

Brandeis

# Heller

{ A MAGAZINE FOR THE  
HELLER SCHOOL FOR  
SOCIAL POLICY AND  
MANAGEMENT }

HR 83 MOBILIZING AGAINST SANCTUARY CITIES BILL

HR 370 REPEAL AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

HJR 69 REPEAL RULE PROTECTING WILDLIFE

EO BUY AMERICAN AND HIRE AMERICAN

HR 861 TERMINATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

HR 785 NATIONAL RIGHT TO WORK

# IN THE AGE OF TRUMP

HR 83 MOBILIZING AGAINST SANCTUARY CITIES BILL

HR 802 RESOLUTIONS AGAINST IRAN

EO VOUCHERS FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

EO BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT IMPROVEMENTS

HR 354 DEFUND PLANNED PARENTHOOD

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## Heller Magazine

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# Heller

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## FROM THE DEAN }

Dear Friends,

Our work at the Heller School has been deeply impacted by the 2016 presidential election, which profoundly shifted the country's public policy priorities and contributed to rising polarization and nationalism in the United States, Western Europe and elsewhere. The agenda of the Trump presidential administration has inspired many of our



students and faculty members to explore the resulting tensions in our respective fields. This issue of Heller Magazine presents some of these reflections in the cover story, "In the Age of Trump."

Over Heller's 58-year history, international students and global policy issues have become an increasingly integral part of our school. Today, we welcome students from over 60 countries and count alumni and friends in nearly every corner of the planet. As we embrace the interconnectedness of today's social policy framework, we have come to realize that perhaps the world is not so big after all. It is both comforting and exciting to watch our school's network broaden and strengthen on a global scale. To know that Heller has a presence in so many different places gives me sincere joy, and I consider it a great strength of the school.

This May, we are proud to graduate over 240 master's and PhD students. We are confident they will go on to do

amazing things in the U.S. and abroad. While the future of global politics may seem uncertain, I hope that our newest Heller alumni members feel secure in their abilities, in the tools they've gained here, and in their ability to forge connections and foster informed social justice initiatives wherever they go.

It is with this sense of continued hope and pride that I end my tenure as interim dean. When I returned to the Heller School in November 2014 to join the school's leadership, it felt like a homecoming. I have loved being part of the daily life here for the past two and a half years and have enjoyed working with the faculty, staff, students, alumni and Board of Overseers. Heller will always be a treasured place for me, as I hope it is for you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marty Wyngaarden Krauss". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Marty Wyngaarden Krauss, PhD'81

# \$3 MILLION GRANT WILL SUPPORT MAJOR EXPANSION OF DIVERSITYDATA KIDS.ORG

BY MAX PEARLSTEIN '01

The Institute for Child, Youth and Family Policy (ICYFP) at Heller has been awarded a \$3.07 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to build the next generation of diversitydatakids.org, its pioneering research project to monitor and analyze whether children of all racial/ethnic groups have adequate and equitable opportunities for healthy development.

The grant will allow the ICYFP team to deepen their work in five areas: (1) significantly expanding their innovative

database, which feeds all policy research work; (2) developing new equity-focused analysis to highlight the state of well-being and equity among U.S. children; (3) updating their signature indicators, including the Child Opportunity Index (<http://bit.ly/COIndex>); (4) enhancing their data storytelling and visualization capacity to improve the reach of their analysis; and (5) increasing the project's impact through targeted outreach and dissemination efforts.

“Our overarching objective is to inject actionable, equity-focused data, analysis and research evidence into the narratives and policy decisions that affect U.S. children, from the national to the neighborhood level,” says ICYFP Director Dolores Acevedo-Garcia.

While the public and policymakers have access to increasing amounts of data, Acevedo-Garcia says local leaders often lack the resources to generate policy analyses from the vast information that surrounds them. Diversitydatakids.org directly addresses the widespread need for more accessible, usable information on issues of child equity, and the need for a centralized information system that monitors progress and holds decision makers accountable.

The current version of diversitydatakids.org, which was built over seven years, offers multi-layered indicators to illuminate the structural factors that impact child well-being and equity (such as residential segregation). In addition, its unique, racial-equity policy indicators (for example, parental eligibility for medical and family leave) highlight the gaps in access and quality of programs that influence children and their families.

The data tool has been used by both academic and practitioner research groups across the country, including teams from Boston Medical Center's Vital Village Network, Cincinnati Children's Hospital and the Chicago Department of Public Health.

“Receiving this grant from the Kellogg Foundation represents a recognition of the increasing impact and visibility of our work, as well as of its potential to keep informing academic and policy research about racial/ethnic equity among



DOLORES ACEVEDO-GARCIA





PAUL GROGAN



MARK BRIMHALL-VARGAS

children,” Acevedo-Garcia says. “In the present national climate, we feel particularly energized and compelled to fulfill our mission. We have always shared with the Kellogg Foundation a commitment to highlight the great value of our country’s increasing diversity and our collective responsibility to offer opportunities to all children.”

## BRANDEIS APPOINTS FIRST CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER

BY **ALEXANDRA RUBINGTON**

Mark Brimhall-Vargas began his work as Brandeis’ first chief diversity officer (CDO) and vice president for diversity, equity and inclusion on Jan. 11, 2017. The purpose of this newly created position, which reports directly to Brandeis President Ron Liebowitz, is to elevate and accelerate the university’s 21st-century vision for inclusive excellence. The university launched its Reaffirming and Accelerating Brandeis’ Commitment to Diversity, Inclusion and Racial Justice plan, of which the creation of the CDO position was one of the initiatives, in the wake of the 2015 Ford Hall protests.

Brimhall-Vargas has spent nearly two decades advancing diversity, equity and inclusion at universities over the course of his career. Prior to coming to Brandeis, he served as CDO and associate provost at Tufts University, where he had primary responsibility for the implementation of that university’s 2013 President’s Diversity Report. Previously, he served for 17 years in various diversity management positions at the University of Maryland, College Park, including as deputy CDO.

Brimhall-Vargas was formally introduced to the Heller community at the school’s Feb. 8 Town Hall meeting. The position of CDO in higher education, he said at the meeting, is necessary because “everyone in an organization who thinks about diversity probably already has a day job. You

need a dedicated person to think about systems and goals.” Addressing the Town Hall’s theme of safety, particularly in the wake of President Trump’s executive order temporarily banning immigrants and refugees from seven predominantly Muslim countries, Brimhall-Vargas said, “No matter your politics, the issue of safety is very real. Spaces we thought were safe are not. People we thought would support us are ambiguous.”

Though Brimhall-Vargas is new to the campus, he is already addressing a number of projects, including reinvigoration of the DEIS Diversity Committee; expanding academic support options for those students who are not currently served by existing programs; creating a trainer cohort to deliver diversity-related trainings; and the creation of a diversity dashboard to provide transparency around the accomplishments (and setbacks) of the institution.

## HELLER WELCOMES PRESIDENT OF THE BOSTON FOUNDATION

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BY **BETHANY ROMANO, MBA'17**

The Heller MBA program’s 2017 Distinguished Management Lecture featured Paul Grogan, president of the Boston Foundation (TBF). TBF is the oldest and largest community foundation in the United States, with a key focus on supporting education, health and youth violence prevention in the Boston area. Last year, TBF celebrated its 100th anniversary and granted over \$135 million to projects that support Boston residents and communities.

In her introduction, MBA Program Director Carole Carlson called Grogan “a truly disruptive thinker.” Grogan’s lecture spanned the history of community philanthropy in the U.S. and covered a wide array of strategic priorities for TBF and other foundations today.

He noted that some of these priorities, including an emphasis on supporting immigrant communities in Boston, are under heightened consideration given the priorities of the Trump administration.

Grogan quoted Louis D. Brandeis, who once said, “States are the laboratories of democracy.” Grogan then amended it, noting, “Actually, I believe now it’s the cities that are the laboratories. Urban life has been revalued in recent decades. This change, especially among young people, is profound and I believe long-lasting.”

He cited Boston’s recent renaissance, noting that in the 1970s, Detroit was the wealthiest city per capita in the country, and Boston was in steep decline. Grogan attributes much of the city’s turnaround to public-private partnerships and the city’s willingness to invest in social entrepreneurship startups.

“Progressive local development and partnerships can accomplish stupendous things,” said Grogan, who at the beginning of his career worked for 10 years in Boston Mayor Kevin White’s administration. Of his own career, Grogan emphasized the role of luck in shaping his professional trajectory, advising MBA students in the audience to “consider what’s possible even under unlikely circumstances, at the intersection of luck and intention.”

TBF regularly funds and advises young social entrepreneurs with innovative ideas. The success of such organizations as City Year, Jumpstart and Year Up has turned Boston into a hotbed of social innovation. While philanthropy has been crucial in supporting and building programs like these, Grogan hopes for the success of experimental new funding models, such as “pay for success,” in which public savings that result from a successful social program are partially reinvested into the nonprofit ventures themselves. With innovative community foundations like TBF in support of these models, Boston residents can hope to see innovative social programs grow to scale even more quickly.





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OF TRUMP



FACULTY FROM HELLER'S ACADEMIC PROGRAMS RESPOND TO THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY AGENDA

HR 861 TERMINATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

HJR 69 REPEAL RULE PROTECTING WILDLIFE



**DONALD TRUMP'S ASCENDANCE TO THE WHITE HOUSE HAS SIGNALLED A SEA CHANGE IN MANY OF THE SOCIAL POLICY AREAS TO WHICH FACULTY, RESEARCHERS AND STUDENTS AT HELLER DEVOTE THEIR CAREERS. FROM HEALTH CARE TO BUSINESS ETHICS, TO INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CONFLICT MEDIATION, THE PRESIDENT'S PRIORITIES IMPACT OUR COMMUNITY ON ACADEMIC, PROFESSIONAL, EDUCATIONAL AND PERSONAL LEVELS. IN THIS SERIES, A FACULTY MEMBER FROM EACH PROGRAM PREDICTS HOW HIS OR HER FIELD IS LIKELY TO RESPOND AND REACT TO THE AGE OF TRUMP.**

**BY BETHANY ROMANO, MBA'17**

## FOSTERING TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP AND PEACEFUL PLURALITY

BY MARI FITZDUFF, PROFESSOR AND FOUNDING  
DIRECTOR OF THE MA IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION  
AND COEXISTENCE PROGRAM

Coexistence programs are all geared toward managing groups of people with differing values or aspirations, and helping them to manage such differences in a productive, positive way. Unfortunately, from what we can observe thus far, President Trump doesn't seem concerned about serving all of his people and their needs. Rather, he seems interested in delivering on campaign promises solely for those who voted for him.

In our field, this kind of leader is called transactional — a leader who takes pride in only delivering for his followers, and forgetting about, or debasing, the needs of other groups. What we rarely see enough of are transformative leaders — those who, when elected, can embrace the needs of all of their people, not just one segment of the population. Understanding how to develop and foster such leadership is critical for our students in the many conflicts in which they work around the world.

In the U.S., political and value differences have widened over the past few years, accelerating with Trump's divisive campaign, and continuing into what looks likely to be a very contentious presidency. Our students are trained to develop and facilitate the kinds of local and national dialogues that are needed in the U.S. and in many situations where our graduates work, both internationally and locally. These students learn to do the important work of identifying who feels left out in a society, and why. We look at inequalities and the tensions they create, and how easily differing identity groups can come to fear and hate each other. We train our students to both understand and ameliorate these social and value differences.

Increasingly, all societies are becoming more diverse due to immigration, economic relocation, or more and more

through refugees. How we manage these differences is critical everywhere. In many cases, it is the mismanagement of such a plurality that leads to conflict. Learning to manage and mediate the fear associated with these rapid changes is an essential skill of our present reality, and one that too few people possess. As our world continues to grow and change, we need more professionals who can manage the kinds of difficult conversations we're struggling with here in the U.S.

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## THE BUSINESS BACKLASH

BY MICHAEL APPELL, MA'79, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF  
THE MBA IN NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

American businesses — in the name of their profits, their reputations and their desire to operate in healthy communities — could turn the tide on President Trump. We can already see the telltale signs of a shift in the business sector that could ultimately remove him from power.

Too often business is cited only for its negative influences. Because it is evolving slowly and out of sight of the media, business activity is not getting the attention it deserves. The “business backlash” is a slow-speed revolution that will not be televised. Here are some reasons why business will dump Trump and lead to his eventual demise:

*Surprises* — Big or little, business (and the stock market) dislikes surprises. Donald Trump is the king of surprises. Don't expect markets to stick with him if they can't see clearly down the road.

*Regulation* — Markets rose on the hope that regulations would be eased. Now it is clear that, as in all matters regulatory, the devil is in the details. Trump is not a details guy.

*Sustainability* — The business case for sustainability has been made countless times. Simply put, sustainable products, services and business strategies often lead to greater corporate profitability.



*Trade* — Most successful American companies view themselves as global corporations. A tariff-based economy or a “Wild West” trade scenario would crush everything they have spent decades building.

*Transparency* — American companies around the world base their decisions on data from government and related sources. They won’t accept information blackouts and poor reporting forever.

*Human Capital* — Companies need a truly diverse workforce to be competitive, and shareholders and stockholders alike want them to stand up for principles that lead to greater inclusion.

*Science Is Real* — Business depends on government to fund and promote robust science and technology endeavors. A government that denies the importance of science or seeks to truncate its work will not be tolerated for long.

*Business Gets Globalization* — Companies understand that we live in a world that is not only interconnected but also tightly interdependent. Markets will fight back against efforts to stifle global networks.

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## WHY YOU SHOULD STUDY PUBLIC POLICY IN THE AGE OF TRUMP

MICHAEL DOONAN, PHD’02, DIRECTOR OF THE  
MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY (MPP) PROGRAM

With the election of Donald Trump, it’s critical that our public policy students double down on their own careers, because policy analysis has become more — not less — important. While data and analysis seem to have taken a back seat to tweets and tabloid-type rants, good policy demands that we know how policy impacts people and be prepared to offer alternatives that forward social justice.

My own experience is a good example. I worked for the Clinton health care plan in the 1990s. I watched it fall apart and I was career-depressed, much like many people are right now. At that point, I decided to return to school. I came to Heller to recharge my batteries, and to focus on what the states and localities could do.

By coming to Heller, where I could study both political science and health services, I was able to play some part in Massachusetts’ health-care-reform efforts. It was Romney-care, which happened before Obamacare. The Commonwealth got to 97, 98 percent coverage, and that turned out to be a model for national reform.

It’s not just health care; many policies are foreshadowed in state governments before they go national. Take fuel-efficiency standards for cars. It wouldn’t have happened nationally if it didn’t happen in California first. This works on conservative causes, too. For example, pro-life groups state by state are limiting or restricting one small rule at a time, which could ultimately have a major impact nationally on access to these health services.

President Trump’s perspective and policy prescriptions are ambiguous, subject to change and most often not based on research or evidence. The solutions our students develop, however, need to be rooted not just in their opinions and values but in a concrete understanding of social policy and social science. The agencies of the federal government use data and analysis. Governors and mayors use it to shape programs. At Heller, we prepare our students to offer policy alternatives when the time is right, regardless of who is in the White House.

*Many of the issues currently facing health care systems, such as the rise of chronic diseases, span countries and continents.*

## **TAKING A GLOBAL VIEW OF HEALTH SYSTEMS**

BY DIANA BOWSER, DIRECTOR, AND MONICA JORDAN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, OF THE MS IN GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Ongoing health policy changes in the U.S. have shown that now, more than ever, we need socially conscious students who have a deep understanding of these issues to strengthen health systems in the U.S. and around the world.

President Trump campaigned on the promise of undoing the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and by Jan. 12, the Senate approved a budget that would allow its repeal. This was a first step in the process of dramatically decreasing both health care coverage and individual health care rights. Repealing the ACA would also impact life-saving Medicaid expansions and Medicare coverage, potentially increasing premiums and prescription drug costs for seniors. It is imperative we understand the current system and all the possible fallout from these policy changes.

Taking a global view of health systems gives us a broader understanding of system weaknesses and ways to improve them. Countries everywhere are facing the demographic shock of rapidly aging populations and the parallel increase of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes. Consider the Middle East, a region with one of the highest breast-cancer mortality rates for women under 60. Some of the richest countries in the world are located in this region, yet they are struggling to adapt their health systems to these changes. Our master's program in Global Health Policy and Management teaches students how health systems are designed and how to use lessons from other countries to improve their own systems.

The field of global health policy teaches us to responsibly consume and interpret scientific research and data to build and defend an argument. We refuse to let policies based

in fear, rather than facts, affect our work. Many of the issues currently facing health care systems, such as the rise of chronic diseases, span countries and continents. We will continue to collaborate and build ties with agents of change for health care systems globally. It is imperative that we work together and bring diverse perspectives to tackle serious threats to human health.

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## **THE ROLE OF RESEARCH IN THE AGE OF TRUMP**

JEFFREY PROTAS, DIRECTOR OF THE PHD IN SOCIAL POLICY PROGRAM

We all have values and an image in our minds of the way the world should be. These are our road maps for seeking to improve society, a question of great importance to the Heller School. But it is not enough. Our students must know how the policy world works and how public actions actually affect us.

Research makes possible the connection between aspirations and actual outcomes. President Trump doesn't do that. He wants a wall to keep Mexicans out. We do not agree with him about keeping Mexicans out, but let's face it: He doesn't care what we think. What we could say to him is, "You want to keep Mexicans out? This wall is not going to do it." Or, "This wall is going to keep out one Mexican for every million dollars spent. Therefore, it's in your economic interest to find another way to do it."

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IN EARLY 2017 THERE WERE MULTIPLE RALLIES ACROSS NEW YORK CITY PROTESTING THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES AND POSITIONS. CLOCKWISE FROM THE TOP LEFT: PROTESTING THE TRAVEL BAN, WOMEN'S MARCH, A DAY WITHOUT WOMEN, PROTESTING THE TRAVEL BAN, PROTESTING THE EXECUTIVE ORDER TO BAN REFUGEES, PROTESTING THE TRAVEL BAN, KICK OFF OF 100 DAYS OF RESISTANCE AT TRUMP HOTEL, PROTESTING THE EXECUTIVE ORDER TO BAN REFUGEES.

PHOTOGRAPHY: KEN SCHLES





Previously, lawmakers didn't necessarily listen to research, but they did not say the facts don't matter. President Trump, however, is basically saying that facts have no bearing, and what's really important is what he thinks. He has created a public conceptual challenge that suggests there is no reason to do research because it's what you believe that matters, not what you can show. That's a symbolic escalation that is very threatening not only to us as a graduate school but also to education in general.

But even in President Trump's world, facts do matter when concrete decisions have to be made. Let's take the wall. It would be useful to know whether it needs to be 17 feet high with snakes on the top or if three feet is fine. That would help President Trump build an effective wall, or the research might lead him to conclude that the wall isn't the best method to keep people out of the U.S.

Research matters if you want to achieve a goal, whether it's to decrease drug use, increase immigration or build a wall. Pronouncements will only take you so far. Analysis based on a true understanding of the world is what turns plain talk into concrete reality.

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## WHY STUDY GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE ISOLATIONIST AGE OF TRUMP?

RAJESH SAMPATH, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF THE MA IN SUSTAINABLE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

With any new administration, there is always a reason to study development. If we look back at former President George W. Bush, he took a surprising turn away from his campaign promises to become more isolationist, particularly after 9/11. Throughout his presidency, he showed concern about aid, most significantly in his commitment to Africa and its socioeconomic development. By the time President Obama took office, there was a strong sense of a cosmopolitan ideal to ensure that societies are in peaceful

cooperation and diplomatically striving toward common aspirations like the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

The approach of the previous two presidential administrations is in direct contrast to the inward-looking mentality of President Donald Trump, who wants to return the United States to a setting in which we put the U.S. first, above all else.

Development is inextricably bound not just to sustainability issues, but to human rights issues as well. That is hard to defend when the president may not even care about domestic wealth inequality, let alone global inequality.

Studying and promoting development makes a statement that these universal goals still matter, and that the commitment to our species as a whole supersedes our obligations as citizens to take care of a single national economy.

For me, development at its core is global social justice. It has to deal with not only the alleviation of poverty and sustainability of the environment, but facing state-sponsored oppression of certain groups head-on. In our domestic context, consider the United States' prison industrial complex or the profound structural racial inequality that is exacerbated by the sort of white nationalist ideology emanating from some of Trump's spokespeople and strategic advisers.

Development today is an affirmation that we care about common goals as the path forward for the planet. Otherwise, we're not going to survive as a species. When we commit to development work, it is a direct statement of opposition to those who don't feel that international problems like global poverty and social inequality of minorities are an issue.

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AT FRIENDSHIP PARK, THE ONLY FEDERALLY ESTABLISHED BINATIONAL MEETING PLACE ALONG THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER, FAMILIES SEPARATED BY IMMIGRATION LAWS GATHER ON BOTH SIDES OF THE FENCE TO SPEND SOME TIME TOGETHER ON THE WEEKENDS.

SELECTIONS FROM PHOTO ESSAY BY GRISELDASA SAN MARTIN









TAKING  
AIM AT  
AMERICA'S  
OPIOID  
CRISIS

BY MAX PEARLSTEIN '01



## HOW A TEAM OF RESEARCHERS FROM THE INSTITUTE FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH IS POINTING POLICYMAKERS IN A MORE EFFECTIVE DIRECTION

### FRAMING THE CAUSE OF AN EPIDEMIC

In January, The New York Times ran a special report on the United States' opioid crisis, citing public health officials who have called the current opioid epidemic "the worst drug crisis in American history, killing more than 33,000 people in 2015." The number of opioid-related deaths is staggering, but for Dr. Andrew Kolodny, who recently joined the Heller School as co-director of the Opioid Policy Research Collaborative, viewing the problem through the narrow lens of overdose deaths misses the point — and therefore the potential solutions.

"The opioid crisis is an epidemic of addiction," Kolodny says. "Since 1997, we have had more than a 900 percent increase in the number of Americans who are suffering from opioid addiction, which, when not treated, can commonly result in fatal overdoses.

"Calling it an overdose problem, though, is like describing the AIDS crisis as an epidemic of PCP pneumonia or Kaposi's sarcoma," Kolodny continues. "Those were conditions that we saw in people with AIDS, but the underlying problem was actually an epidemic of HIV infections, which resulted in those conditions."

Kolodny also believes we should avoid referring to the crisis as an epidemic of drug abuse. "Calling it an abuse problem suggests the cause is bad behavior: people abusing dangerous drugs to get high. While it's true that some people got addicted from recreational use, many also became addicted taking opioids exactly as prescribed by doctors. Once addicted, people aren't using heroin or pills because it's fun. They need to keep using opioids to avoid feeling awful."

Kolodny, who in addition to his work at Heller is also executive director of Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing, started working on the issue about 15 years ago for New York City's health department. At the time, drug overdose deaths were thought to be a problem of inner-city, low-income, nonwhite neighborhoods. For Kolodny, that meant cases primarily in East Harlem or the South Bronx, New York's poorest communities. But as he became plugged into national databases related to drug overdoses, he began to recognize there was a new, severe drug problem affecting very different neighborhoods. Opioids were having a major impact on Staten Island and other largely white communities around the United States.

"As we looked at different ways to try and reduce deaths from overdose, we learned pretty quickly that one of the most effective strategies was treating people who have opioid addiction," Kolodny says. "A lot of my time was spent convincing doctors to treat addiction. Unfortunately, many would say things like, 'I don't want addicts in my office.' I figured I should practice what I preach, so I started a clinical practice treating opioid addiction. I was surprised because the patients who were coming into my office were not inner-city residents struggling with heroin addiction, but instead they were people from the suburbs who had become addicted to what they were prescribed."

It's clear that the opioid problem isn't new, even if public attention on it is: Press reports of Oxycontin addiction and overdose deaths coming out of Appalachia and New England go back two decades. But every year since then, the problem has gotten worse.

*Many other universities are still way behind in responding to the opioid epidemic, but at Heller you had an entire team of folks who were working on this issue for years.*

“I believe the reason that we’ve allowed the epidemic to grow so severe is because it was misunderstood as a drug-abuse problem,” Kolodny says.

“Policymakers wanted to stop so-called ‘drug abusers’ but were ignoring the problem of over-prescribing. It was all focused on preventing kids from getting into Grandma’s medicine chest, but no one was looking at why every grandma now had opioids in her medicine chest.”

#### **A TEAM APPROACH TO TACKLING THE OPIOID CRISIS**

As Kolodny sought to better understand the extent and impact of opioid over-prescribing, he turned to prescription drug monitoring programs, or PDMPs, statewide databases that collect information on controlled substances that are dispensed in each state. While digging into them, he was repeatedly turning to research conducted by Heller’s Institute for Behavioral Health (IBH), part of the Schneider Institutes for Health Policy.

“The Heller team had access to an incredible database of narcotic prescriptions from multiple states, and the ability to do research with that data was very attractive,” Kolodny says. “Many other universities are still way behind in responding to the opioid epidemic, but at Heller you had an entire team of folks who were working on this issue for years.”

In fact, the IBH team has been conducting analyses on various aspects of the opioid crisis since the 1990s. “We’ve been doing this for much longer than it’s been in the headlines,” says IBH Deputy Director Sharon Reif, PhD’02. “The fact that it is now in the headlines is an opportunity — though an unfortunate one — for the work that we’re doing to have more traction.”

That work, explains IBH Director Constance Horgan, can be divided into two main areas: prevention and treatment. “We believe that dealing with the opioid crisis requires focusing across the continuum, from prevention all the way through treatment and recovery, because the situation is getting worse and we need to be more vigilant in changing the conversation if we want to succeed.”

IBH’s prevention work is largely connected to PDMPs. Those projects are conducted by the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Training and Technical Assistance Center (PDMP TTAC), which is led by Peter Kreiner, Heller senior scientist and Opioid Policy Research Collaborative co-director.

“Given that a lot of what got us to this point with the opioid crisis is over-prescribing, much of our focus has been on prescribers and their behavior,” Kreiner says. “One of the areas that we’ve been involved in is validation of the measures that are thought to be associated with risky behavior by both patients and prescribers. There was a small amount of literature on patient risk indicators, but the prescriber risk indicators were based mostly on expert opinion. We recently completed a paper in which we looked at prescribers who had action taken against them, like suspending or revoking their license, by the state medical board in Maine. And we found a high association between those prescribers who rank high on these risk indicators and those who had action taken against them.”

Beyond validation studies, Kreiner and his colleagues are collaborating with federal government agencies, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), on several initiatives. “Much of our work with PDMP data is in the area of public health surveillance — looking at







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:  
CONSTANCE HORGAN, PETER  
KREINER, CINDY PARKS THOMAS,  
PHD'00, SHARON REIF, PHD'02,  
AND ANDREW KOLODNY



trends over time and geographic patterns in prescription opioid use and likely misuse, which can help to target resource allocation,” Kreiner explains. “A number of our measures and surveillance approaches have been taken up by states that are newly funded by the CDC to address the opioid crisis, and we’ve been working with the CDC to assist them.”

On the treatment side, IBH’s work falls into two broad areas: access to treatment and quality of treatment. Within the quality sphere, Heller researchers have done a lot of work on performance measurement. They’ve published a series of papers based on performance measures they developed for medication-assisted treatment, led by Professor Cindy Parks Thomas, PhD’00, who is now working with the American Society of Addiction Medicine to further develop these measures so they can be put into practice. Additionally, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have hired IBH and Mathematica Policy Research Inc. to develop medication-assisted treatment performance measures for use in Medicaid.

Sharon Reif has also co-authored several papers with Horgan and others on access to treatment, including one that examines what opioid addiction-treatment medications are covered by private insurance companies. Another looks at whether treatment services are covered. “It shows, over time, some interesting patterns with respect to the availability of methadone, which used to be the only pharmacological approach for opioids,” Reif says.

Thomas adds, “One of the important things about treatment for substance use in general, and particularly for opioids, is that for a very long time, medications were not an acceptable answer for many people in the field — both people who have the problems and people who are treating the problems. It was seen as treating an addiction to a substance with another substance.”

You can actually see a shift in public and professional opinion on medication-assisted treatment through the papers IBH has produced over the years. While methadone has a long history, one of the early papers by Horgan



and colleagues focused on the availability of medications to treat addiction, finding that buprenorphine (an opioid addiction treatment drug) was only just starting to be covered by private health plans. Another, more recent paper reveals that medications for treating addictions are now much more accepted by both health plans and providers. “The impact we hope our research has is that people understand they should get treatment,” Reif says. “These medications do work, they are an appropriate line of treatment and they’re available.”

That said, another recent paper, this one co-authored by Thomas, reveals that while health plans are more willing to pay for treatment, opioid addiction still goes largely untreated. Even though the cap has been raised on the number of opioid-addicted patients for which physicians may prescribe buprenorphine, she found there is still significant unmet need for treatment in the United States, particularly in rural areas.

“The major take-away from our treatment work is that there are effective pharmacotherapies out there,” Horgan says. “But as shown in Thomas’ recent paper, they’re not being used more widely, and we need to understand why. We’re moving in the right direction, but it’s a slow process.”

#### **AIMING MORE EFFECTIVELY**

Misunderstanding has always played a role in the opioid crisis, from the original policy responses that focused exclusively on stopping drug abusers to the lingering stigma around medication-assisted treatment. With the newly created Opioid Policy Research Collaborative, Horgan, Kolodny and Kreiner are bringing all of the resources that IBH can offer — both researchers and research — to lead lawmakers and practitioners toward more effective solutions.

“We’re utilizing the skills that IBH has used for years in addiction services research in both prevention and treatment,” Horgan says, “but now we’re focusing it in a very laser-like way on how we can make a difference on this particular problem. We have a critical mass of people

at Heller who are not only doing research on the topic but also are out there in the real world interacting with policymakers to disseminate the research findings.”

“You definitely have policymakers at the state and local level who realize, due in some part to the work of Heller, that the opioid issue was fueled by aggressive prescribing,” Kolodny adds. “Massachusetts, for example, has passed laws to limit the amount of pills in a first-time prescription. Other states now mandate that doctors check a database before writing prescriptions so that they don’t give opioids out to people who are visiting multiple doctors. You have diverse stakeholders, ranging from state legislators and attorneys general to private organizations like health insurance companies, who are all recognizing that the most urgent public-health problem facing the country right now is our opioid crisis and determining how we are going to bring it under control.”

While researchers and policymakers alike continue to push for solutions to the opioid addiction crisis, there isn’t yet a good understanding of what will work. Lawmakers are searching for the most effective strategies while avoiding ideas that might have negative, unintended consequences. The goal of the Opioid Policy Research Collaborative is to arm policymakers with much better information.

“The problem is they’re dealing with an emergency, and in an emergency, you’re often shooting in the dark,” Kolodny says. “We want to be able to get them information so they can aim more carefully.”

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## **HELLER EXPERTS IN THE NEWS**

External media outlets regularly turn to IBH researchers for insight on the U.S. opioid crisis, including:

#### **ANDREW KOLODNY**

on On Point with Tom Ashbrook: <http://bit.ly/akolodny>

#### **PETER KREINER**

in Time: <http://bit.ly/pkreiner>

#### **THOMAS CLARK**

in The Washington Post: <http://bit.ly/thomasclark>



A close-up photograph of a woman with voluminous, curly brown hair. She is wearing a red and black plaid shirt over a black fur-trimmed garment. She is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. Her right hand, adorned with a diamond ring, is holding a blue pen and writing on a piece of paper. The paper has some faint diagrams or text on it. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# At the Intersection

BY ANTHONY MOORE





## **NEW EXECUTIVE MBA FOR PHYSICIANS PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE BY HELPING DOCTORS TAKE THE LEAD**

These days, health care management is about much more than health care. In addition to getting up to speed on new threats like the Zika virus, the latest cancer treatments and new medical-imaging technologies, hospital executives must grapple with the complicated and ever-changing challenges of managing health care organizations. How do you maintain a financially viable practice with falling reimbursements and rising overhead costs? What's the most efficient way to implement new protocols for electronic health records? How should you prepare for the potential repeal of the Affordable Care Act?

Addressing a shifting landscape of questions like these while keeping abreast of the actual practice of medicine might seem utterly impossible, but for Professor Jon Chilingierian, the executive director of the Heller School's new Executive MBA (EMBA) for Physicians program, it's something else entirely — it's absolutely necessary.

“Every physician needs training in the blossoming new field of biomedical and management science,” he says. “The current environment demands that physician leaders develop a balance of health policy and management skills in order to be effective.”

To help doctors strike that balance, Chilingierian launched the EMBA program in January 2016, building on a lengthy career at the forefront of health services management. The former assistant health commissioner for the City of Boston, Chilingierian has published award-winning research on health care management; launched Maine's Advanced Health Policy and Leadership Academy, which will train roughly 10 percent of the state's doctors in the next five years; and founded the Heller School and Tufts Medical School's joint MD-MBA program in health management, the country's largest program of its kind.

“Jon brings a wealth of experience and wisdom to the program,” says Dr. Mark Talamini, the chair of Stony Brook Medicine’s Department of Surgery, who this spring is one of the first doctors to graduate from the EMBA program. “He is heavily invested and has developed a personal relationship with each student.”

Designed for doctors working in, or preparing to work in, management and leadership posts, the EMBA physician program distinguishes itself from traditional MBA programs because its curriculum is aimed directly at doctors. To help strengthen health care management and leadership skills, the curriculum integrates medical and managerial issues and hypotheses with courses on national and state health policy, clinical and managerial uncertainty, health law and ethics, health care technology, performance measurement, and health care entrepreneurship.

“The Heller EMBA is different from pure-vanilla MBA programs because we bring together medicine and management, a new field of science, in an integrated learning sequence,” says Chilingierian. “We’re offering an executive MBA exclusively for physicians.”

But if physicians already have so many other responsibilities, some might ask, why not simply train professionals with management backgrounds for leadership positions in health care? For Chilingierian, the answer is clear.

“If we ask who ought to take the lead for any industry, the answer would be the professionals trained in the basic underlying science,” he explains. “Who should manage companies like Google? People trained in software engineering. So who should lead health care organizations? The answer is physicians.”

Currently, less than 5 percent of hospital leaders are doctors. However, research shows that hospitals and medical centers helmed by physicians perform better, achieving higher patient-safety results, lower infection rates, lower readmission rates, increased efficiency and improved financial margins.

“Health organizations managed by clinicians with advanced leadership training can out-perform health organizations led by lay managers alone,” Chilingierian says. “Yet health systems are falling behind when it comes to developing physician leaders who innovate and create value. At Heller, we saw this as an opportunity.” According to the program’s students, by teaching medical management science exclusively to those practicing medicine, the program is making the most of that opportunity.

“I wanted a program that catered to physicians, as this is the field I am choosing to stay in,” says Dr. Tanaz Ferzandi, director of Tufts Medical Center’s Division of Urogynecology and Pelvic Reconstructive Surgery, who also graduates this spring. “I’m not interested in how to make factory widgets.”

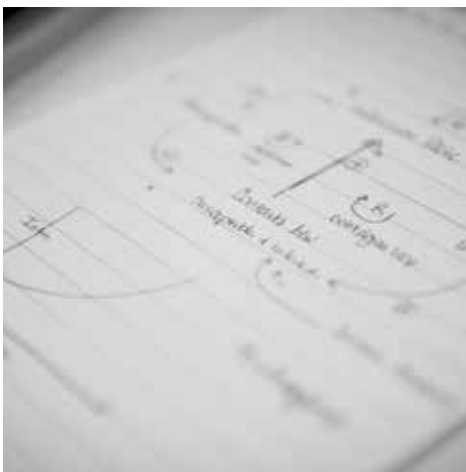
Talamini agrees. “The fact that it is all physicians — and focused on physician leadership — is powerful.”

The accelerated 16-month program is specifically tailored to working health-care professionals. To enable students to enhance their management skills while working full time, the program combines online course work with four intensive 10-day sessions at Babson College’s executive education center.

“Attending the program while maintaining a busy practice and administrative schedule is a major commitment,” says Dr. Evan Lipsitz, associate professor of surgery and chief of the Division of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery at the Montefiore Medical Center and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. “The balance of on-site and remote classes works incredibly well. The technology and conduct of the remote sessions keeps you in close contact with classmates, which is an essential component of the program.”

By bringing a diverse group of working doctors together to discuss health care policy, medical accounting, human resource challenges, and other issues they’re actually dealing with at work, the program creates a powerful community. Its first cohort of 36 doctors come from 20 different U.S. states and work in a wide range of fields,





*We are positioned to be a leader on this front, given our specialized expertise in delivering executive leadership programs to physicians.*





including gastroenterology, urology, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, cardiothoracic surgery, pediatric surgery, emergency medicine, primary care medicine and psychiatry. The program harnesses the strength of this community by pairing each student with a peer student-physician. Together, peers coach and mentor one another while sharing best practices.

“I now have the additional benefit of being in class with 35 other physicians who are diverse and so accomplished that I learn from them daily,” Ferzandi explains. “The collective intelligence in the room can’t be surpassed. Just recently, I went through a challenging time at work, and if it had not been for my ability to vet the situation — in a safe environment — with classmates and some of my professors, I might have made premature decisions and not fallen back on all that I’ve learned to date.”

But the heart of the program, the students agree, is Chilingierian. In addition to his experience crafting and leading the largest MD-MBA program in the U.S., Chilingierian directs the Brandeis Health Leadership Program at Heller, a weeklong residential program sponsored by the American College of Surgeons and the Thoracic Surgery Foundation for Research and Education. From 1997 to 2011, he also led the two-week European Health Leaders Program, which now has nearly 800 alumni, and his extensive research into data envelopment analysis has earned him recognition as an international expert on the subject, which focuses on measuring the productivity and effectiveness of organizational decision making.

Ferzandi says, “Jon brings so much background to the discussions that we are like sponges, soaking it all up. He teaches us a lot about leadership and management, leading by example, but he also serves as a wonderful sounding board and mentor to many of us.”

“The knowledge I’ve gained from the program will allow me to function as a more effective administrator and a more fiscally responsible clinician,” says Lipsitz. Ferzandi agrees, noting that the program will help her to “continue to advance, both personally and professionally.”

While Chilingierian says he saw a need to train physicians in medicine and management, he adds, “It takes a village, and Heller has a deep bench of health policy and academic management experts. We are positioned to be a leader on this front, given our specialized expertise in delivering executive leadership programs to physicians.”

Ferzandi, her classmates and Chilingierian all know that the EMBA program’s mission goes far beyond aiding physicians’ professional development. For Chilingierian, the program offers a new way to attack what he sees as the key challenge to the future of health care: “the triple performance problem.”

Increasingly, health care organizations must juggle the three sometimes-competing needs of technical outcomes, patient satisfaction and efficiency. That kind of high-stakes juggling act, Chilingierian argues, demands a new kind of health care leadership.

“Unfortunately, there is growing evidence that there are very few places in the U.S. and around the world that are able to solve this triple-performance problem,” he explains. “I’ve heard from countless physicians who are struggling.” This, he notes, is a problem not just for them but for the practice of medicine as well. Part of the solution is to give doctors the concepts, tools and confidence they need to help their organizations take on these three challenges in a coordinated effort.

“Preparing physicians to have advanced expertise in both clinical care and management,” he says, “should become a significant ingredient in every country’s health-care reform.”

If Chilingierian’s students are any indication, that “significant ingredient” is exactly what the EMBA program is providing.

“This program is already a huge success with his inaugural class,” says Ferzandi. “Jon’s vision — to make future health-care leaders of his students — is now playing out.”



# Watch City/La Ciudad Del Reloj

BY BETHANY ROMANO, MBA'17

PHOTOS BY MIKE LOVETT



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## BUILDING A DUAL-IMMERSION LANGUAGE PROGRAM IN WALTHAM PUBLIC KINDERGARTEN

At first glance, Sandra Quesada's public kindergarten classroom in downtown Waltham looks much like any other: The walls are awash in primary colors, tiny desks are arranged in geometric pods, and half of the floor space is taken up by a soft blue rug, upon which are perched 20 fidgeting kindergartners in a lopsided circle. Together, they chant the days of the week, practice counting, sing songs and spell out simple words.

It's lovely, and completely typical — except for the fact that those 20 kids and their teacher are all speaking Spanish.

This is the Waltham school district's latest experiment: dual-immersion language instruction. The optional program launched in 2015 with 40 slots in two kindergarten classes. Over 100 families applied for the lottery, and there's a lengthy waiting list. By all accounts, the program has been a massive success for the district and for the families who enrolled their children here.

Kaytie Dowcett, MPP'15 and a Mary I. Jagoda Endowed Fellow, spent two years spearheading the effort to get this pilot program off the ground as a member of Waltham's school committee. Raised in the "Watch City" herself, Dowcett spent the first part of her career running after-school programs in Boston and teaching in Waltham's middle schools before earning a master's in public policy at Heller, where she initially learned about the dual-immersion teaching model. After seeing her English language learner (ELL) students struggle to succeed in a standard educational environment, the concept of dual immersion intrigued her.

"In this country, if you come to elementary school with a language other than English as your dominant language,

it's taught out of you," says Dowcett. "They teach you English at the expense of your first language. Then you get to middle school and you're expected to learn a world language, which is rather ironic. There's some recognition that having a second language is a skill, an asset, but we haven't been doing it right."

Waltham, which has a large Spanish-speaking population, has been a linguistically, culturally and racially diverse city for decades. That diversity is often referred to as a strength, says Dowcett, "but we're still learning how to tap into that strength, rather than just pay lip service to it. We say we value a multilingual community because being bilingual gives you access to more jobs, greater economic opportunity, and it makes us better neighbors to one another. So why wait until middle school to teach a second language?

"If we can start that process earlier, why not? We're saying that our diversity is an asset, so let's really mean it, let's operationalize it, let's bring people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds together and be deliberate about learning from each other."

In addition to this desire to "walk the walk" in valuing linguistic diversity, Waltham is ideally positioned to start a dual-language program. The district is growing and needs to add a new school soon — plus, there's no shortage of scientific research to support the benefits of dual-immersion instruction. Decades of studies indicate that Waltham should see improvements in academic performance for the children who participate, regardless of whether they speak Spanish or English at home.

Dual-immersion schools are built on a model of absolute inclusion for all students, regardless of their home



KAYTIE DOWCETT, MPP'15

language. Half of the students in the pilot program speak primarily Spanish at home, and the other half English. In school, Quesada delivers 80 percent of instruction in Spanish. The other 20 percent — special classes like drama, library, music and art — is taught in English.

A key component of the model, says Catherine Carney, Waltham's director of English language learning, is ensuring that the program is completely equivalent to that of any other public kindergarten class. "That means we have access to the same things any other school has, including specials, transportation, speech therapists, occupational

therapists — any of the resources that other kindergartners in the city have. It's important to us because dual-language instruction should be an add-on, not a trade-off."

Right now, the dual-immersion program is housed in six rooms on the second floor of the Waltham Community and Cultural Center, a large, multistory red brick building perched on the corner of Moody Street in downtown Waltham. Marianne Duffy, the school's interim director, says the program plans to grow. "Next year, the language split for rising first graders will shift to 70/30, and so on until they reach a 50/50 equilibrium in third grade. We're building the program into a school one year at a time. There was easily enough demand in Waltham to justify a larger program, but we want to start small and do this right. We're co-constructing this model as it evolves, and at the same time we're co-constructing a school culture that is inclusive of everyone."

The program shares its space with a number of small nonprofits, including the Waltham Partnership for Youth, where Dowcett serves as executive director. In that role, she works to identify the needs of Waltham youth and leverage resources to meet those needs. A key component of her work is recognizing that systems and structures don't always provide students with equal opportunities to succeed.

When Dowcett entered grad school for her first degree in education, she began learning about systems of discrimination that exist at every level. "As early as kindergarten, teachers often unwittingly judge their students' ability based on how they look, how well-kept they are, whether their hygiene is good, whether they have an accent. That implicit bias has a direct and fairly strong impact on a student's trajectory because first, teachers can make decisions about student placement, and second, the kids internalize those expectations and respond accordingly.

"I did a lot of reading about implicit bias in education in graduate school, and it was like a hammer over my head. As a kid growing up in Waltham, I definitely had a meritocratic mentality that if you work hard you'll succeed.



I came from a working-class family and I worked hard and I was successful in school, and I wanted to pat myself on the back for that. But I could see that everything I was reading about had played out in my own K-12 education for many of my Puerto Rican classmates. I want to be part of a solution, not perpetuate that pattern.”

After leaving the classroom, Dowcett spent a lot of time studying instruction and program models at Heller, including the dual-immersion model. She says, “I thought, ‘we should try to do this here.’ I approached our superintendent and the ELL director, who both supported the idea. We decided to put together a study group to see if we could pull this off in Waltham, and we really dove in.” During the two-year planning process, the team collected a lot of research on language instruction to build support at the district level and among families in the community.

Seminal researchers in this field say that dual immersion is the only model that has proven to close the academic achievement gap and the academic content gap between English learners and their native-English-speaking peers.

Heller PhD student Diana Serrano, a Herman F. Kerner Memorial Endowed Fellow and a Marjorie S. Trotter Doctoral Fellow, became involved in the dual-language program as the subject of her dissertation. “When I applied to the PhD program,” she says, “I wanted to study ELL students, but it was hard to find data that I could analyze. I was beginning to think I would need to change my focus, study something else, when I learned that Waltham was in the process of building this program, and met Kaytie.”

In the planning process, Serrano helped Dowcett and her colleagues review and identify research to guide their



*When you teach children in their native language, they'll be more successful, no matter how you measure success.*

decision making. “Research has shown that when you promote learning in a child’s native language, it not only benefits their academic performance in their native language, it will also promote their performance in their nonnative language. When you teach children in their native language, they’ll be more successful, no matter how you measure success: in Spanish, in English, in engagement, in involvement. It’s a fascinating way to create a more inclusive environment, and there are so many good reasons to do it.”

Serrano also helped them create a truly random lottery process, which both ensures fairness for families and creates an ideal scenario for Serrano to conduct her research. She says, “I’m interested in looking at the students’ developmental reading-assessment scores over time and their individual proficiency over time. Since there was a lottery of randomly selected students and, in essence, a control group who didn’t get into the dual-immersion kindergarten, I can study whether these students are performing better. There’s a lot of research out there, as we’ve been discussing, but very little of it is truly experimental. Here, the conditions are just perfect for an experiment.”

While the role of research is crucial to inform Waltham’s dual-immersion program, there’s also a strong ethical imperative for promoting schools like these. Serrano says, “Rather than telling a child not to speak her language, that it isn’t important or that she can learn it later, imagine how impactful it must be for that child to instead be told, ‘your language matters, your culture matters, and we want to learn from you, too.’ That kind of environment builds feelings of inclusiveness, acceptance and self-esteem — and that helps children thrive.”







Hoy amigos  
Hoy es viernes  
enero de 2012  
Puede nacer  
Para caminar  
enginos? No  
Cumpleaños  
en casa



# WHO'S WITH ME IN THE CLASSROOM

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BY SUSAN EATON



My phone began to buzz, ping, ring just a few minutes after the news broke about President Donald Trump's executive order that banned people from several Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States.

A young woman I'd met in Idaho while I was researching a book included me on a group text about her stepbrother who'd been visiting relatives in Somalia. He was now in Nigeria but traveling with a Yemeni passport. Would he be able to get home to the United States? I doubted it. But I wasn't sure. Several friends from Mexico wrote or called asking slightly differently worded versions of the same question: "How long, do you think, before Trump comes for us?"

Turning into the Heller School parking lot the next morning, my phone rang again, this time flashing the name of my friend Fawzia with an image of her blowing me a kiss. My first thought was, "Thank goodness she's a U.S. citizen." Then Fawzia's story tumbled through the speaker, her voice catching. She reminded me that for years she'd been working through legal channels to bring her elderly mother to the United States. Fawzia's mother had fled to Kenya decades ago to take refuge from the brutal civil war in her home country, Somalia.

"Will they consider her Somali or Kenyan?" Fawzia asked me.

"I have no idea," I told her. "I'm so sorry."

"Can I go to her?" Fawzia asked me, audibly crying now. "Will I never see her again?"

I told her that as a citizen, she could travel freely but that she needed a lawyer. And then I told her I needed to hang up, that I needed to go teach. Her cry evolved into a wail. "I am sorry," I said again, hating myself.

A few minutes later, I walked into a classroom at the Heller School. This would be the second class session in a course on immigrant integration that I co-teach with my colleague, Jessica Santos. I had to get myself organized. But Fawzia's wail haunted me.

As class began, I worried that I didn't have enough answers or the right answers or the most perfectly considered answers for a day when my students and, for that matter, my friends had so many questions. That Friday will likely not be the last time I feel anxious in front of a classroom. But I never feel alone up there. My own teachers, past and present, are always with me. It helps me to remember that the teachers whose lessons I draw upon and who shaped my values and intentions as an educator did not know every fact every person needed to know at a given time. They helped me build knowledge about subjects, yes, but also forced me to reckon with myself and hone an authoritative voice in service of social justice. During such a turbulent political period, spending time in the service of thinking has felt at times like a guilty luxury. But then the lessons from my best teachers remind me that what people think matters, if only because it determines how they will act.

My liberal politics did not match the conservative philosophy of one of my first — and my favorite — political science professors at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Jean Bethke Elshtain. But in spite of all the ways I disagreed with her, Professor Elshtain drilled into me the importance of integrity. She required us to evaluate political action against several measures, including what I remember as the "Will I Be Able to Look at Myself in the Mirror?" standard. I learned from her that "winning" within a political context can't be referred to as winning if you compromise your values and credibility in the process.

In 1986, my senior year at UMass Amherst, James Baldwin — yes, *the* James Baldwin, the writer, activist, genius and subject of the new film "I Am Not Your Negro" — taught a lecture class. I was lucky enough to get a coveted seat. We students sat awestruck, as Baldwin lectured about the historical context in which he wrote his nonfiction. He spoke eloquently about the role of the socially concerned essay in American society, and of how racism misshapes each one of us, particularly white people. Around campus, he'd sport wraparound sunglasses and acknowledge us with cool nods. He quite often sat alone at a restaurant and bar in downtown Amherst as admiring students, including me, floated around before approaching him gingerly. With

*{ A moment of interrogation was enough to force myself to figure it out and shape my writing, my career, my activism, my life, accordingly.*

bemused detachment, Baldwin indulged us, grinning mischievously. James Baldwin and I did not become best friends; I would never claim him as a mentor. But he did influence me profoundly.

In the only private meeting I had with him, he told me, simply: “I think you are a writer.” My heart stopped, but in a good way. Then he added: “But do you know yet why you are here? Why you sit in my classroom? Why you find inspiration in Frederick Douglass? In me, for that matter?” I can’t recall my response. I am sure I didn’t yet know the answer. But that he’d considered me worth a moment of interrogation was enough to force myself to figure it out and shape my writing, my career, my activism, my life, accordingly.

Many years later, my doctoral adviser at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Gary Orfield, was the first to demonstrate the possibility of being a scholar while wading deep into the political fray. Gary collaborated with civil rights lawyers in active litigation and worked as an expert witness in civil rights cases related to fair housing and anti-discriminatory public education. He helped litigators, elected leaders and advocates use scholarly research to strengthen legal arguments and theories and to improve policy arguments before local school boards, in state legislatures, at the U.S. Capitol and the White House. School superintendents and officials from the U.S. Justice Department and U.S. Department of Education called upon him to advise them on how to end racially discriminatory practices.

Knowledge to him was to be built and then pressed into service in advancing racial justice, fairness. I am quite sure I would not have understood the purpose of graduate school if hadn’t had him as a mentor. I was lucky to work alongside and in collaboration with Gary, as we wrote and thought and planned and strategized to exact influence

beyond the academy. He emphasized the importance of understanding the past but just as important, to know what was happening right now, of mapping action, of identifying needs. As a result, I left graduate school able to locate an appropriate role for myself within a field — civil rights and education — that accorded with the values and passions James Baldwin and Jean Bethke Elshtain had forced me to understand, articulate and act upon.

Now, some 20 years later, as I stood in front of the classroom, teaching about immigration at the Heller School, I clicked to a slide that provided hyperlinks to the leading policy and advocacy organizations and think tanks working on immigrant rights, immigrant integration and refugee resettlement. No attached theory or citations or regression analyses. It was just a slide, a list. This slide, in part, was intended to contextualize the theory and scholarly research we’d discuss later in class. But this slide was also a stepping-stone on a path leading from thought to real-world action. So many teachers had guided me along that path. Now I hope I can be something of a guide too.

After the students left that morning, I called my friend Fawzia back. I didn’t have any more information than the little I’d had when I’d hung up with her a few hours before. But at least I was able to connect her with a lawyer.

“Hey,” she asked, “How did your class go?”

I told her it was probably not my best performance, that I got emotional because I was preoccupied with our conversation, that part of me wished I could be with her, helping to develop a strategy to get around Donald Trump’s orders.

“No. No,” she said firmly. “You are where you need to be. Those students of yours? You need to help them get ready for a big, big fight for America’s soul.”



## BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS PARTY LINES

BY **COURTNEY LOMBARDO**

Calvin Harris, MPP'10, Heller Alumni Association board member, is the senior manager of public affairs for the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC), a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit that combines the best ideas from both political parties to promote health, security and opportunity for all Americans. Harris previously served as press secretary and speechwriter for StudentsFirst, a lobbying group founded by education reform advocate Michelle Rhee. In his role at BPC, he oversees media strategies for the senior fellows and national campaigns. He also takes part in writing talking points for speeches, messaging and remarks. BPC's list of senior fellows includes former Sens. Olympia Snowe (R-Maine), Tom Daschle (D-S.D.) and Trent Lott (R-Miss.).

Harris' work often involves bringing together people from both major political parties in an effort to create actionable policy solutions. "It's not an easy task, especially in today's polarized nation. But embracing and engaging differences is the only way real progress can be made," he says.

"Neither political party has a monopoly on the best ideas. And the only way to get anything meaningful done in Washington is through the constructive collusion of ideas," he adds. BPC's various projects reflect this internally by assembling stakeholders with different political ideologies and interests who are tasked with making detailed consensus recommendations. "Americans embrace bipartisanship because they rightfully believe legislation that appeals to politicians on both sides of the aisle will amount to better and more resilient public policy," Harris says.

Not only does Harris work with politicians, he connects on the national level with multinational companies. During the 2016 election season, BPC partnered with Marriott and Starbucks to mobilize their employees to register, vote and volunteer at polling places, proving that even

corporations have a role in building citizenship and engagement in the political system.

Harris concludes that he never intended to get into the communications field but was inspired by a course at Heller that got him thinking about how to share complicated policies with people in much simpler terms. He fell in love with the methods of sharing information so everyone could take part in the conversation. It's no wonder he works at the Bipartisan Policy Center.

Moving forward, Harris tries to keep the big picture in mind. "The well of bipartisanship in Washington is not entirely dry. But we must focus on those shared values that bring us together rather than the small things that divide us."

## CAROL HARDY-FANTA, PHD'91, IS TRACKING OUR TRANSFORMING AMERICAN POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

BY **BETHANY ROMANO, MBA'17**

Carol Hardy-Fanta, PhD'91, directed the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy at the McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston for 10 years prior to retiring in 2012 to write her latest book, "Contested Transformation: Race, Gender and Political Leadership in 21st-Century America." Together with co-authors Pei-te Lien, Dianne Pinderhughes and Christine Marie Sierra, she set out to quantify what we know about elected representatives of color, both women and men.

With funding from the Ford Foundation, Hardy-Fanta spearheaded the Gender and Multicultural Leadership Project and built a database of over 10,000 elected officials



TOP:  
CALVIN HARRIS, MPP'10

BOTTOM:  
CAROL HARDY-FANTA,  
PHD'91



TESSA TOMPKINS BYER,  
MA COEX '16

at all levels of government. “It was incredibly hard to construct this database because there was no centralized source of information; everybody collects their data in different ways and with varying levels of success,” she says. “We were the first group to build a system that allowed us to look at women and men of color holding public office across gender, states, and racial and ethnic groups.”

According to Hardy-Fanta, “This book tells the story of how the transformation of the American political landscape is due to the rise of numbers of elected officials who are black, Latino, and Asian women and men.” These changes, she adds, take place in the context of a contested political terrain; every step toward increasing representation for women and people of color has been met with pushback.

A key finding from the book is that growth in representation is driven by women of color. Hardy-Fanta says, “Black women make up over 35 percent of black elected officials, and Latina women make up 34 percent of Latino elected officials. For Asian women the figures are similar, just slightly less. White women, on the other hand, make up only 17 percent of white elected officials. If you look at women overall, yes it’s true there are more women in office than ever before. But if it weren’t for women of color, it would be flat or slightly declining.”

Hardy-Fanta cites examples from the 2016 election. “If it had not been for the three new women of color who were elected to the Senate, women would have suffered losses in the Senate for the first time,” she says. “Adding Tammy Duckworth, Kamala Harris and Catherine Cortez Masto increased the number of women of color in the Senate from one to four. It also doubled the number of people of color in the Senate.

“Women of color are the force of change in politics today, in terms of gains for representation among our elected officials.”

## MEDIATING HOUSING CRISES IN CAMBRIDGE

BY COURTNEY LOMBARDO

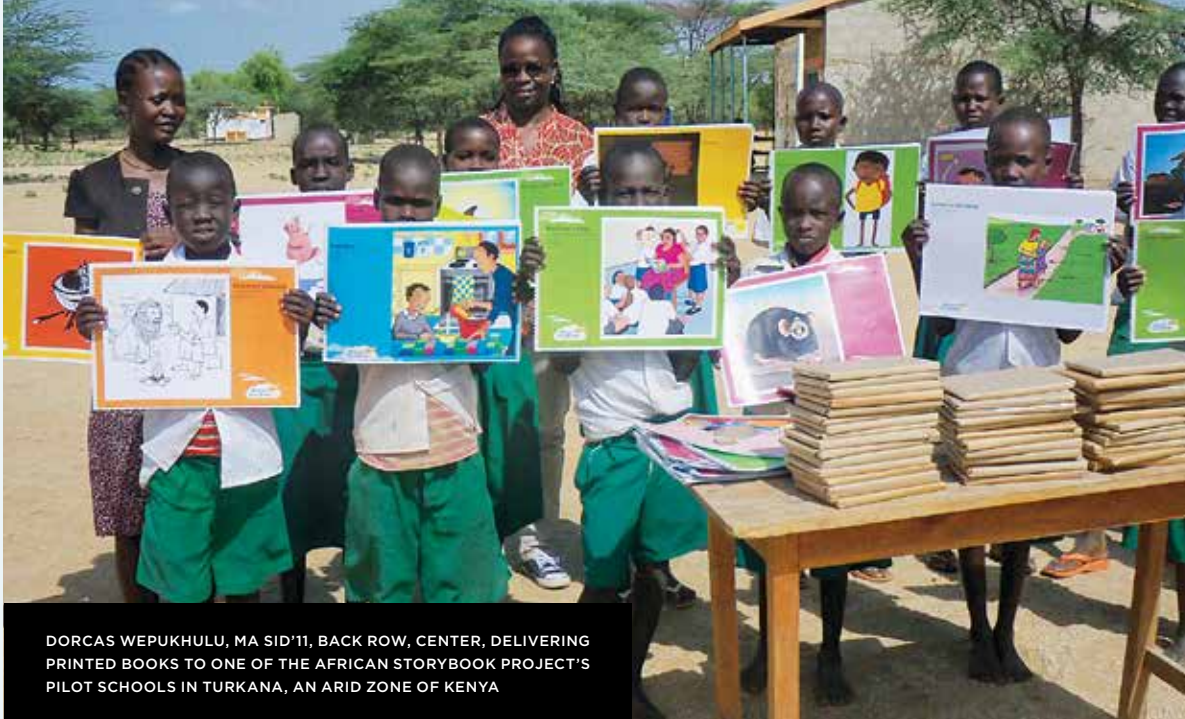
In her job as a mediator and housing stabilization coordinator at Just-A-Start, Tessa Tompkins Byer, MA COEX '16, NGF Fellow, can usually be found in Malden, Chelsea or Woburn, Massachusetts, district courts or in Cambridge mediating conflicts between landlords and tenants. She says her role can be challenging, yet rewarding. Just-A-Start is dedicated to building the housing security and economic stability of low- to moderate-income people.

While attending the Heller School, Byer was inspired by the mediation role-plays she witnessed in Professor Ted Johnson’s class, so she searched the local area for volunteer opportunities, with a strong desire to apply her new skills. In February 2015, she was trained as a mediator through the Harvard Mediation Program, a group made up of community members and Harvard law students. After completing the program, she had the opportunity to train the next group of mediators and also joined the Harvard Mediation Program’s board.

At Just-A-Start, Byer was hired for her conflict resolution skills. Her work in Cambridge can be the most difficult. Conflicts regarding housing can be between tenants and landlords, family members, neighbors and even the housing authority. She helps residents receive federal funding if they are in the process of being evicted or need back rent or security deposits, and prevents people from being homeless. The hardest part of her job is knowing that her clients might lose their homes in a few days.

What’s her advice to young professionals? Be confident and stand your ground, no matter who you’re working with, be it lawyers or local residents. The reward of helping individuals keep their housing motivates her every day.





DORCAS WEPUKHULU, MA SID'11, BACK ROW, CENTER, DELIVERING PRINTED BOOKS TO ONE OF THE AFRICAN STORYBOOK PROJECT'S PILOT SCHOOLS IN TURKANA, AN ARID ZONE OF KENYA

## BRINGING LOCAL-LANGUAGE STORYBOOKS TO RURAL AFRICAN SCHOOLS

DORCAS WEPUKHULU, MA SID'11, CO-FOUNDER OF THE AFRICAN STORYBOOK PROJECT

BY **BETHANY ROMANO, MBA'17**

Before joining Heller's Sustainable International Development (SID) program as a Ford Foundation International Fellow in 2009, Dorcas Wepukhulu, MA SID'11, taught high school for 16 years in rural Kenya. In these arid regions, social services are rare and age-appropriate children's books in local languages even rarer. While a student at Heller, Wepukhulu met Judith Baker, a Boston classroom teacher who was also concerned with meeting children's literacy needs in Africa.

Together, in 2011 they conceptualized the African Storybook Project, an organization that provides access to large quantities of age- and language-appropriate digital reading materials for young children in Africa. With funding from

Comic Relief and support from the South African Institute for Distance Education, they began a pilot project in four countries: Kenya, Uganda, South Africa and Lesotho. Wepukhulu is responsible for the project in Kenya, identifying primary schools in need of local language books and finding development organizations to partner with.

Today, those pilot schools have African Storybook Project laptops, projectors, a camera and a modem. The teachers and librarians are trained to use the African Storybook Project website to download the resources they've developed and teach them to students. The organization has also trained these teachers on basic data collection, monitoring and evaluation, and teamwork, building capacity at the local level.

These teachers acknowledge that the African Storybook Project is filling a gap, and they're motivated to use digital storybooks to teach children reading skills in their local language. The website now has storybooks in 98 languages spoken in Africa, including 15 Kenyan languages. In 2016, the project expanded to Ethiopia, Rwanda, Zambia and Ghana. Wepukhulu says, "We are very optimistic that we'll get funding to continue to solidify the work we have done so far. This will enable us to concentrate on sustainability, quality and capacity building in the communities that are using these resources."

BACK COVER(AGE)

*It's a big bet for sure and a very high-profile one at that.*

**JOAN DASSIN '69** IN INSIDE HIGHER ED ON THE MASTERCARD FOUNDATION'S \$828 MILLION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR AFRICAN STUDENTS

*I'm convinced that those who expect women to recede quietly will soon be disappointed.*

**ANITA HILL** IN A BOSTON GLOBE OP-ED ON TRUMP'S ELECTION AND FEMINISM

*Unless we can demonstrate a value proposition, arguing for more money, by itself, is not going to get us very far.*

**ALLYALA NANDAKUMAR** ON C-SPAN ON HIV/AIDS RESEARCH AND FUNDING

*That means less addiction and diversion, as well as fewer overdoses and deaths related to prescription drugs.*

**TOM CLARK** IN THE WASHINGTON POST ON THE SUCCESS OF STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESCRIBERS TO USE PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS