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New Research
Public Programs
New Book in the University of Pennsylvania Press Series
8th Annual Penn IUR Photography Contest
About Penn IUR

A Penn Institute For Urban Research Publication

# Sustainable Development Solutions Network Commission at COP 28

# Special Briefing Offers Timely Analysis of State and Local Finance



Penn IUR convened experts on urban SDG finance at COP28. Photo by Darcey Beau.

This year's event, held in Dubai from November 30 to December 11, 2023, featured the first ever Local Action Climate Summit within the official proceedings. Hosted by the COP28 Presidency and Bloomberg Philanthropies, the event recognized the critical role local leaders play in reducing emissions, addressing climate risk, and supercharging national efforts to move further and faster on climate progress. More than 200 mayors attended, and the kickoff panel featured Rio de Janeiro Mayor Eduardo Paes and Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo, two of the co-chairs of the SDSN Global Commission on Urban SDG Finance.

(CONTINUED ON P. 11)



Infrastructure investment in an important Special Briefing topic.

The monthly event series, Special Briefing, continued this fall with three new events. Hosted by William Glasgall, Senior Director, Public Finance, The Volcker Alliance and Penn IUR Co-Director, Susan Wachter, Special Briefing brings together governors, mayors, members of Congress, academics, Wall Street's most successful investors, and nationally recognized public finance experts to share their experiences and strategies for state and local governments. Each event is streamed live on Zoom, later broadcast on YouTube, and produced as a podcast available on all podcasting platforms

This fall, experts explored three major topics: whether the country would be able to achieve a "soft landing" after higher interest rates curtailed explosive growth; the impacts on state and local governments of the landmark legislation, the Infrastructure Investment and-Jobs Act; and the state of public pensions.

(CONTINUED ON P. 11)



# Penn IUR Welcomes 2023-24 Fellows in Urban Leadership

Penn IUR welcomes its sixth cohort into the Penn IUR Fellows in Urban Leadership program. Inaugurated in April 2018, the program provides an exceptional group of Penn undergraduates with the unique opportunity to engage with established urban leaders in Philadelphia, New York, and Washington, D.C. Through these experiences, students gain insights into the technical and political talent and skills of high-level public and private decision-makers who manage today's cities and their key institutions. Past speakers have included Patrick Brett, Managing Director, Strategic Venture Investing, Citibank; Chandan Deuskar, Urban Development Specialist, The World Bank; Anne Fadullon, Director, Department of Planning and Development, City of Philadelphia; Jaime Gauthier, District 3 Councilmember, City of Philadelphia; Lorraine Grillo, Former First Deputy Mayor, City of New York; and Michael Nutter, Former Mayor, City of Philadelphia, among others.

"Through monthly meetings with public, private, and nonprofit sector leaders, the Fellows witness first-hand how the individual speakers have gained their positions, handled complicated challenges, and experienced satisfaction with successes in the course of their careers," says Penn IUR Co-Director Eugénie Birch.

"In our increasingly urban world, this program prepares students for the challenges and opportunities that come with being leaders in cities," says Penn IUR Co-Director Susan Wachter.

As last year, the Fellows make site visits to New York (fall) and Washington, D.C. (spring), where Penn IUR Advisory Board Chair, Mark Rosenberg, Principal, MHR Fund Management LLC, and Penn IUR Advisory Board Member, Melanie Franco Nussdorf, Partner, Steptoe & Johnson, host a series of meetings with local leaders and Penn IUR Advisory Board members.

"The D.C. field trip allows the Fellows to view how congressional and national association leaders, as well as those involved in international efforts, address urban issues," says Nussdorf. While Rosenberg notes, "By increasing their connections in New York, the Fellows meet with leaders managing a city of 8 million people. Through exposure to three cities, the Fellows gain an understanding and appreciation of the enormous responsibilities of ensuring that urbanization is both equitable and sustainable." A recap of the Fellows' New York trip can be read on page TK.

The 2023-2024 Penn IUR Fellows in Urban Leadership are:

## Arnav Aggarwal



Arnav is a rising senior in the Jerome Fisher Program in Management & Technology (M&T) pursuing majors in Computer Science, Finance, and Entrepreneurship. From New Delhi, India, he is passionate about urban issues across developing and advanced economies, and the use of technology to assist in such problems and capital to finance it. He credits Geoffrey West's book, *Scale*, with inspiring his interest in the growth of urban centers and the pandemic's impact on global cities.

## Sameem Ahmadzai



Sameem is a rising junior from Long Island, N.Y. majoring in Urban Studies and Philosophy. He is especially interested in education reform, environmentalism, and animal welfare. At Penn, he is a member of the Afghan Students Association, Muslim Students Association, and Effective Altruism. This summer, he interned at the Nationalities Service Center, where he assisted in creating open lines of communication between migrant clients and landlords and familiarizing new

migrants with existing housing systems.

## Mica Lin-Alves



Mica is a senior and a Civic Scholar, with a major in Urban Studies and a minor in Environmental Studies. He grew up in Providence, R.I. During the pandemic, he served as an AmeriCorps literacy tutor in Springfield, Mass. He has continued this commitment to urban education by working with Penn Libraries Community Engagement and the West Philadelphia Alliance for Children to help restore service to a growing number of school libraries on this side of the Schuylkill River. Mica is also interested in transit and land use and interned last spring with Claflen Associates, where he researched affordable housing policy.

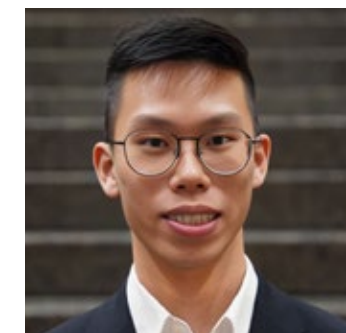
## Emma Boockvar



Emma is a senior from New York City studying Neuroscience with minors in Urban Studies and Chemistry. Focused on the impact of urban planning on health disparities, she is currently investigating mental health outcomes in lead-exposed adolescents through the Center of Excellence

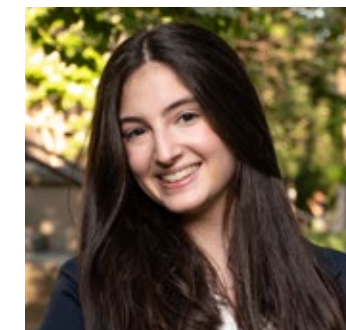
in Environmental Toxicology for her thesis. This summer, Emma interned at both the NYC Department of Health and Bellevue Hospital, helping to improve and implement asthma management interventions in the Bronx as well as evaluate the efficacy of clinical treatments for HIV at Bellevue. This year, Emma is excited to serve as co-president of GlobeMed and co-captain of the Penn Women's Club Soccer team.

## Jed Chew



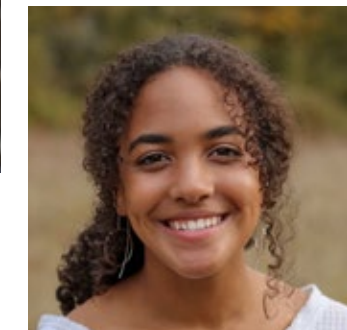
Jed is a sophomore from Singapore majoring in Urban Studies with minors in Public Policy and Real Estate. He is actively involved in the Wharton Undergraduate Real Estate Club as well as Wharton Undergraduates in Public Policy. This past summer, Jed was based in the Bay Area where he worked on an urban design and resilience project for the San Francisco Embarcadero waterfront. He also supported Penn's Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP) initiative to analyze national patterns in cross-sector data integration efforts.

## Erica Edman



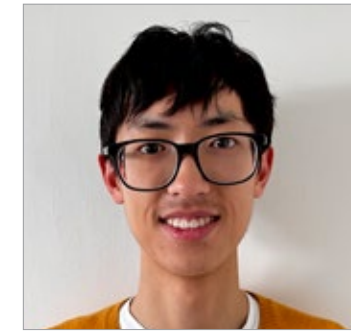
Erica is a junior from Watchung, N.J. majoring in Urban Studies and minoring in Consumer Psychology and Urban Education. She has been interested in the arts since her first dance class at age three and spends most of her time at Penn teaching dance with the After School Arts Program and CityStep, as well as performing with Arts House Dance Company. Erica spent the past summer interning at Bloomberg Philanthropies, working at the intersection of arts and cities. She hopes to eventually work in the nonprofit and philanthropy sector, focusing on cities as a catalyst to enact positive change.

## Mya Gordon



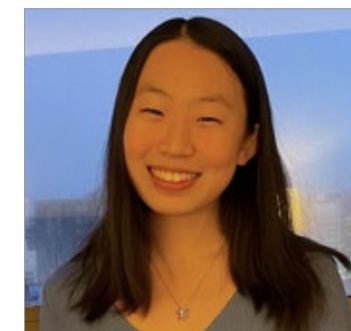
Mya is a rising senior, majoring in Urban Studies with a concentration in Sociology. She attended high school in Lake Oswego, Oregon, where she was active in community DEI work. At Penn, Mya is a Robeson Cooper Scholar, serves on the Netter Center Student Advisory Board and the SNF Paideia Student Advisory Board, and is an intern for the West Philadelphia Corridor Collaborative. Over the past year, Mya has conducted research with the Netter Center and the Andrea Mitchell Center, researching Penn's engagement with the West Philadelphia community and analyzing ways to advance community engagement practices. Over the summer, Mya was honored to intern at the National Urban League with their Education and Youth Development division.

## Louis Hu



Louis is a junior majoring in Biology and minoring in Urban Studies. As a pre-medical student, he is particularly interested in the areas of public health, sustainability, and transportation. He is the Operations Manager for the Philadelphia Food Technology Project, an organization that engages high school students in STEM programming by integrating both computer and nutrition/environmental science using food technology education. At Penn, he participates in Science Olympiad at the University of Pennsylvania (SOUP) as an Event Supervisor and an Urban Initiative volunteer, where he helps organize Science Olympiad competitions and mentors competitors in schools around Philadelphia.

## Annabelle Jin



Annabelle is a junior from Moorestown, N.J. majoring in Neurobiology and minoring in English. She is passionate about health equity from both medical and educational perspectives. As Education Lead of Penn Repro Justice, she created and organized a Menstrual Health Education Program at their partner high schools in West Philly. As a

Shelter Health Outreach Program (SHOP) volunteer, she provides blood pressure screenings and connects people with free healthcare resources. She also loves reading, so you'll often find her learning more about narrative medicine, psychology, and Asian American issues.

## Charles Lane



Charles is a junior from Washington, D.C., majoring in Philosophy, Politics & Economics (PPE) with a minor in Sustainability and Environmental Management. Charles works at the Smart Surfaces Coalition, a nonprofit that supports the rapid adoption of green, porous, and reflective surfaces in urban areas to lower heat and reduce flooding. At the Coalition, he supports the development of the cost-benefit analytic tool. He is greatly interested in data- and community-driven solutions to environmental justice issues in cities.

## Lynn Larabi



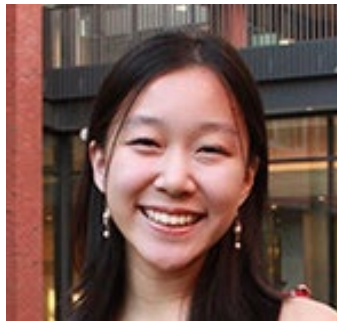
Lynn is a senior majoring in Political Science and minoring in Anthropology. Lynn has a great passion for public service, as she has served as a White House



## FACULTY &amp; STUDENTS

intern at the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, and as a Public Affairs Intern for the UN Foundation. She has also worked at a Seoul, South Korea public consulting firm, in which she helped develop early warning systems and community-centric programming for Leyte, Philippines. Born and raised in Philadelphia, Lynn is interested in exploring workforce development solutions in public school curricula to improve the unemployment gap and financial disparities in the city.

## Melody Luo



Melody is a sophomore majoring in Political Science and minoring in Legal Studies and History. Following book banning attempts at her high school, Melody became interested in advancing educational equity and diversifying K-12 curricula, with hopes of eventually pursuing a career in education policy. This past summer, she worked with the National Asian Pacific American Woman's Forum to expand knowledge of and accessibility to reproductive health resources for marginalized communities in New York City and helped to reduce food insecurity across Long Island as an intern for the New York State Department of Education's Summer Food Service Program.

## Shivam Shah



Shivam is a junior majoring in Economics and minoring in Urban Education and Urban Studies. He has created his own course, nonprofit, and social impact organization. At Penn, he's the Wharton Class Chair and a member of the Admissions Dean Advisory Board member. Recently, he worked with two professors, focusing his research on urban studies and food insecurity.

## Timethius J. Terrell



Timethius is a senior from Georgia, majoring in Psychology, with minors in Linguistics as well as Legal Studies and History. He is interested in institutional reform, housing policy, LGBTQ+ rights, and educational access. He is a former fellow with Penn's Office of Social Equity and Community, founder of the first LGBTQ+ university student advocacy/activist group in Thailand (at Mahidol University International College), and the Executive Director of the 501c3 nonprofit Divulge Alliance..

## Khue Tran



Khue is a senior from San Jose, Calif. majoring in Earth and Environmental Science and minoring in Asian American Studies (ASAM). At Penn, she is involved in the ASAM Undergraduate Advisory Board and the Vietnamese Students' Association. In the Urban Undergraduate Research Colloquium, she began a project on Asian Americans and climate adaptation planning in New York City, which she will continue under the ASAM Research Fellowship. This summer, she interned at the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Wisconsin, developing resources for Hmong farmers and assisting with conservation practice applications.

## Abigail Weinstein



Abigail is a junior from Titusville, N.J., majoring in Design with minors in Environmental Studies, Mechanical Engineering, and Architecture. At Penn, Abby works in biomaterial development at Dumolab Research in the Weitzman School of Design, builds sets for numerous student-run theater productions on campus, and is on copy staff at The Daily Pennsylvanian. She has been involved

in numerous grassroots- and student-led efforts to promote social and environmental equity both in and before college, and she strives to champion causes affecting the broader Philadelphia community.

## Nicholas Yohn



Nicholas is a junior studying Finance and Business Analytics with a minor in Data Science. He grew up in the New York City metro area, and as a lifelong subway rider, he cares deeply about urban transportation and infrastructure and public finance. Since coming to Philadelphia, he has joined the SEPTA Youth Advisory Council. On campus, he dances with Penn Masti, leads outdoors expeditions with Wharton Leadership Ventures, serves on the executive board of Penn International Impact Consulting, and participates in the Joseph Wharton Scholars program.

[To learn more about the program, visit the Fellows in Urban Leadership program page on the Penn IUR website.](#)

## FACULTY &amp; STUDENTS

# Fellows in Urban Leadership Fall 2023 Visit to New York

On October 27, 2023, Penn IUR sponsored a trip to New York with its 2023-2024 cohort of Fellows in Urban Leadership. The full day of site visits provided an opportunity to meet with and learn from local urban leaders who have championed New York's arts and culture sector.

The Fellows made their first stop at the offices of MHR Fund, hosted by Penn IUR Advisory Board Chair Mark Rosenberg. In a conference room overlooking Central Park and north to the George Washington Bridge, the Fellows met with Emily Rafferty, who has served in several important roles in the city: President, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Board Chair, Federal Reserve of New York; and Board Chair, NYC & Company, the city's tourism agency, as well as many other local and national boards.

Rafferty shared her career and her experience advancing into leadership positions. Through 40 years at the Met and 10 years as its president – and equal times in her roles at the Fed and NYC & Company – she emphasized the value of communication and teamwork not only in day-to-day work, but especially in response to unexpected challenges and crises. She held the students spellbound in her description of how the Met responded to 9/11. As news of the attack came into the museum, management sent 2,000 staff members home. Later in the chaotic day, the mayor called and insisted that the Museum open the next day, September 12. With a Herculean effort, working through the night, the Met opened the doors that morning, welcoming 3,000 visitors – testimony to the city's resilience.

Bill Lukashek, Penn IUR Advisory Board member, added a different dimension to the discussion. He related his experience as a volunteer member of one of the city's community boards, the entities representing citizen voices in land use and other municipal decisions. He explained the value of this work, one completely unrelated to his business life, but one that made him an expert and advocate for parks and open space in the community board district. He urged the students to “get involved in civic life wherever you live and whatever profession you pursue.”

After these powerful discussions, local Penn IUR board members and alumni of the Fellows program joined the group for lunch and conversation.

Next, the Fellows headed to Lincoln Center, via a fast-paced walk that passed through 6 1/2 Avenue, a quarter-mile, mid-block, privately-owned-public space (POP) that traverses several offices. They then rounded Columbus Circle, redesigned by Laurie D. Olin, Practice Professor Emeritus, Landscape Architecture, Weitzman School of Design, to arrive at the rarely seen backstage door of Metropolitan Opera. There Marcia Sells, Chief Diversity Officer, greeted the students with cupcakes and drinks before they all settled down to hear about her work with the Opera's CEO, Board, and donors.

Sells has helped the Opera to expand the diversity of programming and reach new audiences, including BIPOC students and aspiring dancers. Along the way, she told the students about her journey to her position, starting as a young ballerina star attending the Professional Children's School, and later attending college, law school, and business school. Her career included a stint at a prominent law firm, working as chief counsel to a labor union, and most recently serving as Associate Dean and Dean of Students at Harvard Law School.

The splendid October weather provided an ideal background for the Fellows to walk through Central Park as Eugenie Birch, Penn IUR Co-Director, delivered a quick history of New York City's premier public space on their way to their next appointment with the head of the Frick Museum. The Frick is currently



Fellows met with local leaders on a trip to NY

undergoing a major expansion and is temporarily housed at the former Whitney Museum, where students met the Frick's Director Ian Wardropper. Wardropper shared his experience in overseeing the multiyear effort of the Frick's expansion: lead the museum through gaining construction approvals, working on significant changes in the design, and fundraising to support the project while tending to the museum's daily operations. Throughout it all, Wardropper had to exhibit patient leadership and develop strong relationships with residents and elected officials who were initially hostile to the Frick's plans.

Finally, the group strolled down an Upper East Side street for dinner at the home of Penn IUR Co-Director Eugénie Birch, where fellows, alumni, and board members had a chance to discuss the trip's highlights and forge new connections before rushing off to catch the train back to Philadelphia. They were exhausted but enriched by the myriad views of the Big Apple.



# Faculty Fellow Updates

## AMMON LAUNCHES NEH-FUNDED PROJECT



**Francesca Ammon** published a chapter, "Urban Renewal through Rehabilitation and Restoration," in the edited collection, *The Many Geographies of Urban Renewal*, Ed. Douglas R. Appler (Temple University Press, 2023). In 2024, Ammon is co-launching *Sunset Over Sunset*, an NEH-funded digital humanities project that uses the photographs of Ed Ruscha to uncover stories of urban change across five decades along Los Angeles's Sunset Boulevard. Her essays on historic preservation will be published this spring in *AIA Philadelphia's Context* magazine and in the online journal *Platform*.

## BARNETT PUBLISHES BOOK



**Jonathan Barnett** published his latest book, *Implementing Urban Design, Green, Civic, and Community Strategies*, which addresses the central urban design issue of how to bring an urban design from concept to reality, in June 2023. With Associate Professor of City & Regional Planning Zhongjie Lin, Barnett also published an article, "10 Principles for Managing Autonomous Vehicles on City Streets," in the Summer 2023 issue of *Planning*, the magazine of the American Planning Association.

## BARNES PUBLISHES BOOK



**David Barnes** published his new book, *Lazaretto: How Philadelphia Used an Unpopular Quarantine Based on Disputed Science to Accommodate Immigrants and Prevent Epidemics*, in

May 2023. The story of Philadelphia's Lazaretto quarantine station shows the many surprising, controversial, and often faltering ways in which public health institutions have alternately facilitated and impeded the commercial traffic and immigration that turned a city in crisis during the yellow fever epidemics of the 1790s into a global industrial powerhouse a century later. There are lessons in the stories of Philadelphia epidemics and quarantine that can help us navigate the fraught politics of public health in the 21st century.

## BEHRMAN SERVES AS INVITED SPEAKER



**Jere Behrman** was ranked #70 in the world and #57 in the United States in the 2023 Edition of *Ranking of Best Scientists in the field of Economics and Finance* (research.com/scientists-rankings/economics-and-finance). Behrman served as an invited Speaker, African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) Senior Policy Seminar XXV Theme: Human Capital Development in Africa (HCD) in Nairobi, Kenya, and at School of Population and Global Health, McGill University, Montreal, Canada, among other speaking roles in 2023. Additionally, he is a co-principal investigator (PIs: Hans-Peter Kohler, Lauren Schmitz – University of Wisconsin), exploring "Adversity, Aging and ADRD Risk among the Global Poor: A Biosocial Lifecourse Approach" and a multiple Principal Investigator (MPIs Stein, Aryeh D- Emory University; Behrman, Jere R.) for "The impact of early-life nutrition on socioeconomic status, physical health and cognitive function through middle age."

## BIRCH CO-CHAIRS GLOBAL COMMISSION SECRETARIAT



**Eugénie Birch** co-taught the U.S. Department of State Diplomacy Lab course on *Rebuilding Cities in Ukraine* with Penn IUR Faculty Fellow David Gouverneur in Fall 2023. Her recent publications include: "Harnessing Urban Innovation to Unlock the Sustainable Development Goals," Singapore: Springer, 2024. (with Ali Cheshmehzangi, Nicholas You, José Siri); "How will Philadelphia Finance Climate Change?" *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 11, 2023 (with William Burke White and Mauricio Rodas); "Transitioning to Clean Energy in Informal Settlements: Sustainable Energy Towards Achieving SDG 7," *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* (forthcoming, with James Mensah and Zechariah Langnel). She also delivered lectures including "CHAMP (Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnership) is a Triumph," *Multilevel Action & Urbanization Pavillion, COP, December 5, 2023*; "Making Cities Climate Ready," *Thai Pavillion, COP 28, December 6, 2023*; and "Bridging the Local Finance Gap," *Cities and Regions Summit, UNEA 6, February 23, 2024*. She is the co-chair, Secretariat, SDSN Global Commission on Urban SDG Finance.

## BROWNLEE PUBLISHES ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY



**David Brownlee** made an online presentation "A Building Powered by Fusion: George Edmund Street and the Royal Courts of Justice" for the judges of the King's Bench Division of the Royal Courts of Justice, London, in May 2023. In June his brief architectural history of the Philadelphia Museum of Art was published in *It Starts Here*, a volume celebrating the completion of the museum's \$600 million renovation

and expansion project. He continues to serve on the boards of the Design Advocacy Group, the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, and the Beth Shalom Preservation Foundation.

## DILULIO COLLABORATES ON HANDBOOK



**John J. Dilulio** serves with Charlotte Ren, Robert A. Fox Leadership International Professor of Practice, as co-Director of the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) Partnership for Innovation, Cross-Sector Collaboration, Leadership, and Organization (PICCLO). Joined by Professor Chao Guo of the Penn School of Social Policy and Practice, they are working on a "Handbook of Cross-Sector Collaboration" to help identify and illustrate the conditions under which government agencies, business firms, and nonprofit organizations are most likely to interface in ways that yield predictable and desirable results including in urban communities.

## DURANTON PUBLISHES NEW PAPERS



**Gilles Duranton** and co-author Diego Puga, CEMFI, published "Urban Growth and Its Aggregate Implications," in the November 2023 issue of *Econometrica*. With co-authors Prottoy A. Akbar, Aalto University; Victor Couture, University of British Columbia; and Adam Storeygard, Tufts University, Duranton published "The fast, the slow, and the congested: Urban transportation in rich and poor countries," in the National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series in August 2023.

## FERREIRA PUBLISHES PAPER ON GENTRIFICATION



**Fernando Ferreira** published a working paper, "Household Mobility, Networks, and Gentrification of Minority Neighborhoods in the U.S.," (with Jeanna H. Kenney and Benjamin Smith) in the National Bureau of Economic Research in July 2023.

## GYOURKO PUBLISHES NBER WORKING PAPERS



**Joseph Gyourko** recently published three new working papers: "Minimum Lot Size Restrictions: Impacts on Urban Form and House Price at the Border", NBER Working Paper 31710, September 2023; "Does Political Partisanship Affect Housing Supply: Evidence from U.S. Cities", NBER Working Paper 31966, December 2023; and "Why Has Construction Productivity Stagnated? The Role of Land Use Regulation," December 2023.

## HARKAVY CO-AUTHORS BOOK



**Ira Harkavy** co-authored a June 2023 book entitled, *The Community Schools Revolution: Building Partnerships, Transforming Lives, and Advancing Democracy*. He published a chapter with Penn colleagues, "Towards Creating the Democratic, Engaged, Urban University: Penn's Partnership with West Philadelphia as an Experiment in Progress," in *Engaging Place, Engaging Practices: Urban History and Campus-Community Partnerships*. His keynote address to the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy, "Dewey, Implementation, and Creating a Democratic Civic University," was

published in the Society's journal, *The Pluralist*. Harkavy also co-authored a chapter, "Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education" in the book *Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean: Civic Engagement and the Democratic Mission*, co-produced by the Netter Center, the Organization of American States, and Penn's Center for Latin American and Latinx Studies.

## JENSEN CONTINUES RESEARCH ON VACANT LOT GREENING



**Shane Jensen** continues to focus on using high resolution data to explore the association between aspects of the local built environment and the social and economic functioning of urban neighborhoods. Jensen is one of several researchers that has been empirically evaluating the Vacant Lot Greening program that has been operated by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society over the past 15 years in Philadelphia. In collaboration with Penn IUR Co-Director Susan Wachter, Jensen is evaluating the impact of vacant lot greening on nearby real estate values. They use repeated sales data and some sophisticated house pricing models to estimate an average increase in value of around 4 percent within the first year for a property nearby to a greened lot. This work has potential for significant impact as they continue to establish vacant lot greening as a model for repurposing urban land that is relatively low cost but with multi-dimensional benefit.

## LANDIS RESEARCHES COVID'S EFFECTS ON CITIES



**John Landis** recently published his working paper "Ten Ways COVID-19 Changed America's

Cities – or Maybe Not" with Penn IUR. The paper uses scenario analysis to speculate on the current state of the American city by comparing pre-COVID and pandemic-era population growth, housing, employment, infill, transit ridership, violent crime and poverty trends through 2030. While the national media has focused on the post-COVID recovery difficulties facing cities like New York and San Francisco, Landis finds many other American cities to be doing just fine.

## LUM EXHIBITS NEW WORK



**Ken Lum** exhibited his work at the Arthur Ross Gallery, University of Pennsylvania in 2023 and has several exhibitions scheduled for 2024, including a solo exhibition at The Image Centre, Toronto; and group exhibitions, *Knock Knock Art, Humour and Meaning*, Two Rivers Gallery, Prince George, B.C., and *Another Beautiful Country, Moving Images by Chinese American Artists*, USC Pacific Asia Museum, Pasadena, Calif.

## MACDONALD PUBLISHES RESEARCH ON GUN VIOLENCE



**John MacDonald** recently published a paper in the *Journal of the American Planning Association* that addresses the topic of gun violence in Philadelphia and other cities with similar aging housing infrastructure and high levels of abandonment. Due to a partnership with PHDC and PHA, MacDonald's field experiment showed that remediating abandoned housing helps reduce gun violence. In the most recent paper from this experiment, MacDonald used systematic social observation methods to rate changes in disrepair, disorder, and litter at housing sites and on the city

blocks where they were located and police-reported data on gun violence and illegal substance use. The results showed significant changes in observed disrepair at housing sites were the primary mechanism that drove reductions in gun violence. This experiment is a demonstration of the benefits of experimental evaluations of place-based changes to the built environment. The report is available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01944363.2022.2128855>

## NEUKRUG ADVANCES WATER CENTER AT PENN



**Howard Neukrug**, in his role as Executive Director of The Water Center at Penn, has continued to focus in the areas of Water Leadership, Water Equity, and Building Community Climate Resilience. Some highlights include empowering emerging water utility leaders through non-traditional leadership training, peer-to-peer learning, mentoring, and guidance to create an innovative and collaborative approach to problem-solving for the future of U.S. utilities. Additionally, The Water Center and PennPraxis have been working to develop a comprehensive, equity-based stormwater strategic plan for Pittsburgh. The plan is the first phase of a long-term planning effort to address local stormwater challenges and considers prevalent issues such as neighborhood flooding and basement backups while also looking through the lenses of equity and environmental justice to create geographic priorities for investment. Finally, The Water Center is working with community partners as leaders to build capacity to address water issues in the Cobbs Creek and Eastwick neighborhoods in Philadelphia while providing STEM learning opportunities for youth.



## PERNA KEYNOTES CONFERENCE



**Laura W. Perna** uses various methodological approaches to identify how social structures, educational practices, and public policies promote and limit college access and success, particularly for groups that are underrepresented in higher education. This past year, she delivered the keynote address for the “Focusing on the First Year” conference at the Ohio State University and the Dan E. Sweet Lecture at the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University. She reflected on the forces that influence college access for students in the United States in a 2023 essay entitled, “La transition du lycée à l’université aux États-Unis, publiée in *Diversité: Revue d’actualité et de réflexion sur l’action éducative.*” Perna also works to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging among college and university faculty, and offered recommendations in two op-eds: “Enabling midcareer faculty of color to thrive” (with Sydney Freeman, Jr.) and “Why we need better data on faculty diversity.”

## REINA RETURNS FROM WHITE HOUSE



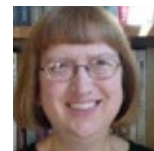
Vincent Reina returned to the Weitzman School of Design after serving as the senior advisor for housing and urban policy in the White House Domestic Policy Council in 2022-24. In that role, he worked with administration leaders and executive branch agencies to address the nation’s housing affordability and supply challenges, affirmatively further fair housing, and advance equitable development and community investment.

## STEINER EARNS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION MEDAL



**Fritz Steiner** earned the Landscape Architecture Foundation’s 2024 LAF Medal, one of the profession’s highest honors. He also received the 2023 Outstanding Alumni Award from the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning at the University of Cincinnati. His latest book, *Megaregions and America’s Future* (with Robert Yaro and Ming Zhang), was published by the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. He contributed a chapter, “Environment” to *The Landscape Project (Applied Research & Design / ORO Editions, 2023)*, edited by Richard Weller and Tatum Hands. Dean Steiner also published “Reflective Socio-Ecological Practice” in *Socio-Ecological Practice Research (Volume 4, Number 4)* and “Envisioning Health, Safety, and Welfare for All” in *Journal of Comparative Urban Law and Policy (Volume 5, Number 1)*.

## STEINHARDT PUBLISHES TWO BOOKS



**Nancy Steinhardt** completed several long-term projects recently, including *Yuan: Chinese Architecture in a Mongol Empire* (Princeton University Press, 2024) and *Chinese Modern Architecture: 180 Years* (ORO, 2024). She delivered keynote talks at the World Association of Chinese Studies in Beijing in the summer of 2023 and at the Chinese Society of Architectural Historians annual meeting in the fall.

## VITIELLO RECEIVES URBAN HISTORY ASSOCIATION AWARD



**Domenic Vitiello** received the Urban History Association’s 2023 Kenneth Jackson Award for the best book on North American urban history for his latest

book, *The Sanctuary City: Immigrant, Refugee, and Receiving Communities in Postindustrial Philadelphia* (Cornell University Press). Due to support from Weitzman School Dean Frederick Steiner and the Mellon-sponsored Humanities + Urbanism + Design initiative, the book is open access, free to download. In 2024, Vitiello is launching two new projects as part of his ongoing work in Sicily: a multi-year community-driven participatory action research initiative on immigrant rights with Penn SP2 Lecturer Obed Arango and partners in migrant-led community organizations in Palermo, funded by Penn Global; and a book project on anti-mafia work in migrant communities of Palermo, Corleone, and Campobello di Mazara, supported by the University Research Foundation.

## WACHTER SHARES INSIGHTS ON REAL ESTATE



**Susan Wachter** was honored to deliver the fourth Austin J. Jaffe Real Estate Lecture at the Penn State Smeal College of Business on November 13, 2023, sharing her insights on housing economics and mortgage finance in a talk titled “Real Estate and the Challenge of Cycles.” Her co-authored paper “Why do young adults coreside with their parents?” was published in *Real Estate Economics* in November 2023, and another co-authored paper titled “Climate Risk in Mortgage Markets: Evidence from Hurricanes Harvey and Irma” is currently forthcoming in the same journal. In December 2023, she recorded an interview with Knowledge at Wharton on the real estate outlook for 2024.

# Listen to the Special Briefing podcast

Hear urban experts and government officials discuss the future of U.S. cities

# Planning for a Greener Urban Ukraine



Penn IUR Co-Director Genie Birch and Penn IUR Faculty Fellow David Gouverneur with students.

How will small cities in Ukraine rebuild both during and after the war? This question was the focus of a Fall 2023 course, Topics in International Development: Urban Plans for the Ukraine, led by Penn IUR Co-Director Eugénie Birch and Penn IUR Faculty Fellow David Gouverneur, both faculty in City & Regional Planning, assisted by Penn IUR Faculty Fellows Randy Mason (Historic Preservation), Wendell Pritchett (Law), and Megan Ryerson (City Planning and Engineering).

Undertaken as a project for the U.S. Department of State’s Diplomacy Lab that Penn joined in Spring 2023, the course centers on developing a climate

sensitive conceptual plan for the reconstruction of Bucha, a war-torn site 15 kilometers from Kyiv. Known for the February 2022 invasion by Russia and a subsequent massacre that left 501 dead and some 3,000 homes and structures damaged, Bucha has shown remarkable resilience and dedication to remaking itself amidst adversity. While it has maintained the prewar population level of 37,000, its residential composition has changed dramatically as refugees from other parts of Ukraine have moved in, the military-age male population is in the army, and others have fled the country. Further, Bucha’s leadership is eager to explore how to strengthen the city’s economic base,

memorialize the recent history with dignity and respect, and accommodate a green and just recovery.

Working with representatives of the Bucha City Council and C40, a global network of mayors of the world’s leading cities that are united in action to confront the climate crisis, 13 students employed satellite imagery, stakeholder interviews, data assembled by the Ukraine Rebuilding Action Group (URAG), an international team of professionals sponsored by the American Planning Association, and RO3KVIT, Urban Coalition for Ukraine, as the basis of their work. They set up operations in the Penn IUR conference room where they documented current conditions on oversized maps of Bucha and its environs hung on the wall and spread across the tables as well as on GIS based state and regional maps on their computers. They also explored the regulatory framework related to planning, building codes, historic preservation, and infrastructure requirements.

During a recent session of the course, students traded chats and voice messages over WhatsApp with Andrew Melnyk, a local private sector leader working with the Bucha City Council. Despite the ongoing war, Melnyk stressed the importance of

Bucha’s transformation into a more sustainable city and was already thinking ahead to a time when the city will host tourists – even dark tourists, surveying the damage of war. “Green is good,” Melnyk wrote.

Meanwhile students outlined the area’s natural and transportation systems, located key cultural and historic sites, including the recent temporary memorials, new construction, the makeup of 11 surrounding villages, and the relationship with Kyiv as they considered the components of a green strategy for the city. Students and professors exchanged questions: How could the city reconnect better with the river and its broader region? How could the city expand its bike lanes and sustainable transportation options? Birch read from a report that local architects in Ukraine have provided conveying residents’ vision for Bucha’s future and how its identity can be enhanced through a land use plan. How should the city incorporate a monument to the war?

At the conclusion of the course, Penn students and faculty developed a roadmap for a rebuilt sustainable, economically vibrant city and its environs that they readied for a presentation to the Ukraine Ambassador and Diplomacy Lab in January 2024.



# New Research

Penn IUR's research initiatives generate new scholarship and promote the exchange of knowledge among scholars across disciplines.

## Powering the Slum II: Alternative Sources of Energy in Accra's Informal Settlements

By Eugénie Birch, Penn IUR Co-Director, and James Kwame Mensah, Penn IUR Fellow

In a new policy digest published by the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy, Birch and Mensah explore efforts to introduce renewable energy to informal settlements in Accra, Ghana. It builds on previous studies, *Powering the Slum: Meeting SDG 7 in Accra's Informal Settlements* and "Electricity and Informal Settlements: Towards Achieving SDG 7 in Developing Countries."

Ghana's electrical system is not only highly reliant on fossil fuels (66 percent of the total) but also does not meet demand due to rapid population growth, especially in the country's urban informal settlements. This widespread lack of affordable and reliable energy severely limits informal settlers' capacity to leap out of poverty and live safe, healthy, and productive lives.

How can the energy generation mix be diversified to yield the most affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy in informal settlements? The digest explores how solar and biogas technologies are fit for adoption in informal settlements, but have limited adoption due to many barriers, including cost, knowledge, technical expertise, and financial support. Transitioning to broader use of alternative energy in informal settlements will require a coordinated multi-stakeholder approach. The digest concludes with recommendations for the private, public, and civic sectors to advance this energy transformation.

## Good and Bad News About Income Inequality in Urban America and Calculating and Applying the Tract-Based Concentrated Poverty Index

By John Landis, Penn IUR Faculty Fellow and Crossways Professor Emeritus, Department of City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design

Where poverty and income inequality occur is as important as how much of it occurs. Scholars and researchers agree that spatially concentrated poverty limits equitable access to housing, education, public services, and health care, contributes to worsening residential segregation, aggravates crime and other social pathologies, and perhaps most perniciously of all, replicates itself over successive generations. In a recent pair of Penn IUR working papers, Professor Emeritus of City & Regional Planning John Landis used local census data to look at recent changes in the spatial occurrence of income inequality and poverty among large U.S. urban counties.

In the first, entitled "Good and Bad News about Income Inequality in Urban America," Landis finds that while nominal income inequality – the numerical divide between rich and poor – worsened between 2000 and 2020, spatial income inequality, the tendency for rich and poor to live apart from one another, significantly lessened. In the second paper, entitled, "Calculating and Applying the Tract-Based Concentrated Poverty Index," Landis demonstrates the use of a Gini coefficient-like measure able to reliably track concentrated poverty at the local level and to compare its severity by race and ethnicity.

Among the 66 largest urban counties, poverty concentrations between 2000 and 2021 declined in 34 counties, increased in 25, and stayed about the same in seven. Concentrated poverty lessened further between 2020 and 2023 thanks to the availability of recently exhausted COVID-19 relief funds, but absent further government action, is likely to begin rising.

## National Land Use Regulatory Index

By Susan Wachter, Penn IUR Co-Director

Penn IUR's National Land Use Regulatory Index (NLURI) project is a multi-year effort to identify how local zoning restricts the availability of the supply of land for housing. The land use restrictiveness index is based on local-level estimates of the number of housing units allowed per acre under municipal zoning ordinances. The methodology, in beta testing

mode, enables the aggregation of census block group data to county, metro, and state levels.

## Tracking Urban Investments in Nature-Based Solutions

By Amanda Lloyd, Penn IUR Global Research Initiatives Director, and Eugénie Birch, Penn IUR Co-Director

Following the 2023 State of Finance for Nature in Cities: Time to Assess, Summary for Policymakers with the United National Environmental Program (UNEP), Penn IUR Global Research Initiatives Director, Amanda Lloyd and Penn IUR Faculty Co-Director Eugénie Birch have been researching ways to improve the tracking of urban investments in nature-based solutions (NbS) at the local level. NbS, broadly speaking, is a holistic approach to addressing the triple threat of pollution, climate and biodiversity while benefiting humans by providing important services such as reducing climate change risk, providing clean water and access to recreation. A key finding from the first report highlighted a large global gap in city-level data on NbS investments. Four of the underlying challenges are 1) the diversity of NbS and their integration across government funding silos, 2) the evolving role of Urban NBS in green financing for resilience, adaptation and mitigation; 3) the general lack of subnational data, and 4) the lack of knowledge and capacity at the city level. To mobilize new investments, cities need a simple yet robust tracking criteria framework that can address these challenges without straining local capacity and resources while also improving their alignment with national adaptation and resilience funding goals. In 2024, a proof-of-concept framework will be tested with cities engaged with UNEP's Restoration Generation urban NbS pilot initiatives and findings will be included in the 2024 UNEP's State of Finance for Nature report.

(CONTINUED FROM P. 1)

## Special Briefing Offers Timely Analysis of State and Local Finance

SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

### Special Briefing: Recession? Soft Landing? . . . Impact on States and Cities

*Speakers: Zac Jackson, Indiana Budget Director; Eric Kim, Senior Director, Fitch Ratings; Torsten Slok, Chief Economist, Apollo Global Management; Matthew Stitt, Director and National Lead for Equitable Recovery and Strategic Financial Initiatives, PFM's Management and Budget Consulting Team, and former CFO, Philadelphia City Council; and Kate Watkins, President and Chief Economist, Bright Fox Analytics, and former Chief Economist, Colorado State Legislature's Legislative Council Staff.*

Panelists delved into the repercussions of the Federal Reserve's decisions on interest rates, exploring the possibilities of a hard, soft, or no landing. Post-pandemic recovery and federal aid have allowed states and localities to return to historical patterns of moderate growth in tax revenues. However, challenges loom in the form of high interest rates, inflation, labor shortages, expiring federal budget aid, and potential economic slowdown or reversal.

OCTOBER 19, 2023

### Special Briefing: Rolling Out the \$1.2 Trillion Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act—What's Being Built and What's in the Pipeline

*Speakers: Representative Earl Blumenauer (D-OR); Alison Premo Black, Senior Vice President and Chief Economist, American Road & Transportation Builders Association; Leah Brooks, Professor, Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration, George Washington University; Jessica Jennings, Legislative Director for Transportation and Infrastructure, National Association of Counties; and*

*Vikram Rai, Lead Strategist, Wells Fargo Municipal Division.*

The panelists discussed progress in funding 38,000 infrastructure projects across more than 4,500 communities across the country. These projects include rebuilding the nation's most economically significant bridges and 15,000 smaller bridges, making the largest rail investment since Amtrak's creation, building out the first-ever national network of 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations, replacing the nation's lead pipes, and helping to ensure access to high-speed internet. The speakers also discussed the challenges states and localities face, including bottlenecks due to permitting requirements, environmental concerns, unfilled job openings at construction sites, and issues among counties and states in the distribution of funding.

NOVEMBER 30, 2023

### Special Briefing: Public Pensions - Still a Crisis

*Speakers: Liz Farmer, public finance journalist and co-host, Public Money podcast; Vedanta Goenka, Senior Municipal Strategist, Citigroup; Merl Hackbart, Professor Emeritus, Martin School of Public Policy and Administration, University of Kentucky; Shoaib Khan, Director, New Jersey Treasury Division of Investment; Anthony Randazzo, Executive Director, Equable Institute; and Les Richmond, Vice President and Actuary, Build America Mutual.*

Many states, counties, and cities emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting recession with record cash reserves following the US government's injection of \$5 trillion to revive the economy and prop up local government budgets. But even after the unprecedented federal support, states and municipalities have been left with more than \$1.3 trillion in unfunded liabilities for public employee pension benefits that were promised but are not fully funded. This panel discussed strategies that state and local governments are adopting to reduce this pension burden and whether they may have to reduce spending for education, infrastructure, and other critical public services to make room for increasing retirement contributions.

(CONTINUED FROM P. 1)

## Sustainable Development Solutions Network Commission Update

Additionally, the second Urban Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change, sponsored by the COP 28 Presidency and UN-Habitat, convened more than 1,000 attendees, including a diverse set of ministers, local and regional leaders, financial institutions, and non-government stakeholders. The parties reviewed and agreed on a suite of multilevel, Paris-aligned actions for cooperation in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) space, focused on joint policy and finance for sustainable urbanization across sectors including buildings, waste, transport, water, energy, and nature.

During the Local Climate Action Summit, the COP28 Presidency announced the groundbreaking Coalition of High Ambition Multilevel Partners (CHAMP) Pledge—endorsed by 64 countries committing to partner with subnational governments on the next round of NDCs and other climate plans and strategies. In total, nearly \$470 million was mobilized toward urban climate action.

Finally, the Loss and Damages resolution included a new precedent—the ability to fund subnational governments. The SDSN Global Commission on Urban SDG Finance released a statement on subnational governments' role in the Loss and Damages Fund Operational Guidelines.

"The SDSN Global Commission for SDG Finance is pleased that the Loss and Damage Fund (LDF) has been operationalized in COP 28 with the mandate of providing subnational governments with direct access to resources from the Fund. This is an important milestone. Now we need to make sure cities participate in the negotiation of the Loss and Damage Fund Operational Guidelines to ensure urban needs are duly considered," said Mauricio Rodas, Former Mayor of Quito, Ecuador, and Fellow, Penn IUR.

# Public Programs

Penn IUR hosts public programs both on campus and online to engage students, scholars, and urban leaders.

SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

## Advancing Homeownership Opportunity: An Update on Recent Innovations

### Speakers

Panel One: *Stacey Shifman, Senior Director, Single-Family Analytics and Modeling, Fannie Mae; Chuck Bishop, Head, Home Lending Diverse Segments, Wells Fargo; Laurie Goodman, Institute Fellow, Urban Institute (Moderator)*

Panel Two: *Robin Wiessmann, Executive Director and CEO, Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency; Nicole Montecalvo, Chief Capital Officer, Home Partners of America; George W. McCarthy, President and CEO, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy; Susan Wachter, Co-Director, Penn Institute for Urban Research (Moderator)*

For many Americans, owning a home is an effective tool for building household – and generational – wealth. Yet not all Americans have shared in this prosperity. Historical and systemic barriers to homeownership have long stood in the way of households of color, resulting in significant racial disparities in homeownership and neighborhood disinvestment that persist nationwide. With rapidly increasing house prices and interest rates, more innovative and strategic programs are needed to narrow the racial homeownership gap. As a follow-up to the 2022 webinar series, *Advancing Homeownership Opportunity to Narrow Racial Disparities*, the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, the Urban Institute, and the Penn Institute for Urban Research provided an update on strategies for expanding homeownership opportunities for lower-income households and households of color.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

## Raising Public Awareness on Climate Change: Spotlight on Ecologically Sensitive Urban Places

Speakers: *Simon Richter, Class of 1942 Endowed Term Professor of Germanic Studies, School of Arts & Sciences; Joshua Mosley,*

*Professor of Fine Arts, Weitzman School of Design; Kelly Kennedy, Research Coordinator and Lab Manager of the Galápagos Education and Research Alliance; and Eugénie L. Birch, Co-Director, Penn Institute for Urban Research (Moderator).*

As global warming continues to intensify, ecologically sensitive urban places are particularly prone to its consequences. This panel focused on the world-renowned Galapagos Islands, a place experiencing meteoric growth in land- and sea-based tourism (up from 18,000 in 1980 to 271,000 in 2019) as an example. Speakers engaged in Penn IUR's Galapagos Goes Green Project underscored their efforts to increase public awareness about the conflict between local desires to maximize visitors and resulting induced negative effects (e.g., uncontrolled urban growth, increased use of fossil fuels, ongoing threat to biodiversity) as a means to guide public and private decision-making about many dimensions of the islands' economy. A short, animated video, *What Would it Take to Make Galapagos Tourist Resilient?*, was shown to help explain the underlying research. Co-sponsors: Perry World House

SEPTEMBER 22, 2023

## Uneven Access to Digital Tools and Tech in Low-Income Informal Communities

### Speakers

*Stefan Chavez-Norgaard, PhD Candidate in Urban Planning at Columbia University; Pamela Siphika Founder, Whizz ICT, Cape Town, South Africa; Christopher Moonga, Co-Director, Whizz ICT, Cape Town, South Africa; Gwamaka Mwalemba, Senior Lecturer, Department of Information Systems, University of Cape Town (Moderator)*

Proponents of smartphone and internet access have long hailed their digital tools as the great equalizer expected to leap-frog low-income communities in the global south across the technical divide. However, the reality is more nuanced. Target 9.c of the Sustainable Development Goals required the international community to provide universal and affordable

access to the internet in the least-developed countries by 2020. In its latest report, the United Nations acknowledged this target was unmet. In many countries of the global south, the lack of regular electricity supply is a fundamental hindrance to such access, but the success stories are tangible where available. This session draws panelists from ground-level experience in low-income informal settlements of Cape Town, South Africa, to ask: In what ways does uneven access to digital tools and technologies change how low-income informal communities build civic and community capacity and self-sufficiency? And, in doing so, how does this equip or challenge communities to mobilize further for social and economic rights?

### Co-sponsors

Columbia GSAPP, University of Cape Town School of IT, and Whizz ICT.

SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

## AI in the City

### Speakers

*John Paul Farmer, President of WeLink Cities; Evi Fuelle, Global Policy Director at Credo AI; Santiago Garces, Chief Information Officer of the City of Boston; Emily Royall, Smart Cities Administrator at the Office of Innovation for the City of San Antonio; and Ethan Zuckerman, Associate Professor of Public Policy, Information and Communication at UMass Amherst.*

Cities have been grappling with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and algorithmic governance for years. Many are carefully walking a tightrope between leveraging AI to improve city processes and managing the errors and ethical conflicts embedded in AI. Now, as the use of AI accelerates, tech leaders are calling for regulation. There is increasing urgency for cities to develop more formal plans and policies on their use of AI. In this panel, five leading experts on smart cities, urban technology, and AI talked about their experiences with AI in the city, what they are most excited about right now, and their cautions. What is the future of AI and cities?

OCTOBER 5, 2023

## Data Action: Using Data for A Public Good

### Speakers

*Sarah Williams, Associate Professor of Technology and Urban Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Director of the Civic Data Design Lab and the Leventhal Center for Advanced Urbanism*

Big data can be used for good, from tracking disease to exposing human rights violations, and for bad: implementing surveillance and control. In this lecture, MIT Associate Professor of Technology and Urban Planning Sarah Williams explored her own projects and provided historical background to remind us that data inevitably represents the ideologies of those who control its use; data analytics and algorithms too often exclude women, the poor, and ethnic groups. Focused on urban planning and urban analytics, the lecture provided case studies including Digital Matatus in Nairobi,

where open data was used to create an informal transit system, and Distance Unknown, where data visualizations presented to the U.S. Congress created more work visas for Central American migrants.

NOVEMBER 13, 2023

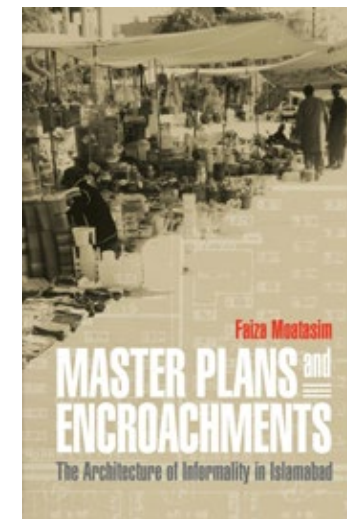
## Private Cities in the Developing World: Has Their Time Come?

### Speakers

*Martin Rama, Consultant, Equitable Growth, Finance and Institutions Vice Presidency, World Bank; Yue Li, Senior Economist, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank; Rana Hasan, Regional Lead Economist for South Asia, Asian Development Bank; Robert Helsley, Grosvenor Professor of Cities, Business Economics and Public Policy, Sauder School of Business, University of British Columbia; Gilles Duranton, Dean's Chair in Real Estate Professor at The Wharton School (Moderator).*

Institutional constraints and weak capacity often hamper the ability of local governments in developing countries to steer urbanization. As a result, there are not enough cities to accommodate an unabated rural-urban migration and many of those that exist are messy, sprawling, and disconnected. The flipside is the emergence of entire cities – more than gated communities or industrial parks – led in whole or in part by private actors. To assess the emergence of private cities, the authors examined 14 cases across the developing world in the recent World Bank paper, "Private Cities: Outstanding Examples from Developing Countries and Their Implications for Urban Policy." In this event, the authors and discussants explored the conditions that create these private cities, who these private actors are, and the implications for urban policy.

# New Book in the University of Pennsylvania Press Series, The City in the 21st Century



## Master Plans and Encroachments: The Architecture of Informality in Islamabad

By *Faiza Moatasim*  
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2024  
The City in the 21st Century Series.

Among urban designers and municipal officials, the term encroachment is defined as a deviation from the official master plan. But in cities today, such informal modifications to the urban fabric are deeply enmeshed with formal planning procedures. *Master Plans and Encroachments* examines informality in the high-modernist city of Islamabad as a strategic conformity to official schemes and regulations rather than as a deviation from them. For the new administrative capital of Pakistan designed in 1959 by Greek architect and planner Constantinos A. Doxiadis, Islamabad's master plan offers a clear template of formal urban design within which informal spaces and processes have been articulated. Drawing on deep archival research, wide-ranging

interviews, and an array of visual material, including photographs, maps, and architectural drawings, Faiza Moatasim shows how Islamabad's master plan is not simply a blueprint that guides future urban development or makes its violations apparent; it is used by both city officials and citizens to develop informal spaces that accommodate unfulfilled needs and desires of those living and working in the city. *Master Plans and Encroachments* is the first book that examines the informal practices of both the privileged and the underprivileged. The book highlights how low-, middle-, and upper-income people do not randomly build informal spaces; they strategically use architectural techniques to support their informal claims to space, which are often met with the government's tacit approval. By focusing on those spaces in Islamabad's urban fabric that are not part of its official master plan, the book demonstrates how planning actually works in complex ways.



# 8th Annual Penn IUR Photography Contest

Penn IUR is pleased to announce the winner of its 8th Annual Photography Contest: “Wetland for All” by Amitava Chandra. The theme of the 2023 contest, “Urban Nature,” brought attention to the connection and coexistence of cities and nature around the world. The contest attracted 125 submissions from photographers from around the world, from Philadelphia to the Philippines, and cities in more than a dozen countries. The photo contest jury consisted of four Penn affiliated staff and faculty: Thabo Lenneiye, Managing Director, PennPraxis; Kathleen Morrison, Sally and Alvin V. Shoemaker Professor of Anthropology, School of Arts & Sciences; Joshua Mosley, Professor of Fine Arts, Weitzman School of Design; and Frederick Steiner, Dean, Weitzman School of Design. In addition to the winner, the jury selected two additional photographs as honorable mentions: “Rooftop Garden” and “Food-Secure City,” both by Sudip Maiti.

**WINNER /**  
**Wetland for All**  
by Amitava Chandra /  
Guwahati City, India

“As an important part of the global ecological environment, urbanized wetlands provide rich environmental and ecological resources for human production and life, and have relatively high ecological value; for example, they produce oxygen, prevent drought & soil erosion, control runoff, store flood water, degrade urban pollution, regulate and control urban climate, and so on. Because of their filter-like function, wetlands are also known as the “kidneys of the earth.”



**HONORABLE MENTION: / Food-Secure City**  
by Sudip Maiti / Kolkata, India

“A farmer checks on cauliflower plants beside the high rises of the city of Kolkata. With the help of urban agriculture, we can prevent significant carbon dioxide emissions by using local produce.”



**HONORABLE MENTION: / Rooftop Garden**  
by Sudip Maiti / Kolkata, India

“A man works on his rooftop garden in Kolkata, India. As a result of climate change, drought will have a significant negative impact on the food production of the world. On the other hand, as a result of rapid urbanization, the space for agriculture is also declining. To combat the issue, we can use our roofs as a secondary source of sustainable food production.”



# About Penn IUR

## The Penn Institute for Urban Research

is dedicated to advancing cross-disciplinary urban-focused research, instruction, and civic engagement on issues relevant to cities around the world. As the global population becomes increasingly urban, understanding cities is vital to informed decision-making and public policy at the local, national, and international levels. Penn IUR has a strong focus on research that informs the sustainable and inclusive 21st-century city. By providing a forum for collaborative scholarship and instruction at Penn and beyond, Penn IUR stimulates research and engages with urban practitioners and policymakers to inform urban policy.

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