

Undergraduate Urban Research Colloquium

LIST OF STUDENTS AND PROJECTS

Ailbhe Yasmín Wallis, Earth & Environmental Sciences, School of Arts & Sciences

Mentor: Chris Quattro, City & Regional Planning, Stuart Weitzman School of Design

Biosketch: I am a senior in the Earth & Environmental Sciences Department at the University of Pennsylvania. My previous research primarily focused on the ecological relationships between extremophilic microorganisms and the nature of biogeochemical cycling. In this program, I am focusing my research on sustainable city design and environmental planning, with an emphasis on American zoning policies and their role in the perpetuation of racism. As a mixed-race gay woman from Berkeley, CA, I am looking forward to investigating an unfamiliar case study, addressing inequality in planning law, and confronting my own privilege through this project. Most of all, I hope that the intersection of these disparate interests gives me a unique perspective.

Project Abstract: This study seeks to research the historic archives of the City of San Antonio, TX, to determine (1) how zoning codes vary based on district, and (2) whether economic class or race was a deciding factor when determining these differences. The study will critically analyze policy memos, historic plans, meeting minutes, and stakeholder testimony from the code drafting procedures, as well as the historic codes and maps themselves. A temporal content analysis will be conducted to compare the discussions and codes from each year of adoption for a significant code amendment or drafting, focusing on three critical years: 1933, 1957, and 2001.

Adam Goudjil, Urban Studies, School of Arts & Sciences

Mentor: Mary Rocco, Urban Studies, Barnard College

Biosketch: I am a sophomore majoring in Urban Studies and minoring in International Development and Urban Education Policy. Although my coursework centers around the built environment, I'm interested in philanthropy's impact on society. As a student who has received philanthropic support to pursue an education, and who lives in New York City, a city with some of the most impactful foundations in the world, I consider the sector to have been a major part of my life thus far. Philanthropy has become an underlying theme of my classes, extracurriculars, and recent readings. As a result, I seek to incorporate the two and assess the impact philanthropies have on cities and vice versa.

Project Abstract: This project will update data and literature in support of a manuscript, "Keeping it Local: Urban Revitalization through Place-based Philanthropy in Legacy Cities" authored by Dr. Mary

Rocco. The book argues that over more than a century, philanthropic foundations have contributed significantly to improving cities, especially in declining Rust Belt cities, known as Legacy Cities. Their revitalization efforts took the form of building public spaces, leading neighborhood development efforts and supporting local government capacity-building. In fact, in the first decade of the 21st century, foundation spending toward urban revitalization in fifty Legacy Cities, surpassed that of the federal government's Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), the nation's major urban program. I will update existing literature from 2016 forward on the revitalization efforts in Legacy Cities, with close attention to those efforts led and funded by philanthropy. I will also review grants made for revitalization in Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia from 2003-2018 and support qualitative analyses of grantmakers in cities. This will allow us to continue the story of how philanthropies support urban revitalization in Legacy Cities since 2016.

Julia Mitchell, Huntsman Program for International Studies and Business,
The Wharton School and School of Arts & Sciences

Mentor: Patricio Zambrano-Barragán, City and Regional Planning, Stuart Weitzman School of Design

Biosketch: I am a junior in the Huntsman Program for International Studies and Business, studying Public Policy at Wharton and French and Spanish in the College. Through hands-on experience researching immigrant housing for the Nationalities Service Center and border policy at Perry World House, I developed an interest in improving national policy responses to migration. This led me to the renter's crisis for Venezuelan refugees, which I hope to address by applying a comparative framework and economic tools from my coursework.

Project Abstract: Focusing on the question of housing accessibility for Venezuelan migrants within urban markets, I will investigate how host countries and cities can provide housing to a large number of Venezuelan migrants despite limited housing supply and political strife. This analysis will draw on case studies and interviews with both on-the-ground leaders in host cities and those involved in the recent management of the Syrian refugee crisis in Europe. It will lead to a policy proposal that can provide insight to local leaders.

Justin Moore, Architecture, Stuart Weitzman School of Design

Mentor: Bing-yu Chiu, City & Regional Planning, Stuart Weitzman School of Design

Biosketch: I am a sophomore majoring in architecture with a minor in environmental studies. This intersection of fields has caused me to have a deep interest in sustainable development. My ambition is to find ways to remove barriers facing individuals and organizations so that we may respond more quickly and intelligently to address the challenges of my generation such as climate change. Transportation

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modernization is one such challenge which presents great potential to have a positive impact. This blends my interests in the built environment as well as preserving the natural environment.

Project Abstract: Studying Taipei, Taiwan, as a case study, this project will estimate how an individual's use of motorcycles correlates with the spatial characteristics and new transit investments in the area where the rider lives, controlling for the individual's socioeconomic characteristics. In particular, we will investigate the effectiveness of public investments in a metro system and a bikeshare system in reducing the city's reliance on high-risk and pollution-heavy motorcycle usage and in promoting clean, healthy, and efficient public and active transportation.