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THE HELLER SCHOOL
FOR SOCIAL POLICY
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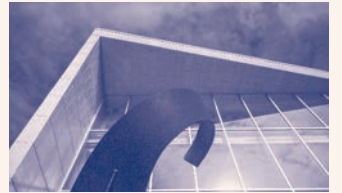
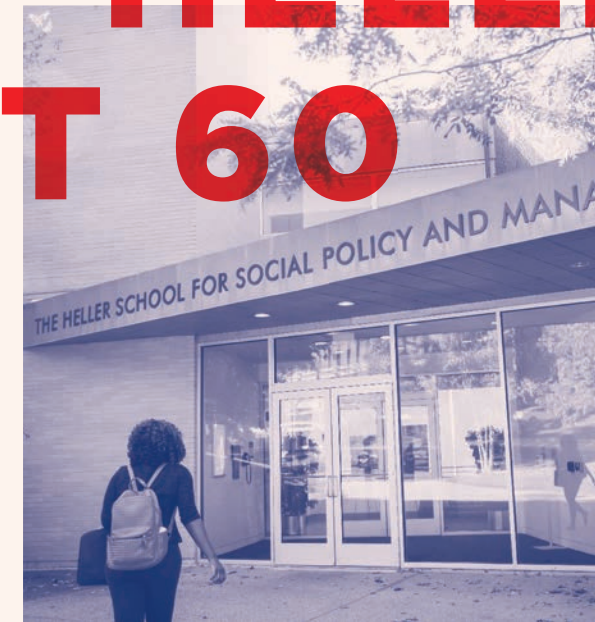
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Heller

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

CELEBRATING HELLER AT 60



BACK COVER(AGE)

Our civil rights laws don't go away in the midst of a pandemic.

ARI NE'EMAN ON NPR ABOUT HOW POLICIES TO RATION CARE FOR COVID-19 COME AT THE EXPENSE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The concept of caste and caste discrimination is not something to which most Americans are attuned, and therefore even discrimination might be hidden to our eyes.

LAURENCE SIMON IN INSIDE HIGHER ED ON BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY ADDING CASTE TO ITS NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

We see really vast inequities between black and white children, as well as between white and Hispanic children.

DOLORES ACEVEDO-GARCIA ON NPR, DISCUSSING THE CHILD OPPORTUNITY INDEX 2.0, WHICH REVEALS SHARP RACIAL DIVIDES IN CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES

It's totally laid bare how vulnerable they are.

DAVID WEIL IN REUTERS ON GIG WORKERS AND THEIR LACK OF SOCIAL SAFETY NET PROTECTIONS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

Heller

Contents

- 02** LETTER FROM 60TH ANNIVERSARY STEERING COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS
- 03** NEWS BRIEFS
COEX student Soroush Kazemi's work featured in Oscar-winning documentary; Professor emerita donates retirement fund to support Heller students; Commemorating Ford Hall 2015
- 06** PEAK INSPIRATION
Daniel Mazur, PhD '00, scales the planet's highest summits and gives back to the communities that call those mountains home
- 10** CELEBRATING HELLER AT 60
➤ Reflections from Dean David Weil on Heller's 60th Birthday
➤ The Best Lessons I Learned at Heller: Alumni share stories about their favorite professors
➤ Now and Then: How Heller has changed over the last six decades
➤ 60 Heller Alumni Around the World
➤ Deans' Stories: Stuart Altman, Jack Shonkoff and Lisa Lynch look back on their time leading the Heller School
➤ Heller Policy Impact: How Heller's policy footprint has grown over the years
- 28** TRACKING FENTANYL IN THE DRUG SUPPLY
Traci Green puts public health first with new services for users to test their drugs
- 32** HELLER ALUMNI STEP UP TO COMBAT COVID-19 IN BOSTON
Brenna Schneider, MBA '12, Dr. Ihsan Kaadan, MS '16, and Audrey Etlinger Cohen '07, MPP '10, in their own words.
- 33** ALUMNI MILESTONES
Maryse Pearce, MBA/MPP '18, is strengthening the LGBTQ community in New York City; Evan Hochberg, MMHS '96, is creating social change through philanthropy; Sydney Skov, MA SID '15, creates new documentary to shine light on dance and development; Kathy Byers, MSW '71, honored as National Association of Social Work Pioneer



KRISTIN PERRY, MA COEX'20, INTERVIEWS A YAZIDI RELIGIOUS DEPUTY FROM THE PERSECUTED RELIGIOUS MINORITY GROUP DURING HER PRACTICUM. SHE WORKED IN IRAQI KURDISTAN FOR THE MIDDLE EAST RESEARCH INSTITUTE (MERI), IRAQ'S LEADING THINK TANK FOCUSED ON ADDRESSING POLICY ISSUES IN THE MIDDLE EAST.



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ABOUT THE COVER
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LETTER FROM 60TH ANNIVERSARY STEERING COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

Welcome to this very special edition of Heller Magazine, released at the culmination of the Heller School for Social Policy and Management’s 60th anniversary year.

As you look at the content of the magazine, we hope you enjoy reading the recollections of favorite professors, looking at photos of Heller then and now, and learning from Dean Weil’s reflections on consistent themes throughout Heller’s history. You will also learn about the interesting work of members of the Heller community, including promoting youth development through skateboarding in Afghanistan, leading excursions up Mount Everest and supporting critical sustainable development projects in the region, and setting up drug-checking centers in Massachusetts.

As the co-chairs of the Heller 60th Anniversary steering committee, we’ve had the great privilege to roll up our sleeves and dive back into Heller with the objectivity that comes with distance and time. Like it was for many of you, the unique confluence of Heller’s emphasis on social justice and applied policy research brought both of us through the school’s doors originally. And our homecoming is rooted in deep appreciation for the ways that our Heller education has been foundational to our career achievements.

Now, more than ever, the world needs Heller. As the sense of urgency in addressing societal problems quickens, Heller has a unique role to play in equipping students with a solid understanding of research and policy development, and the skills to co-create innovative and compassionate solutions.

Thank you for all the ways that you’ve engaged with the Heller School this year. We’ve asked you to get involved by connecting with current and prospective students and alumni; attending gatherings with other members of the Heller community, be it in Mumbai, Waltham or digitally; and sharing your social justice hero and your favorite professor as part of our year-long campaign, launched in Heller Magazine in spring 2019. To kick things off, here are ours:

TOM: My social justice heroes are **CHARLES SCHOTTLAND**, first dean of the Heller School, and **ERNEST (ERNIE) GREEN**, one of the Little Rock Nine. Schottland formed a school

devoted to social justice and to building the field by training future deans and academic leaders of social policy schools around the country. Green was the first African American to graduate from Little Rock Central High School. He’s an iconic civil rights figure who remains active today.

My favorite professor was **LEONARD HAUSMAN**, former Maurice B. Hexter Professor of Social and Economic Policy. Hausman taught me to take prudent risks, and together with Dean Schottland, we launched the first master’s degree program at Heller in 1977.

SUE: My social justice hero is **ELIJAH CUMMINGS**, former U.S. Representative. He constantly exhorted us to be better as a society, and we’ve lost an important voice since his passing.

As for my favorite Heller professor, **NORM KURTZ** taught statistics in a fun and relevant way that made me love it. These quantitative skills have served me well over the years.

As we look ahead to Heller’s next 60 years, we urge you to stay connected: connected to the school, the students, the alumni, and in particular, to the practice of social justice. If not us, then who? If not now, then when?

Sincerely,



Thomas P. Glynn III, MSW’72, PhD’77
Co-Chair, Heller 60th Anniversary Steering Committee
CEO, Harvard Allston Land Company
Adjunct Lecturer, Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Harvard Kennedy School



Susan Windham-Bannister, PhD’77, H’19
Co-Chair, Heller 60th Anniversary Steering Committee
President and CEO, Biomedical Growth Strategies

COEX STUDENT SOROUSH KAZEMI’S WORK FEATURED IN OSCAR-WINNING DOCUMENTARY

BY **KAREN SHIH**

In February, the 2020 Academy Awards honored “Learning to Skateboard in a War Zone (If You’re a Girl)” with the Oscar for Best Documentary Short Subject. The film features the work of Soroush Kazemi, MA COEX’21. Kazemi led the nonprofit Skateistan-Kabul as general manager for nearly four years, working with 700 children — mostly girls — to give them new educational opportunities through sports.

“All children deserve to receive education, regardless of their ethnicity, religion or language,” says Kazemi. “At Skateistan, skateboarding is the hook. Once the children come to skateboard, we enroll them in education programs and classes, leadership activities and other sports.”

Skateistan, founded in 2009, works to improve the lives of 3 million Afghan children who aren’t in school but are often working on the streets polishing shoes, washing cars, and selling tea and snacks for just \$1 per day. In addition to sports programs, it offers a one-year intensive back-to-school program that catches students up, then enrolls them back in public schools and tracks their progress. Skateistan’s programs are completely free, including shuttle buses and meals.

It wasn’t easy to get students, his colleagues or even the government on board with making the documentary, but Kazemi worked behind the scenes to help the film crew make it all happen. He was thrilled to hear that the documentary won the Oscar, which he hopes will not just raise the profile of the organization but his country as a whole.

“I told our colleagues, ‘It is the very right time to send a very different message to the world,’” he says. “This is a message

of hope and peace and love. That Afghanistan and Kabul are not just about explosions, suicide attacks, where females and women are second-class citizens. It is a country where people are trying very hard for change.”

Kazemi has experienced firsthand the upheavals in his country. When he was in primary school in northern Afghanistan, the Taliban forced his family to flee the country. But as a refugee in Iran, he wasn’t able to go to school. He turned to selling pens on the street to pay for private night classes. When the family returned home after the fall of the Taliban, he was determined to shine a light on societal ills, and created a small monthly newspaper with his friends.

“We questioned social challenges, like why people don’t have equal access to education; why there was child and forced marriage; and environmental problems like air pollution and solid waste management,” he says. That led him into his first job with the Civil Society and Human Rights Network, and a decade-long career working for human rights.

Choosing to study conflict resolution and coexistence at Heller seemed like a natural next step. His wife, Alia Sharifi, MA SID’16, had studied at Heller, and he wanted to gain the skills and knowledge to take his work with Skateistan to the next level.

“I love the diversity at the Heller School,” Kazemi says. “I’ve learned a lot from my classmates and the experiences they’ve shared, which will enrich and enhance my knowledge for when I go back to the field and start stronger than before.”



VIDEO STILL FROM THE TRAILER FOR “LEARNING TO SKATEBOARD IN A WAR ZONE (IF YOU’RE A GIRL)”

TOP:
TOM GLYNN
BOTTOM:
SUE WINDHAM-
BANNISTER



MARI FITZDUFF

PROFESSOR EMERITA DONATES RETIREMENT FUND TO SUPPORT HELLER STUDENTS

Mari Fitzduff, professor emerita of the Master of Arts in Conflict Resolution and Coexistence (COEX) program, has generously donated her Brandeis University retirement fund to create a 10-year fellowship program. Named “The Fitzduff Family Fellowship,” the scholarship will be awarded each year to an international COEX student from a war zone, allowing the recipient to gain skills from the Heller School that will allow them to return and build peace in their home community.

Fitzduff, who retired from the Heller School in May 2019, is an expert in the peacebuilding process and the social psychology of inter-societal conflict. In her retirement, she

is continuing her practice and working on an upcoming book focused on behavioral peacebuilding for civilian and military personnel working in conflict areas.

Why set up a fellowship fund? She says, “Both my husband and I have concerns about inherited wealth ... both the taking and the giving of it. How can you work in Heller and not have them? We have two sons and a daughter-in-law who are all professionals and lack none of the necessities of life, nor do their children. We live relatively simply, and so have ended up with more funds than we thought we needed for the next stage of our lives.”

Additionally, as the founding director of the COEX program, Fitzduff is proud of the program and the work that her many students are doing around the world today as alumni. “But it is very hard for many of our students to find funding for the work. Many of them come from situations where they and their families and friends are struggling to get by ... in the midst of sometimes terrible wars. If by funding a tuition scholarship we can help one more person come to our program, then we are very happy to do this.”

Fitzduff herself is familiar with this struggle, as she began her career in her home of Northern Ireland during the 1990s, where she was deeply involved in facilitating peace. She notes that “a very important part of this work was the building up of trusted institutions, even in the middle of the war, that could address issues of inequality, housing, public services, etc., and thereby make political agreements more possible.”

To that end, Fitzduff has always felt that the COEX program is well situated in a school of social policy, like Heller, where students often go on to careers that help ensure more inclusive and peaceful societies.

COMMEMORATING FORD HALL 2015

BY KAREN SHIH

“What happens when we forget?”

That was the question posed by PhD candidate Rev. Jarvis Williams to the Heller community in January. “Not remembering can be dangerous,” he said.

That’s why Heller’s Office of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity (EID) organized a two-part event from January 21 to 22 called “Ford Hall: Closing the Disparity Gap,” to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Ford Hall 2015 protests. During that time, students led a 13-day sit-in to advocate for racial justice and a more inclusive, equitable and diverse student experience, inspired by the 1969 campus protests that led to the creation of the Department of African and African American Studies (AAAS).

EID Associate Dean Maria Madison — whose position was created in the wake of Ford Hall 2015 — and her team brought together alumni who had participated in the protests to share their experiences with a new generation of students.

Kicking off the evening event, Madison said, “The dynamism they showed through their leadership and tenacity demonstrates our motto: knowledge advancing social justice.”

The panel featured Alex Montgomery, MPP’17; Callie Watkins Liu, PhD’16; Shayna Jones, MPP’18; Chari Calloway ’19; and Kwesi Jones ’21. The event started with an audio clip of Martin Luther King Jr.’s 1957 lecture at Brandeis and a viewing of Kwesi Jones’ video about Ford Hall, created for the AAAS 50th anniversary.

“As a public policy student at Heller, I thought to myself, why can’t I question Brandeis policy?” said Montgomery, who recounted their own experiences with racism on campus.

The students’ demands to the Brandeis administration included increasing black faculty and staff to 10% across

campus, mandating yearly diversity and inclusion workshops, increasing funding of black student organizations and appointing a campus chief diversity officer.

“Our dignity wasn’t being honored,” said Shayna Jones, who now serves on the Heller Alumni Association board and continues to push for improvements. “We were asking for basic necessities. Having 10% black faculty? That’s not a lot.”

Joining the sit-in wasn’t easy. They recounted the challenges of missing Thanksgiving with their families, keeping up with classes and feeling unseen by the rest of campus, for whom life continued as usual.

Another Ford Hall 2015 participant in the audience, Christian Perry, MA SID/MBA’17, urged the Heller community not to stand on the sidelines.

“You have the opportunity every day to act on your values,” he said, citing current examples like protesting potential war with Iran. “Are you going to sit in class like nothing is happening in the world?”

The next day, Heller welcomed Smith College history professor Elizabeth Pryor to discuss her research on the “N-word,” particularly its toxic effect in educational environments.

“Classrooms are the most treacherous spaces for a point of encounter with the N-word,” she said. Since today’s students often lack history and context around the word — both the slur and the euphemism — it’s important to explicitly teach those things before students encounter it in popular culture or in literature, such as in “Huckleberry Finn.”

Williams closed out the events with a powerful speech about the importance of remembrance.

“It matters that we take time, like now, to collectively remember Ford Hall,” he said. “We can’t fail to remember the people who led the way.”

Please visit heller.brandeis.edu/diversity/learning/ford-hall.html for more information about Ford Hall, including ongoing EID efforts at Heller.

TOP TO BOTTOM: SHAYNA JONES, MPP’18; KWESI JONES ’21, ALEX MONTGOMERY, MPP’17; CHARI CALLOWAY ’19; CALLIE WATKINS LIU, PHD’16



PEAK INSPIRATION

DANIEL MAZUR, PHD'00, SCALES THE PLANET'S HIGHEST SUMMITS AND GIVES BACK TO THE COMMUNITIES THAT CALL THOSE MOUNTAINS HOME



BY **BETHANY ROMANO, MBA'17**

IN THE WORLD OF ELITE MOUNTAINEERING, Daniel Mazur, PhD'00, is a celebrated alpinist and trip leader. A veteran climber, he's summited virtually all of the world's tallest peaks and has led 12 expeditions to Mount Everest. In addition to these accomplishments, he's known for having rescued several fellow climbers on Everest, including a high-profile incident in 2006 that landed him in newspapers across the country.

Over the decades, he's become deeply involved as a philanthropist in the Everest region, supporting critical sustainable development projects alongside indigenous people in the area. His top philanthropic goal today is to construct a solar-powered biogas facility to treat the thousands of pounds of human waste left on Everest each year.

"I got into the social aspect of my work," he says. "I wanted to take the concept of giving back that I learned at Heller, and bring a certain amount of study to it, to identify needs and look at policy. I started to spot areas where maybe I could do something helpful, collaborating with local people to work toward common goals. I do a lot of that now. And that's all because of Heller."

SOCIAL WORK BEGINNINGS

Growing up in the flatlands of suburban Illinois, Mazur's earliest exposure to mountains and wilderness was through his grandfather's stories. "My grandfather was my hero," says Mazur. "He homesteaded in Montana in the 1920s, and he was a Boy Scout for 50 years. I always just thought he was the greatest guy."

Though Mazur's grandfather passed away when Mazur was just 10, those stories of homesteading in the shadow of the Rockies inspired him to attend the University of Montana, where he began climbing mountains and glaciers.

He also earned a bachelor's degree in social work, citing his upbringing as inspiration. "My parents were both PhDs and were active in their community, so I learned about the importance of public service and education from a young age," says Mazur. The world of social work intrigued him enough that he quickly sought a graduate degree in the field.

"I was interested in what causes social issues, what contributes to them. So I started looking at graduate schools, and Heller popped out as a really cool option," he says. "I was really impressed with the people, the teachers and students I met at Heller."

As a doctoral student in the 1990s, Mazur pursued questions around affordable housing for the elderly. He was interested in the importance of extended family and in policies that could foster affordable housing in the U.S. for grandparents as they age. His classmate Howie Baker remembers him as a "thoughtful and non-judgmental person, always very positive about our work."

But earning a PhD is not a quick endeavor — and the mountains were calling. "Summers I would go away and climb mountains, first in Alaska with friends, and then just bigger and bigger mountains every year, until eventually I ended up climbing Everest," Mazur says.

Partway through his doctoral degree, he took several years off to seriously explore his options as a professional mountaineer. He moved to England and split his time between university classes and climbing. Eventually, he had a "lightbulb moment" in a class in England. "I discovered how the British manage affordable housing for older people, and I decided I wanted to weave their idea together with U.S. housing policy. That idea really intrigued me — enough that I had to get back to Boston right away." He rushed back to Heller and completed his dissertation within three years.

PROFESSIONAL SUMMIT GUIDE

After earning his doctorate in 2000, Mazur turned to professional climbing as his full-time job. "I saw that I could take other people up there and share my love of it. I got into leading these expeditions and earning my living at that, paying all my bills," he says. For the last 16 years, he's been an expedition leader for Summit Climb, guiding groups to scale mountains like Everest and K2 every year.

Though his home base is Olympia, Washington, his work regularly takes him to Tibet, Nepal, Pakistan, India, China and more. He describes his work as his passion, but he's quick to add that "the responsibility is huge, and it's stressful. It's great to be with people who are on vacation, but it's a risky and dangerous thing. I don't want to discount that or take it for granted."

Mazur's climbing adventures have been chronicled by many news outlets, from National Geographic and The New York Times, to NPR and NBC. He's lived through avalanches and earthquakes, injury and frostbite. He's known many climbers who have died, and he's had a few close calls himself. The first time he ever climbed Everest was on an unplanned trip with

TOP: DANIEL MAZUR AT THE EVEREST BASE CAMP
 BOTTOM: REBUILDING EFFORTS FOR THE DEBOCHE CONVENT AFTER THE 2015 EARTHQUAKE



someone he barely knew — a Russian climber who neglected to inform him that he had only one lung (he collapsed and had to be rescued on the descent, but survived).

The most famous of Mazur's adventures is the 2006 rescue of Australian climber Lincoln Hall, whom Mazur discovered at 28,000 feet after Hall had been left for dead the night before by his own party. Mazur and his team radioed for help and sacrificed their own chance to summit Everest, sharing their oxygen and supplies with the disoriented Hall and eventually getting him back to base camp for medical care.

When asked about the climbers Mazur has rescued over the years, he expresses characteristic humility. "If I see someone that needs help, I was always someone that couldn't walk away. But everybody's different. We've all been in a car driving down a highway and seen a car in a really bad accident. Sometimes you stop and sometimes you don't. Sometimes traffic is bad, or you see an ambulance already there; it looks like it's covered. It's hard to know if you can actually help. It's tricky."

In fact, despite having led 12 expeditions to Everest — many of them successful — he's only summited once himself. "Every time I go up there, I keep getting involved in looking after our own team members and members of other teams, rescuing people, and helping people who are not feeling well to get back down," he says. "I keep saying I will go to the summit, and then I get sidetracked helping people."

FOSTERING DEVELOPMENT IN THE EVEREST REGION

There are two throughlines in Mazur's career: summiting the world's tallest mountains and helping the people he encounters along the way. In addition to rescuing fallen climbers, he's deeply involved in supporting long-term sustainable development projects in the Everest region.

Mazur notes that his initial efforts at philanthropy weren't his most successful. He recalls donating computers to a government office that issues climbing permits whose equipment was sorely outdated. He succeeded in procuring and installing some used laptops, and then promptly received a sharp rebuke from the Sherpas he was working with.

"They were like, 'What are you doing? The people in our village don't have any health care. There's nowhere for them to go when they get sick. Why don't you work on that instead?'"

he remembers. "So I went to visit their village, which I'd never been to, out in a very remote area, and there were 4,000 people living there with zero access to health care within a two- or three-day walk." Mazur worked with his Sherpa colleagues to drill down to the main issues and devise solutions: raising funds to bring in medical supplies, training local people to become health workers and getting doctors to make regular visits to the village.

"That's how it all started," he says.

In 2003, Mazur and that same group of Sherpas founded the Mount Everest Foundation for Sustainable Development (MEFSD), a registered nonprofit in Nepal. "They do tons of different projects. They have the knowledge on the ground, local skills, knowledge of the local government. They can get stuff done," he says. Mazur brings ideas to the table as well as his capacity as a fundraiser: He regularly gives slide shows and talks around the U.S. and U.K. to raise awareness and funds for MEFSD projects.

He also raises awareness through his day job as an expedition leader, making sure that tourists and climbers are aware of the health care and education needs of the local mountain communities, and providing an opportunity for them to give back. Of his clients, he says, "When you see a problem, I think it can be really hard to know what to do. And as a tourist, you're only visiting for a short time, or the problems may not be obvious to you, or you're on vacation and that's just not why you're here."

"But I think all of us have the ability to help others, inside ourselves. And all of us have the ability not to help others. We just have to make the ability to help others come to the fore, and pop out."

The MEFSD and Mazur have implemented many projects in the region, including developing schools and clinics in rural areas, providing free Sherpa climbing training programs and renovating cultural sites such as the Deboche convent, a historic and culturally significant building that was severely damaged by an earthquake in 2015.

Today, Mazur's priority is the Mount Everest Biogas Project, a much-needed treatment plant to manage the massive problem of human waste deposited on the mountain every year. He's partnered with Kathmandu University, Seattle University and Engineers Without Borders to develop a design, secure government permits and conduct site visits. At the moment, he and



GR PANT (LEFT), CEO OF NEPAL MOUNTAINEERING ASSOCIATION, WITH DANIEL MAZUR AT THE HILLARY AWARD PRESENTATION.

his partners are fundraising to secure resources to implement their design.

For these and other philanthropic projects in the region, Mazur was presented the Sir Edmund Hillary Mountain Legacy Medal in 2018 "for remarkable service in the conservation of culture and nature in mountainous regions." The medal is awarded by Mountain Legacy, a Nepali nonprofit dedicated to the stewardship of mountain landscapes, ecosystems and communities.

"Like [Sir Edmund] Hillary, Dan Mazur has been able to marshal an impressive array of resources, through a combination of tireless off-season speaking engagements and a variety of service treks," says Seth Sicroff, project director of the Sir Edmund Hillary Mountain Legacy Medal.

"Although I continue to climb professionally, the facets of what I learned at Heller have always stayed with me," Mazur says. "I've become more and more focused on giving back to indigenous mountain peoples living on the slopes of the peaks we climb, where local families can benefit from health care and education, cultural and environmental preservation."

"I just love what I do. There's so much need out there, sometimes I feel like we're not even scratching the surface, but I'm going to keep going. And that's what I loved about my time at Heller: that enthusiasm and care, and the way we all shared in that."



Knowledge Advancing
Social Justice

CELEBRATING HELLER AT 60

Reflections on Heller's 60th Birthday

BY DAVID WEIL,
DEAN AND PROFESSOR

In 2016, I was serving as President Obama's administrator for the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division when I was approached by a search firm seeking a new dean for the Heller School. At that moment, I had not given a lot of thought about whether to return to my prior academic appointment or seek new opportunities at the end of the administration, but in all candor, being a dean was not on my radar screen.

A cornerstone of my own career aspirations was (and continues to be) blending rigorous analytic research with applied social policy problems of consequence — in particular, I focus on problems that matter to working people. It is this blend of research and practice that motivated my academic work before I joined the Obama administration and guided me in my government post.

However, the more I learned about the unique academic programs and research activity of the Heller School, the more interested I became. In one small footprint, the school brings together a distinguished PhD program, six master's programs, and 10 extremely active research centers and institutes. Intrigued, I threw my academic cap in the ring. In the course of multiple discussions with members of the community, I saw that Heller's motto of "knowledge advancing social justice" was more than words: The school's commitment to mission is reflected in the perspectives

and activities of the faculty, students, researchers, alumni and staff. For that reason, I was both delighted and honored to be selected as the Heller School's sixth dean in 2017.

This orientation, and the intellectual and social justice energy that underlies it, goes back to the school's inception. It is what motivated Brandeis President Abe Sachar and Florence Heller, the philanthropist who endowed the school. It is what drew the school's first dean, Charles Schottland, and every dean to follow. And, most importantly, it is what brings together the community of scholars, students and staff who have made good on Heller's mission and legacy every day for the last 60 years.

But that legacy is neither stagnant nor simple. At 60 years, the Heller School faces major challenges:

- Sustaining a complex mix of PhD and master's programs while also supporting a large number of research institutes and centers.
- Undertaking rigorous academic research befitting a major research university and striving to apply those insights to the most pressing social policy problems of the day.
- Bringing the appropriate mix of academic disciplines together under one roof to focus on those problems in meaningful ways.
- Recruiting a diverse student, staff and faculty community that is reflective of our social justice mission, and providing them with academic programs that tap students' experience and fulfill their demands for relevance.
- Funding all of the above in a world where tuition revenue, research funding and donor support can move in sudden and unexpected directions.

In 1954, Abe Sachar and Florence Heller wrestled with similar questions in their correspondence about founding a school

of "social welfare." These same challenges underlay the five tasks that Dean Schottland shared with President Sachar after his first several months in office, and they have been center stage to the five deans who followed him — Arnold Gurin, Stuart Altman, Jack Shonkoff, Lisa Lynch and me. And they remain central to Heller's next chapter.

These recurring challenges emanate from the lofty expectations that the school has for itself, epitomized in its motto. Although the methods by which the faculty, researchers and staff undertake that mission have changed to reflect the distinctive problems of the past six decades, the desire to impact deeply rooted social policy dilemmas has not. It is this desire to effect systematic social change that has attracted like-minded people to our doors for decades — and they show no signs of stopping.

President Sachar described Heller's role in the world succinctly: "Our country needed ... a school, geared not for pedestrian social service, for the routine job of case work, but for the training of top leadership, for statesmanship, for imaginative social planning in a period where welfare programs affect the destinies of millions." Ever since, Heller has grappled with balancing its role in training students to undertake social policy work with its role as a research institution that informs social policy. This has led the school to expand beyond its original goal of training PhD students to lead schools of social work to one with a world-renowned PhD program in social policy and six master's degree programs. Heller's research endeavors have also grown, from specializing in three social policy areas at its founding, to today's full complement of 10 research institutes and centers as well as many ongoing collaborations with research enterprises across Brandeis and at universities around the world.

Florence Heller launched the school with a generous endowment, yet it quickly became clear to Dean Schottland that the combination of endowment earnings and

PhD students' tuition revenue would not financially sustain the school. So, like deans, faculty members and researchers to follow, Schottland quickly went out to secure government and foundation grants and contracts to support the school's mission. Ever since, sustaining Heller's mission has required securing externally funded research, particularly from the federal government. That necessity has created a distinctive entrepreneurial culture at Heller, linked to timely social problems people care about, but also vulnerable to political and economic cycles and risks borne by the school's individual researchers.

Although founded with a focus on U.S. domestic social policy, from its earliest days, Heller also embraced an international focus for its work. PhD students were originally required to show mastery of two foreign languages and would be "expected to have knowledge of [their] specialty in at least one country outside of the United States." It soon trained students who would assume leadership positions around the world. Today, Heller typically welcomes one-third of its students from over 60 countries. Though every program welcomes international students, many of them are drawn to the school's newer master's degree programs, which train students to face pressing problems in global health policy, conflict resolution and sustainable development.

Many of the social policy questions Heller researchers grapple with are rooted in disparities in treatment and outcomes — including inequities by race, gender, ethnicity, immigrant status, ability and other social identities. It is no accident that Heller students were deeply engaged in advocating for racial justice on Brandeis' campus in the events of Ford Hall 1969 and Ford Hall 2015. Since its inception, Heller's lofty ideals for social justice and equity were championed by giants of history — Eleanor Roosevelt was a founding member of the Board of Overseers, and the first graduating PhD class shared the podium with honorary degree recipient Thurgood Marshall —



HELLER'S FOUNDING DEAN, CHARLES SCHOTTLAND, WAS A FORMER COMMISSIONER OF THE U.S. SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION. BEFORE HE RETIRED IN 1976, HE SERVED AS UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT FROM 1970-72.

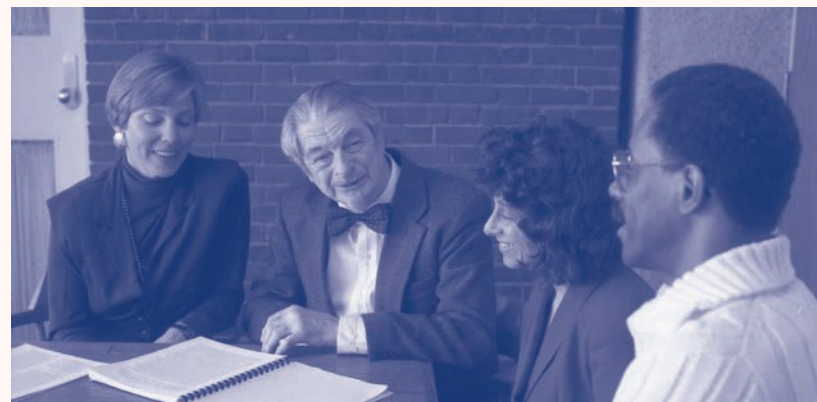
but as an institution, Heller still grapples with the immense responsibility to "walk the talk" in managing its own diversity and inclusiveness.

There is perhaps no more common debate at Heller than the struggle to define "social justice." Throughout the school's history, these productive but difficult conversations have led to intellectual tensions: how to balance the demands of rigorous research and analysis with a normative aim of improving social outcomes. How to train students in dispassionate analysis while recognizing their desire to change the world. Today, there is still no simple consensus on how to strike that balance and weigh social good. But there is unanimity that the pursuit of truth in these questions remains central to what the school strives to do.

As we all live through this coronavirus pandemic and the associated economic crisis, the world of higher education faces

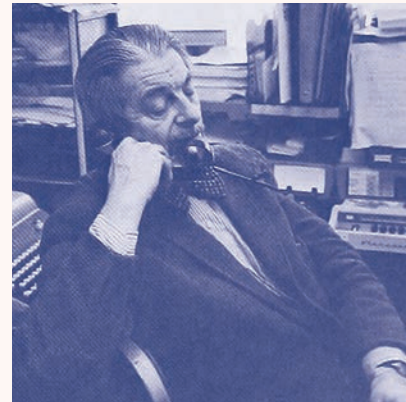
new challenges. At Heller, we have gone to great lengths to respond creatively and compassionately as an institution of higher learning and a community of scholars in our teaching, research and engagement work. In historic moments like these, society expects the academy to provide insight and leadership in the students it trains and the knowledge it produces. The present crisis demands that Heller answers that call in all that we do.

The next chapter of the Heller School will be shaped by these global challenges and by the people who are drawn to our powerful mission. These leaders, scholars and practitioners will no doubt forge new responses to enduring issues, like social and economic disparities, as well as emerging ones we have yet to fully articulate. May Heller's path forward continue to speak to its founders' desire to make the world a more just, peaceful and humane place for all.



The Best Lessons I Learned at Heller

Over the last 60 years, our dedicated faculty members have worked with thousands of students, serving not only as teachers in the classroom, but as mentors, research advisers and even friends. We asked alumni to share the best lessons they learned from their favorite professors at Heller — and we were thrilled with the wide range of responses received. From Heller's first dean, Charles Schottland, to some of our current faculty members, like Social Impact MBA Program Director Carole Carlson, here are stories of some of Heller's most beloved professors.



GUNNAR DYBWAD
FORMER PROFESSOR

KATHY BYERS, MSW'71

My adviser was Gunnar Dybwad. He was just such a wonderful human being. He was warm, accepting, a good listener, and stood up for things that were right. His whole emphasis was on disabilities, and he got me interested in that field where previously I hadn't been particularly engaged. In my practice, when I was a social worker and administrator, I worked for 10 years for an organization that worked with children with disabilities. I was glad to have his perspective. He was just a wonderful kind of rock to relate to.



ANITA HILL
UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR

NICOLE RINIER, MBA/MPP'21

The chance to study with University Professor Anita Hill is the main reason I was drawn to Heller, and has far exceeded my expectations. Professor Hill not only champions social change

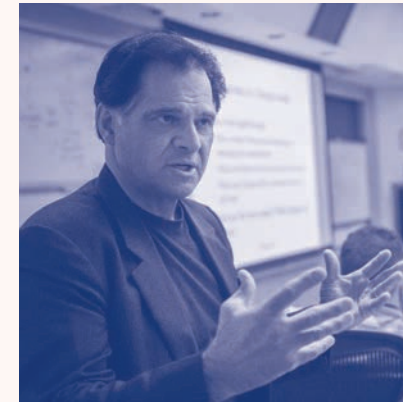
but embodies a professorship that fosters and energizes that power necessary to influence policy discourse and help shape history. I continue to learn from her great wisdom and intellect, which she imparts with a grace and sense of humor integral to keep moving forward in what can be emotionally taxing and difficult work. I feel incredibly fortunate for her guidance, support, and the way in which she pushes and challenges my research to levels I feel I otherwise never would have reached.



CAROLE CARLSON
SENIOR LECTURER AND DIRECTOR OF THE SOCIAL IMPACT MBA PROGRAM

JAMES MILLER, MBA/MPP'11

Professor Carlson was the exact educator I was looking for in graduate school. Adept at her craft, proven in her field, Professor Carlson embodied success and strength. Her gravitas and openness made her human, while her hard-hitting questions and quandaries always left students wondering, "Have I really thought this through completely?" My biggest takeaway from our time together was that "there is something to be learned in every success, but even more in every failure." Luckily, I've been blessed with more successes than failures, but I always take my time to evaluate the situations in their entirety.



JON CHILINGERIAN
PROFESSOR AND DIRECTOR OF THE EXECUTIVE MBA FOR PHYSICIANS PROGRAM

ABRA POLLOCK, MBA'11

My favorite was Jon Chilingirian, who taught leadership and organizational behavior. His course opened my mind to how one can build trust and inspire people's confidence. To this day, I apply lessons from that class in my work as a management consultant for the state of Minnesota, helping stakeholder groups feel respected and designing processes to ensure their voices are heard in policies and programs that affect them. Also, he had a class rule — anyone whose cellphone went off during class had to buy us all champagne. Somebody's cellphone only went off once during the semester — and it was his. So, yeah, he brought champagne for us on the last day of class!



RICARDO GODOY
PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GUSTAVO PAYAN LUNA, MA SID'05

When I think of the Heller School and my experience, I think of Professor Godoy. His curiosity of the world and genuine interest in his students are the two biggest lessons I learned from him. He responded to an email I sent him when I was still a prospective student. Upon my arrival in Heller, he gave me a job opportunity to be an RA for one of his research projects, even when I had zero research experience. Even though econometrics was not my field, he guided me and always cared about me and my trajectory. He always had a word of encouragement and praise, even over a decade after I graduated.



BRENDA ANDERSON
SENIOR LECTURER

SARAH WINAWER-WETZEL, MBA'09

Before I even came to Heller, I heard about Brenda Anderson. When I met with then MBA Program Director Barry Friedman, I expressed concern that I might struggle a bit with accounting, as I hadn't done much quantitative work in undergrad. "Well," he said in his Barry way, "our accounting professor wins a lot of teaching awards. ..." Once I got to financial accounting with Brenda, it was pretty clear why. I'm grateful to her not only for her warmth and positive energy, but for restoring my faith that accounting was not some mysterious gibberish, but just another language that I was perfectly capable of learning and mastering.



DAVID GIL
PROFESSOR EMERITUS

ABLA TSOLU, MA SID'08

David Gil was the first professor who allowed us to develop our own coursework for the semester. He gave us the freedom to think outside the box during every discussion so that everyone around the table had a voice. He even allowed us to grade ourselves at the end of the semester. Our classroom setup was even unconventional — it was a boardroom format!



JAMES SCHULZ
PROFESSOR EMERITUS

ALLAN BOROWSKI, PHD'80

James H. Schulz is an exceptional human being, someone universally admired and respected. The source of this admiration and respect is his complete integrity, his internationally recognized research and scholarship in the field of gerontology (especially in the economics of aging), and his tremendous investment in mentoring his students. He was a dissertation supervisor extraordinaire who, while

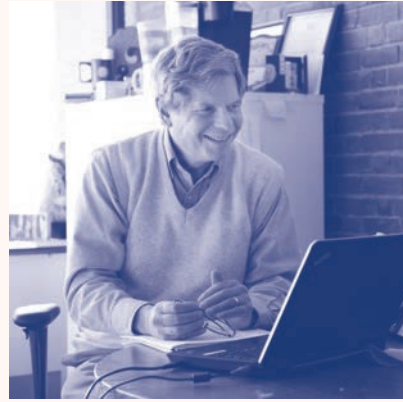
having very high expectations of his students, was also completely supportive of them. Those of us blessed to have had him as a dissertation supervisor found in Jim not only the attributes just mentioned but also a lifelong friend.



MARION HOWARD, MA SID'04
PROFESSOR EMERITA

EMILY POHL, MA SID'11

Marion Howard's planning and implementation course was the foundation of my development career. With the skills she taught, I went on to become an M&E technical adviser, where I trained thousands of people around the world in how to plan projects and evaluate if they were successful or not. That one course gave me a career, a love of logic and numbers in the midst of a messy humanitarian crisis, and the ability to train leaders in over 30 countries. Personally, Marion was a mentor and an encourager to me as I navigated the halls of a prestigious academic environment for the first time and then moved into my career.



DONALD SHEPARD
PROFESSOR

TAPIWA MUPEREKI, MS'11

Donald Shepard was really passionate about drilling down his highly quantitative courses: cost-effectiveness and advanced cost-effectiveness. He was quite excellent in relating theory to his work at the World Health Organization and the World Bank as well as his groundbreaking dengue vaccine work around 2010-11. Don perhaps emphasized the seriousness of his classes by coming fully dressed in a jacket and tie 100% of the time! His desire to produce stellar global citizens was evident in the way he selflessly devoted his time, expertise and compassion to us as students, even outside the classroom.



MARI FITZDUFF
PROFESSOR EMERITA

JIDE OLAGUNJU, MA COEX'06

Professor Fitzduff ensured a free flow of information beneficial to the academic and career progression of her students. She did not, however, just tell you where

to find resources; she followed you there and backed you to the hilt. That is how I became an MIT Mellon Research Scholar, which enabled me to graduate in record time, in the spring of 2006. In class, Mari exposed us to the best. She gave of her best and brought in other faculty from anywhere and everywhere to ensure that the knowledge and the skills we needed to be avant-garde conflict managers and coexistence enablers were available to us, at our fingertips. I have gone on to advise and consult for several governments, corporations and international agencies, such as the World Bank and the United Nations. Mari did what I think a consummate teacher ought to do: She sowed herself in her students. I can only hope that we give her back what I think is the only payoff: trigger paradigm shifts in our coexistence work communities, from negative to positive. She herself did it in Northern Ireland. She gave us all the tools we need to do it in the world.



CHARLES SCHOTTLAND
FIRST DEAN OF THE HELLER SCHOOL

JAMES A. LOMASTRO, PHD'76

Charles Schottland was very helpful to me in terms of my working through the doctoral program on time. He was both supportive and critical. While I had some difficulties in the first semester, with his support I recovered relatively quickly and was able to get back on track and graduated in less than three years. The advice that he often gave us was more encouraging than didactic. He also encouraged us to

"infiltrate" into the system — government and corporate — and indicated that even small bureaucrats in the system could make a substantial difference in people's lives.

I particularly remember graduation. My parents were both working-class, and looking forward to Social Security. It was with trepidation that I introduced them to Charlie, who had been Social Security administrator and on Eisenhower's staff during World War II. Charlie was gracious, speaking to my father — a veteran — as an equal, both having had to work with refugees after World War II. His acknowledgment of my father's service as a fellow soldier impressed me. I don't think that was a side that many people saw — his ability to relate to people at their level. Graduation became an occasion not only for celebrating my achievement but also for the affirmation of my father.

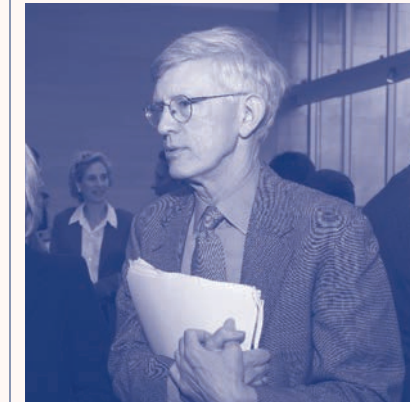


NORMAN KURTZ
PROFESSOR EMERITUS

TERESA ANDERSON, PHD'98

Norman Kurtz is my favorite of the many fine professors who guided my learning. Norman's book, "Statistical Analysis for the Social Sciences," is one I still use to teach basic data interpretation. Norman made his topic fun, useful and meaningful. "You want to know about scatter?" he'd say. "It's like cows in a thunderstorm." Norm brought the concepts home with a smile so we understood and retained them.

He chaired my doctoral committee and held me to a high standard, for which I am very grateful. He helped me through many frustrating moments with more wise comments, such as, "Don't worry, Teresa. Remember, it's always darkest before it turns completely black." A grin always accompanied those "Norm-isms." I cherish them.



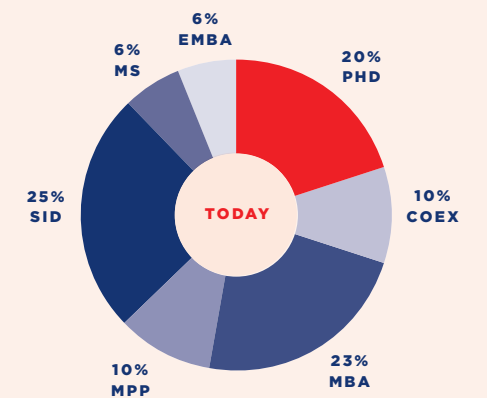
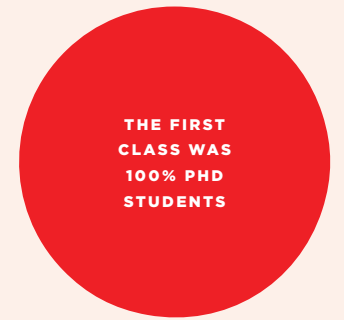
TOM GLYNN, MSW'72, PHD'77
FORMER ADJUNCT LECTURER

LAURIE ANSORGE BALL, MMHS'83

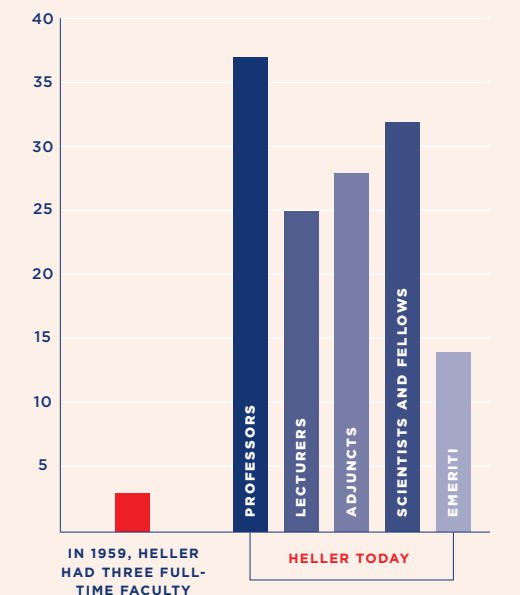
Tom introduced me to the world of public management — a career choice of which I was not even aware. After Heller, I spent almost 20 years working in Massachusetts state government (initially, at the Department of Public Welfare, where Tom was deputy commissioner), and I absolutely loved it. In addition, Tom once taught a résumé workshop and said, "If Peter Goldmark [then the executive director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey] can present his résumé on one page, do you think you can?" I never forgot that!

Now and Then

HELLER STUDENTS BY PROGRAM



HELLER FACULTY



60 Heller Alumni Around the World

Heller's 4,500 alumni are scattered across the globe, creating social change on virtually every continent. From working for the United Nations on youth development in Jordan to starting a manufacturing company in an economically depressed Massachusetts town, serving in a leadership role with the Botswana ministry of health to teaching the next generation of public policy professionals in New York City, our alumni are making an impact everywhere they go.

NORTH AMERICA

CANADA: TORONTO
JARED GOLDLUST, MA SID'10, MBA'10 COO, JOYRIDE

CANADA: VANCOUVER
TRILBY SMITH, MM'98 DIRECTOR, LEARNING AND EVALUATION, VANCOUVER FOUNDATION

EL SALVADOR
RODRIGO MORAN, MA SID'16 TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGER FOR CENTRAL AMERICA, CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL

HAITI
LESLEY JOSEPH, MS'16 CO-FOUNDER, SAINT APOLLONIA MOBILE DENTAL CLINIC

USA: LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
FERNANDO M. TORRES-GIL, MSW'72, PHD'76 PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND PUBLIC POLICY; DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR POLICY RESEARCH ON AGING, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

USA: SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
KRISTIN CAPRITTO, MA COEX'17 SENIOR ASSOCIATE, DOWNEY BRAND

USA: MIAMI/FORT LAUDERDALE AREA, FLORIDA
JACOB MARKEY, MPP/MA HORNSTEIN'18 ASSOCIATE, GREATER MIAMI JEWISH FEDERATION

USA: ATLANTA, GEORGIA
ANN HEDGES, MPP'16 RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, GEORGIA HEALTH POLICY CENTER

USA: WILLOWBROOK, ILLINOIS
REBECCA SLIWOSKI, MBA'16, MS'16 DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS, KLETJIAN FOUNDATION

USA: BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
ABBY ALEXANIAN, MBA/MPP'17 SENIOR MANAGER OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, ROOT CAUSE

USA: BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
MARY GRANT, PHD'00 SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE FELLOW FOR CIVICS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE, BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY

USA: GREATER BOSTON AREA, MASSACHUSETTS
BRENNAN SCHNEIDER, MBA'12 FOUNDER AND CEO, 99DEGREES

USA: NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK
BRYNA SANGER, PHD'76 DEPUTY PROVOST AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, THE NEW SCHOOL

USA: NEW JERSEY
NICOLE RODRIGUEZ, MPP'14 RESEARCH DIRECTOR, NEW JERSEY POLICY PERSPECTIVE

USA: RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA
BRIAN KENNEDY, MPP'16 CONSULTANT, FRONTLINE SOLUTIONS

USA: PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
JEFF LURIE, PHD'87 OWNER, PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

USA: WOONSOCKET, RHODE ISLAND
WESLEY DICKERSON, MBA'18 HEALTH PLAN PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT ADVISER, CVS HEALTH

USA: SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
DR. MARK SAVARISE, EMBA'17 GENERAL SURGEON, UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

USA: SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
FILIMON GHEBRETINSAE, MS/MA SID'18 PROJECT MANAGER, PANORAMA GLOBAL

USA: WASHINGTON, D.C.
ELLE CHANG, MA SID'15 INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM SPECIALIST, U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

USA: WASHINGTON, D.C.
MARION CROS, PHD'18 SENIOR HEALTH ECONOMIST, WORLD BANK GROUP

USA: MADISON, WISCONSIN
MEE HER, MA COEX/SID'17 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, VISITING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

USA: MADISON, WISCONSIN
MARSHA MAILICK, PHD'78 EMERITUS VICE CHANCELLOR FOR RESEARCH AND GRADUATE EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

SOUTH AMERICA

BRAZIL: BRASILIA
JASON ANTHONY HOBBS, MA SID'05 HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST, INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

CHILE: REGION DE LOS LAGOS
MIGUEL FERNÁNDEZ FREIRE, MA SID'09 REGIONAL DIRECTOR, INJUV CHILE

PERU: LIMA
MARIA FERNANDA AWAPARA FRANCO, MA SID'13 NATIONAL OFFICER FOR PARTNERSHIPS AND DEVELOPMENT FINANCE, UNITED NATIONS

EUROPE

BELGIUM: BRUSSELS
MARINE RAGEUNEAU, MA COEX'19 CONSULTANT, IOM UN MIGRATION

GERMANY: HAMBURG
JULIA BEIER, MA SID'13 SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER, BEIERSDORF

ITALY: ROME
JACOPO MONZINI, MA SID'04

NATURAL RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION, UNITED NATIONS

MOLDOVA
OCTAVIAN BODAREU, MA SID'15 STATE PROSECUTOR

RUSSIA: UFA
BULAT IDRISOV, MS'14 ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES, BASHKIR STATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

SWITZERLAND: GENEVA
DAVID KOKIASHVILI, MS'07 PUBLIC HEALTH, M&E OFFICER, THE GLOBAL FUND TO FIGHT HIV/AIDS, TB AND MALARIA

UK: LONDON
NAVEED NOORMAL, MA COEX'16 FIRST SECRETARY, EMBASSY OF AFGHANISTAN

MIDDLE EAST

IRAQ: ERBIL
SHADI SHEIKHSARAF, MA SID/COEX'17 ASSOCIATE REPORTING OFFICER, UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)

ISRAEL
DAVID J. PORTOWICZ, PHD'80 PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER, JAFFA INSTITUTE

MOROCCO
NAIMA BENWAKRIM, MA SID'04 DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND MONITORING, NATIONAL COUNCIL ON HUMAN RIGHTS

NIGERIA: MAIDUGUR
KERRI LEEPER, MA COEX'18 HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT ANALYST, MERCY CORPS

UGANDA
PETER APELL, MA SID'11 FIELD PROGRAMS MANAGER, THE JANE GOODALL INSTITUTE

ASIA

AFGHANISTAN
BASHIF NAJEEB, MS'15 PROGRAM SPECIALIST, UNFPA

BANGLADESH: DHAKA
PUSHPITA SAMINA, MS'15 CLINICAL SERVICES LEAD, USAID BANGLADESH

CAMBODIA: PHNOM PENH
PRITESH CHALISE, MA SID'19

NEW BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, SWISSCONTACT CAMBODIA

CHINA: SHANGHAI
MENGJI CHEN, MS'13 CONSULTANT, WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

INDIA: NEW DELHI
JARNAIL SINGH, MA SID'13 DEPUTY DIRECTOR, INDIA, THE MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

INDONESIA: SOUTH JAKARTA
ENDRIANI SISWANTI, MA SID'12 REGIONAL MAJOR GIFTS MANAGER, GREENPEACE SOUTH ASIA

JAPAN
AKIKO MERA, MA SID'05 MANAGER, INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS, HUNGER FREE WORLD

KAZAKHSTAN: NUR-SULTAN
ASEMGUL KALIYEVA, MA SID'11 PROJECTS OFFICER, THE BRITISH EMBASSY

NEPAL
LOKESH BHATT, MS'18 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING CONSULTANT, JHUCCP

PAKISTAN: GILGIT
AEJAZ KARIM, MA COEX'08 PROJECT MANAGER, AGA KHAN RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAM

SRI LANKA: COLOMBO
SULTAN MOHAMMED ZAKARIA, MA SID'17 SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL RESEARCHER, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

VIETNAM
HUONG LE, MBA/MA SID'17 CO-FOUNDER, SAVE SON DOONG

AFRICA

BENIN
MAXIME HOUINATO, MA SID'96 DEPUTY REGIONAL DIRECTOR, UN WOMEN IN WEST AFRICA

BOTSWANA: GABORONE
RAJUNISA ROSE MOLOMO, MS'14 SENIOR HEALTH OFFICER, PARTNERSHIPS COORDINATION, MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS

GHANA
MOHAMMED AMIN DAWUDA, MA'11 SENIOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION SPECIALIST, SOCIAL IMPACT INC.

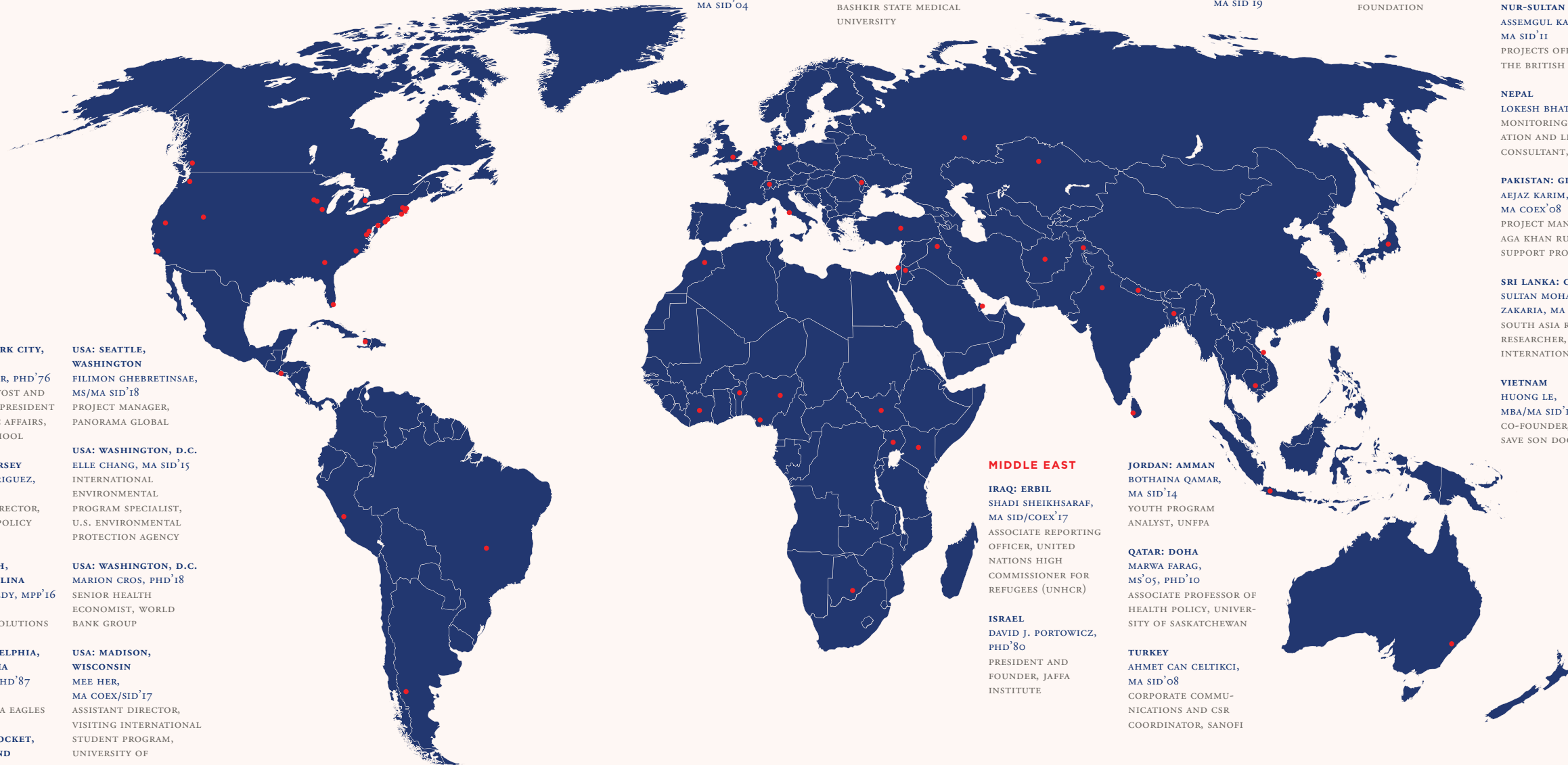
KENYA
DORCAS WEPUKHULU, MA SID'11 CO-FOUNDER, AFRICAN STORYBOOK PROJECT

NIGERIA: YENAGOA
OBIOMA OBIKEZE, MS'13 WORLD BANK SCHOLAR AND MANAGED CARE PROGRAMS COORDINATOR, FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTER YENAGOA

SOUTH SUDAN
PANTHER ALIER, MA SID'17 COUNTRY DIRECTOR, SMILE AGAIN AFRICA DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIA: CANBERRA
TANYA PRICE, MA SID'02 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, RESPONSE AND COLLECTION METHODOLOGY, AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS





THE FIRST STUDENTS WERE REQUIRED TO "SHOW MASTERY" OF TWO FOREIGN LANGUAGES ...



SINCE THE 1970s ...

... HELLER'S GENDER MAKEUP HAS SHIFTED ...

MALES DOMINATED THE EARLY CLASSES AT HELLER, MAKING UP 84% OF THE FIRST FIVE COHORTS.

... AND TODAY, ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF STUDENTS ARE FEMALE.

... BUT ALL WERE AMERICANS.

TODAY, HELLER STUDENTS HAIL FROM MORE THAN 60 COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD ...

... AND A ROBUST COHORT OF RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO A MULTI-LINGUAL COMMUNITY.

Deans' Stories

STUART ALTMAN

Sol C. Chaikin Professor of National Health Policy

HELLER SCHOOL DEAN, 1977-90, 1992-93, 2005-08

When I was selected to be dean in 1977, the Heller School was in a serious situation. Much of the federal funding it received during the Great Society period was being eliminated, and many of the original faculty that had created the school had decided to retire. I was faced with a double-barreled set of problems: how to maintain a financial base for the school, and how to attract new researchers and faculty members. I am quite proud that we met those challenges.

During my tenure as dean, we expanded Heller's research on disability policy and on children and families. We also built a major research institute in health

care policy and started a new academic program: the Master's in Management of Human Services (MMHS), now called the Social Impact MBA program. I helped create the Schneider Institutes for Health Policy so that my research could blend with that of others here at the school, and so the school could receive funding that supported researchers and students who were interested in health policy research. I think Heller came out of that period a stronger, more respected school, and today remains a leader in social policy research and education.

One area that has changed considerably is the relationship between the Heller School and the rest of Brandeis University. When Heller was formed, it was a unique, separate entity that really only trained PhD students. Its faculty had little or no relationship with the rest of the university. Today, we're much more integrated with the university than we were when the school first started, and much of that happened during my tenure. But that relationship was also expanded by deans who took my place, and I give them a lot of credit for what they did.

The problems the school focused on in the 1960s are still problems today, and I think

that says something about our society. What has changed at the Heller School is that we're now a major force in the international area as well as the domestic, for example, in sustainable international development and global health policy. The problems that we focus on really are not new. Although some of the techniques are different in terms of how you deal with them, the problems are the same.

JACK P. SHONKOFF

Julius B. Richmond FAMRI Professor of Child Health and Development, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Harvard Graduate School of Education

Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School and Boston Children's Hospital

Director, Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University

HELLER SCHOOL DEAN, 1994-2005

My years as dean of the Heller School were a time of deep personal and professional growth. My learning curve was steep, and the relationships I developed were rich.

Heller's public face changed in several ways during that period. We coined the tag line "Knowledge Advancing Social Justice," and changed our name from the Florence Heller Graduate School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare to the Heller School for Social Policy and Management. We hired Bob Reich and Anita Hill, which increased our public visibility, and we rose to the No. 3 position in the U.S. News & World Report ranking of graduate schools of social policy.

During my tenure, we strengthened our signature PhD program and made significant changes in our master's footprint. We converted our sole degree offering of a Master's in Management of Human Services (MMHS) to an MBA, and added an MA in Sustainable International Development and an MS in International Health Policy and Management. This expansion in master's-level education diversified the student

body dramatically and generated a stronger revenue base for the school. We also created a new undergraduate major in Health: Science, Society and Policy (HSSP).

Perhaps the most "concrete" (pun intended) achievement associated with my time as dean was the completion of a successful fundraising campaign to construct the Irving Schneider and Family Building and renovate the existing facilities. The barriers we faced at that time were formidable, and

as a starting point, not a destination. The struggle for social justice desperately needs fresh thinking and more effective strategies to achieve larger impact at scale. We must create safe spaces where constructive dissatisfaction with what we've achieved to date is viewed as empowering; risk-taking is nurtured; and learning from failure is seen as more valuable than meeting predefined deliverables. The Heller School can and should be such a place.



JACK SHONKOFF WITH STUDENTS, 1998

there is no way we could have overcome them without the leadership of Tom Glynn, MSW '72, PhD '77, and Ronny Zinner, chair and vice chair of the Heller Board, and Sen. Ted Kennedy, who helped secure the federal funding that catalyzed the private philanthropy that made this "impossible dream" a reality.

Where does the school go next? Academic social policy, broadly speaking, must begin to confront the harsh reality that although progress has been made in reducing structural inequities and improving human well-being over the past 60 years, there is still so much more work that needs to be done. The challenge for a place like Heller is to move beyond advocacy for policies and programs that work, and to raise the bar by considering current best practices

LISA M. LYNCH

Provost, Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs, Maurice B. Hexter Professor of Social and Economic Policy

HELLER SCHOOL DEAN, 2008-14

When I started as dean at Heller in 2008, we were in the midst of the greatest financial crisis since the Great Depression. Across the country, there was major economic displacement and economic hardship, and all universities, including Brandeis, faced severe financial challenges.

Paradoxically, at Heller, it was a period of tremendous growth and excitement. We had upgraded and doubled our physical space with the addition of the Irving Schneider and Family Building and the



FOUNDED IN 1959 as the Florence Heller Graduate School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare, Heller initially focused on social work. The school was first housed at Woodruff Hall, a house that served as Brandeis' first administrative building.

TODAY, the Heller School for Social Policy and Management has expertise across a broad range of social policy, from health care to income and wealth inequality, and from international development to child, youth and family policy. For most of Heller's history, students took classes in the Heller-Brown Building, which broke ground in 1965. In 2006, the Irving Schneider and Family Building was constructed, adding 34,000 square feet of new space, and doubling the size of the school.



STUART ALTMAN (RIGHT) WITH STANLEY WALLACK, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR HEALTH POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH, 1978

renovation of the existing Heller-Brown Building. This gave us beautiful new classrooms, state-of-the-art technology and new common spaces. Our expanded space allowed for a rapid growth of our graduate programs as more and more students decided to get a master's degree during the recession. With all of our research centers and institutes finally united into one contiguous space, we focused on creating more permeable boundaries across the degree programs and research centers and institutes.

It was also clear that there was growing demand from our students to cross traditional degree boundaries. Therefore, we developed a range of new dual and joint degree programs within Heller, with other departments across the university and with other universities. Examples included bringing the Conflict Resolution and Coexistence (COEX) program into Heller, establishing new dual master's degrees such as the MPP/MBA and Sustainable International Development/COEX, expanding dual MBA or MPP degree options with the Hornstein Jewish Professional Leadership program, and building dual degree programs with Tufts Medical School (MD/MBA, and Master of Biomedical Sciences/MBA).



LISA LYNCH, 2008

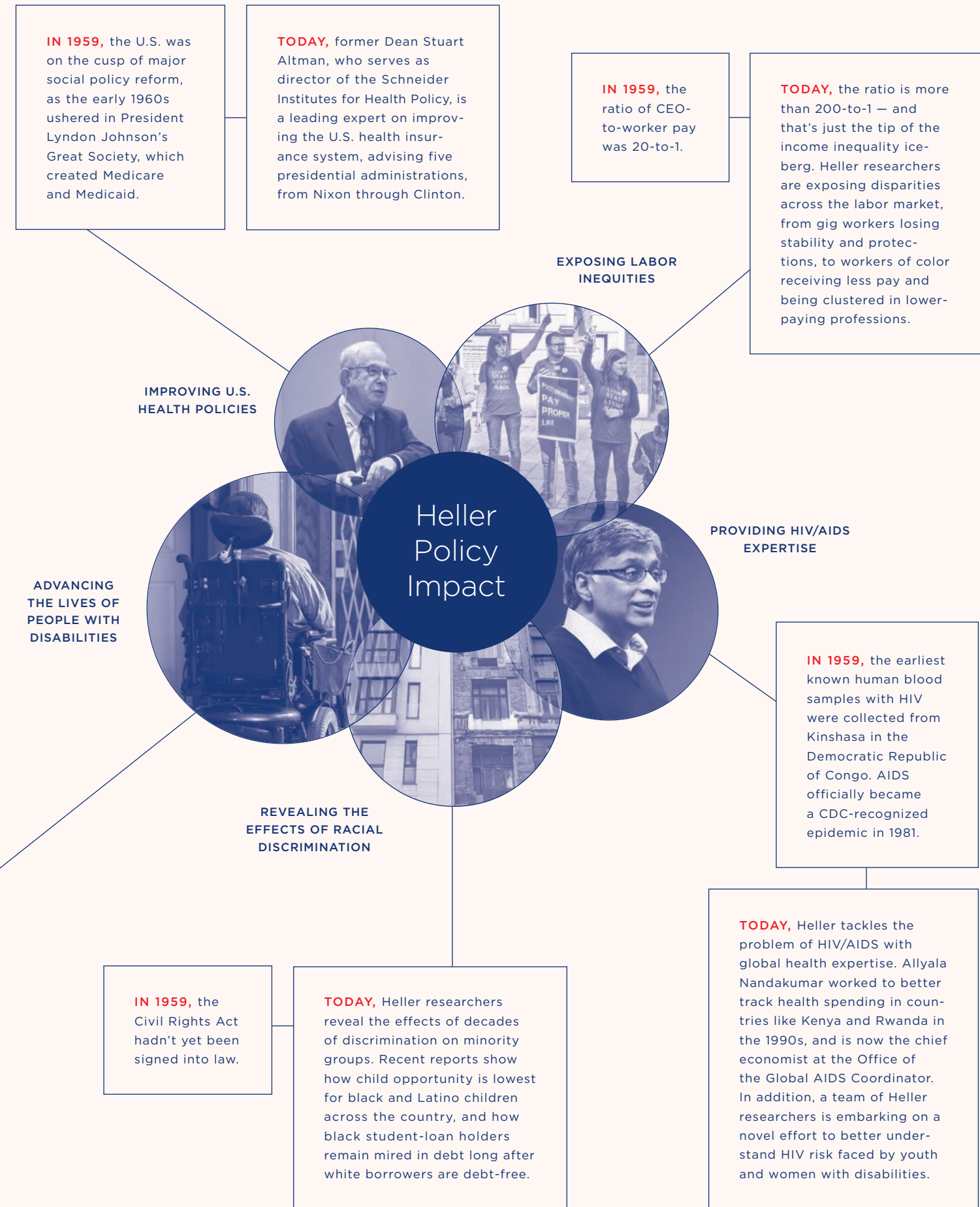
Given Heller's commitment to "knowledge advancing social justice," we undertook a major strategic planning effort in 2011 and concluded that we needed to better address diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) at Heller. We developed a detailed plan for DEI engagement and work across a wide range of areas of the school: faculty appointments, student selection, research and curriculum. While we made progress, the student demonstrations of

2015 and beyond have shown that there is still more that needs to be done in this important area.

As the current SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has shown us, the need for knowledge about social policy has never been greater. For me, the "special sauce" of Heller is that among the community, there is always a sense of hope and possibility informed by rigorous analysis, even in the darkest moments.

IN 1959, the Americans with Disabilities Act was still three decades away from being passed, and people with disabilities were regularly being institutionalized. Gunnar Dybwad, an early faculty member, became a fierce advocate for the rights of people with disabilities.

TODAY, Heller conducts federally funded research on parents with disabilities, community living and the intersection of opioid use and disability; provides expert testimony in front of federal agencies; and assesses the policy plans of presidential hopefuls.



PHOTOS IN THIS SECTION BY MIKE LOVETT, PATRICK SINGLETON, BOB HANDELMAN, TOM KATES, KAREN SHIH AND LIZ LINDER. ARCHIVAL PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ROBERT D. FARBER UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT

TRACKING FENTANYL IN THE DRUG SUPPLY

TRACI GREEN PUTS PUBLIC HEALTH FIRST WITH NEW SERVICES FOR USERS TO TEST THEIR DRUGS

BY BETHANY ROMANO, MBA'17

“SO MUCH OF WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT FENTANYL is from autopsy reports,” laments Traci Green, professor and director of the Opioid Policy Research Collaborative (OPRC). What is known is frightening: Last fall, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that nearly half of all overdose deaths from March 2018 to February 2019 were due to fentanyl and other synthetic opioids.

These data paint a desperate picture — and an incomplete one. Green and other public health experts combine numbers from autopsy reports, crime labs, poison control centers and 911 calls, but many of these datasets aren't available until months or years after the data are collected.

These delays are deadly. “Every single time fentanyl enters the drug supply in a new city or town, overdose rates double. They double,” says Green. “We need to know where fentanyl is entering the market today — not two years ago — if we're going to save any lives.”

Only a fraction of police-confiscated drugs gets tested for fentanyl or other cutting agents. Most are destroyed or kept in storage — often for years — while the few samples that become evidence in criminal cases go to crime labs for testing. “There's so many different places where we could possibly collect data, but instead, it's on a shelf. Or it's trash.

“But it just so happens that epidemiologists really love trash,” she says with a grin. “Where some see trash, I see data.”

So Green and her colleagues are collecting trash — both untested drugs seized by police departments and drug packaging from active users — to test it for fentanyl and other cutting agents. They're then providing that information in real time to public health officials and drug users to learn about the drug supply and help keep users safe.

Green's goal is for this real-time testing, called “drug checking,” to stabilize fentanyl fluctuations in the market and empower

users to know what is going into their bodies. “That level of autonomy is afforded to all other medical patients,” she says, “so why not people with opioid use disorder?”

BRIDGING SCIENCE AND CREATIVITY

The opioid crisis began in the 1990s with prescription painkillers whose addictive qualities were underplayed or denied by their manufacturers. Many people who became addicted eventually turned to heroin, as prescription painkillers grew more difficult to acquire. Fentanyl, a synthetic opioid often used as a cutting agent in street heroin, is so potent that minuscule amounts can result in a fatal overdose. In 2017, over 70,000 people died from drug overdoses in the U.S., 28,000 of them from fentanyl and its analogues.

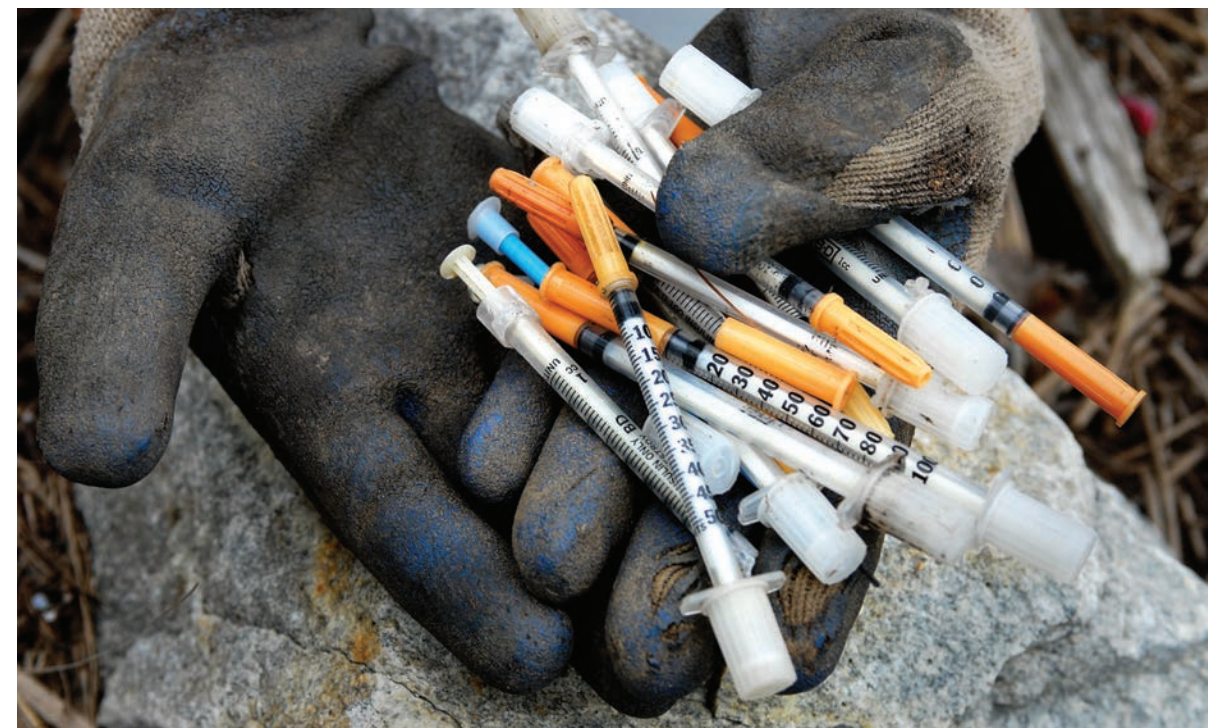
That same year, the Heller School founded the Opioid Policy Research Collaborative to combat this growing epidemic. Green joined the OPRC as its director in January 2020. In her career as an epidemiologist, Green helped increase access to naloxone (an overdose antidote), co-led strategic planning for the Rhode Island Governor's Task Force on opioids and

overdose, and became an expert adviser for the CDC and the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas.

Over the last decade, she has developed deep roots in metro Boston, including critical partnerships with police departments, public health commissions and organizations focused on harm reduction for active users, like needle-exchange sites. Brittni Reilly of the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) says, “Traci and her team have national expertise in the topic of drug checking. We've been really honored to participate and support this emerging field.”

As a scientist, Green emphasizes the importance of creativity and interdisciplinary thinking in her work. “I think we get stuck in ruts as scientists if we stay only within our disciplines,” she says. “The surge in fentanyl overdoses really got me thinking that the tools we're using are insufficient.”

In addition to seeking out stories from users and service providers, she pieces together stories from the data. “When I look at medical examiner cases, I try to reconstruct what happened and see opportunities for intervention. Where did



“We need to know where fentanyl is entering the market today — not two years ago — if we’re going to save any lives.” Traci Green

we miss the chance to connect with this person? How could we have prevented that death?

“It’s one of the reasons I was so excited about coming to Heller: the opportunity to work with like-minded people who were willing to take the snow globe and shake it up a little bit.”

For Green, like many of the people working in this field, the urgency to solve the opioid epidemic feels personal. “I have loved many people who use drugs throughout my life. It’s devastating seeing communities you care about losing young people, or even losing older people who have used drugs for a long time but who aren’t able to navigate this terrain. Drug checking is our effort to set the scales. As scientists, we have other tools, and we should be using them.”

PRIORITIZING DRUG USER SAFETY

Drug checking is a consumer safety issue, according to Green: “With drug checking, we’re treating street drugs the same way we treat any other substance that someone consumes on a regular basis. We put public health first.”

In 2018, the Bloomberg American Health Initiative funded Green and collaborators from Johns Hopkins University and Rhode Island Hospital to determine which field-testing devices were best at detecting fentanyl in street drugs. The team partnered with police departments in Providence and Baltimore to blind test over 200 samples of confiscated drugs using three devices: an infrared spectrometer, a Raman spectrometer and simple fentanyl test strips. They determined that a two-pronged approach is best: the infrared spectrometer — which provides detailed chemical profile information — and fentanyl test strips — which are cheap, simple to use and highly sensitive to fentanyl.

“When we finished that study and got that information out, other projects started using fentanyl test strips in the U.S. But to our knowledge, none took the next step of buying some of these more expensive devices,” says Green. The devices, which

are already used around the world in countries like Australia, Canada and Germany, resemble a dark metal case the size of a piece of carry-on luggage.

Green partnered with Sam Tobias, senior drug-checking technician at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, to train her team on the infrared spectrometer. “Drug checking could provide a modicum of regulation in an otherwise completely unregulated market,” notes Tobias. “For a long time, the drug market was kind of a black box. People just got what they got, and they didn’t really have answers to other questions, like, ‘What am I actually getting here?’”

The spectrometers Green uses are most frequently purchased by pharmaceutical companies to conduct quality-control testing. Each unit costs upward of \$40,000. In addition to the cost and the novelty of using spectrometers on street drugs, the legal landscape is unclear at best. Each state differs, she says, but in some states, even fentanyl test strips can be seen as drug paraphernalia.

“There’s a gray zone, frankly. With the exception of police-confiscated substances, we can’t legally hold or test drugs. So we test remnant drugs, package materials, used cookers. It’s sometimes frustrating, because, of course, it’s best if we can test the drug before it’s used.”

Despite the convoluted legal issues, Green and her team conducted a pilot drug-checking program at Access, Harm Reduction, Overdose Prevention and Education (AHOPE), a harm reduction and needle-exchange site in the South End run by the Boston Public Health Commission. They’ve also provided drug checking on the CareZONE van, a mobile addiction-services program run by the Kraft Center for Community Health.

Jennifer Tracey, director of Boston Mayor Marty Walsh’s Office of Recovery Services, says, “The substance use crisis has devastating effects on individuals and families across our city. That is why the city of Boston continues to invest in providing the

best and most effective harm-reduction and recovery services. We hope this technology and research will help us achieve our goal of reducing overdoses and saving lives.”

In addition to making the drug supply safer, these services reduce information lag for public health officials. “Fentanyl test strips take about five minutes, and spectrometers take about 40 seconds to scan and a few minutes for a technician to read the results. The full drug-checking experience could take about 15 minutes, start to finish, and then you have information that you can act on without anyone getting arrested or hurt,” Green says.

“This work is so innovative, but for a very simple reason,” says Constance Horgan, professor and director of Heller’s Institute for Behavioral Health, where OPRC is housed. “Almost everybody working to counter the opioid epidemic is focused on demand-side interventions: reducing demand for prescription opioids, for illicit opioids. Traci’s drug-checking work is one of the few supply-side interventions out there.”

REACHING THE “LAST 10%” IN BOSTON AND BEYOND

Green intends to expand to provide drug-checking services in around a half-dozen communities in Boston this year. The CDC and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health are funding her team to build out drug-checking and drug-supply surveillance systems with spectrometers at multiple sites around the Bay State, including a key partnership with the New Bedford Police Department.

She is partnering with the Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (PAARI) to distribute fentanyl test strips far and wide. “Unlike the spectrometers, test strips are inexpensive, easy to distribute and share; they can be used anywhere at any time, and they don’t require a ton of interpretation. And they’re great at detecting most of the major kinds of fentanyl, which could save lives.”



TRACI GREEN, PROFESSOR AND DIRECTOR OF THE OPIOID POLICY RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE (OPRC)

On all sides, Green is confronted with stakeholders who see the potential for drug checking to curtail the deadliest aspects of the opioid epidemic. “The overall impression we’re getting from people is that this is exciting and pretty groundbreaking, but also really frustrating that we aren’t yet able to offer these services regularly.

“Some of the providers we’re speaking with are trying to reach that last 10% of people who don’t want to come in for services. They may not be someone who injects drugs, or they may not see themselves as needing services. But maybe they went to a new dealer and their drug seemed different, and they want to make sure there’s no fentanyl in it. That person could come in for drug checking, and in addition to getting information about their drug that could be lifesaving, maybe they’ll also pick up clean syringes, get HIV tested, grab a few Narcan kits and some fentanyl test strips. This is a distribution pathway for tools that aren’t reaching other neighborhoods or spaces. And most importantly, it’s respecting the dignity of people who use drugs, and elevating their health and safety. That’s all for the better.”



LEFT TO RIGHT: IHSAN KAADAN WEARING PPE AT BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER; BRENNA SCHNEIDER HOLDING A PROTOTYPE OF AN ISOLATION GOWN AT A PRESS CONFERENCE WITH MASSACHUSETTS GOV. CHARLIE BAKER; AUDREY ETLINGER COHEN WEARING PPE OUTSIDE OF WHITTIER STREET HEALTH CENTER

HELLER ALUMNI STEP UP TO COMBAT COVID-19 IN BOSTON

The COVID-19 pandemic has turned the world upside down. Schools and universities like Brandeis have moved to online learning; friends, coworkers and families are separated through shelter-in-place orders; and health care systems are straining to cope with the surge in new patients.

Heller alumni around the globe have stepped up — including here in Massachusetts. Brenna Schneider, MBA'12, pivoted her Lawrence-based company from making athletic apparel to producing isolation gowns for health care professionals. Dr. Ihsan Kaadan, MS'16, is treating COVID-19 patients at Boston Medical Center, drawing on his hospital experience during the Syrian conflict to cope. And Audrey Etlinger Cohen '07, MPP'10, is helping COVID-19 patients in Boston's lowest-income community navigate the health care system and access critical community supports.

BRENNA SCHNEIDER, MBA'12 Founder and CEO, 99Degrees

The biggest thing that I learned from Heller is that business can be used skillfully to respond to public health needs, economic needs and community needs. We need jobs right now in this community, and we need people to have PPE [personal protective equipment].

I talked to my team and board and advisers and said, “How do we respond here?” We all agreed that if we could find a way of reopening and keeping our team healthy and safe, we would do that. We looked into products that are compliant with FDA standards and that serve health care workers. That’s when we settled on isolation gowns for the medical community.

We’re just coming out of startup mode, so we’re used to pivots, but this is a big one. We’re now set up for at least half a million units per month. We’re moving our warehouse to make room to social distance.

We’re trying to respond to a critical need, but also there are risks we’re trying to mitigate. There’s no perfect way to completely protect people, so how do we prevent our company from being a place where illness is spread? That puts a lot of pressure on our team.

DR. IHSAN KAADAN, MS'16 Second-Year Internal Medicine Resident, Boston Medical Center

I did my first year of residency at Aleppo University Hospital during the conflict [in Syria]. Mentally and physically, I’m already prepared for working in a crisis.

I’m seeing 100% corona patients right now. I’m working 12-hours shifts, six days a week. The type of management we do, the encounters we see, it’s all changed. You really need to wear PPE. That process takes so long: You have to put the gown on, gloves, face masks and a shield as well.

We have a clinical word, “active,” to describe patients whose situations are changing. For example, a patient doesn’t need oxygen, then all of a sudden needs a couple of liters. In the

past, if I was working nights, you might get a few pages per hour while you’re covering 30 patients. Now, you’re getting many more pages. At the end of the day, you’re tired.

Even subspecialty fellows and attending physicians who have done all their training are working with internal medicine residents and attending COVID patients. Everyone is working so hard, putting their lives on the front lines.

AUDREY ETLINGER COHEN '07, MPP'10 Mary I. Jagoda '05 Endowed Fellowship; 2009 Heller MPP Segal Fellow

High-Risk Nurse Case Manager, Whittier Street Health Center

I work with our highest-risk individuals: folks with multiple chronic health conditions and social challenges, such as substance use disorder or homelessness. During the COVID-19 crisis, I’m focusing on post-hospitalization education and connecting people with community resources. I’m following up with all of our patients who visited the emergency room, identifying our patients who have been infected, and contacting them to make sure they received and understand their results. I’m also helping to enroll patients in meal delivery services, and our pharmacy has started delivering medicines so patients can stay home while they recover. Many of our patients are unable to work remotely, have no paid sick leave and have bosses who offer little flexibility. I’m doing a lot of outreach to employers right now to ensure that employees get access to time to self-quarantine.

A lot of folks come to the clinic when they don’t know where else to go, so they’re showing up even with positive COVID tests and severe symptoms. For example, I recently saw a man who was COVID-positive but was feeling better after two days, so he came to pick up his blood pressure medication. He didn’t understand why he needed to stay at home.

To read the full Q&As and for more Heller COVID-19 stories, visit heller.brandeis.edu/covid-stories.

PHOTO OF BRENNA SCHNEIDER BY JOSHUA QUALLS/GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE

MARYSE PEARCE, MBA/MPP'18, IS STRENGTHENING THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY IN NEW YORK CITY



MARYSE PEARCE

For Maryse Pearce, MBA/MPP'18, program manager at Stonewall Community Foundation, the professional is also personal.

“As a queer person living and working in New York, I’m in many ways a beneficiary of the work” of the foundation, she says, whether she’s attending a talk about LGBTQ history at the Brooklyn Museum or enjoying a play written by a queer immigrant.

The foundation, named for the iconic Stonewall Inn that sparked the fight for LGBTQ rights in the United States, is focused on strengthening New York City’s LGBTQ community. As program manager, Pearce oversees its grant and scholarship programs and community events as well as donor education on LGBTQ issues.

Just a year into her role, Pearce is proud to highlight grantee Out My Closet, an organization that hosts free pop-up clothing shopping opportunities for homeless queer youth and provides sexual health education. When Stonewall Community Foundation was contacted by a major clothing company with thousands of dollars’ worth of excess clothing to donate, she was able to make the connection with Out My Closet, even though it was outside of her usual scope of work.

“It’s really great to support organizations in multiple ways,” she says.

National Queer Theater is another grantee close to her heart.

“We provided one of their first grants, and the festival blew up in the best way,” she says. The summer festival featured four plays from countries where being LGBTQ is criminalized, earning a profile in The New York Times and more than 7,000 attendees. “Policy and legal advocacy is most of what I’ve done professionally, and that’s so important, but telling and celebrating our stories is just as important.”



TOP:
EVAN HOCHBERG
BOTTOM:
SYDNEY SKOV

EVAN HOCHBERG, MMHS'96, IS CREATING SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH PHILANTHROPY

Pearce has advocated for LGBTQ rights since college, when she was the co-president of the Pride Alliance at Washington University in St. Louis. She moved to Boston after earning her undergraduate degree and working for GLBTQ Legal Advocates and Defenders (GLAD).

But after four years at GLAD, she was ready to make a bigger impact, and she chose to pursue dual master's degrees in the Social Impact MBA and Master of Public Policy programs at the Heller School. At GLAD, a lot of her work had included lobbying legislators and educating GLAD's legal team about issues the community faced, but she wanted a stronger foundation in social policy. She also wanted more expertise in nonprofit management that she hadn't gotten from her work experience.

After graduating, she worked briefly for HR&A Advisors, an economic development consulting company. Though she gained critical experience working with foundations and evaluating their programming and strategy, she found herself missing more direct advocacy work. That led her to Stonewall.

"There's a lot of potential in philanthropy," Pearce says. "What I like about it is the ability to look at the field of LGBTQ advocacy from a bird's-eye view, see how different strategies and organizations fit together, and how to support that."

"What's the role for business and philanthropy in making the world a better place?"

That's the question that's driven Evan Hochberg, MMHS'96, for more than two decades, as he's led corporate social responsibility, social innovation efforts and philanthropy at large global companies and organizations.

Today, he's president of Crown Family Philanthropies, a Chicago-based family foundation. The family built its wealth starting in the 1920s by creating the Material Service Corporation, and has given both locally and globally for more than 70 years.

"The family are real civic leaders in Chicago, creating opportunities for Chicagoans to live better lives through education, housing and environmental efforts," says Hochberg. "In addition, the family supports social impact efforts nationally and health in sub-Saharan Africa, and has a deep commitment to the Jewish community and to Israel."

The Crown family is descended from Eastern European Jewish immigrants and is one of the largest funders of Jewish causes. (The family has supported Brandeis since the school's founding, including establishing the Irving and Rose Crown School of Graduate Studies and the Crown Center for Middle East Studies.)

For Hochberg, who is also Jewish, it's been a unique opportunity to think about his faith, community and social impact through the work of the foundation.

"We're trying to figure out challenging questions: What does it mean to be Jewish in 2020? How does the Jewish community survive and thrive in the face of anti-Semitism and other threats? How might a commitment to universal social issues be approached through a lens of Jewish values?" Hochberg says.

Stepping into the family foundation role two years ago was a change for Hochberg, who previously worked at the intersection of the business and nonprofit sectors. He ran Community Wealth Partners, a social innovation consulting firm, in the late 1990s, then moved to Deloitte, where he led community involvement and corporate social responsibility efforts. Most recently, he served as chief strategy officer for United Way Worldwide.

Hochberg began his career working on the ground for nonprofits focused on education, youth and disabilities after graduating with a philosophy degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"It was really meaningful work to me, and I wanted a career in social impact, but I knew I didn't have the fortitude to work on the front lines all my life," he says.

That's when he found Heller.

"The Heller School was an essential part of my career journey. It helped me understand how you could make the world a better place by focusing on the intersection of strategy, management and policy," he says. "What I enjoyed the most was getting a hard business education in an environment where the professors, case studies and students were all focused on social impact. There was a whole ecosystem for people like me."

He's excited that there are so many more paths today for students to pursue a career that enables them to "flex both the head and heart" — and he urges students to consider philanthropy as well.

"Philanthropy really needs talented, committed, business-minded social impact people," he says. "I hope people can see philanthropy as a platform for living out the social change they want to see in the world."

SYDNEY SKOV, MA SID'15, CREATES NEW DOCUMENTARY TO SHINE LIGHT ON DANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

For Sydney Skov, MA SID'15, the connection between her lifelong passion for dance and her interest in improving the lives of vulnerable populations around the world wasn't immediately apparent.

But that changed when she stepped into a class offered by Kolkata Sanved, an Indian NGO that empowers survivors of human trafficking and violence by teaching them dance and movement therapy.

"It's unbelievable, the work they do," Skov says. "Many of these children don't have other avenues for expressing themselves or feeling that kind of joy. The organization sends [dance therapy] practitioners to shelter homes, and these practitioners they hire come from the populations they work with. You can see such a stark difference between the practitioners [who have gone through Kolkata Sanved's program] and the girls still in the shelter home: how confident they are, how they can carry on a conversation and hold eye contact."

To highlight the organization's work, she created a short film, "From There to Here," which has been screened across the country at film festivals over the past year. Now, she's hoping it will be used in educational settings as a conversation starter about dance and development.

Her relationship with Kolkata Sanved started with her work as a volunteer after college. She hopped on a plane with just a little bit of information — and wound up staying for seven months.

"I was so inspired by them that I changed all of my plans," she said. She turned down admission to law school when she returned to the U.S., and she pivoted to applying to programs in international development.

Skov came to Heller on the recommendation of a former colleague, and it served as "a great jumping-off point," she says. "I loved being among bright minds who have been in the field around the world."

While at Brandeis, Skov also connected with Cynthia Cohen, director of the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts. "She's a mentor and role model for me," Skov says. "I found this place where we were actively talking about art in development in a really critical way that wasn't just giving it lip service."

Skov was particularly thrilled to find that guidance, because just before arriving at Heller, she had founded Free Body Project, dedicated to promoting dance as a global resource for healing and empowerment.

At Heller, it all came together. She returned to Kolkata Sanved for her second-year practicum, earning a Boren Fellowship that allowed her to spend time studying Bengali and better connect with the organization. While doing her practicum, she came up with the idea for the film, which she created through Free Body Project and alongside a team of dedicated filmmakers.



KATHY BYERS

Determined to stay in India, she applied for a Fulbright Award, which funded her team's initial work on the documentary after she graduated from Heller.

Today, she continues to lead Free Body Project by organizing conferences for dancers and development practitioners, and promoting the film while balancing a career as a U.S. foreign service officer in Chennai, India.

"Dance and social justice — nobody speaks about it as a field," says Skov. "It blows my mind that this work isn't done more. There are huge international NGOs that do classical music with kids, for example, but a violin is thousands of dollars. Why doesn't dance have a place in this field? Every culture has a dance form. You can walk into any space and teach a dance class for free — there's massive potential."

KATHY BYERS, MSW'71, HONORED AS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORK PIONEER

Last fall, Kathy Byers, MSW'71, was recognized as a Social Work Pioneer by the National Association of Social Workers Foundation for her work as a founding member of Influencing Social Policy (ISP). The organization aims to increase social workers' influence on policy at the local, state and federal levels.

"I was just thrilled and humbled," she says. "My parents and uncle, all social workers, were also honored in that way, so I was just so touched."

Byers, now retired, has had a long career as both a social worker and an educator. In 1997, she helped create ISP, which holds annual contests for students to propose policy ideas and hosts an annual conference and teaching institute. She served

as its national chair for seven years, during which time she connected ISP with the University of Connecticut and the Congressional Research Institute for Social Work and Policy to launch a voter empowerment campaign partnering schools of social work with local social service agencies.

"We need competence in policy practice for all social workers, because we're the closest to understanding what clients need," she says. "What I used to tell students is that policy affects everything you can do. To say you don't care — do you know how our mental health system is structured, for example? That's policy."

Byers seemed almost destined for a career in social work. With a family steeped in the tradition, she sought out a graduate program that was the right fit.

"I was interested in city planning at the time, but because it was the 1960s, I was also interested in social justice and social work," she says. The Heller School had just started offering a master's in social work, which led Byers to the program in 1968.

Her focus was community organizing, which became more than a classroom lesson when she participated in the Ford Hall 1969 protests at Brandeis. She took those skills and helped in organizing a general strike in Boston against the Vietnam War, delaying her final project until 1971.

She spent the first part of her career after Heller working for the Developmental Training Center connected to Indiana University (IU), offering services for children with disabilities and interdisciplinary education for IU students. In addition to being a social worker and administrator for the program, she also taught part time at IU.

After 10 years, Byers realized she wanted to pursue teaching full time. She earned a doctorate in educational psychology at IU and began her academic career, spending much of it leading IU's bachelor's in social work program.

She advises today's Heller students to find advocacy groups for policy issues they care about.

"You can't really influence policy all by yourself, but if you're working with a group that has a strategy, that has a plan, that's a good place to start," she says. "Following your passion is important."

HELLER AT 60

Heller 60th Anniversary Fellowship Fund

Investing in students today creates social impact tomorrow.

Farida Mushi, MS'16, is a maternal health advocate in Tanzania, and she says that none of her work would have been possible without her Heller fellowship. "Potential donors should know that their donation can change society," she says. "Their support might be helping a mother in a village in Namibia or Tanzania, because they're helping one person to have the knowledge to go and change or implement policy." Thanks to her fellowship, she was able to take a year off of work and come to the United States to study at Heller.

100% of Heller students receive financial aid.

Please support the Heller 60th Anniversary Fellowship Fund today by contacting Kate Kaplan, director of development and alumni relations, at katekaplan@brandeis.edu or making an online gift at heller.brandeis.edu/give.