MDP Student Summer Practicum Success

In the summer of 2017, Arizona MDP students worked in 6 countries, partnering with 5 organizations, ranging from local non-governmental organizations, to international agencies.

Bianca Comer (above) and Shannon Jones worked with one of our partner organizations, JustHope, in Nicaragua, where they focused on examining the healthcare needs of pregnant and new mothers. Devin Crim worked with Pima County Development Services here in Tucson and focused on integrating community and participatory approaches to neighborhood development strategies. Amanda Monroy spent the summer in Washington D.C. interning with the Girl Scouts of USA and gained experience in their Public Policy and Advocacy Office.

Amanda Hixson (above) worked with one of our partner organizations, Tango International, to complete a 2011-2016 Country Program Evaluation of the World Food Program in Cambodia.

Deborah Dimmert traveled to Haiti to conduct research on human rights in prisons and draft a request for a thematic hearing with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).

Cecy Cuevas (above) worked with Engineers without Borders in the Dominican Republic. She conducted baseline study of community needs as part of their project to improve irrigation and food production systems in Sabana Mula, a rural community near the border with Haiti.

Karina Maritinez conducted research on energy poverty in Hermosillo, Mexico, and Tucson, focusing on meeting the energy needs of vulnerable groups while also exploring the potential for renewable energy sources to meet those needs.
Dr. Katherine Snyder, director of the MDP program, traveled to Tanzania in the summer of 2017 to re-visit the site of her Ph.D. work. Her work there is part of a larger DFID/ESRC funded project to the University of Sheffield in the UK. This project is headed up by Dan Brockington with three co-investigators: Christine Noe and Moses Mnzava from the University of Dar es Salaam and Vesa-Matti Loiske from the University of Söderling. She wrote a blog post about some of her initial impressions from this research which can be read here: http://livelihoodchangeta.wixsite.com/tanzania/single-post/2017/12/20/Reflections-on-change-in-Irqwa-Da’aw-Mbulu-Tanzania. Dr. Snyder will return to Tanzania this summer to follow up on some of the results and to attend a research team writeshop to compare findings across the different sites.

“Towards Improved Synergies: Women, Natural Resource Based Livelihoods and Renewable Energy in Arizona and Zacatecas” - This CAZMEX funded project is assessing, as well as comparing and contrasting, the specific energy needs of women in and near semi-arid cities and rural communities in the states of Arizona and Zacatecas (Mexico) and how renewable energy projects in these locations can become better integrated into gendered livelihood systems. The study sites in Arizona include Tucson, where rooftop and parking lot solar panels are ubiquitous and rural communities in the Cascabel-Benson area where a recently constructed large wind and solar farm is located; in Zacatecas the sites include several peri-urban and rural communities where recently installed wind farms are located. The Arizona-based team will travel to the sites in Zacatecas in September 2017 and the Mexico team will visit the Arizona sites in early 2018. The study findings will inform policy prescriptions disseminated to policymakers and planners via policy briefs and a project website linked to both the University of Arizona and the Colegio de Postgraduados and disseminated to academics via journal publications and conference presentations. The principal investigators are Dr. Stephanie Buechler (second from right) of the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy and the School of Geography and Development (SGD) working with MDP students Cecy Cuevas (second from left) and Karina Martinez, and Dr. Verónica Vázquez García (right) of the Rural Development Program of the Colegio de Postgraduados, Montecillo, Mexico working with research assistant Dulce Maria Sosa (left), research consultant based in Zacatecas. The team presented their work at the UA in March.
MDP Research Activity

Dr. Sapana Doshi, MDP affiliated Faculty in the School of Geography and Development, began new field research on stories of corruption in relation to urban real estate, land grabbing and redevelopment in Mumbai and Bangalore, India. This project, entitled “Corruption Plots, Imagined Publics: The Ethics of Space in the Millennial City”, is supported by a grant from the American Council of Learned Societies.

Dr. Doshi also gave a talk at the Harvard Graduate School of Design in March on slum redevelopment in Mumbai.

MDP Special Events and Visitors

In February, we hosted the annual meeting of the North American contingent of the Global Association of Master’s in Development Practice programs. Directors from Emory University, University of California at Berkeley, University of Minnesota Twin Cities, University of Florida, Regis University and the University of Waterloo (Canada) were in Tucson for two days of meetings to discuss the future of MDP.

Also in February, students met with development specialist Dr. Olive Minor who was in Tucson working with the International Rescue Committee. This follows her work with Oxfam in West Africa on the 2014 Ebola outbreak.

Since our MPD is housed in the School of Geography and Development, we also enjoyed talks by experts invited to the colloquium series. Some highlights included Dr. Laura Pulido’s talk on “Landscapes of Foundational Racial Violence”; Dr. Karl Zimmerer’s talk on “New spaces of dystopia and sustainability: transforming the geographic dynamics of biodiversity use and social access in food systems amid global change”; and Katharine Wilkinson on “Drawdown: A blueprint for reversing global change”; Dr. Jennifer Hyndman on “‘Solutions’ and Refugee Subjectivity: A Feminist Approach”; and Dr. Matthew Taylor on “The Slow(est) Professor: A Decade of Community-Based Water Research Along Nicaragua’s Pacific Coast”.

Students also met with Dr. Sezin Tokar of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID) and the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology to discuss her work on disaster warning systems and disaster relief.

MDP affiliated faculty Drs. Diana Liverman, Larry Fisher and Tim Finan also participated in a panel on social science tools in climate adaptation, sponsored by the Center for Climate Adaptation Science and Solutions.
**Dr. John Ehiri**, Professor and Chair of the Department of Health Promotion Sciences at the UA Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health and MDP affiliated Faculty, has recently returned from Nigeria where he was a **Fulbright Scholar** for 2017.

Dr. Ehiri was at the University of Lagos College of Medicine as part of a research project to reduce HIV stigma among health personnel who provide services for prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV using a cluster-randomized trial at health centers in Lagos.

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**Dr. Larry Fisher**, Research Professor in the School of Natural Resources and the Environment, and MDP affiliated Faculty, continues to travel regularly to Indonesia, where, among other things, he is working to develop a national clearinghouse for resolving land use and natural resource management conflicts. The Conflict Resolution Unit ([http://conflictresolutionunit.id/en](http://conflictresolutionunit.id/en)), funded with support from the United Kingdom’s Climate Change Unit (UKCCU), and the Ford and Packard Foundations, supports selected mediations throughout Indonesia, ongoing training and capacity building for professional mediators and service providers, and targeted research to examine the causes and impacts of these conflicts. Recent studies include an analysis of the costs of conflict to oil palm plantations *, and a soon-to-be published study of challenges with Indonesia’s spatial planning system.

Other News

MDP candidate Devin Crim has started a new job as “Planner 1” at the Santa Barbara County Planning Development – Energy and Minerals Division. This builds on his position as a Planner at the San Xavier District on the Tohono O’odham Indian Reservation. Congratulations!

MDP Alumni Updates

Kseniya Efremova (class of 2015) is now a Health Services Consultant for the Washington State Department of Health, working on the Paul Coverdell National Acute Stroke Program, and is also the Office Coordinator for Harbor WildWatch, an environmental education organization that promotes stewardship of the Puget Sound.

Karla Rascon-García (class of 2017) is now pursuing a Ph.D. in Epidemiology from UC-Davis.

Ida (Nadia) Djenontin (class of 2017) is now pursuing a Ph.D. in Geography from Michigan State University.

Chloe Hein (class of 2017) is now a Research Associate at Tango International, a Tucson based development practice firm.

Albert Casella (class of 2016) is now Senior Manager of Health Programs at the Roadrunner Food Bank of New Mexico. The food bank is a key stakeholder in addressing malnutrition for the food insecure population in NM and is part of the larger network known as Feeding America. This follows his first post-MDP position with the Rwandan Ministry of Health, in partnership with the non-profit Partners in Health.

Emma Barker-Perez (class of 2016) is now at nonprofit Good Shepherd Microfinance based in Melbourne, Australia, working to provide access to financial services to those who are typically excluded from mainstream institutions and banks.

Lauren Simonis (class of 2014) is running two small social enterprises: Scratchpad Consulting, which is social enterprise consulting, and Green Life Aerial Yoga that leads sustainable living and aerial yoga retreats in Northern Portugal.

Paige Klotzman (class of 2017) is now a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Officer at the Perkins School for the Blind outside Boston, MA.

Lee Allen (class of 2017) is now working with Apple Inc. on their Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives.
Make a Gift to MDP!

**Your generous gift** will allow us to continue training the next generation of development practitioners dedicated to ending global poverty. Specifically, your contribution will help support MDP students complete their summer field practicum. For 8-12 weeks each summer, MDP students travel to locations throughout the world to engage directly in a development practice under the mentorship of professionals working in the field. This practicum offers invaluable hands-on experience for our students. Your donation will allow us to continue to attract the highest quality students and provide them with the critical support they need to become highly skilled practitioners in defining sustainable and socially-just pathways to development. Here are some examples of how your contribution can help students as they work to address pressing global development challenges:

A donation of **$500** will pay for 1-month of housing while in the field.

A donation of **$1000** will pay for 1-month of room and board during practicum field work.

A donation of **$1,500** will cover airfare to the field practicum site for one student.

A donation of **$5,000** will cover living and travel expenses for one student’s summer practicum.

**DONATE (CLICK HERE)**

Please also consider donating to the **Rosalia Gibert Memorial Fund**. In memory of one of our outstanding students whose life ended tragically in 2015, this fund will support students who embody the same values, motivation and life experiences that Rosalia brought to our program. Rosalia was passionate about social justice and was an active member of the Tucson community. Coming back to graduate school as a mother of two in her 40s, Rosalia embraced the challenge and worked extremely hard in starting a new phase of her career as a professional development practitioner. This fund is meant to keep alive the spirit, inspiration and work ethic that she brought to the program and will be used to support a non-traditional, female student who will carry forward Rosalia’s mission to create a better world through development practice. **To donate to the Rosalia Gilbert Memorial Fund, click on “Donate” above and at the bottom of the form under “Tribute Information” indicate that you would like the donation to be “In memory of Rosalia Gilbert.”**
Please visit us on the web!

MDP student Amanda Hixson in Cambodia for her summer practicum, 2017.