

Louis D. Brandeis
Legacy Fund
for
Social Justice

2022

Graduate Student Fellows



Brandeis
UNIVERSITY

2022 Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice Graduate Student Fellows

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management
Institute for Economic and Racial Equity
Summer Dissertation Grant Recipients

Habiba Braimah, MA'20, MA'21, PhD Candidate

Subject: Examining underrepresentation of Black women in faculty positions

Kaitie Chakoian, MA'20, MA'21, PhD Candidate

Subject: Aftermath for College Sexual Assault Survivors

Teresa Kroeger, MA'19, PhD Candidate

Subject: "Gender Segregation and Earnings in the Federal Workforce"

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management
Master of Public Policy (MPP)
Summer Internship Fellowships

Michael W. Berger, MPP'24

Massachusetts Communities Action Network

Rachel Dovek, MPP'22

Network of Jewish Human Services Agencies

Sivan Gopen, MPP'23

Moshe Dayan Center for
Middle Eastern and African Studies
Tel Aviv University

Meghan Gragg, MPP'23

Research Intern
Massachusetts BabySteps Program
Institute for Economic and Racial Equity
Heller School

Ariel Hyre, PhD, MPP'24

Environmental League of Massachusetts

Isaac Minkoff, MPP'23

Jewish Institute for
National Security of America

Zoe Rubinstein, MPP'23

Health Care For All

Maya Lynn Jai Singh, MPP'23

Leah Zallman Center for
Immigrant Health Research
Institute for Community Health

Lisa Kim Thorn, MPP'23

Subject: Relationship building with Black
farmers across the Southern United States
Institute for Economic and Racial Equity
Heller School

Julia Warheit, MPP'23

Racial Justice x Tech Policy Initiative
Institute for Economic and Racial Equity,
Heller School

Dear Generous Donors of the Legacy Fund,

Thank you for selecting me to be a recipient of the Institute for Economic and Racial Equity (IERE) Racial Equity Fellow.

I am a 5th-year PhD Candidate in Social Policy with a BA in International Business and Marketing from the State University of New York at Plattsburgh College, in addition to a MA in Higher & Postsecondary Education from Teachers College at Columbia University.

As I reflect on my experience as a PhD candidate, I feel fortunate to have made it this far in my educational journey. My successful progression in this program is in large part due to the financial support I've received through my fellowship. This fellowship was instrumental in supporting my progress towards my dissertation, which focuses on examining the underrepresentation of Black women in faculty positions. As a result of your generous donation, I was able to dedicate time towards my research by participating in the American Association of Blacks in Higher Education (AABHE) Dissertation Writing Bootcamp. During this bootcamp, I had an opportunity to workshop my dissertation topic, get feedback on how to best proceed with coding and analyzing my data, and received one on one consultation with faculty members in the field.

As I continue working on my dissertation, I am excited about contributing to the field of higher education by highlighting the critical ways colleges and universities can work towards building inclusive faculty job search processes, and also increase the recruitment and hiring of not only Black women faculty, but academics from other marginalized communities as well.

All in all, I am thankful to have been selected as the racial equity fellow and be afforded the opportunity to make great progress towards my dissertation. If you would like to learn more about my research or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at hbraimah@brandeis.edu or 347-734-9885. Thank you for your generosity and support.

Sincerely,
Habiba Braimah

Dear Supporters of the Legacy Fund,

I am writing to thank you and introduce myself to you. First, thank you for your generous support of my dissertation this summer. The IERE Summer Dissertation Summer Grant allowed me to complete my data collection with a robust and diverse sample of participants.

My dissertation focuses on an investigation of what happens to college sexual assault survivors as they navigate the education, healthcare, and criminal-legal systems in the aftermath of violence. The investigation began with a grounding in the lived experiences of survivors – utilizing the methodology of Institutional Ethnography (IE) infused with an intersectional framework. While much research has been done on college sexual assault, the majority centers the experiences and narratives of cisgender, straight, white women and examines the experience of navigating school processes in isolation from those of the healthcare and criminal-legal systems. This research, in contrast, takes a holistic look at the specific experiences of college survivors navigating both on- and off-campus systems.

Additionally, a core component of IE is attending to the ways that power structures ruling relations. It is impossible (or at least inadequate) to attend to power without an intersectional understanding of the way that power operates and impacts individuals based on their varied and intersecting identities. As such, it has been crucial, since the inception of this project, to not only ground the research in the lived experience of survivors, but specifically in the lived experience of survivors with diverse intersectional identities. The sampling frame for this study includes survivors of diverse racial and ethnic identities, gender identities, and sexual orientations. The commitment to and prioritization of this recruitment has shaped the rest of the study and led to the inclusion of not only survivors who interacted with educational, healthcare, and criminal-legal institutions after their assaults, but also those who chose not to interact with these systems due to expectations or previous experience of not being believed, protected, or treated with dignity by those same systems.

This summer I was able to focus on completion of my data collection through interviews with both survivors and advocates who support them. With your help, I interviewed fifteen survivors and seventeen advocates. My sample includes survivors who are both cisgender and with identities other than men or women; both straight and queer/gay/bi; and with racial and ethnic identities that include white, Black, Asian, and Latinx. My sample also includes survivors who interacted with each of the systems I have identified for the study (education, healthcare, criminal-legal), survivors who interacted with two or more systems, and survivors who did not have any interactions with these systems. In areas of my sample where I had the most trouble recruiting survivors (most notably, men) I interviewed advocates who could speak to their experiences working with those populations. I interviewed a former advocate from an organization that is explicitly focused on supporting LGBTQ+ survivors and sees a high percentage of survivors of color. This advocate was included to speak directly to some of the barriers facing and best practices for supporting intersectionally oppressed survivors, as well as to provide information on experiences of these survivors. I also interviewed an advocate who specializes in legal advocacy for youth, most often youth under 18. This advocate was included to speak to some of the dynamics at play for male survivors and to provide a perspective on why male survivors are absent from my survivor sample.

The IERE Summer Dissertation Grant allowed me to devote the necessary time to recruiting a diverse sample of survivor participants, thereby ensuring that the findings of my dissertation reflect the experiences of all survivors and can fill a critical gap in existing literature on the experiences of survivors beyond those who are white, cis, and female as they interact with the healthcare, criminal-legal, and education systems.

Thank you for your generous support.

Sincerely,
Kaitie Chakoian

Dear Supporters of the Legacy Fund,

I would like to thank you for your generous support to IERE's Racial Equity Fellowship. Your gift has advanced my dissertation research and enabled me to strengthen the racial equity component of my analysis. Thanks to your support this summer, I created a single dataset with 40 years of federal employment data, completed a chapter of my dissertation, and extended my analyses on women of color.

My dissertation, which is titled "Gender Segregation and Earnings in the Federal Workforce," utilizes federal employment data to explicate the relationship between inequality and public sector labor market outcomes. In order to carry out these analyses, I use unique data on the employment and earnings of the federal workforce dating back to 1973. The rich, longitudinal dataset enables me to examine how the earnings and employment effects of gender segregation in the federal workforce ripple across time, career pathways, and sectors of the economy. It is my hope that this work will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of federal workforce pay-setting mechanisms, pay equity, spillover effects, and occupation and agency segregation.

Your support helped to expand my dataset for a more complete analysis. My primary dataset for the research is robust; however, it ends in 1997, which leaves questions about the status of women in the federal government over the last 25 years. To resolve this, I obtained a second version of the dataset with data for 1973 through 2013. This second dataset has fewer variables and lacks information on gender. Since gender is central to my analyses, I used a dataset from the Social Security Administration to impute gender for a large number of workers. I used a third dataset of the same federal employment data to weight the gender-imputed dataset to the true gender distribution of the federal workforce in each year. I appended this gender-imputed and weighted data to my primary dataset, and I can now produce analyses on workers in the federal civilian workforce across 40 consecutive years using a single dataset.

The summer fellowship also supported my writing of the data and methodology chapter of my dissertation. As described in the paragraph above, this research includes unique datasets and statistical methods that require thorough explanation. The chapter details my datasets, gender imputation method, key variables, and econometric methods. Upon completing the data chapter, I made exciting progress on the following chapter of my dissertation, which provides an overview of federal workforce demographics and employment, over time and in comparison to the private sector.

The Racial Equity Fellowship enabled me the time to better integrate race and ethnicity into my analyses of gender. I feel that a dissertation on women in the federal workforce in the 1970s through today is incomplete without discussing what employment looked like for women of various races in comparison to white men in particular. Data on race and ethnicity are not available across all 40 years of data, so I have added more data to my analyses in order to complete the picture of women in the federal workforce.

My academic accomplishments this summer were made possible by your generous support through the IERE Racial Equity Fellowship. I would like to express my utmost gratitude for your support of my research and of racial equity research writ large. I feel honored to be part of such a supportive community, and I look forward to the opportunity to pay your generosity forward to future racial equity scholars.

Sincerely,
Teresa Kroeger

Dear Legacy Fund Supporters,

My name is Michael Berger, and I'm going into my third year (the homestretch!!) of a dual Social Impact MBA and Masters of Public Policy focused on Economic and Racial Equity. Due to your support, this summer I was able to sustain myself while working for the Massachusetts Communities Action Network (MCAN). MCAN is a statewide coalition of interfaith, member-led community organizing groups and is the MA affiliate of the national Faith In Action network. My background is in community and electoral organizing, and through this work I was able to build on that and to gain a much deeper understanding and experience in how community driven economic and racial justice legislative change is achieved in Massachusetts, and by extension across the country.

I believe community organizing is at the heart of American democracy and is what drives us to actually live the values our nation portends to represent. Through the Heller MPP Summer Internship and your wise, generous support of it, I have fortified and expanded my comprehension of and ability to contribute to this kind of critical grassroots transformative change. I thank you deeply and sincerely for that, as do the future beneficiaries of this fund. The school, country, and world are better for it.

Thank you, and please continue your support, knowing your return on investment is real and expansive.

With Gratitude and In Partnership,
Michael W. Berger

Dear Supporters of the Legacy Fund,

My name is Rachel Dovek and I am a graduate student gaining my Master of Public Policy and Master of Arts in Jewish Professional Leadership from Heller and Hornstein.

This summer I had the opportunity to intern with the Network of Jewish Human Services Agencies. I was able to work on macro level projects that allowed me to put my policy learnings into practice. I developed a case management certificate curriculum from collated survey data, developed a training to make organizations more LGBTQ+ inclusive, served on the Domestic Human Needs coalition among other projects. This summer allowed me to have a lens into how Jewish nonprofits impact public policy and human service agencies and further understand the skills I still need to develop.

I am deeply passionate about foster care and juvenile justice reform. Prior to coming back to Brandeis, I completed a year of service with the Commonwealth Corps at More Than Words as an employment and education coordinator supporting foster care, homeless, court involved and out of school young adults to take charge of their lives by taking charge of a business.

Thank you again for your generosity and helping students like me advance important issues at the Heller School.

Rachel Dovek

Dear Supporters of the Legacy Fund,

My name is Sivan Gopen, and I am a second-year graduate student at Brandeis University, pursuing a dual Master of Public Policy at the Heller School and a Master in Jewish Professional Leadership with the Hornstein Program. I am writing to thank you for your generous gift to the Legacy Fund at Brandeis. This funding allowed me to pursue an internship at the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies at Tel Aviv University this past summer.

As an intern with the Moshe Dayan Center, I helped organize events for the Gulf-Israel Policy Forum, a forum that brings together leaders and innovators from around the Middle East to consider the region's problems and how they can be solved with regional cooperation. Additionally, I had the opportunity of delving into my own personal research project, an analysis of the policies surrounding honor killings in the Middle East. This experience with the Moshe Dayan Center has given me many tools that will further my career, such as an understanding of diplomacy, writing and research skills and contacts with thought leaders in the Middle East.

I am dedicated to finding policy solutions to social inequities in the Middle East and am excited by the idea of regional cooperation in pursuing these solutions. I was born and raised in Israel and have been a first-hand witness to many of the social disparities that plague my country and my region. This internship has given me the opportunity to contemplate policy solutions to women's rights issues that we, the women of the Middle East, face. In the future, I hope to continue the work of finding policy solutions to social inequities.

Thank you again for your generosity.

Best wishes,
Sivan Gopen

Dear Legacy Fund Supporters,

My name is Meghan Gragg and I am a Master of Public Policy student at The Heller School at Brandeis University. I am writing to thank you for your generous gift to the Legacy Fund at Brandeis. This funding helped support my work with the Institute of Economic and Racial Equity's evaluation of Massachusetts' BabySteps program this summer. As a research intern in IERE, I helped clean and code transcripts of family interviews and focus groups, to determine the effectiveness of the BabySteps program and how the BabySteps program can improve in the future.

I also helped with the analysis of the qualitative data we coded. The BabySteps program is an important program as it is a Children's Savings Account that, if opened in the first year of life, the state of Massachusetts will give \$50 to contribute to the account. This could help families save for college, encourage children from lower income families to go to college, and increase financial education in the population. In the long run this work will hopefully expand asset equity among the families of Massachusetts. Thank you again for your generosity and helping students like me advance policy research at The Heller School.

Thank you,
Meghan Gragg

Dear Supporters of the Legacy Fund,

My name is Ariel and I am a Master of Public Policy student at The Heller School at Brandeis University, with a concentration in Environmental Justice. I am writing to thank you for your generous gift to the Legacy Fund at Brandeis. Your gift meant that this summer I was able to work with the Environmental League of Massachusetts on several projects related to offshore wind, regional electrical transmission planning, and the upcoming MA elections. As a Fellow with ELM I was able to focus on policy research that will benefit the state, the nation, and the world by advancing climate action. I also worked with ELM's Action Fund to support state House and Senate candidates that placed a green future and environmental justice at the forefront of their campaigns.

Prior to enrolling at Heller, I earned a Ph.D. in chemistry from Boston University. I have long believed that the United States needs more scientists in government, which is why I chose to pivot to policy. This program, and the internship experience you facilitated, are helping me to access the levers of power necessary to lead the country into a more sustainable future. I will recall your support with gratitude when I am working at the Office of Science and Technology Policy one day.

Thank you again for your generosity in helping students like me change the world for the better.

Be well and safe,
Ariel S. Hyre, Ph.D.

Dear Supporters of the Legacy Fund,

My name is Isaac Minkoff. I am a Master of Public Policy student at the Heller School and a Master of Jewish Professional Leadership student in the Hornstein Program at Brandeis University. I am writing to express my deep thanks for your generous gift through the Legacy fund at Brandeis.

The funding supported my work this summer at the Jewish Institute for National Security of America (JINSA), a national security and international relations policy think tank located in Washington DC. This position was funded through the Legacy Fund. As a policy intern at JINSA, I tracked incidences of violence in Israel and the Palestinian Territories and malign behavior conducted by Iran in its region. I also wrote memos on Iran's nuclear policy, military capacities of Greek Cyprus, Turkish incursion in Northern Syria (particularly in Kurdish regions), dynamics in US-Middle Eastern foreign relations and the regional transition to renewable energies, and in streamlining US military posture in the Middle East. The research and analysis I provided in my work this summer were crucial to the work of the senior and executive publications at JINSA. 4 months at JINSA has given me a solid foundation in security policy.

This year, I'm planning to write my graduate thesis in the realm of environmental security. As climate change begins to ravage the most arid regions of the planet, human insecurity continues to rise. To help mitigate armed conflicts and arising from environmental insecurity to preserve human life and wellbeing, much work and research is needed in the growing field of environmental security. My passion for environmentalism and human rights drove me to this experience in international security and affairs at JINSA. With this security background established, I can continue to build my environmental policy chops this fall and spring as I prepare to write my thesis on topics connected to environmental security.

Thank you so much for your generous support in helping Heller School students like me advance policy research and analysis in this critical area.

Isaac Minkoff

Dear Supporters of the Legacy Fund,

Thank you for your generous gift to the Legacy Fund at Brandeis University. I am a current student in the Master of Public Policy program at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management, and this funding helped support my work with Health Care For All, a group that provides assistance, advocacy, and research for health care in Massachusetts.

Thanks to the funding from the Legacy Fund, I had the opportunity to serve as a practicum student with Health Care For All this summer. In this position, I assisted with a social determinants of health research project that assessed the partnerships between accountable care organizations and community-based organizations; these collaborations are a key part of the MassHealth Flexible Service Program that seeks to address people's health-related social needs, like food and housing security. Alongside a fellow practicum student, I coded interviews, identified major themes, and wrote a policy report. This experience helped me develop my qualitative research skills and gain work experience in the intersection of research and advocacy.

I am passionate about improving public health from a multi-disciplinary approach. Prior to attending Heller, I was a clinical researcher in a neuroimaging lab at a local hospital. While that role provided me insights into physiological solutions to health, I am excited to learn about approaches that also consider the social and economic factors that influence health. My work this summer has allowed me to experience healthcare from these perspectives and round out my research skill set, both of which will aid me on my journey to developing comprehensive approaches to public health.

Thank you again for your generosity.

Zoe Rubinstein

Dear Supporters of the Legacy Fund,

My name is Maya and I have just started my second year in the Master of Public Policy program at The Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. I want to thank you for your generous gift to the Legacy Fund at Brandeis! The funding supported my work as a summer research intern at the Leah Zallman Center (LZC) for Immigrant Health Research, a center within the Institute for Community Health.

As a research intern at LZC I was fortunate enough to work alongside Dr. Jessica Santos, PhD, (and former Brandeis professor!) and a team of researchers to evaluate programs designed to advance the health and wellbeing of immigrant and refugee populations. As a member of the team, I got invaluable hands-on experience in the world of qualitative research - including in conducting semi-structured interviews and focus groups and performing thematic analysis on our findings. I also got the chance to work on a publicly-facing Resource Guide that practitioners in the field of immigrant advancement can consult when designing pre- and post- survey tools measuring the impact of mental health interventions. My experience at LZC gave me the opportunity to learn how rigorous mixed-methods research can (and should!) be made accessible to all audiences.

After my internship, I feel confident that I would like to continue to hone my skills in qualitative research and pursue a career that allows me to understand and uplift a range of voices within the policy landscape. Thank you again for your wonderful donation and for helping students like me pursue the knowledge to advance social justice!

Thank you,
Maya Lynn Jai Singh

Please see the next page for the text of the card.



THANK YOU

PAPER+SOURCE
2014 - Printed on recycled paper
Made in Chicago, Illinois

Dear supporters of the Legacy Fund,
My name is Maya and I am in my second year of the Master of Public Policy program at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. I want to thank you for your generous gift to the Legacy Fund at Brandeis. The Legacy Fund supported my work as a summer research intern at the Center for Immigrant Health Research (CIHR) at the Health Institute for Communities with Health.
I was privileged to work alongside Dr. Jessica Santos, PhD, and a team of researchers to work on a project titled "The Role of Health Insurance in the Lives of Immigrants." I was able to contribute to the project in several ways, including conducting interviews, analyzing data, and writing reports. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with such a talented team and for the support of the Legacy Fund. I hope to continue to work with the Center for Immigrant Health Research in the future.

Dear Supporters of the Legacy Fund,

My name is Lisa Kim Thorn and I am a Master of Public Policy student at The Heller School at Brandeis University. Thank you for your generous gift to the Legacy Fund at Brandeis. Through my internship with the Institute for Economic and Racial Equity, your support helped build relationships with Black farmers across the southern United States to grow the body of research toward meaningful cash payments for marginalized communities.

Over the summer I researched local news organizations, agricultural magazines, and developed publishing goals to ensure the stories of Black farmers would reach Black farming communities. I traveled to Alabama to speak directly with farmers, ranchers, and other researchers who are invested in supporting policy to build strong rural communities. The farmers underscored the local, state, and federal systems still fraught with racism and discrimination. Their once vibrant communities were deprived of financial support and slowly they lost not only their land, but their food supply, educators, craftspeople, and health workers.

This experience extinguished any lasting doubts I may have had about returning to school after more than a decade in the private sector. While my field of study centers around the challenges of race and technology, I could contribute to the fight for equity in any industry or policy area. Online communities are similar to any other community. They require support systems, communication, accountability, trust, and many other elements to sustain a healthy environment. I will take this experience with me into my career as I tackle the difficult work of creating and advocating for an equitable society, be it online or in rural America.

Thank you again for your generosity and helping students like me advance policy research at The Heller School.

Lisa Kim Thorn

Dear Supporters of the Legacy Fund,

My name is Julia Warheit and I am a Master of Public Policy student at The Heller School at Brandeis University. I am writing to thank you for your generous gift to the Legacy Fund at Brandeis. This funding helped support my work with the Racial Justice x Tech Policy (RJ x TP) Initiative under the Institute for Economic and Racial Equity at The Heller School.

More specifically, this summer I had the privilege to be a Carceral Policy Pillar intern under the RJ x TP Initiative at The Heller School. This position was funded through the Legacy Fund. In my role, I conducted research on policies and practices that have been used to surveil Black and Brown communities from the inception of slavery to present day. This research along with the lived experiences of some of my team members was used to create a virtual game called As They Watch Us, which will be used to educate students and policymakers about the history and current state of surveillance. We hope this policy tool will create a pipeline for Black and Brown students to work in the technology field, and for new policies that will ameliorate racist policies, and support and uplift Black and Brown communities.

I am passionate about criminal justice reform. Prior to coming to Heller, I worked as an intern at the Baltimore Office of the Public Defender, where I realized policy was my passion rather than law after seeing the laws public defenders have to deal with on a daily basis. The following summer I worked as an intern at Restore Justice in Chicago where I helped research and lobby for more humane criminal justice laws. My research position this summer has helped work toward my dream job of working in criminal justice reform, and I hope to continue such work when I graduate from The Heller School in May.

Thank you again for your generosity and helping students like me advance policy research at The Heller School.

Julia Warheit

“The most important political office is that of the private citizen.”

Justice Louis D. Brandeis

The Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice supports Brandeis students, enhances campus life and promotes the issues of social justice that the former U.S. Supreme Court justice championed throughout his life.

Since its establishment in 2006, the Legacy Fund has sponsored a series of initiatives designed to help students, enrich the university community, and address social justice concerns on and off campus.

The Legacy Fund was founded by Jules Bernstein '57, and is funded in part by Mr. Bernstein and his wife, Linda Lipsett, and the Class of 1969 Fund for Social Justice, an endowment established by the Class of 1969 during their 50th Reunion.

Special gratitude to the Legacy Fund Advisory Committee:

Jules Bernstein '57, Committee Chair

Walter Mossberg '69

Nancy (Sherman) Shapiro '69

Shaina Gilbert '10

Sahar Massachi '11

Contact Us

Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice
Brandeis University
415 South Street
Waltham, MA 02453

781-736-4013