



# MCSP Alumni Newsletter Winter 2020

## Welcome from the MCSP Directors

We hope you are healthy and well in the midst of this unprecedented coronavirus pandemic crisis. We know this is a stressful time for everyone.

The purpose of this special MCSP Alumni Newsletter is to send you much love from your MCSPfamily in these difficult days. We hope you will feel the love of your MCSP Community in the many MCSP Spotlights that follow. We hope the words and photos of your fellow MCSP alumni will bring you good cheer and a big smile to your face.

Thinking of each of you,  
David and Wendy

David Schoem, Director

Wendy Woods, Associate Director

## Alumni Spotlights

### Sarah Luke

**Years in MCSP:** 4 (participant, peer advisor, and resident advisor)

**What have you been up to since graduation?**

Since graduation, I attended law school and am now a practicing attorney.

**What are you currently doing now?**

I represent colleges, universities, K-12 schools, and not-for-profit organizations in and around New York.

**How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?** I help my clients further their educational missions, many of which include a commitment to equal opportunity, social justice, and access. I help them to both comply with federal and state civil rights laws and to correct actions and omissions that violate those laws. I also volunteer for the Lawyers Alliance for New York through which I provide *pro bono* legal services to area non-profits, and for CHiPS (Community Help in Park Slope) which addresses issues of food insecurity in Brooklyn, NY.

**What is your favorite memory about MCSP?** My favorite memories of MCSP are the unstructured, unplanned, late night conversations I had in the hallways with my classmates. The opportunities for spontaneous conversation are more sparse in adult life, and I treasure the memories of those special moments.



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**Emily Prifogle**

Years in MCSP: 2004-2005

**What have you been up to since graduation?**

Since my time with MCSP, I have taken a winding road away from, then back to Ann Arbor. First, I finished my BA at Indiana University, where I was able to continue my interest in working with youth and education issues. I spent three years at IU as an Advocate for Community Engagement coordinating service-learning students at a local elementary school. After undergrad, I then continued that focus on education advocacy while obtaining a master's in social policy and a law degree as far away as England and California. For the last several years, I worked on a PhD in history in New Jersey, completing it just last year.

**What are you currently doing now?**

I'm back at Michigan! I am currently the inaugural Faculty Fellow and visiting assistant professor at the University of Michigan School of Law. I plan to stay here after the fellowship and am looking forward to growing roots in Ann Arbor!

**How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

The same concerns and questions that drew me to MCSP fifteen years ago now motivate my legal and historical research. Although my studies have taken me away from a primary focus on direct service work, my research continues to focus on issues of power and inequality. I research and write about rural legal history in the Midwest, examining how race, class, and gender affect rural legal experience. My interests in education equality also continue to find their way into my research but are also expressed in my commitment to public universities. I'm looking forward to spending my career helping make a public university the best in the country!

**What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

My time in MCSP was deeply formative of how I navigated my education and career that followed. As someone who has remained in higher ed for more than a decade after MCSP, it's not surprising that I have many good memories of being in class with Professor Schoem and others. MCSP faculty taught me so much—not just about how to combat inequality and value diversity, but also how to integrate a social justice mindset into my teaching, scholarship, and daily life. My coursework with MCSP formed the foundation of the many years of education that followed. Those classroom experiences and the mentorship I received during MCSP continue to inform how I approach teaching and mentoring now as a professor as I hope to pay those kindnesses

forward.



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## Clare McGuire

**Years in MCSP: 2004-2006**

**What have you been up to since graduation?**

I lived and worked in Philadelphia for a few years, and then moved to Bloomington, Indiana to attend the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University. I got my Masters in Public Affairs focusing in public finance and policy analysis, and then went to work for the federal practice of a big consulting firm in Washington, DC for two years. I then moved to Chicago, where I live now! I've worked in local government and nonprofits here, and absolutely love Chicago.

**What are you currently doing now?**

I am currently working as a Project Manager of Infrastructure Capital Controls for the Chicago Transit Authority, focusing on capital projects.

**How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

I've integrated my belief in social justice into all of my post-Michigan decisions- going into public policy, working in nonprofits, and now focusing in local government. My work at the Transit Authority helps residents of Chicago have access to the jobs and resources they need, and I'm happy to be using my finance background to help my city run better for everyone.

**What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

There are so many good ones- meeting all of my classmates for the first time when we moved in, multiple MCSP Alternative Spring Break Trips, driving Ginsberg Center vans to volunteer

events...the list can go on forever. I have stayed close to many of the people I met in MCSP because of our shared believe in social justice and our wonderful shared memories.



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## Beka Guluma

**Years in MCSP:** 2010-2012 (PACS in 2011-2012)

**What have you been up to since graduation?**

I graduated in 2014. After graduation I worked for a year doing public policy research and evaluation in Lansing. I then returned to school for my PhD in sociology at Stanford.

**What are you currently doing now?**

I'm in my 5<sup>th</sup> year of graduate school. I am currently doing my dissertation research in the Washington D.C. area.

**How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

I'd like to think that my decision to pursue my PhD in sociology is a form of social justice work. I

was drawn to sociology because I think it is the discipline that best explains our world—how and why we relate to each other the way that we do. In better understanding our ways of relating to one another, hopefully we can fix our more harmful, maladaptive beliefs and actions. Outside of school I have found ways to live a social justice, service-learning oriented life. I was involved in student organizing to push for more student and faculty diversity in our department, I volunteered as a teacher at one of the San Francisco county jails, I protest and petition for causes and issues I care about like immigrant rights and grad student affordability in the Bay Area. I also think often about my consumption and ways I can reduce it. Climate change is the most important issue of our time so I'm always seeking to live more sustainably. For me, living a social justice oriented life is living a life with love and compassion. Hopefully if we put that loving energy out into the world, we will receive that same energy back.

**What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

I loved college and I loved my time in MCSP. During my first year of MCSP I loved spending time with my hallmates on the ground floor of the old East Quad—shout out to GLF! We were a raucous group, partying together and conversing quite loudly long into the night. We were also a loving and friendly group. The purity of our innocence and playfulness gives me nostalgia. I made many friends in that first year with whom I am still close. My second year of MCSP was equally enjoyable but in a different way. I spent almost all my free time with my guys Andy Clark, Dan Green, Raqman Lewis, Donovan McKinney, and Max Miller. We, too, were a loud, energetic, playful, and loving crew. We spent many nights watching basketball, playing NBA 2K, and making late night trips in Donovan's red Chevy Lumina. Some other memorable experiences were serving as a Peer Advisor for Community Service, participating in Alternative Weekends and Detroit Partnership Day, and meeting civil rights activist Rev. Dr. Bernard Lafayette Jr.



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## Devon Degraffenreed

**Years in MCSP:** 2007-2011 student, peer advisor, resident advisor, 2014-2016 Admin

### **What have you been up to since graduation?**

Directly after graduating undergrad I started working in the mortgage division of one of the largest banks in the country. After working there for a few years learning a whole lot about but the loan servicing and mortgage underwriting I decided to make a career shift and ended up working for MCSP a full-time staff member while also applying to graduate school. After being accepted as a member of The Institute for Recruitment of Teachers (IRT) which is a fellowship for scholars committed to diversity in the field of education I attended the University of Arizona where I completed my M.A. in Higher Education.

### **What are you currently doing now?**

Since completing graduate school, I moved back home to Michigan to be closer to family and I currently work at the University of Michigan for Student Life where my work focuses on initiatives and programs for graduate and professional students across all the campus's 19 schools and colleges. When I am not at work I am hanging out with my godchildren and my not-so-little-anymore siblings.

### **How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

The student population that I work with is the most diverse on campus and because of that, I get to use the many lessons I learned by being a member of MCSP, around intergroup relations, dialogue, diversity, allyhood and equity on a near-daily basis. I am really thankful that I can use my voice and position within the university to advocate for students who are traditionally underrepresented and marginalized in these types of spaces.

### **What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

I cannot pick a single favorite memory about being in MCSP. I was apart of the program for 6 years as a student and staff member so that means I have quite a few, but I had to choose one to share it would be hanging around in the Couzens dining hall. It did not know it at the time but having the ability to always find a familiar and welcoming face made transitioning to such a large campus bearable.

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## Mary Hirt

**Years in MCSP:** 2011-2012- MCSP First Year, 2012-2013- Programming Board, Environmental Action Team 2012-2015- MCSP office assistant

**What have you been up to since graduation?**

After graduating in May 2015, I moved to Atlanta, Georgia with my boyfriend Eric Lytle (another MCSP 2015 grad) so I could pursue my Master's in City and Regional Planning at Georgia Tech. At Georgia Tech, I focused my studies on housing and community development studies and researched the racial disparities homeownership and wealth accumulation. After graduating in 2018, I started working full time at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta in the Community and Economic Development Department.

**What are you currently doing now?**

I work as an engagement analyst in the Community and Economic Development department at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. I get to do a mix of research and engagement work around the topics of affordable housing, workforce development, community development finance, and so much more, all through an economic mobility lens. My department recently created an engagement team that I transitioned to in 2019, which allows me to meet more folks and help create actionable outcomes from the research we produce. I love living in a new region of the country and am enjoying the opportunity to explore the communities I serve in the Southeast.

**How do you integrate social justice into your life post college?**

I have been fortunate to be able to integrate social justice in most of my professional work and educational pursuits. In grad school, my focus on housing and community development allowed to continue my studies in social justice, and discover how that pertains to the built environment. In my work at the Federal Reserve, I get to talk about social justice through an institutional lens, focusing on topics of economic mobility and resilience as well as racial equity.

**What is your favorite memory of MCSP?**

It's hard to pick just one memory! I have so many great memories living in East and West Quad with my MCSPhamily. I remember a lot of the relationships I built during freshman year with both Alternative Weekends in Brightmoor and Alternative Spring Break in New Orleans. For Alternative Weekends, we would go spend the weekend once a month helping the Brightmoor community through planting, gardening, building, or running events, really whatever they needed us for that weekend! We also always made sure to pair fun with the service, whether it be late nights playing card games or giant leaf piles.





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## Adelia Davis

**Years in MCSP:** 2013-2014 IRC, 2014-2015 IRC, 2015-2016 worked as the DPE in West Quad with MCSP

### **What have you been up to since graduation?**

Upon graduating, I carried out a self-directed service project in Cape Town, South Africa through the Raoul Wallenberg Fellowship. I used culturally relevant children's literature to facilitate collaborative youth programming through reading clubs, field trips, and workshops to develop self-confidence and purpose in black children in South Africa. I have continued leading similar programming since returning to my hometown Detroit, Michigan through the organization I founded, Story Shifters. I have also worked with local, like-minded literacy organizations including InsideOut Literary Arts and Wellspring.

### **What are you currently doing now?**

Currently, I work for Wellspring Detroit, which is a youth programming non-profit in Brightmoor, serving as a literacy specialist for elementary students. I am also running a volunteer program called the GenPen Project in Warren E. Bow Elementary on Detroit's west side, where I have volunteers connecting with second grade students through storytelling. This fall I plan to start graduate school to continue to expand my knowledge and understanding of global youth development.

### **How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

MCSP helped me to develop the skills to unpack inequity on a structural level, which has served as a foundation for the way that I approach injustice through my career goals. My work in education and literacy is as much about building relationships with community members and stakeholders as it is about understanding the policy and curriculum that have contributed to creating the current state of the educational system. I seek to share what I learn and add to it from listening to other community members' experiences and knowledge.

### **What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

One of my favorite memories about MCSP is from my first semester. I started getting really involved with the Intergroup Relations Council, which was at the time run by Maya Williams and Rebecca Christensen. One night before a dialogue we were planning, the three of us made a Meijer run to get snacks for participants. It ended up taking a long time to finish this trip, because we spent so much time talking about social justice, life on campus, and just life in general! This was the beginning of a trio friendship I hold very dear to my heart.



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## **Meredith Burke**

**Years in MCSP:** 2012-13 Participant, 2013-14: Peer Advisor for Community Service, 2014-15 MCSP RA, 2015-16: MCSP RA

**What have you been up to since graduation?**

I will admit that finding my way after graduation was a little tricky, but I think I'm beginning to figure out how to build my own path in the world of adulthood. During my AmeriCorps VISTA year in Colorado Springs, CO, I found a passion in connecting people of all ages and backgrounds with new resources, new opportunities, and new friends. Life has continued in Colorado, and I am currently living and working in Rifle, CO; however, I will be moving to Fort Collins this summer to start my MBA program at Colorado State University, focusing on making businesses more socially and environmentally responsible.

**What are you currently doing now?**

I am currently the Program Director of Garfield County Outdoors, which is part of a grant-funded Colorado-wide initiative working to connect youth and families with the outdoors.

**How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

In my professional role, my work with Garfield County Outdoors is focused on breaking down barriers to outdoor access. Likewise, all of our programs are free and transportation and gear are provided when available. We are working to break down other barriers, such as language and striving towards representation of all backgrounds among both program leaders and participants. Additionally, I teach an environmental justice simulation lesson (which I based off the Sim City simulation from MCSP's UC 102 class) to local middle and high school students.

Personally and professionally, I am always seeking out ways to build my own understanding of the world and those within it through dialogue with peers, admitting what I don't know and pursuing ways to learn more, constantly questioning systems, and doing my best to break down stereotypes in conversations with peers.

**What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

Having been a part of MCSP for four years, it's hard to pick just one favorite memory. I always enjoyed the first two days of MCSP where everyone comes together to do a low ropes challenge course and do a service project in the local Ann Arbor community. Not to be all sentimental, but every day was a favorite while in MCSP, and it was truly the best decision I made while at Michigan. MCSP introduced me to my best friends and taught me how to be a better, more vulnerable, more passionate, more aware, and more involved individual. Oh, but I'll never forget when we all did the Harlem Shake during MCSP retreat and when David shared that his favorite color is rainbow because he can't pick just one color!



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## Danny Lambouths III

**Years in MCSP:** 1999/2000

**What have you been up to since graduation?** I moved to Chicago and entered the finance/accounting profession after graduating from the University of Michigan's business school (now called Ross Business School) in 2003, where I worked various finance and accounting roles. One of these roles was with United Airlines, which gave me the amazing opportunity to travel the world virtually free:-). I have traveled to 4 continents so far and I am hoping to visit my 5th this year!

In 2011, I decided to pursue graduate education from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) where I have been ever since. I have obtained three masters degrees while here (Sociology, Youth Development, and Statistics).

**What are you currently doing now?**

I am currently working on a doctoral degree in Sociology at UIC. Additionally, I work for the Office of Diversity and the Office of Institutional Research.

**How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

Social justice is an integral part of who I am professionally and socially. Through my work with the Office of Diversity and the Office of Institutional Research I am able to identify and measure

inequalities at the institutional level and work collaboratively with my colleagues to develop solutions. As a graduate student/researcher studying racial prejudice, I commit a lot of time, effort, and work into understanding race relations in America. My motivation around this work comes from believing that the better we understand racial prejudice, the closer we can come to eradicating it.

**What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

When I think about my favorite memory about MCSP, I think about the close community it provided to me my first semester. Some of my closest friends today I met through MCSP and even those I don't keep in touch with, when I saw them at the 20th year reunion, it was clear to me that we share a special bond that was fostered by our time in the program. Being from a small town, I came to the University of Michigan nervous and unsure if I'd "make it." The structure of the MCSP program allowed me to not only survive at the "U," but actually thrive. I am forever grateful for my MCSP experience.



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## **Maya Angelica Williams**

**Years in MCSP:** 3 years

**What have you been up to since graduation?**

After graduation, I worked as MCSP's first Coordinator of Diversity Initiatives for the Intergroup Relations Council (IRC). Next, I worked in Boston for one year as a Program Advisor to international students. Following that experience, I attended the University of Texas at Austin and obtained my Master's in Social Work.

**What are you currently doing now?**

Currently, I am a third year doctorate student at the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis. I study the impact skin tone bias, discrimination, and colorism have on African American girls' self-esteem and academic outcomes.

**How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

I integrate social justice into every aspect of my life post-college. Through my many travels, jobs, and schooling opportunities I have always worked with and advocated for racial and ethnic minorities to receive equitable opportunities. I continue to serve communities of color as a social work student both through research and practice.

**What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

My favorite MCSP memory always has been and always will be attending Alternative Spring Break or ASB in Chicago during my sophomore year. We had an awesome car ride and played the best self-selected music, the students we worked with in Chicago always made us laugh, and we had the best site leaders of all time Emily Rosengren and Abby White <3



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## **Jeane Emily DuBose**

**Years in MCSP:** 2013-2015-- PACS member

**What have you been up to since graduation?**

Living in Chicago, learning photography, and working for a few different non-profits in the city.

**What are you currently doing now?**

I work for the American Bar Association as a membership specialist.

### **How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

MCSP taught me how the importance of self-reflection and self-compassion. I use these skills on a daily basis-- considering my privilege and how it affects the decisions I make and the way I perceive certain problems. I'll be forever grateful for MCSP and everything I learned within the community.

### **What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

I **loved** IGR dialogues. I had conversations about income inequality, about gender and sexuality, about white privilege, and learned things I never knew and would have never considered before. Learning from others was transformative and taught me how to think about myself.

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## **Michael Jacobson**

**Years in MCSP:** Freshman: Fall 2009 - Spring 2010, Sophomore Year: Fall 2010 - Spring 2011 (East Quad) - I think I was a Peer Advisor for Community Service.

### **What have you been up to since graduation?**

After graduation in 2013, I continued to date my MCSP sweetheart, Claire He, who I met on the first day of MCSP, freshman year. I worked for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for two years. Then, I returned to the University of Michigan to get a Masters in Public Health. After completing that degree, I asked Claire to marry me and we got married the following year.

### **What are you currently doing now?**

I have just started my third year working at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). Ever since the Flint Water Crisis, there has been an increasing investment to remove lead from housing and water systems. I am part of a team that is responsible for the creation and implementation of lead hazard control programs across the whole state of Michigan.

### **How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

MCSP introduced me to the existence and the magnitude of health disparities on a global, national, and Michigan scale. Ever since then, I have wanted to live a life trying to reduce them. In Michigan alone, there are thousands of children with elevated blood lead levels. Health effects of lead exposure include brain and nervous system damage, decreased IQ, learning difficulties, slow or reduced growth, kidney damage, and more. All of these health effects, which can change the trajectory of one's life, are the result of old housing and infrastructure. In my job, we identify children who are at risk for lead exposure or who have already been exposed. We then locate all of the lead hazards in the home. After locating all of the lead hazards, we make sure that they are all removed. No child's home should expose them to lead. I can't thank MCSP enough for introducing me to the world of Public Health.



**What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

I miss living in a dorm with my friends. Those two years of my life, in MCSP, were full of so much fun. On paper, it does not sound like much. It was a conglomeration of completing school work, discussing social justice, knitting scarves for the homeless, playing Nintendo 64, eating at a cafeteria, and volunteering somewhere on the weekend.

But to me, those were the best two years of my life.

They made me who I am today.



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# Connor Wilkinson

**Years in MCSP:** I was in MCSP all four years! I was on the programming board my sophomore year and then became an MCSP RA my final 2 years.

## **What have you been up to since graduation?**

I moved to New York City and began working in advertising at Yelp before returning to the University of Michigan to pursue a graduate degree in Public Policy.

## **What are you currently doing now?**

I am in the final semester of my MPP degree at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy. In addition to my coursework, I have had the opportunity to intern at Facebook, work on consulting projects in Detroit, and serve as an RA in Munger Graduate Residences.

## **How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

As an RA for graduate students, I try my best to create and foster an inclusive and diverse community in which all residents feel respected, represented, and safe. Also, as a public policy student, I am learning ways to craft and implement policies that promote human rights, equality, and fairness.

## **What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

From dancing at MCSProm to working in the Brightmoor community garden, MCSP has gifted me with the best of friends and a lifetime of memories. I was lucky to be surrounded by a community of people with an infectious passion for social change and activism. I have MCSP to thank for offering the perspectives and networks needed to forge a civic-minded path in public policy.



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## Zainab Bhindarwala

**Years in MCSP:** 2015-2016: Freshman, 2016-2017: Peer Advisor on Intergroup Relations Council (IRC), 2017-2019: ORCA Member and MCSP Advisory Board Member

**What have you been up to since graduation?**

Within 2 months of graduating, I moved to New York!

**What are you currently doing now?**

I'm working as a Paralegal at a law firm in Manhattan.

**How do you integrate social justice into your life post-college?**

The firm I work at handles medical malpractice cases. Since joining, I've encouraged the lawyers I work with to take on cases involving medical malpractice in prisons. People who are incarcerated don't have the option to go to the doctor when they feel sick - as a result, many inmates don't receive medical care until they are critically ill, thus worsening their prognosis and sometimes leaving them with permanent, irreversible injuries. In the short time that I have been here, our law firm has taken on a number of cases in the prison system and expanded our practice to include issues such as solitary confinement, the use of force, and the spread of infectious diseases in prisons. I am also continuously trying to better myself by reading about social issues and engaging with social justice. I think it's important to continue challenging and educating myself, even if I'm no longer in an academic setting.

**What is your favorite memory about MCSP?**

There's so many! We spent so much time in the lounges and media room hanging out and switching between having deep conversations and just joking around. MCSPhamily nights will also always have a special place in my heart! The MCSP End-of-Year Ceremonies were some of my favorite events - as an underclassman I loved seeing what MCSP alumni were up to, and as a senior it was great to reconnect with everyone and relive our freshman year memories!



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