From an idea to an institution...evolving
Five years of the 'DEIS Impact Festival of Social Justice

From early meetings with Student Union President Herbie Rosen ’12 and Ethics Center staff in the summer of 2011...to Levin Ballroom packed to overflowing with students, community members and press attending keynote addresses by humanitarian and actor Eliza Dushku and her mother Judith Dushku, professor of politics at Suffolk University (2013) or Nelson Mandela’s grandsons Kweku Mandela-Amuah and Ndaba Mandela (2014)...to more than 40 events per year organized by students, staff, faculty, and community members....

With five years of Brandeis University’s “festival of social justice” in the books, and intense planning already underway for year six, we ask: How did this happen?

How did this idea, hashed out in conference rooms and coffee shops on campus, grow to become an institution that is an important part of the Brandeis journey for so many?

Key to the success of ‘DEIS Impact is collaboration: ‘DEIS Impact is a vital partnership between the Ethics Center and the undergraduate Student Union, bolstered by the commitment and innovation of the student organizing team, aka “the ‘DEIS Impacters.”

The ‘DEIS Impacters have transformed Brandeis University, and have been transformed in turn. “My interest in social justice organizing and activism stems from my time working on ‘DEIS Impact,” says Lindsay Mitnik ’16. “‘DEIS Impact helped me realize the power and potential we all have to make a positive difference in the world, and the role that organizing and educating one’s community can play.”

Before Heather Spector ’17, saw a business course on the schedule of ‘DEIS Impact College (open sessions of Brandeis classes held during the festival) it had never occurred to her that business and social justice could go together. “‘DEIS Impact College was the start of my deep exploration into corporate social responsibility, a field that combines these two interests. It opened up a whole new world of opportunity for me.”

In her introductory remarks at the 2016 ‘DEIS Impact keynote address, Provost Lisa Lynch, then interim president, highlighted the significance of ‘DEIS Impact for the Brandeis community...
Staff Highlights (January – June)

This spring David Briand conducted oral history interviews with retiring Brandeis faculty, for the Archives and Special Collections Department. Cynthia Cohen presented “Municipalities and the Prevention of Violence: The Contributions of Arts and Culture” at the International Studies Association in March in Atlanta. In April she spoke in Washington, DC on a panel, “Performance and Peace-building: Healing our Wounds,” organized in partnership with the Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics at Georgetown University, following a performance of the play “Falling Out of Time.” Marcia McPhee is directing a portion of the proceeds from her recent books – “Sunday Lessons and Activities for Kids” (2015) and “Girls’ Camp: Ideas for Today’s Leaders” (2016) – to support immigrant families at Waltham Family School. In March, Leigh Swigart presented a paper (“Diversity and the Global/Local Conundrum in International Criminal Justice”), at a University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law conference in honor of Linda Carter, longtime BIIJ co-director. Also in June, Swigart’s paper “International Justice in Africa: Defining Authority and Localizing the Global” was presented at the conference of the African Studies Association and the American Anthropological Association in Dakar, and Swigart presented “Diversity on the International Bench: the Case for Considering Language and Culture” at the Conference of the International Society of Public Law in Berlin. Daniel Terris will be based in Jerusalem as a U.S. Fulbright Scholar from August 2016 through June 2017. He will be teaching in and working on the development of the Master’s program in American Studies at Al-Quds University, a Palestinian institution on the West Bank.

Details: brandeis.edu/ethics/news. Daniel Terris chaired the organizing committee for “Louis D. Brandeis 100: Then and Now,” a series of events at Brandeis in spring 2016 that commemorated the nomination and confirmation of Louis D. Brandeis to the United States Supreme Court.

David Weinstein was also a part of the organizing committee. Their work was recognized by the Brandeis family with gifts to the Jacob H. and Susan Brandeis Gilbert Scholarship Fund. In April, David Weinstein was part of a Brandeis Admitted Students Day panel titled “Embracing our Legacy: Community Service, Social Justice, and Student Activism at Brandeis.” In July he joined a panel of Brandeis colleagues to speak with high school students visiting from China about campus life.

Challenges, Surprises, Observations, Inspiration: The 2016 Sorensen Fellows Intern Across the Globe

The 19th cohort of Sorensen Fellows – Jennifer Almodovar ’18, Marcelo Brociner ’18, Jake Greenberg ’18, Yael Sammi Jaffe ’18, Brandon F. Tran ’18, and Sophia Warren ’18 – scattered across the globe for their summer internships. Their experiences in Boston, Hanoi, Jerusalem, New Delhi and New York State were challenging, surprising – and even inspiring.

More about the 2016 Sorensen Fellowship internships, including pictures and thoughts from the Fellows’ summer reports from the field: brandeis.edu/ethics/news/2016/July.29.html

Pictured: Tran (3rd from left) with “those who were working in the kitchen [of the temple]…. We took breaks and had fun in our own ways,” he writes.
Faculty fellows from 15 states come to Brandeis to support “Laboratories of Democracy”

Is government dysfunctional? Can change come through the legislative process? Brandeis University namesake Louis D. Brandeis suggested that the states can be “laboratories of democracy.” ENACT: The Educational Network for Active Civic Transformation takes inspiration in part from that idea.

On May 22nd, just hours after Brandeis University’s 65th commencement, the Ethics Center welcomed the inaugural cohort of 15 ENACT Faculty Fellows to Brandeis. At the core of ENACT are the courses these Fellows are teaching beginning this fall at colleges and universities across the country, modeled on ENACT Academic Program Director Melissa Stimell’s course “Advocacy for Policy Change” (LGLS 161b).

Students in ENACT courses learn how to work with community organizations, state legislators and legislative staff members to advance policy. The five-day workshop was designed to support their development and teaching of these courses, as well as their participation in the national ENACT network. The Fellows discussed the challenges and opportunities of this work, and shared their own expertise.

“The most enriching part of the ENACT Institute was connecting with like-minded scholars and educators from throughout the country, learning about the innovative ways they are working with students to initiate and affect policy change in their respective states,” says Robert Glover, Assistant Professor of Honors and Political Science at the University of Maine.

Institute sessions featured Brandeis faculty, professionals from advocacy organizations, and students from Prof. Stimell’s course. The Fellows also spent a day at the Massachusetts State House, where they met with legislators and legislative staff, consulted with State Representative Jay Kaufman ’68, MA ’73, a longtime supporter of ENACT who serves as Distinguished Legislator for the program and recently joined the Center’s Board (see p.8) – and were officially recognized from the House floor by the Speaker while the legislature was in session.

“It was inspiring to hear legislator and activist perspectives on the policymaking process – what works, what doesn’t, and how important it is to be an active citizen,” adds Katharine Owens, Associate Professor in the Department of Politics, Economics, and International Studies at the University of Hartford, and Director of the Environmental Studies Program.

“ENACT taught me how to infuse my courses with lessons to effectively engage my students on the state policy issues that are most important to them.”

“Too many students (and citizens) fail to recognize the ways in which our federal system works, and the impact of state and local policy on their lives,” notes Sheila Suess Kennedy, Professor of Law and Public Policy at the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, where she directs the IUPUI Center for Civic Literacy. “The focus on state-level legislation is a necessary corrective to public affairs curricula that tend to emphasize either municipal or federal policy, and to ignore or shortchange state-level legislative issues.”

ENACT is made possible by a generous gift from Ethics Center Board member Norbert Weissberg and his wife, former Board member Judith Schneider. The program is also supported by the Rice Family Foundation.

For more about ENACT and to sign up for updates: go.brandeis.edu/ENACT
FROM THE ACTING DIRECTOR

Ethics of Reciprocity

continued from page 1

This power can be marshaled toward nefarious ends, for sure. However, the arts can be crafted to engage people in constructing meaning from complex realities and to counter polarized discourses with appreciation for nuance and paradox. They create platforms for exchange of ideas across cultures, continents and perspectives. They offer unparalleled resources for addressing unresolved legacies of past violence.

We recommitted ourselves to strengthening infrastructure for the field of arts and social change. We need to document effective practices and synthesize learning, and we need spaces to reflect together on ethical dilemmas. We need to construct ongoing conversations with issue experts and policymakers as well as other artists, to develop strategies that engage the aesthetic, affective and transformative power of our work to full effect. In this regard, Brandeis and the Ethics Center will continue to offer leadership.

We came to see the field as an ecosystem, an interdependent web of artists, scholars, practitioners, policymakers and funders. To address global challenges, we must cooperate better across roles, subverting hierarchies with an ethics of reciprocity.

As the global community demands innovative sources of resilience, our Brandeis University community is grappling more affirmatively with issues of race. On both fronts, the Center’s commitment to social justice and our engagements in international law, the arts, civic engagement and leadership development position us to convene significant conversations and facilitate collaborations across disciplines, worldviews and generations.

The Ethics Center, founded in 1998, enters its third decade in 2018. These considerations will be among those that inform our priorities as we approach this milestone and look beyond.

‘DEIS IMPACT—continued from page 1

“Social Justice is Brandeis University’s school sport!” – Amanda Dryer ’13 (second from right, pictured with her fellow 2013 ‘DEIS Impacters, Brandeis staff, and keynote speakers Eliza and Judith Dushku)

Counting on Social Justice

• Number of Years of ‘DEIS Impact: 5, going on 6
• Number of ‘DEIS Impacters (2012-2016): 57
• Number of ‘DEIS Impact events 2012-2016): 214
• Number of ‘DEIS Impact College classes since 2014: 25
• Number of co-sponsoring academic departments, student clubs and individuals: 223
• Number of ‘DEIS Impact participants (2012-2016): 11,289+

White & Jewish: Autobiography of a Shifting Self and many other works, will headline the festival. (See p. 7 for details.) After that? It is up to you: ‘DEIS Impact is still evolving!

‘DEIS Impact is a collaboration between the Brandeis Undergraduate Student Union and the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life, with support from the Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice.

Videos, photos, details and event proposal deadlines: go.brandeis.edu/DEISimpact
Bystanders, Upstanders, and Justice – Martha Minow

The 2015-16 Joseph B. and Toby Gittler Prize, which honors contributions to racial, ethnic or religious relations, was awarded to Harvard Law School Dean Martha Minow. In February she spoke about “Bystanders, Upstanders, and Justice,” in an award lecture that was also part of the Louis D. Brandeis 100: Then and Now Centennial Celebration series. Students from Harvard Law School and Brandeis, including students from the Ford Hall 2015 movement, protested during the event to focus attention and awareness on the ongoing movements at both schools to address concerns of students of color. The following is an excerpt from Martha Minow’s lecture. Video of the full lecture and an interview with Martha Minow are online: brandeis.edu/gittlerprize/videos

“What does it mean to stand up against injustice? What does it take to engage in risks? What does it take to produce effective – effective – change? Believe it or not, a good place to start is identifying and remedying gaps in vocabulary. Gaps in vocabulary are clues to structural problems. When we lack words, we lack tools for perception and for change. Consider the absence, historically, of a word for the opposite of bystander – that means a person that is near but does not take part in what is happening. English has long lacked a word for the opposite of bystander, but recently, people have invented its opposite: “upstander.” It gives recognition and approval to people who stand up against injustice, oppression and danger to others or jeopardize to crucial values.... An upstander can speak out publicly or engage through existing political processes or violate the law. An upstander can be a whistleblower who exposes wrongdoing in the hope of stopping it. And upstanders may offer support directly to victims of bigotry and injustice. Such acts expose upstanders to danger and discomfort. So why does anybody ever stand up? What personal qualities and what contexts make it possible?”

A Cursory Sermon on Art and the City – Theaster Gates

“Theaster Gates, award-winning artist, urbanist and facilitator whose projects act as catalysts for social engagement that leads to political and spatial change, was the 2015-16 Fred and Rita Richman Distinguished Fellow in Public Life. The fellowship recognizes individuals active in public life whose contributions have had a significant impact on improving American society, strengthening democratic institutions, advancing social justice or increasing opportunities for all citizens. In his award lecture, “A Cursory Sermon on Art and the City,” Gates sang gospel tunes, offered wry humor and shared profound reflections, against a backdrop of projected images. In the excerpt below he discusses one of his works. Video of the full lecture and an interview with Theaster Gates are online: brandeis.edu/richman/videos

“My hope is that these abstractions... actually...land as hyper-tangible moments, like a hardware store goes out of business. Why does the hardware store go out of business? Home Depot. What do you do with an amazing hardware store that's not really about glue traps and keys made and lottery tickets? It's really that there's one more place on the block where people can come and say ‘what's up’ to each other, where they can drop off their keys because they know the hardware store man is going to be there, and their baby know they can get their keys at 3:30 because...there is no community center, there is no nursery, and there is no after school arts program. And so when the hardware store goes away, not only can you not get glue traps...all these other things start to fall away. And so when you talk about the erosion of an African-American neighborhood and other neighborhoods, what we call a kind of re-entry of the white gentry, it’s like all right, I’m super excited that I, too, can eat at the local sushi bar. It’s cool. But if the sushi bar is constantly replacing the True Value hardware stores, then the urban fabric starts to look really boring.”

The first episode of the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts podcast series “Arts for Life: African Voices,” features songs, stories and poetry composed and performed by Gcina Mhlophe, the South African storyteller, author and anti-apartheid activist, along with commentary from Kim Berman, Associate Professor at the University of Johannesburg and the co-founder and Executive Director of Artist Proof Studio.

The host is Kitche Magak, head of the department of literary studies at Maseno University in Kenya, who co-produced this series with the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts. The episode was edited by David Briand of the Ethics Center, who also composed and performed the music.

“Arts for Life: African Voices” grew out of “Being Human Today: The Theory and Practice of Social Transformation through the Arts,” a Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies colloquium abroad, convened at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study in 2015 by Berman, University of British Columbia law professor Michelle LeBaron, Magak, and Director of the Ethics Center’s Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts Cynthia Cohen.

Listen online and sign up to be notified of new episodes: brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/arts-for-life

The Role of Municipalities in Violence Prevention

What are the drivers of violent conflict at the level of the municipality? How are arts-based and cultural resources engaged to prevent violence and ameliorate its effects? What can we learn from exploring these questions in our own backyard, here in the greater Boston area?

These are the questions that animate the participation of the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts (PBA) in City Responsibility: The Role of Municipalities in Violence Prevention, a research project based in the Hague Institute for Global Justice.

Last spring Cynthia Cohen presented “Municipalities and the Prevention of Violence: The Contributions of Arts and Culture” at the International Studies Association meeting in Atlanta. The paper identifies how arts and cultural activities can be crafted to minimize dangers of violence associated with various conditions that give rise to violence, such as injustice, migration to urban areas, poverty, unaddressed legacies of past violence, and alienation. It includes 13 case studies and examples from Cambodia, Canada, India, Kenya, Northern Ireland, Peru, South Africa, Sri Lanka and the United States.

Meanwhile, students in the Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation (CAST) minor at Brandeis explored the contributions of the arts to the prevention of violence in Boston and Waltham in a design lab featuring artists, community organizers, and leaders from government and non-profits. Visitors to the class included Amy Merrill ’69 and Robbie McCauley, who described their project Body and Sold which addresses sex trafficking through readings and conversations; and groundbreaking visual artists Theaster Gates and Rick Lowe, who described their work in Chicago and Houston, respectively. (See page 5 for more about Gates’ visit to Brandeis.)

More about the Municipalities Project: go.brandeis.edu/municipalities

Interested in the Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation (CAST) Minor? go.brandeis.edu/CAST
The Authority of International Courts and Tribunals: Challenges and Prospects

Judges serving on 12 international courts and tribunals met in Copenhagen in June for the 11th session of the Brandeis Institute for International Judges (BIIJ). This small and confidential judicial event, unique in the world of international justice, was an institutional partnership between the Ethics Center and iCourts, the Danish National Research Foundation’s Centre of Excellence for International Courts at the University of Copenhagen, Faculty of Law.

BIIJ 2016 explored the nature of the authority of international courts and tribunals, the various challenges this authority may face in different types of jurisdictions, and the ways judicial institutions might enhance their authority in the eyes of constituents, parties and the public.

“I really learned a lot,” remarked Judge András Sajó of the European Court of Human Rights during the closing session of the Institute. “[I]t was a great support emotionally for me to hear that judges in other institutions face similar problems.”

World Trade Organization Appellate Body member Ujal Bhatia echoed these sentiments, acknowledging the value of this opportunity to “meet with brother and sister judges and hear their points of view on issues of mutual interest.”

The Institute ended with insightful commentary on “The Role of International Courts in Combating Terrorism and Ensuring Peace” – a topic current events render ever more critical to global well-being – by Judge David Baragwanath of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, University of Copenhagen Professor Jens Elo Rytter and former United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs Hans Corell.

### Highlights of Recent Events

**FEBRUARY**

Ellen Elias-Bursac spoke about her work as a former translator/reviser at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Cosponsored by the Undergraduate Program in Comparative Literature and Culture and the MA in Comparative Humanities.

Martha Minow accepted the Gittler Prize. (See page 5.)

**MARCH**

Brandeis presented a series of events throughout the spring to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Louis D. Brandeis’ appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court. (See brandeis.edu/ldb-100.)

Poet Miles Hodges performed with Brandeis students, and discussed Black identity in the era of the Black Lives Matter Movement. Cosponsored by the Brandeis Black Student Organization, CAST, the Office of the Dean of Student Life, the Brandeis Pluralism Alliance, and the Student Union.

**APRIL**

Karima Bennoune, author of “Your Fatwa Does Not Apply Here: Untold Stories from the Fight Against Muslim Fundamentalism” delivered the Markowicz Memorial Lecture on Gender and Human Rights.

**MAY**

The first ENACT Institute took place at Brandeis. (See page 3.)

**JUNE**

The 11th Brandeis Institute for International Judges convened in Denmark. (See above.)

**JULY**


**COMING SOON**

‘DEIS Impact 2017:
January 26 – February 5, 2017
Get involved! Propose an event!
Details, deadlines and free tickets: go.brandeis.edu/DEISimpact

Save the date:
‘DEIS Impact Keynote: Rebecca Walker
Tuesday, January 31, 2017, 7:30 pm
Shapiro Campus Center Theater
Founder of the Third Wave Fund for Social Justice and bestselling author of Black White & Jewish: Autobiography of a Shifting Self and many other works, she brings two decades of experience, insight, and innovation to the global conversation about identity, culture and power.

Interested in Ethics Center Cosponsorship? See: brandeis.edu/ethics/events/cosponsorship

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Photo: David Fenton
NEW TO THE INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

The Center welcomes new Board members Germaine Ingram, Jay Kaufman ’68, MA ’73, Ángela María Pérez Mejía and Elaine Reuben ’63.

Germaine Ingram (Philadelphia, Penn.) is a jazz tap dancer, choreographer, songwriter, and vocal and dance improviser. She practiced law for 30 years before becoming a full-time artist. As a faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania Law school she founded a clinical program that provided free representation for children and youth. Ingram was the keynote speaker for the Center’s 2016 ’DEIS Impact festival of social justice.

Jay R. Kaufman ’68, MA ’73 (Lexington, Mass.) has served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives since 1995. He currently chairs the Legislature’s Committee on Revenue and is leading the charge for a major reform of state and local taxes. He serves as the Distinguished Legislator for the Ethics Center’s new national program, ENACT: The Educational Network for Active Civic Transformation.

Ángela María Pérez Mejía (Bogotá, Colombia) is Chief Cultural Manager of Banco de la República, Colombia’s central bank, which has a network of 28 cultural facilities. Pérez Mejía was an associate professor of Latin American literature at Brandeis for 10 years. She has published on travel writing, buccaneers in the Caribbean, gender in Latin American literature, and cultural management.

Elaine Reuben ’63 (Washington, D.C.) is an engaged philanthropist and former activist academic. She has been a leader in the development of women’s studies and affirmative attention to women faculty and students. Reuben has taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and at The George Washington University Graduate School, where she was faculty director of women’s studies. Reuben is an adviser to and supporter of the Ethics Center’s Peacebuilding and the Arts programs.

Full bios of entire Board: brandeis.edu/ethics/about/board.html

Coming January 26 – February 5, 2017: ’DEIS Impact!
See page 7 for details of the Festival of Social Justice