hooked and noted that the most impactful course she took was Gender, Justice and Environmental Change: Issues and Concepts.

“This course really showed how different ideas have evolved over time. We focused on concepts like ecofeminism, while drawing together the parallels between the environment and degradation and injustices that occur with people, including the oppression of women and racial minorities,” she said. “It changed the trajectory from just preservation, to show how these issues affect people.”

The GJEC specialization gave Pynnonen Hopkins an opportunity to work with GenCen core faculty, whom she found inspiring and has maintained in contact with after graduating. She developed a number of close relationships with those working for GenCen, and even worked for GenCen herself as an adjunct professor, teaching Introduction to Women’s & Gender Studies, Feminist Research Methods and co-teaching GJEC courses.

*So many organizations want to be better, and [studies centered around] gender, race, and the environment are needed more than ever.*

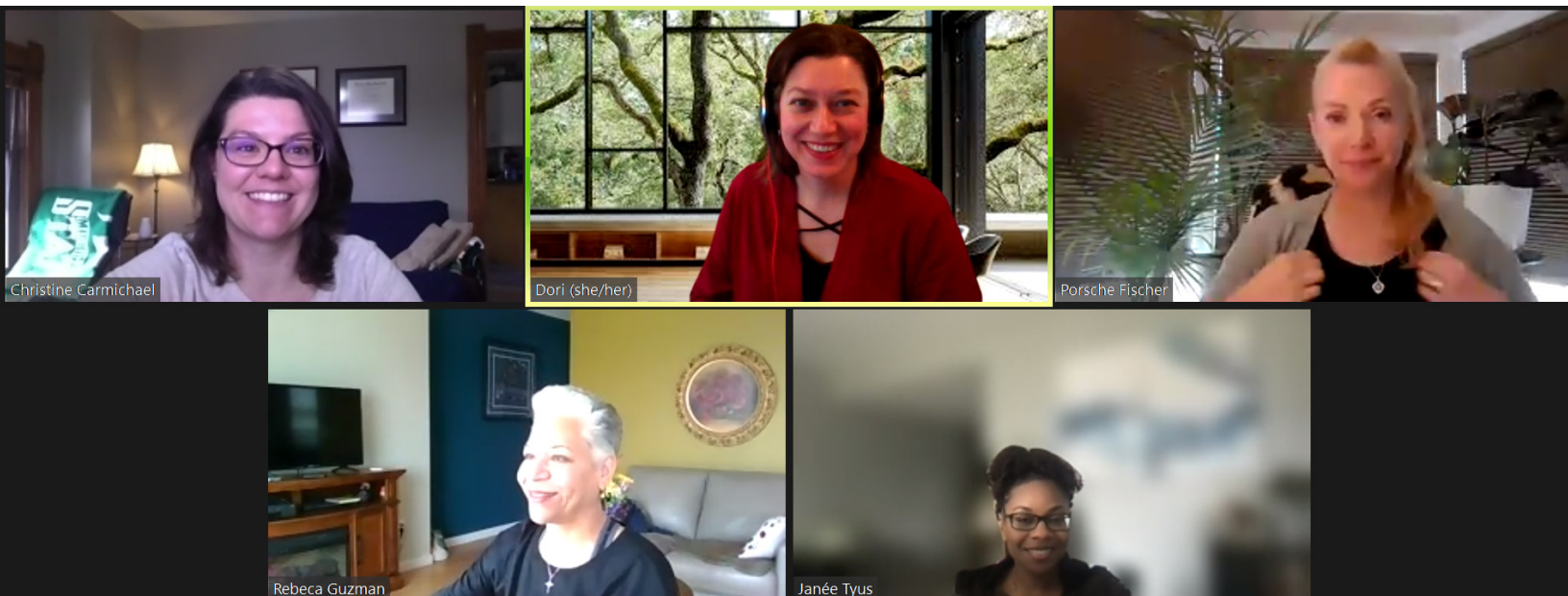


*You should find peers who have similar interests and who can support you through the job search. Just don't lose hope and focus on your interests.*

Working with the Michigan Public Health Institute, Pynnonen Hopkins's primary duties center around evaluation, including designing and conducting qualitative, quantitative, and community-based participatory research as well as assisting nonprofit organizations with grant opportunities to acquire funding. In the field of community health, she has worked on a number of unique projects, including developing a social norms campaign to address sexual violence in Michigan, rape prevention education initiatives, and programs for incarcerated youth fathers. Additionally, Pynnonen Hopkins has worked on racial equity and racial justice projects with members of Michigan's tribal communities, as well as environmental justice campaigns. These diverse projects have enabled Pynnonen Hopkins to apply what she learned through GenCen to her career, specifically a wide variety of research methods she was taught, demonstrating how to be emancipatory in research goals, as well as different methods can be helpful or harmful to marginalized communities.

Pynnonen Hopkins hopes to make a home for herself at the Michigan Public Health Institute. Currently, she is working to develop a program within the Center for Healthy Communities focused on climate change and environmental justice. Specifically, she's developing a curriculum to teach community health workers about climate change and how to better respond and address its impacts in the state.

When asked if she had any advice for those wishing to pursue a career in community health, Pynnonen Hopkins responded with "Be prepared to be the black sheep in any program you're in and accept that. You should find peers who have similar interests and who can support you through the job search. Just don't lose hope and focus on your interests. So many organizations want to be better, and [studies centered around] gender, race, and the environment are needed more than ever." ■



*Virtual meeting with members from the **Sexual Assault Prevention Action Team of Kent County** to discuss conducting a community-wide survey addressing social norms related to sexual violence to inform the county's prevention efforts and social norms messaging campaign.*

 *Dori Pynnonen Hopkins*

2020 - 2021

## AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

**Farha Abbasi • MSU Community Engagement***Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry*

Farha Abbasi, M.D. is an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Michigan State University and core faculty member of the Muslim Studies Program. Her areas of interest are cultural psychiatry and teaching medical students how to provide culturally appropriate care to Muslim patients. She is the founding director of the annual Muslim Mental Health Conference. Her recent awards include Mayor's Town Hero Award, and the APA Foundation Award for Advancing Minority Mental Health from the American Psychiatric Association.

***Favorite inspirational quote:*** "Shame, secrecy, silence buries you in stigma. Speak up, be seen, own your story." – Farha Abbasi

**Taylor Belyea • Undergraduate Student Leader***Social Relations and Policy and Women's & Gender Studies dual major*

Taylor Belyea is a junior studying social relations and policy as well as women's and gender studies. She is president of Planned Parenthood Generation Action and chapter head of The Roosevelt Institute, two progressive-oriented registered student organizations on MSU's campus. She has volunteered with and worked for a number of reproductive rights and gender equity focused nonprofits/organizations, including Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan, NARAL Pro-Choice America, Advocates for Youth, MSU's Prevention, Outreach and Education department, and GenGen.

***Favorite inspirational quote:*** "You have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the world. And you have to do it all the time." – Angela Davis

**Chelsie Boodoo • Graduate Student Leader***Biomedical Engineering Ph.D. student, Graduate Research Assistant, Host of The Sci-Files, President of MSU SciComm, Digital Content Creator for MSU Science Festival*

Chelsie Boodoo is a biomedical engineering Ph.D. student. She has collaborated in designing a welcoming environment that fosters all aspects of science communication in a dynamic way. Her passion for scicomm drives her to find unconventional and inspiring ways to mix science with the art of storytelling; this led her to be the founder and president of MSU SciComm. Chelsie co-hosts the award-winning show, The Sci-Files, with Daniel Puentes on Impact 89FM, where they explore various MSU student research topics. She also is the digital content creator for the MSU Science Festival.

***Favorite inspirational quote:*** "There are no limits to what you can accomplish, except the limits you place on your own thinking." – Brian Tracy





# INSPIRATION AWARDS

# 20/21

## Hui Liu • MSU Community Engagement

*Professor, Department of Sociology*



Hui (Cathy) Liu, professor of sociology and director of the Family and Population Health Laboratory, applies innovative quantitative methods to develop, test, and promote scientific understanding of the processes of marriage and family linked to population health and well-being. Her interests in marriage also extend to other marriage-like intimate relationships such as LGBTQ+ relationships and partnered sexuality. Her research, continuously funded by the National Institutes of Health, has been widely reported in prominent national and international news outlets.

***Favorite inspirational quote: "Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment." – Buddha***

## Beronda Montgomery • MSU Culture of Empowerment

*MSU Foundation Professor and Interim VP for Research and Innovation, PRL and Office of Research & Innovation*



Beronda Montgomery is a writer, science communicator, and Michigan State University Foundation Professor in the Departments of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology and of Microbiology & Molecular Genetics. She is also a member of the MSU-DOE Plant Research Laboratory. Her research group investigates how photosynthetic organisms adapt to changes in their environment. Her scholarship extends beyond biology and into studying mentorship and leadership to foster strategies to engender equity and inclusion in academia.

## Linda Vail • Mid-MI Community Engagement

*Health Officer, Ingham County Health Department*



Linda Vail oversees a diverse department of public health services, a network of community health centers with Federally Qualified Health Center status, and health care in the Ingham County Jail and Youth Center. Prior to joining Ingham County Health Department, she served in local government for nearly 12 years in Kalamazoo County where she became the first female health officer, serving in that role for over seven years. Linda has a master's in public administration with a public health concentration from Western Michigan University, and a bachelor's degree in microbiology, magna cum laude, from the University of Georgia.

***Favorite inspirational quote: "Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step." – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.***

20/21

# GENDER, JUSTICE & ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE FELLOWSHIPS



## Alaina Bur • GJEC Dissertation Research

*Department of Sociology & Environmental Science and Public Policy Program*

**Dissertation:** *Decentralized Water Management in West Pokot County's Up- and Downstream Villages*



## Laura Castro-Diaz • GJEC Dissertation Research

*Department of Community Sustainability*

**Dissertation:** *Social Impacts and Energy Injustices Generated by Hydroelectric Dams in the Global South*



## Noleen Chikowore • GJEC Dissertation Completion

*Department of Community Sustainability*

**Dissertation:** *Informal Recyclers' Livelihoods, The Role of Place and Waste Governance at Campus Football Tailgates in Michigan*



## Brian Geyer • GJEC Dissertation Research

*Department of Anthropology*

**Dissertation:** *Intersectional Identity Among Kenya's Technology Professionals*



## Abdoulie Jabang • GJEC Dissertation Research

*Department of History*

**Dissertation:** *Reproducing Environmental Inequalities: Power, Production, Gender, and Injustice in the Gambia, 1860-1980*



## Angela Manuel Manjichi • GJEC Dissertation Research

*Department of Community Sustainability*

**Dissertation:** *Addressing the Gender Gaps in Sustainable Land Management in Central Mozambique: Farmers' Behavior and Practices and the Role of Agriculture Extension*



# WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES FELLOWSHIPS

# 20/21



## Elizabeth Brannon • WGS Dissertation Research

*Department of Political Science*

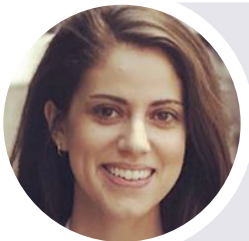
**Dissertation:** *The Role of Women in Former Rebel Parties*



## Briona Simone Jones • WGS Dissertation Completion

*Department of English*

**Dissertation:** *The Black Lesbian Has Decolonized Her Body*



## Inna Mirzoyan • WGS Dissertation Research

*Department of Sociology*

**Dissertation:** *Who is Armenia's "Second Army"? Armenian-American Diasporans and the Fight for Home Away From Home*



## Judith Namanya • WGS Dissertation Research

*Department of Geography, Environment, and Spatial Sciences*

**Dissertation:** *Gender and HIV/AIDS: Investigating Uganda's High HIV Infections Among Young Women in an Era of Widespread Gains in HIV Prevention and Treatments*



## Rachel Robinson • WGS Dissertation Completion

*Department of Writing, Rhetoric, & American Culture*

**Dissertation:** *'I've Fooled Them All!': Imposter Syndrome and the WPA*



## Chioma Uchefuna • WGS Dissertation Research

*Department of History*

**Dissertation:** *Undressed Soldiers, Embodied Dualities: Igbo Women, and the Making of Communities During the Nigeria-Biafra War, 1967-1970*



### Jacquelyn Adams

**RCGV Award for the Best Undergraduate Paper on Gender-Based Violence**  
*"Transwomen's Experience of Gender-Based Violence"*

**Future goals:** "Once I graduate from MSU with my B.S., I plan to continue my schooling. I haven't decided where I'd like to go to graduate school, but I do know that going is a necessary step in achieving my long-term goals. In the future I'd like to write novels. However, my main goal is to do what I can to help heal society."



### Taylor Belyea

**Tracy Dobson Award for Undergraduate Student Feminist Activism**  
*For her exemplary efforts as an advocate for the advancement of gender equity through safe, accessible reproductive health care*

**Future goals:** "Post-MSU, I plan to formally enter the nonprofit sector, likely reproductive rights and/or gender equity focused. I would like to move out of Michigan for at least a few years and live in a city where I can specifically work in national nonprofit management, organizing, or affiliate work."



### Chloé Damon

**Mary Anderson Award for the Best Undergraduate Paper on Women and Gender in Global Perspective**  
*"Gendered Nationalisms and Absolutism in Thailand: The Appointment and Dismissal of Sineenat Wongvajirapakdi"*

**Future goals:** "After graduation, I plan to begin applying to graduate programs in anthropology, with the intent of further pursuing research that focuses on the intersections of gender and environmental justice in the Mekong region."



### Anna Christina Martínez-Hume

**Rita S. Gallin Award for the Best Graduate Paper on Women and Gender in Global Perspective**  
*"'I've Lived It in My Own Flesh': Empowerment, Feminist Solidarity and NGO Worker Subjectivity in Maya Guatemala"*

**Future goals:** "Upon earning my Ph.D. in anthropology in May 2021, I intend to teach coursework in medical anthropology and Latin American studies and continue health focused qualitative and collaborative research with underserved communities. Expanding on my dissertation research, I plan to specifically explore the intersections between indigeneity, gender, and social solidarity frameworks in NGO health interventions for reducing chronic childhood malnutrition among Indigenous communities in Guatemala."



# SPECIAL THANKS

## COMMUNITY BOARD

### Fall 2020 - Summer 2021

Alternatives for Girls  
Capital Area Response Effort  
Capital Area Sexual Assault Response Team  
Child and Family Charities  
Equality Michigan  
Firecracker Foundation  
Greater Lansing Chapter of the  
United Nations Association of the USA  
Ingham County Women's Commission  
Lansing Area AIDS Network  
Lansing Association for Human Rights  
Michigan Coalition to End Domestic  
& Sexual Violence  
Michigan Women's Commission  
*(MI Department of Civil Rights)*  
Michigan Women Forward  
MSU Safe Place  
NorthWest Initiative  
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan  
Salus Center  
SIREN/Eaton Shelter  
South Asian Women's Association  
of Greater Lansing  
South Lansing Community Development  
Association  
Vote Run Lead  
Women's Center of Greater Lansing

## GENCEN STAFF

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Ginny Lindberg  
Katie Paulot  
Caryn Shannon  
Alison Shereda  
Ashley Strong  
Andala Yakubu

## INTERSECTIONS

### 2020-2021 Edition

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# GENCEN

## CENTER *for* GENDER *in* GLOBAL CONTEXT

The **Center for Gender in Global Context (GenCen)** serves as Michigan State University's hub for gender and sexuality research, teaching, and engagement with a global perspective. Our mission is to connect scholars, students, and community stakeholders with feminist knowledge to advance social change.

Our interdisciplinary research home is within International Studies and Programs, while our academic programs are housed primarily within the College of Arts & Letters. Working with these and other units across campus, we provide opportunities for active learning, including events, education abroad programs, research mentoring, and internships. These experiences deepen our constituency's understanding of gender relations, the cultural and material politics of place, and the relationships between global and local transformations in real-world contexts.



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