**Director’s Corner**

Greetings from the fourth floor of Eggers Hall. The 2017-18 academic year has ended, and I am writing to pass along some of our highlights since the last newsletter. In January of 2017, CPR launched the Maxwell X Lab. The Maxwell X Lab was designed to complete two functions. First, the lab provides the infrastructure necessary for our faculty and students to conduct field experiments for their research. Second, the Maxwell X Lab will work with local government agencies and nonprofits to help them offer their services while improving efficiency. We recently completed a randomized control trial (RCT) for the City of Syracuse to increase tax payments on foreclosed properties using a behavioral intervention. Results from this experiment suggest that the intervention increased revenue for the city by around $100,000. In a second completed RCT, we saved Onondaga County nearly $200,000 in health care expenditures for a reproductive health program. To date, we have around 30 projects at various stages of completion from discussions to closed contracts.

We had several outstanding CPR guests this past spring semester. In the CPR Seminar Series, Ingrid Gould Ellen (NYU) presented her research on housing vouchers. In April, Rajeev Darolia (University of Kentucky) discussed student choices when for-profit colleges lose their federal assistance and Marianne Bitler (UC-Davis) detailed her work on food assistance and human capital. In addition, Raj Chetty, Professor of Economics at Stanford University, gave the 2018 Volcker Lecture in Behavioral Economics in March titled “Restoring the American Dream: New Lessons from Big Data.” Susan Dynarksi, Professor of Public Policy, Education, and Economics at the University of Michigan, was the 2018 Jerry Miner Lecturer, and presented her paper “Increasing Economic Diversity at a Flagship University: Results from a Large-Scale Randomized Trial” in April as well.

We have several CPR graduate associates who have finished their doctoral programs and have started (or will shortly) new positions. Wacong Fu (ECN) is working at SHOUJU Technology, Co. LTD, Boqian Jiang (ECN) was hired as an economist at Amazon.com, and Fabio Rueda (ECN) will be a senior consultant at Deloitte. A number of graduates will also start positions as assistant professors in the fall: Hyunseok Jung (ECN) at the Sam M. Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas, Ling Li (ECN) at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, Michelle Lofton (PAIA) at the University of Georgia, Jindong Pang (ECN) at Wuhan University, and Shulin Shen (ECN) at the School of Economics at Huazhong University of Science and Technology. Congratulations to all of our graduates!

Please check our website regularly for more details on past and future seminars and lectures. You will learn more about the research the faculty, graduate students, and our CPR Visiting Scholars are producing. Don’t forget to follow us on Twitter and “like us” on Facebook to receive the most current updates.

-Len Lopoo

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**From the Field**

Aside from being newly engaged, Lincoln Groves (Ph.D., PAIA) recently started a job with the SAS Institute in Cary, NC as a Senior Analytical Training Consultant. He will be traveling around the country giving free workshops at universities on how to use SAS software to answer a range of analytical questions. Lincoln also recently had two papers accepted for publication with CPR faculty members, Len Lopoo (PAIA) and Sarah Hamersma (PAIA).

Emily Cardon (PAIA) is currently a Senior Advisor with BIT North America, where she works to improve public services and build local capacity for evaluation, drawing on lessons from behavioral science and testing interventions in field experiments. In the past year, she has designed and implemented randomized controlled trials to study charitable giving in partnership with the MS Society of Canada, increased uptake of an ambulance service insurance program in Oklahoma City, and increased enrollment in WIC with the municipality of Anchorage.

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**Grad Bag**

David Schwegman (PAIA) was selected to join the Center for Economic Studies (CES) Mentorship Program. This program assists doctoral candidates who are actively engaged in dissertation research in economics, sociology, demography, or a related field using U.S. Census Bureau microdata at a Research Data Center.

Iuliia Shybalkina (PAIA) received the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award from the SU Graduate School. The Outstanding TA Award recognizes teaching assistants who have made distinguished contributions to Syracuse University by demonstrating excellence in significant instructional capacities.
Congratulations to Alfonso Flores-Lagunes (ECN), Yilin Hou (PAIA), Shannon Monnat (SOC), Becky Schewe (SOC), Saba Siddiki (PAIA), and Pete Wilcoxen (PAIA) on receiving grants from the Collaboration for Unprecedented Success and Excellence (CUSE) Grant Program for their respective research projects.

Colleen Heflin’s (PAIA) work (with Stephanie Potochnick and Huang Ying), “Household Food Insecurity and Early Childhood Health and Cognitive Development among Children of Immigrants,” was published in the Journal of Family Issues.

At the invitation of the director of the Munich, Germany based Center for Economic Studies (CESifo), Yilin Hou (PAIA) will be visiting and working there from late fall this year until mid-January next year. During his stay at CESifo, Yilin will be studying the German property tax system and, in collaboration with a couple of German scholars, providing input into the new design of the now ‘non-use’ German property tax. This visit is part of Yilin’s ongoing project on real property tax administration.

Shannon Monnat (SOC) has had a number of recent publications, including “Opioid-Related Mortality in Rural America: Geographic Heterogeneity and Intervention Strategies” in International Journal of Drug Policy, “Factors Associated with County-Level Differences in U.S. Drug-Related Mortality Rates” in American Journal of Preventive Medicine, “Self-Interest and Public Opinion in Health Policy: Smoking Behavior and Support for Tobacco Control” in Social Theory & Health, and “Drug Overdose Rates are Highest in Places with the Most Economic and Family Distress” in National Issue Brief #134, Carsey School of Public Policy, University of New Hampshire.

This spring, David Popp (PAIA) was a recipient of the University’s 2018 William Wasserstrom Prize for the Teaching of Graduate Students. The prize is awarded to faculty that are great graduate seminar leaders, research directors, advisors, and role models.

Pete Wilcoxen (PAIA) will serve as the Inaugural Ajello Professor in Energy and Environmental Policy. A gift from Maxwell School alumnus, James Ajello ’76 MPA, will create this new professorship, while supporting interdisciplinary research projects in the field.

Let’s Keep In Touch!
We encourage you to update us on what you have been up to, where you are employed, and how your time in CPR has impacted your life. We will gladly share your stories in our Connection Newsletter! Fill out our new form on the CPR/Metro Alumni Page!

Volcker Lecture 2019
In the spring of 2019, Dierdre Nansen McCloskey, Distinguished Professor of Economics, History, English, and Communications at the University of Illinois at Chicago, will give the 5th Annual Paul Volcker Lecture in Behavioral Economics.

For more up to date information, please visit our events website.
This section of the newsletter is dedicated to CPR faculty or CPR staff members who have been a part of the Center for over 25 years. In this issue, we feature Peg Austin, who has been a staff member here in Maxwell and a part of the Metropolitan Studies Program (Metro)/Center for Policy Research (CPR) family since 1988. Peg is the Associate Director here in CPR. We had the opportunity to delve into the history of Metro/CPR through the eyes of someone who’s been here to see it morph into what it is today. We appreciate Peg giving us this opportunity.

1. What brought you to Syracuse University and CPR?

I had recently moved back to Syracuse from Rochester in 1983, and was looking for employment. Previously, I had worked at Rochester Institute of Technology and liked the academic environment. I accepted a job as an Inventory Clerk in the Chemistry Department and worked there for five years. I applied for the job I currently have in September 1988.

2. When you joined what is now CPR, it was called the Metropolitan Studies Program. What has changed over the years as Metro has evolved into the CPR we know today?

- The research focus has changed. We used to do a lot of domestic and international research. Now our focus is on domestic research.
- We had only one laser printer and the only fax machine in the building. Now I have my own printer and the fax machine rarely gets used.
- In the beginning, the roof in Maxwell would leak on the desks of graduate students, now in Eggers the roof leaks on the faculty members’ desks.

3. You have helped so many faculty and graduate students with their work/research throughout the years. Are there any particular projects or grants you helped with that stand out in your memory?

I can remember the first graduate student who put me in her dissertation dedication, Patty. Another graduate student, Nigel, told me when I was pregnant, he knew for sure I was having a boy. I had a girl. There was also a graduate student who was working at a local grocery store because she needed money and wasn’t on an assistantship. We were able to find funds to support her. She cried she was so happy. Honestly, there are so many happy memories that I could fill pages.

4. What is your favorite story or memory from your time in Metro/CPR?

Shortly after I started in Metro, there was a party at Jim Follain’s house in honor of Jerry Miner, who had just stepped down as department chair. I asked David Greytak, the Director of Metro and my boss, what the dress code was for this event. He told me casual. I thought okay, in Chemistry all the faculty wore suits and ties, but not so much in Metro. So, I appear at this party in slacks and a nice shirt and everyone else was dressed up. I wanted to kick him. The Chancellor was there. I never asked him about dress code again.

5. Is there any advice you would give to new staff, faculty members, or graduate students who are joining CPR?

CPR is a great place and you should be part of what happens. Go to seminars, lectures, baseball games, bowling parties. This is where your memories will start. Metro/CPR has always been a great place to work. We are a team. Tim Smeeding had a motto – Work Hard, Play Hard. We do.
**Staff Stop**

**Peg Austin** continues to travel between NYC and Rockville, MD to be with her daughters, Cassandra and Michelle. This past Memorial Day weekend, she celebrated her son-in-law Steve’s graduation from college on Saturday and then on Sunday they all went and picked 65 lbs. of strawberries. Let the jam making begin. She will attend the NCURA National Conference in August in DC.

**Emily Minnoe** is approaching her one-year anniversary at CPR. She is still learning every day and is thankful for all of the helpful staff, graduate students, and faculty. This summer, Emily and her husband will be spending lots of time in the yard – landscaping and training their puppy. They also plan to spend some time traveling down the southern coast of California for their honeymoon. Emily is most excited to visit Alcatraz and the San Diego Zoo.

**Kitty Nasto** has worked at Syracuse University for 21 years, 18 of those years in CPR. She enjoys the daily interaction with students, faculty, and staff. Kitty loves spending time with her daughters, and her seven grandchildren, Claire, Emma, Grace, Viola, Derek, Luca, and newest edition, Lilliana, who joined the family last June! In her spare time, Kitty enjoys taking classes at the gym, cooking, baking, gardening, and traveling to see her children.

**Candi Patterson** welcomed her third grandchild Amora, who was born in November.

**Laura Walsh** has been at the University for almost 2 years. She has greatly enjoyed organizing the CPR Seminar Series, the 29th Annual Lourie Lecture, and learning more about the Center’s fiscal process. Laura and her husband, Alex, are looking forward to the arrival of their first child, a baby boy, in August. They are excited about becoming parents and having the opportunity to raise a future NY Rangers hockey fan!

At the end of May, **Katrina Wingle** celebrated her fifth year in CPR. It is hard to believe that five years have flown by so quickly, but a lot has changed since she started in 2013. Katrina moved from her original position of Administrative Assistant/ Front Desk Coordinator to her current position as Administrative Specialist/Conference Coordinator in 2016, a change she has really enjoyed and is grateful for. She feels lucky to work in an environment that encourages her to keep learning and growing.

On June 30, after 14 long months of planning, Katrina and her fiancé Joe got married! It was a beautiful day. Katrina is excited to start this new chapter in their life and is especially looking forward to their upcoming trip to Croatia and Italy, which will take place in September.

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**Camp Econometrics**

Camp Econometrics XIII was held April 6-8 at The Sagamore in Bolton Landing, NY.

The conference, hosted by Professor **Badi Baltagi** (ECN), drew scholars and researchers from across the country, as well as Europe and Canada. The keynote speaker at the event was James G. MacKinnon (Queen’s University).

Stay tuned for more details on next year’s Camp Econometrics, which will be held in spring 2019.
Diplomatic Pouch

CPR Assistant Professor of Public Administration and International Affairs, Michah Rothbart, traveled to Hong Kong to present research findings at the University of Hong Kong (HKU).

This past spring, I traveled to Hong Kong to present findings from research on the consequences of universal free school meals programs to the Department of Politics and Public Administration at the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Social Sciences.

Hong Kong is hot and humid. It is an extremely vertical city, with a skyline that rivals New York City. Parts of the city, including HKU, are built along the side of cliffs (“the peak”), such that some buildings start at sea level but let out to a “ground level” on multiple floors. The city is extremely cosmopolitan and international. Increasingly, since the “one county, two systems” policy with The People’s Republic of China, there has also been large migrations from mainland China.

Historically, Hong Kong was a British colony for over 150 years, which ended in 1997. Since then, Hong Kong is reunified with China. As part of the reunification, Hong Kong retains substantial economic, administrative, and constitutional independence, but this creates significant complications for its relationship with China and the rest of the world.

As mentioned above, but worth repeating, the layout of the University of Hong Kong is unique. I’ve never seen anything like it. Many universities are located on hills, but HKU takes it to the extreme. It’s up on this cliff along the side of the peak. So one has to travel the equivalent of 7 or 8 (or more) stories up just to get the ground floor/main floor of campus. Once arrived, the whole campus is connected on a main level along the side of the cliff. Each faculties (like colleges) have their own tower that shoots up another 15-20 stories further up the cliff. My talk was in the Faculty of Social Sciences tower (the “Jockey Club Tower,” because horseracing is huge in Hong Kong) in the Politics and Public Administration Department.

The setting is spectacular, because it is in the middle of the city, but only the campus is that far up that side of the steep cliff. The campus is connected to the city below by a series of escalators, lifts, and malls that line the side of the mountain. Thus, you look down on all sorts of buildings (schools, apartments, offices) from the main floor of campus.

Anyhow, when going to my talk, I got out the wrong side of the MTR (subway) station and missed my chance to take the lifts up to campus. Instead, I had to climb the side of the cliff using a series of escalators, stairs and ramps, which were mostly outside—all in my suit. Luckily, the weather was nice and this just felt like a nice way to explore.

Stay Connected

Interested in what you read? Want to learn more about our staff, faculty, and graduate students’ travels and research? Then follow us on social media!
The Lerner Center

Rebecca Bostwick, Managing Director of the Lerner Center, stepped down in May to pursue other opportunities. She will remain in Central New York as an independent consultant in community health and development. Rebecca has served as the Center’s Director since it opened its doors in 2011 and her leadership established the Center’s community health portfolio. In her tenure with the Center, Rebecca successfully secured external funding to support neighborhood health initiatives in Syracuse’s Near West Side and mentored 22 Lerner Fellows who have gone on to contribute to the health and healthcare of the community. We are deeply grateful to Rebecca and all that she has done for the Lerner Center and wish her the best in her next adventure.

Leah Moser, who has been with the Center since 2011, first as a Lerner Fellow and then full time staff member, is the Center’s new Program Director. Leah directs the Center’s operations and programmatic initiatives and oversees the Center’s staff and Lerner Fellows.

The Lerner Center continues to support student development through its Lerner Fellowships. Each year a team of four graduate students work to support the Healthy Monday campaign and community health initiatives. Beginning in the fall semester, the Center will recruit graduate students from across Maxwell who have an interest in population health practice, research, and policy. Recognizing that health extends beyond the boundaries of the healthcare system, we will build a multidisciplinary team of students who bring diverse skill sets and perspectives to creatively address population health issues impacting our community.

The 30th Annual Herbert Lourie Memorial Lecture on Public Health

This year’s guest speaker will be Carol Graham, Leo Pasvolsky Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, College Park Professor at the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland, and Senior Scientist at the Gallup Organization.

Carol Graham’s research focuses on poverty, inequality, subjective well-being, the economics of happiness, and development economics. She has testified in Congress several times and has appeared on NBC News, NPR, and CNN, among others. Graham is the author of numerous books, journal articles, and book chapters. Her most recent book, Happiness for All? Unequal Lives and Hopes in Pursuit of the American Dream (Princeton University Press, 2017), highlights the importance of well-being measures in identifying and monitoring trends in life satisfaction, optimism, misery, and despair, and demonstrates how hope and happiness can lead to improved economic outcomes. Graham was the recipient of a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Pioneer Award in 2017.

For more information about the 2018 lecture or to RSVP to this event, visit our [website](#) or contact Emily Minnoe at erminnoe@syr.edu or 315-443-3114.