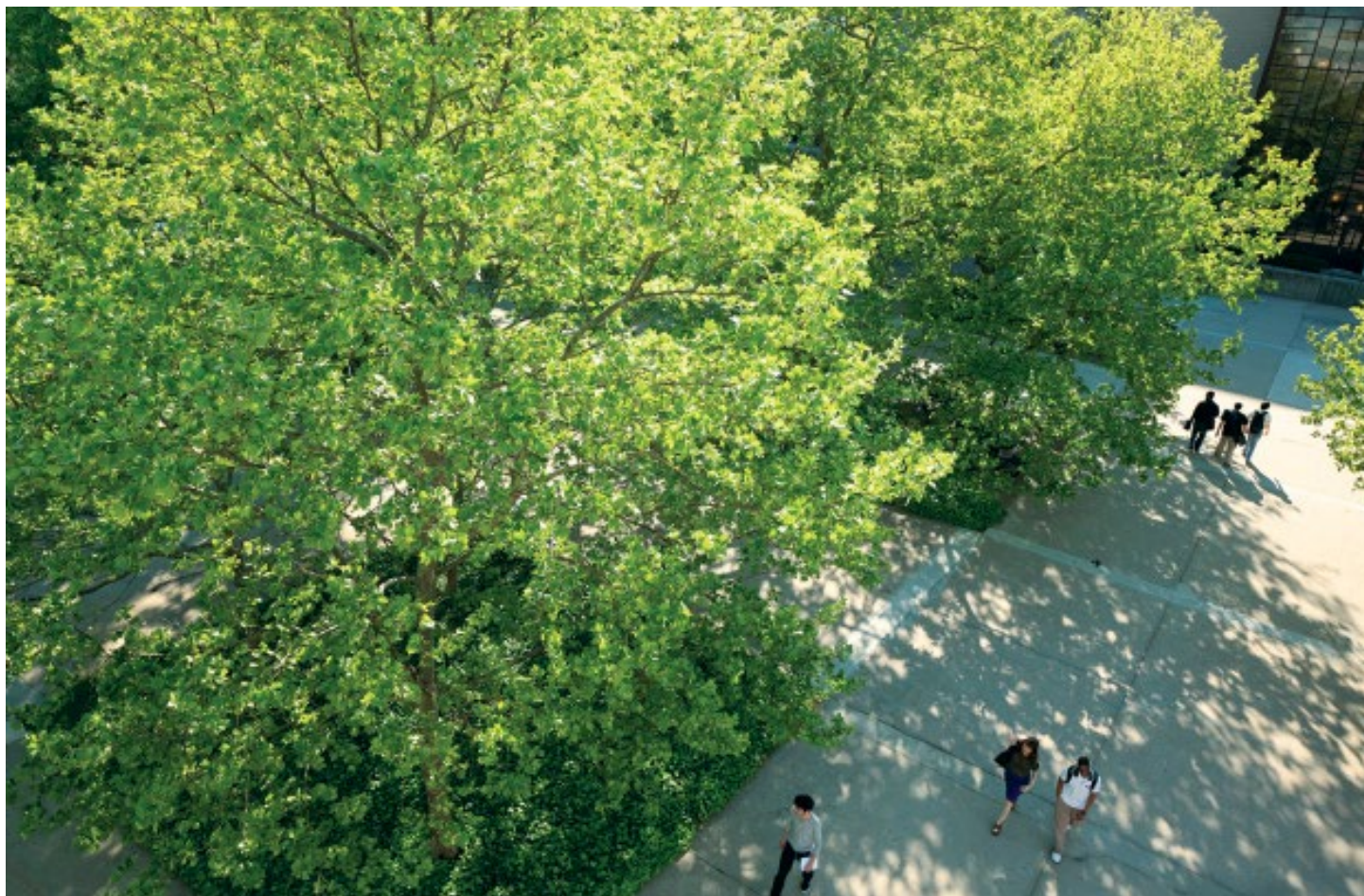


GRADUATE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



SPRING & SUMMER 2017

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Message from the Dean

Dear Students, Alumni, Colleagues, and Friends,

Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2017 edition of the Graduate School Newark (GSN) Newsletter. It's been a remarkable spring semester: not only have we continued our excellence in research and innovation, but we've also taken one of our unique strengths — a commitment to diversity and inclusion — further into the nation and out to the world.

Inside this issue, you'll see how our ongoing support of both diversity and STEM is reaping benefits across many fields. Our Chemistry Department not only includes three faculty winners of the NSF Career Award, but also an outstanding cohort of students from near and far, who are tackling a wide array of today's scientific problems. The same is true of Dr. Ashaki Rouff's Geoscience lab where a diversity of minds is keeping pace with the world's increasing environmental challenges. In April, our third annual Research Week proved, yet again, the promise of our young scientists and scholars, who come from all walks of life, and who will make the important contributions of tomorrow.

Members of our faculty — ever hardworking and engaged — have recently stepped onto new stages, before new audiences. Dr. Jessica Ware from the Department of Biology was one of the key speakers at the March for Science in Washington, D.C. The History Department hosted a series of sit-ins that offered perspective for understanding our current political reality. As Dr. Susan

Carruthers will tell you on page three, now is the time to study history. In this edition, you'll also meet Dr. Jason Barr from the Department of Economics, whose recently published book exposes a surprising correlation between skyscrapers and inequality.

Over the last several months, our graduate students have worked as agents for social change everywhere from Newark to Ghana. Here in the US, they've marched in support of belongingness for immigrants and refugees, for women, and for science. As scholars, they've excelled, presenting their research at the nation's top conferences. In April, the Student Association of Global Affairs and the Rutgers Division of Global Affairs jointly hosted a conference entitled Dynamics of Inequality: New Thinking in Global Affairs.

Above all, when I look back on this academic year, I feel true pride for GSN. So many have spoken truth to power. So many have communicated our message that regardless of what you look like, how much money you have, where you are from, how you worship, Rutgers University - Newark is a place that embraces your brilliance.

This summer, I hope you continue in your own ways to shift the world from its current state to that better place we know it can be.

Best Regards,
Kyle Farmbry, J.D., Ph.D.
Dean

TIME TO STUDY HISTORY



During the 2016 presidential elections, Professor Susan Carruthers was struck by the enthusiasm of her undergraduate history students. She says they often dread history because they mistakenly think it's about memorizing dates. But Carruthers taught them about the Muslim slaves who helped build this country and the white settlers who illegally claimed a third of Mexico's territory. They discussed these historical events in today's context of border walls and Middle Eastern wars. She says the students were rapt.

"I think they found it empowering to learn that there are long histories to many of the things that seem as though they're new," says Carruthers, who also directs the department's Graduate Program.

She says, with today's rise in political misinformation, it is one of the most necessary times to study history. Especially at the master's level, where students hone the skill of using the past to challenge present events.

"It's more critical than it's ever been for engaged citizens and residents to answer [misinformation] with grounded, empirically supported analyses and interpretations of the past," she says. "We have even greater imperative to cling to notions of empirical evidence, to notions of truthfulness."

History, she says, is about interpretation — how and why things happen, and what they mean. It involves the study of concepts and debates. It teaches students argumentation and analysis, how to think critically, and how to use evidence — key skills for these times.

A history degree also offers a sound foundation for a variety of careers. Not all graduate students want to work in academia after finishing their degrees. Many go on to work in journalism, law, publishing, criminal justice, public service, and in community colleges. Others work at historic sites, museums, or with an organization that shares history through untraditional methods, like traveling exhibits.

Carruthers says that RU-N's graduate history program is particularly forward thinking. Not only does it offer students a transnational lens, but it also emphasizes digital research and dissemination.

The faculty are very active scholars at the forefront of their research. Last fall they celebrated the release of twelve books among their fifteen faculty. The subjects vary from forensic science in Republican China to community action in 1960s Newark. Carruthers herself released a well-received book called *The Good Occupation*. It explores the complicated personal experiences of the American GIs who occupied Germany and Japan after the end of WWII.

Carruthers says the history graduate program is also particularly supportive for students with families and jobs. Classes are only offered in the evenings and the pace of study is tailored to the students' lives.

There are more opportunities on the way. In Fall 2017, the department will launch a combined BA/MA program that allows students to save time and costs on their way to a master's degree.



CHEMISTRY: FROM CANCER CURE TO RENEWABLE ENERGY



Graduate student chemists labor in labs studying the smallest of particles and reactions, which puts them at the frontlines of scientific discovery. Right now, experiments underway on campus have implications for fields spanning renewable energy to next-generation cancer treatment. Publishing in top scientific journals and landing prestigious grants, RU-N graduate chemistry students are quickly becoming tomorrow's leading scientists.

The RU-N Department of Chemistry has attracted an outstanding cohort with its track record of high achievement: Three junior faculty have received prestigious National Science Foundation CAREER awards.

It is highly uncommon for a single department to receive that many awards. The department has also won a number of federal and state grants for an x-ray diffractometer, two nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectrometers, a mass spectrometer and a scanning electron microscope – all state-of-the-art instruments crucial to the understanding of chemical structure and the flow of energy and electrons in materials and biological molecules.

This impressive assortment can be credited in part to a departmental culture centered on teamwork: Collaboration is crucial; when multiple faculty need the same vital equipment, a department (like RU-N's) stands a much better chance of receiving an award, since grant agencies

and program managers know it will support multiple research projects.

"We encourage people to be as interdisciplinary as possible," incoming department chair Piotr Piotrowiak said. "We don't feel constrained by traditional disciplinary divisions."

Presently, the program hosts 40 PhD candidates, all of whom receive full funding through either teaching assistantships or graduate assistantships in research. Salaries for Rutgers TAs and GAs are among the highest in the country at public universities, and each semester students can apply for the Professional Development Fund, which provides additional funding for travel, equipment, conferences, and other expenses that will

chemistry cont

contribute to academic growth. Current students also appreciate close interactions with peers and ample faculty mentorship provided by the program.

Here's a brief look at some of the important work undertaken by RU-N chemistry students:

Fifth-year doctoral student Hao Fan is studying photoinduced electron transfer between dyes and semiconductors, a process which is central to the generation of solar power. Fan likens the synthetic chemistry part of his laboratory work to cooking – he spends a lot of time researching the optimum “chemical recipes,” shops for all the necessary ingredients, and then moves on to his vast array glassware and other reactors to carry out the synthesis. The success or failure of the latter is determined by a number of advanced measurements such as nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) and mass spectroscopy, which he had to master early on in his graduate career. His favorite molecule is the dye perylene, which he is using as a convenient building block to figure out how molecular design can increase efficiency of electron transfer. A better understanding of the principles may one day help manufacturers build more efficient and less expensive solar cells.

Amir Khoshi did his undergraduate studies in chemistry at Sharif University of Technology in Tehran and at age 18 started teaching college-level chemistry to high school

students, preparing them for the International Chemistry Olympiad, before coming to RU-N for doctoral studies. Khoshi is passionate about “doing something beneficial for everyone.” He’s currently working on developing electrocatalysts to convert carbon dioxide (the main cause of global warming and ocean acidification) to valuable fuels and feed-stocks for chemical industry. For example, re-processed CO₂ can be used as a starting material for the manufacture of common polymers. In addition to having a supportive and caring advisor and ample opportunities to learn and collaborate with fellow chemists on the New Brunswick campus, Amir says he has received invaluable mentorship from the RU-N LGBTQ office. He’s very happy to have chosen a campus that places such a high value on diversity. As an inveterate people-person who loves seeing a student ‘get it,’ Amir hopes to continue both teaching and research in the future, though he wants to have industry experience as well.

Vivid Gong, who is also in her fifth year of doctoral studies, focuses on the dynamic aspects of electron transfer and vibrational cooling using femtosecond laser spectroscopy. One femtosecond is one billionth of one millionth of a second and the chemical processes that she investigates are often over within one hundred femtoseconds or less. She spent more than a year learning how to tune the complex laser system, which

holds a sequence of individual lasers and hundreds of optical elements. She can identify and characterize ultrafast processes in atoms, ions, and molecular fragments in a variety of materials. This has implications for developing more efficient devices (like solar panels) and furthering understanding of the nature of chemical reactions. In 2015 Gong attended the International PACIFICHEM Chemical Congress in Hawaii and presented her doctoral research to chemists and scholars from all over the world. Her current work involves close collaboration with scientists at the Tokyo Institute of Technology in Japan.

There’s still a lot of fundamental work to be done in the field of organic chemistry related to energy conversion and storage. Fourth-year doctoral student Kanglei Liu is working with boron to make new molecular structures that emit light of different colors for applications in organic electronics (like solar cells and OLED display panels). However, her lab work led to a surprising outcome this year: one of the compounds she synthesized carries a lot of energy and is capable of producing a highly reactive form of oxygen. This unexpected finding raises the intriguing possibility of future photodynamic therapy (PDT). If the generation of the active oxygen can be controlled, the compound could be used to target tumors and chemically destroy them. Liu’s work remains focused on understanding the



We encourage people to be as interdisciplinary as possible.

We don't feel constrained by traditional disciplinary divisions."

fundamental aspects of these molecular interactions, but the possibilities of new knowledge carried forward to treatment of tumors excites her nonetheless.

Elena Guevara successfully defended her dissertation in March, which focused on pyruvate dehydrogenase complex, a compound that plays a major role in the body's metabolic process. Guevara's work was on regulation; dysfunctions in regulation have implications for cancer, type II diabetes, and other genetic illnesses. Guevara says her doctoral study provided the best of both worlds: a major research university that housed a department with a small-town feel. Guevara is quick to cite the ample support she's received during her seven years working toward her doctorate in the RU-N chemistry department; a Dissertation Fellowship from the Graduate School and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences–Newark; two years of support via the NIH MBRS program; and she was also



awarded a highly-competitive NIH F31 Fellowship for Minority Graduate Students.

"It prepares you well for a career in academia," Guevara said of the RU-N chemistry program, citing rigorous coursework, ample tutoring in the grant application process, and an emphasis on conference participation.

"I personally have gone to three national conferences and two regional meetings. The department encourages getting your research out there and getting a feel for presenting work."





THE SKYSCRAPER ECONOMIST

A decade spent researching skyscrapers and the Manhattan skyline produces more than a few ponderable insights.

Take for instance: Almost two-thirds of Manhattan buildings are less than six stories. The city could have housed 55 million people if it had been built to zoning specifications predating the 1960s. However, currently its population is 8.5 million, which is still well under its actual built capacity, 12 million. Places with taller skyscrapers also are places with higher income inequality; One World Trade Center and NYC fit the bill. And for decades people believed poor geology explained the lack of skyscrapers between Midtown and the Financial District; but many years of record-sifting helped RU-N economist Jason Barr correct this persistent misconception in his book *Building the Skyline: The Birth and Growth of Manhattan's Skyscrapers*, which came out last year.

An hour's conversation with RU-N Associate Professor of Economics Jason Barr ranges over these facts and more. Barr grew up on Long Island, his parents hailed from the Bronx and Brooklyn, and his father commuted into work in Midtown, so he grew up with a certain fascination with New York City, Barr said, one

that was shaped in part by gritty action movies like *Taxi Driver* and *Escape from New York*.

Barr began the research that would eventually form his book in 2005, a lot of which involved collecting data from old directories. Starting from the late 1700s, well before telephones and phone books, several companies published directories of New York residents, listing the addresses where people lived and worked. Barr collected a data group of 20,000 names stretching from the 1860s to 1900. He mapped the movement of these people across New York City.

Early on, before there was any form of public transit, merchants lived near the southern tip, which was close to the port. Lower-income laborers lived a little farther north, in the Lower East Side, necessitating a longer walking commute. However, horse-driven street cars were introduced in the 1830s and 1840s.

Laborers mostly stayed put, but some merchant families chose to suburbanize farther north, in search of bigger houses, less congestion, and more sunlight. This suburb necessitated a commercial entertainment district that would eventually turn into what's now known as Midtown. The Lower

Manhattan banking district took the place of the old merchant hub, and the space in between remained more lower-rise and filled with immigrant communities.

Before Barr's research, the most common explanation for Manhattan having two skyscraper districts (most cities have one) was that put forth by a geologist in a 1968 book citing a correlation between skyscrapers and the geological conditions of Manhattan.

"Everyone assumed the bedrock story," Barr said, "no one took the time to do this data work."

As a researcher, Barr is more comfortable explaining the past than offering proscriptions for the future. However, the epilogue to his book mentions that New York City of today was essentially finished by 1960. The neighborhoods and traffic patterns of today are largely linked to decisions made more than half a century ago. The best way to build an affordable city, Barr says, would be to increase housing supply: to replace blocks of single-family homes in places like Eastern Queens, and build denser high-rises. Density also lowers future infrastructure costs since more people use the same systems, but it would be difficult to build the political will for that kind of major change.

"Most academics think urban density is good for the wellbeing of people," Barr said. However, "If you start telling people in quiet, leafy neighborhoods, well it's good for the city, we're going to make the city more resilient, and bring more jobs, they'd say I don't care, I own my home and I want to preserve its value."

After a decade of work, Barr says he doesn't want to be only 'the skyscraper guy,' but he is interested in taking a closer look at the correlation between tall, skinny mega skyscrapers and the outsized income inequality present in the cities and countries where they are built. He's interested in looking at this phenomenon on a global level. He may not have to travel far in order to start: The gap between income levels of Manhattan's richest and poorest residents is the highest in the country.

FACULTY PROFILE

Dr. Ashaki Rouff



Dr. Ashaki Rouff, 2nd from left

Associate Professor Ashaki Rouff doesn't believe in tackling just one or two of the world's problems at a time. In her geoscience lab, she's developing methods for the sustainable use of phosphorus, for removing fertilizer from our waterways, and for cleansing our soils of heavy metals. As if that were not enough, she's also addressing one of the biggest problems facing the science world today – lack of diversity.

The majority of scientists in academia and industry are Caucasian men, many of whom are moving closer to retirement age. Less than one percent of all STEM degrees go to black women, according to 2013 data from the National Science Foundation. In Rouff's field of Earth and Environmental Science, the number of black women is statistically negligible.

For years, this gap has

been cause for concern. Yet there remains a large supply of young minds from underrepresented groups – Black, Latino, Native Americans, for example—who struggle to enter the sciences. They often face financial obstacles, but also a fear of not belonging, which can act as a deterrent.

"For any student of color, as you move up the science ladder this issue of being able to fit in and being able to assimilate gets more and more difficult," says Rouff. "You are going to be the odd one out in a lot of cases, and you need to be able to deal with that."

Rouff understands these challenges well. During her undergraduate work in geology at Middlebury College, she was the only person of color in the program. Throughout the rest of her career trajectory – Ph.D. from Stony Brook University, postdoc from the

University of Chicago, a second postdoc from Switzerland's Paul Scherrer Institute, and a professorship at CUNY –she often faced a sense of isolation, and sometimes even overt discrimination.

Those experiences have led her to care deeply about nurturing diversity in the sciences. "The problems that scientists are trying to solve affect people from all backgrounds from all over the world, so why shouldn't everyone be participating?" Rouff is honest with students about the difficulties they may face as scientists of color. She advises persistence, patience, and preparation.

Along with giving talks about her groundbreaking science, Rouff is often asked to lecture on the issue of diversity. In 2016, she was invited to join the HERS Luce Program for Women in STEM Leadership. She also mentors ten students from RU-N's Honors Living and Learning Community.



For any student of color, as you move up the science ladder this issue of being able to fit in and being able to assimilate gets more and more difficult.”

that is just one of the many game-changing ideas in development.

Much of their work revolves around the needs of communities here in New Jersey and around the world. Rouff says making these direct connections with people outside of the lab pushes her students to solve more problems. She credits the diversity of her team for this socially minded science practice

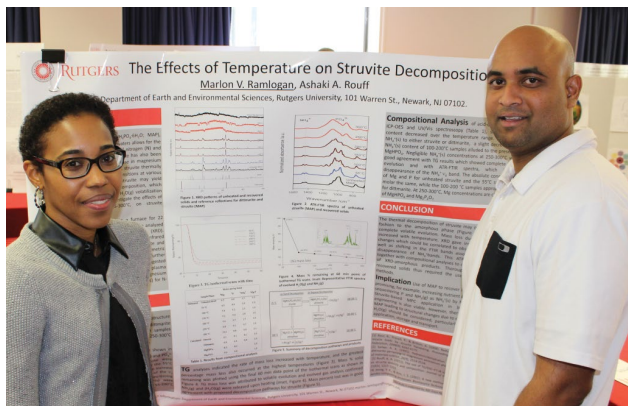
In her lab, she works with six science students, whose roots go back to India, Trinidad, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Israel. Amidst the test tubes and petri dishes, the room hums with the energy of diverse collaboration. Rouff even invites undergraduates into her lab to work alongside the Ph.D. and Master's students. The undergraduates get opportunities to develop their own research projects and to publish. This is not common practice in academia — but it is part of Rouff's mission to inspire students to continue into graduate school.

“We're bringing different experiences to the table, we connect to our research in different ways, and that enriches the science. It becomes an experience. Thinking about how the science impacts the local community and the international community broadens the scope.”

The students, on their part, are devoted to their professor. They say Rouff demands their best, while allowing them ownership of their work and creative freedom. They rave about her approachability and the support she offers. Two students actually followed her from CUNY to RU-N.

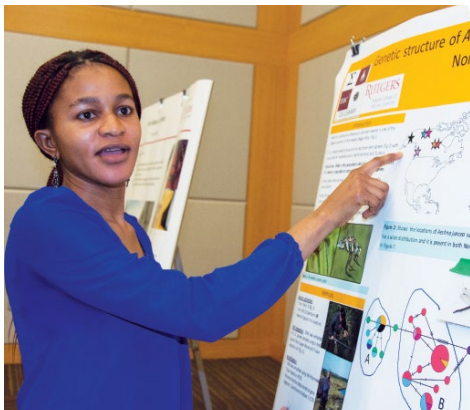
By all measures, her lab is a success. She and the students have developed a way to remove phosphorus from animal waste before it gets into waterways and ruins the aquatic ecosystem. The team plans to make this technology open source, available to everyone free of cost. And

One of those students is second-year master's candidate Karen Juarez. She says Rouff is a role model. “I know that if she did it then I can definitely do it too. She's pretty inspirational, actually.”



ANNUAL RESEARCH WEEK 2017

Research Week opens with Graduate & Undergraduate Student Poster Sessions



Newark Public High School Students Return for a Tour of STEM Labs.



Once again students from Newark Public High Schools came for a hands-on tour of RU-N STEM labs.

Students visited labs in different departments including biology, earth & environmental science and organic chemistry. For many, this was their first introduction to science research and the many career opportunities.



Biology Professor Alex Rodriguez with students looking at a kidney tissue stained with antibodies to detect proteins in an adhesion complex controlling permeability.



Dr. Greg Weber shows students a developing frog embryo under a microscope, which he uses to study proteins involved in directing tissue movement during developmental processes.



Earth & Environmental Geology Professor, Alexander Gates, instructing students on the geologic setting for oil and gas deposits while playing "The Oil Game."

NEW FACULTY SEMINAR

RU-N welcomed six new faculty this year. They presented during research week on their contributions to the fields of business, history, sociology, neuroscience, philosophy, and art. A quick look at the expertise they bring to campus:

Assistant Professor Jordan Casteel received her MFA in Painting and Printmaking from Yale. Her vibrant, humanizing portraits explore Black masculinity and relationships between Black men. Theater students, family members, and Harlem neighbors have served as subjects. She paints from photos, covering large canvasses in thick brushstrokes to compose paintings both colorful and tender.

Assistant Professor Vincent McGinty joined the Center for Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience where he studies the neural basis of motivated behavior and everyday decision making. McGinty researches bias: In studies completed with macaque monkeys, McGinty found his subjects preferred the objects they saw first and looked at longest. His animal research has implications for understanding human biases.

Assistant Professor Kihyun (Hannah) Kim brings expertise to Rutgers Business School on the impact marketing has on purchasing decisions and consumer experience. She combines empirical and behavioral data to inform customer relationship management strategy – analyzing how customer service experiences affect future consumer behavior.

(cont.)



Jordan Casteel



Vincent McGinty



Kihyun (Hannah) Kim



Melissa L. Cooper



Valerio Baćak



Joanne B. Ciulla

New Faculty cont.

Assistant Professor of History, Melissa L. Cooper's book *Making Gullah: A History of Sapelo Islanders, Race, and the American Imagination* debuted in March. Cooper described her research as "collecting collectors who have been collecting Black people." The Gullah are Lowcountry, coastal-dwelling African-Americans whose culture has been highlighted for retention of African customs brought over by slaves. Cooper's book shows the outsized effect racism has had on how the Gullah were both perceived and portrayed in academia and the popular imagination.

Assistant Professor Valerio Baćak joined the School of Criminal Justice, where he is investigating the health impacts of incarceration. His research spans the prolonged mental health effects of incarceration and deconstructing the "healthy prisoner effect" – an evidence-lacking theory that prisoners are comparatively healthy compared to non-incarcerated peers.

Professor Joanne B. Ciulla was named Professor of Leadership Ethics and Academic Director of the Institute for Ethical Leadership at Rutgers Business School. Ciulla has spent many years delving into leadership ethics. She's challenged the notion of authenticity as a crucial leadership trait; history suggests a performed identity can serve leaders well.



Modern Beats of Poetry & Jazz

A rapt alumni audience enjoyed readings by six emerging poets currently enrolled in the RU-N Creative Writing MFA program followed by a powerful jazz performance by Newark's own 15-year-old singer-songwriter Alexis Morrast.

The April event brought together alumni from across decades to appreciate the artistic and creative spirit inherent to RU-N and Newark.

Hailed as a jazz prodigy, Morrast sang classics ("My Funny Valentine") along with gospel and contemporary numbers – displaying impressive vocal range and improvisational chops. The evening's poetry showcased a range of styles and subject matter: Ariel Yelen piqued interest with "The Apocalypse is Trending;" Jeremy Clark read a poem about the 1937 Ohio River flood; and Cheswayo Mphanza read with accompaniment provided by an upright bass, bridging the evening's focus on rhythm and word.

FOSTERING OPPORTUNITY FOR WEST AFRICAN YOUTH



Mora McLean, left

The Graduate School, in collaboration with the Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies ("Cornwall") convened a forum in April at the University of Ghana entitled Expanding Youth Learning and Opportunity Pathways. The gathering launched a conversation among scholars, activists, and practitioners to better understand the circumstances and prospects of West Africans aged 15-24 and provided a step toward expanding research and study abroad opportunities for graduate students. The forum also touched on issues of internal and transnational migration, class and race-based exclusion, and structural barriers to education and employment faced by youth who live in West African cities and in Newark.

West Africa is the most populous region in Africa. While stories of boat crossings to Europe dominate international headlines, the volume of migration within West Africa, and to other regions of the African continent, far exceeds that to European or other western countries. But regardless of whether they chose to migrate and where they end up, the vast majority of West African youth

face the predicament of equally unsatisfactory choices: lack of opportunity at home, restrictive immigration policies and anti-black racism abroad, all of which curtail their capacity to improve their conditions of life and fulfill their full potential.

One of the forum's main focuses was counter-narratives: evidence-based theories and analysis challenging conventional notions. For example, mainstream discourse holds that young Africans flock to urban areas because they don't want to farm. However, University of Ghana researcher Nana Akua Anyidoho presented on how inheritance issues complicate career choices for young Ghanaian cocoa farmers: Young people appreciate how farming has provided a livelihood for their families; fathers often offer to pass down the farm in exchange for their children's continued labor, but when the timeline for property transfer is open-ended, many youth heed the call of the city.

“**What I found striking is Africans and African-Americans are used as proxies for describing deprivations.**”

Mahako Etta, current Rutgers-Newark graduate student and former program manager with the Newark City of Learning Collaborative (NCLC) based at Cornwall and Michael Simmons, Senior Program Manager at Cornwall, presented on the NCLC city-wide, collective impact collaborative to increase Newark's postsecondary attainment rate. One of eight panel presentations, on a range of youth-related topics, the NCLC experience was explored as part of an exchange of information



FOSTERING OPPORTUNITY cont.



and ideas amongst researchers and practitioners working in urban and urbanizing spaces, on either side of the Atlantic, that share similar demographics and challenges: Like many cities in West Africa, including Accra, Ghana and Lagos, Nigeria, Newark is a hub for immigrants. According to the latest census data, West Africans are amongst Newark's fastest-growing immigrant populations.

Mora McLean, Senior Fellow at the Cornwall Center, and co-director of the Forum project with Kyle Farmbry, Dean of the Graduate School, explained the connection this way: She observed that in making the case that GDP is an unreliable measure for determining how the people of a country are faring, Nobel laureate economist Amartya Sen cited global mortality data showing that black men in Harlem have shorter life spans than men in the poor Indian province where Sen grew up. Sen argued that mortality data is as pertinent to assessing quality of life in United

States as it is "in famine stricken sub-Saharan Africa."

"What I find striking is that everywhere around the world, Africans and African-Americans are used as proxies for describing deprivations," McLean said. "If we recognize this, we can safely assume that young people do too, even if they don't quite know how, or find it too painful, to articulate it. Unless they're equipped to refute widespread, uninformed notions that this is the natural order of

things, they may experience this as a heavy psychological burden."

Some Forum presentations will be published in the online journal of AROCSA (The Association for Research on Civil Society in Africa). The Forum itself was a first step in an ongoing conversation: AROCSA will host a conference in South Africa this summer and has invited those who participated in Accra to attend and dig deeper on matters of youth opportunity pathways, migration, culture, and aspirations.



INTERNATIONAL FELLOWS

For the third consecutive summer, GSN students head to Cape Town to spend two months working on a host of community-based research projects focused on social change.

Fellowships were administered through the GSN dean's office in cooperation with the Rutgers Center for Global Advancement and International Affairs (GAIA), with a grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

A look at what 2017 fellows will tackle in the field: Global Urban Studies doctoral student Nakeefa Garay will research the relationship between engagement and impact: do education, youth development, and safety programs achieve greater outcomes when there is a higher level of civic engagement in a community?

Global Urban Studies doctoral student Latoya A. Jones will focus on how energy education and technician training programs effect community capacity building; she'll also work with Western Cape science educators to implement an after-school energy education program.

Global Affairs doctoral student Lauren Kaplan will explore economic empowerment and the enhancement of livelihood choices through the evaluation of community, provincial, and national level interventions regarding their access to, use of, and control over land.

Global Urban Studies doctoral student Tolu Lanrewaju will assess the economic integration opportunities available to Western Cape millennials, with a special emphasis on the refugee and foreign-national population in Cape Town. South Africa has held relatively progressive policies toward migrants in the past, but the government is now considering ways to tamp the flow of people, such as revoking asylum seekers' right to work.

Criminal Justice doctoral student Valeriya Metla will conduct qualitative interviews with Cape Town ex-offenders living both in formal urban areas and informal settlements to compare and contrast the challenges of reentry based on living conditions. She'll use her data to recommend next steps for devising better practices related to reentry.

Global Affairs doctoral student Rebecca Pena is returning for her third summer working with non-government organization Community Chest. Drawing on systems and data analysis experience, Pena is building measurement tools so Community Chest can evaluate the programs it funds based on impact.

Public Administration doctoral candidate Seth Meyer will look into how non-government organizations (NGOS) can best manage services spread over multiple locations. He will also map grant disbursement in Cape Town to discern areas lacking support.

American Studies doctoral student Lauren O'Brien will examine the historical role of color within the District 6 neighborhood and the District 6 Museum, an institution that memorializes the forced relocation of non-white inhabitants during the Apartheid regime. O'Brien will use her findings to facilitate a community event centered on identity, race, and public history.

Business doctoral student He (Bonnie) Zhang will study the difficulties small and medium enterprises face obtaining credit, looking to help the government ensure efficient resource allocation and improve outcomes for both businesses and financial institutions.



Top - Bottom, L-R: Nakeefa Garay, Tolu Lanrewaju, Rebecca Pena, Lauren Kaplan, He (Bonnie) Zhang; Seth Meyer, Lauren O'Brien, Valeriya Metla, Latoya A. Jones

HOODING 2017

Doctoral and MFA students gathered in the Paul Robeson Campus Center to mark the completion of their terminal degrees. There to witness and celebrate were the faculty, staff, friends, and family, who all played a critical role in supporting the students through their academic journeys.

Graduate School Dean Kyle Farmbry, opened the hooding ceremony by noting how rare it is in the world to achieve this high a level of education. He called on graduates to take their place in the national and global discourse.

"With such achievement," he said, "comes a responsibility to raise the difficult questions, challenge assumptions that might exist, and figure out ways to wrestle with what might be presented as truth in our broader society."

This year's keynote speaker was Mary Rizzo, Assistant Professor of Professional Practice in History and Associate Director of the Public

and Digital Humanities Initiatives. In a rousing speech, she also called upon graduates to use what they've learned at RU-N to do meaningful work in the world.

She advised graduates to stay strong and focused as they search for their career paths. The best way to do this, she said, is for the graduates — the new RU-N alumni — to listen to themselves, and not to generic societal

expectations. "It has to be really coming from who you are," she said, "what you want, and where you see yourself."



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