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Dear friends, I hope this message finds you well. It was a challenging year for us all, one that fundamentally changed the way we live and work. COVID-19 required all of us to approach even the most basic routines with a new sense of caution and care. I am incredibly proud and grateful for the many sacrifices the O’Neill community has made to keep our students learning, our faculty teaching, and our staff working.

The past year was also marred by the senseless killing of, and violence toward, several Black Americans. These events have brought social justice and equality to the forefront of public discussion. These actions have opened important dialogues not only at the national and international levels, but within our own school as well.

The O’Neill School is world-renowned as an institution that shapes the hearts and minds of future leaders. To continue that reputation, we must take steps to ensure we are committed to providing a diverse, safe, and welcoming community for all. We spent much of last summer evaluating where we are as a school and where we need to go. As a result, we identified several initiatives that we are excited to have undertaken this academic year.

First, we’re proud to welcome three new members to the offices of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Rachel Brooks joined us in March as the school’s new director. Based in Bloomington, Rachel will oversee initiatives on both campuses. Malissa Sanon (Bloomington) and Ellise Smith (IUPUI) will serve as assistant directors. All three women bring strong backgrounds in DEI programming and will be tremendous assets to our school. Our DEI offices serve as a critical resource for our entire community, and the arrival of these talented women only strengthens them.

Secondly, we hosted an inaugural DEI Summit in November. This virtual event highlighted student, staff, alumni, and faculty contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion. I hope you were able to make time to join us. You can view recordings of the sessions on our YouTube channel.

Additionally, in Bloomington, we’re committing to our continued support of our student-led Students for Equity in Public Affairs organization. SEPA focuses on issues of race, equity, and social justice, and we’re proud to continue supporting their efforts. In Indianapolis, we’re working to create a similar group to give IUPUI students the same opportunities.

Finally, we’re examining curricula across both locations to determine where we can include additional foci on social justice issues as well as actively seeking opportunities to include resources from underrepresented scholars and teachers. Some of our programs are already utilizing textbooks and other materials from more diverse sources, and our students have said they appreciate these additional viewpoints.

These are just a few of the important initiatives we’ve begun. A full list can be found on both the O’Neill Bloomington and Indianapolis websites, and I encourage you to read them when you have the chance.

We have a long way to go before we get where we want to be as an organization. But we will, and we’ll do it together.

Best wishes —

Siân Mooney, Ph.D.

Dean
AN UNFORGETTABLE TIME IN AMERICAN HISTORY

A global pandemic.
Countless demonstrators in the streets, advocating for racial justice and equality.
A contentious presidential election.
And the storming of the U.S. Capitol.
To many, the world seemed as if it was on fire—and in some areas, it actually was. Twenty-twenty felt at times like it would never end. But many within the O’Neill School community have lived through other challenging times, and have found reason to be optimistic despite all that’s going on around us.

Paul Helmke was president of the IU Bloomington student body in May 1969 when the university announced it would increase student fees by 67% the next year to offset budgetary shortfalls from the state legislature. The outrage grew to the point where thousands of students boycotted classes and massive demonstrations were held across campus. The tension culminated with a tense meeting between the student body representatives and school administrators. During the meeting, more than 100 Black students—who felt the fee increases would be used as a method of preventing many Black students from attending college—entered the room and demanded an emergency Board of Trustees meeting to discuss the issue.

The group prevented anyone from entering or leaving Ballantine Hall as they awaited the Trustees. A lengthy discussion followed, with the administrators promising to convene a Trustees’ meeting. Then, as Helmke recalled, each side started listening to one another. Eventually the lock-in was ended, but several of the Black students and faculty supporters were later charged with “rout,” a misdemeanor charge aimed at curtailing Ku Klux Klan activities. Even as progress was made—even if only temporarily—the outcome was marred by legal proceedings.

More than a half-century later, Helmke sees history repeating itself in a way. “So many things today remind me of that 1968–69 era,” he said. “A lot of it is positive, but a lot is scary, too. You think back to the ’60s and you had war raging in Vietnam, protests in the streets, the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Bobby Kennedy, Nixon’s law-and-order rhetoric … Every week you’d think, ‘What’s next?’ This feels very similar in a way.”

Les Lenkowsky is an expert in civic engagement and civil society in a comparative perspective. He, too, likened 2020 to the calamitous years of 1968–69. “Things have been bad before,” he said. “We’ve had tough times. But this is a resilient country. We snap back fairly quickly. Will we do so this time? It’s hard to say, because the pandemic adds an important factor.”

Lenkowsky noted that the last major pandemic the U.S. faced—the Spanish Flu of 1918—was followed by the “roaring ’20s.” Will we rebound again? Neither is sure, but both agreed that the path forward will require action at the polls.

“People are concerned about lots of issues, but many don’t have deep-seated kinds of connections to act on them,” he said. “For all of the challenges we’ve faced this past year, will someone do something about it? We’ve been through difficult periods before and it hasn’t always happened.”

Helmke, who directs the O’Neill School’s Civic Leaders Center where dozens of IU undergraduates hone their leadership skills every year, believes they will.

“Even when things look bleak, there are good things happening,” he said. “I always tell people, ‘Yes, we’ve gone through chaotic periods before as a nation, but the best response is to speak up and be willing to be in the streets to push for change!’

The only question is whether anyone is listening. “Back then, people wanted to hear all sides of an issue,” Helmke said. “They wouldn’t agree, but they’d still go hear the speaker anyway, because students then wanted to hear both sides. I sense an opposition to that now.”

In a year that was full of noise, both professors hope we’ll still find a way to listen.
An education in policy and in equity
It’s been more than two years since Dr. Breanca Merritt launched the Center for Research on Inclusion and Social Policy at the IU Public Policy Institute.

“Our goal has always been to serve the public by providing information,” Merritt says. “Leaders and residents alike need to understand how our policy decisions can contribute to inequities so they can make more informed decisions to address them.”
As CRISP’s founding director, Merritt designed the research center to serve as a centralized resource for reliable, nonpartisan data and research on the many complex and interconnected issues that make up social policy—such as education, poverty, health care, and housing.

“We can lead conversations about disparity and inequity in a way that others perceive to be more neutral than those who focus on advocacy,” Merritt adds. “Talking through research presents a baseline to clearly see the differences that exist so we can know what to address and how to support communities’ assets.”

**Hate crimes**

The center’s first report focused on bias crimes—and it came right as the Indiana legislature debated Indiana’s hate crime bill. CRISP’s research found that crimes committed because of the victim’s sexual orientation or gender identity were the least likely to be prosecuted as bias crimes. The student-led team of researchers also determined that even when a state has a bias crimes statute on the books, prosecutors don’t file bias crime charges in many of those cases—and when they do, it isn’t done equitably among victim groups.

**Evictions rates**

As CRISP analysts began examining eviction rates in Indiana, they found that Marion County, Indiana, had the third-highest eviction rate in the state. “Eviction can have a detrimental and lasting impact on individuals, families, and communities,” Merritt says. “It can affect a renter’s credit score, make it harder to find new housing, force relocation, and even result in job and income loss.”

**Rent burdens**

The most common reason for eviction was unpaid rent. Another CRISP report found that 49% of renters in Marion County are rent-burdened, spending more than one-third of their income on rent. Areas with more Black and Hispanic/Latinx renters have even higher rent burdens than areas with more white renters. Those high rent burdens make it hard to save money for a down payment to buy a home, which research has shown is critical to building wealth for future generations.

**Home values**

Yet even if people are able to purchase a home, CRISP found that nearly 90% of Marion County’s predominately Black neighborhoods have median home values lower than the county median. Low home values can also keep residents from moving to more desirable areas that could further increase their wealth-building capacity.

**Housing insecurity**

Another area in which inequities are evident is in the housing sector, especially when looking at housing insecurity issues such as rent burdens and evictions.
Merritt says many of these housing trends have resulted from decades of discriminatory practices and policies that created segregated neighborhoods. Undoing those causes is a complex process that requires involvement from leaders in many different sectors.

The impact of COVID-19

The complexity and long-lasting impact of disparities in our nation have been highlighted recently by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Institutional causes of COVID-19 disparities

When cases first began appearing in Indiana, CRISP quickly pivoted to examine the disproportionate number of Black Hoosiers dying from COVID. What they found was that social and structural barriers put this group at greater risk for contracting the virus. They were more likely to work in essential sectors with more human interaction. They had higher rates of homelessness and housing instability, lower rates of health insurance, and higher rates of underlying conditions, such as asthma, obesity, and diabetes.

COVID and immigration policy

Some of the structural dangers that put Black Hoosiers at risk extend to many in Indiana’s immigrant community. In July of 2020, CRISP focused on how COVID-19 could be exacerbated by the federal public charge rule, which allows the federal government to determine whether someone is likely to become a public charge, which could negatively affect their immigration status. Many immigrants also work in essential fields, putting them and their families at a greater risk of COVID-19 exposure. Yet they may not seek out medical help due to fear and a lack of health insurance and translation services. In addition, more than 70% of Indiana’s immigrants work in service industries hit hard by state-mandated closures. A loss of stable income could also force them to seek public assistance to cover basic expenses, making them more susceptible to the public charge rule.

Finding solutions

CRISP’s work doesn’t only present problems. The team also offers solutions. These recommendations often focus on the systemic issues that have led our communities and the most vulnerable among us to where we are today.

“Data is just the beginning,” Merritt says. “We educate local leaders, organizations, and residents about these topics, but we also provide research-based recommendations and actionable ideas on how we can address these issues to make a more just and equitable future for communities and individuals across the country.”

CRISP team members are conducting projects through a racial justice lens that addresses housing code violations, poverty assistance, Indianapolis’ and school districts’ criminal justice systems, and measuring racial equity in government agencies.

To learn more about CRISP, its projects, and to keep up on future reports, visit go.iu.edu/crisp.
Rebekah Amaya, originally from South Bend, Indiana, is a junior studying Law and Public Policy with a minor in Critical Race and Ethnic Studies. She was the first intern for the O’Neill School’s Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, as well as the first undergraduate president of Students for Equity in Public Affairs (SEPA).

Like many students, she navigated the academic year online because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although she misses the classroom experience, she’s committed to using the flexibility in her schedule to work on projects that make campus a more equitable and inclusive place.

On working with the Office of DEI:

“I first learned about the office as a freshman while on a retreat with La Casa, the cultural center for Latinx students. A graduate student encouraged me to get in touch with the (former) director, Brian Richardson Jr., and my internship started shortly thereafter.

“Through the office, I was able to set up a speaker series that addressed the needs of first-generation students. I was also able to participate in meetings with different offices across the O’Neill School addressing diversity in student programming.”

On encouraging change through SEPA:

“SEPA exists in part to create space for students to organize around diversity and inclusion issues and to hold faculty, staff, and administration accountable for change. I’m proud of a lot of the educational work we’ve done, like hosting events on microaggressions and bias training.

“One of SEPA’s biggest contributions to the school
is our annual student survey, which takes stock of the cultural climate at O’Neill. We also host focus groups that give us a helpful picture of what underrepresented students are truly experiencing inside and outside the classroom. It’s been encouraging to see some tangible progress that’s been made over the years as a response to the survey, including:

- The creation of the DEI office
- The creation of a bias incident reporting system, where students can safely and anonymously report issues
- The dedication of resources toward mental health issues within the student community

On progress still needed:

“One of the projects I worked on as an intern for the DEI office involved putting together an organizational chart of the different cultural centers across campus. It was wonderful to see so many resources available to students, but it was also a reminder that there are many gaps—particularly on intersectional issues.

“Within O’Neill, transparency and representation are very important to students. We’re interested in learning more about the motivations and the decision-making processes guiding the school’s administration. We want student voices to be heard—especially when decisions affect us.

We’re glad to see that the school has developed new diversity programming and events for the future, but projecting forward doesn’t fix past inequities.”

How to get involved:

“Alumni are a very powerful group. I was able to see that firsthand last year while working with the O’Neill Alumni and Development Office to promote the SEPA scholarship. If diversity, equity, and inclusion issues are important to you, I’d encourage you to consider donating to the SEPA scholarship or promoting it to your network. I’d also encourage you to engage directly with student groups like SEPA to help amplify student voices. We’d welcome your involvement and the chance to learn from your experiences.”
As Kosali Simon sees it, contemporary American life changed forever on March 13, 2020.
That was the day COVID-19 was proclaimed a national emergency. The day before, according to federal data, some 1,645 people in the United States had been infected with the virus. A little more than a year later, the United States has recorded more than 32 million cases and nearly 600,000 deaths. The pandemic has exacerbated existing racial and demographic inequalities. Healing from the COVID-19 era will be a gargantuan policy priority long after a successful vaccine strategy returns us to “normal times,” Simon said.

What have we learned since March 13, 2020?

Simon, one of the nation’s foremost experts on health policy, has been working virtually nonstop alongside colleagues from the O’Neill School, IU, and around the world to better understand the effects of the global pandemic.

“The whole world was taken by surprise,” she said. “As the virus began spreading, we started seeing states act out of surprise. No one knew what to do except immediately close activities that put humans in close (non-family) interactions with each other. You’d see one state enact measures, then another. The thinking was, ‘Let’s close and buy time to figure it out, flatten the (hospital capacity) curve.’” The immediate worry was that hospitals would be overwhelmed if patient flow surged at once, whereas buying time would lead to a more steady flow of patients who could all be treated.

In the months since the virus gripped the U.S., researchers like Simon have looked at the massive amount of data being generated every day to recognize patterns, identify problems, and find solutions.

The conditions and knowledge surrounding the coronavirus advanced so rapidly, it was hard for anyone to know what society should do.

“Masks are one example of where our knowledge and attitudes changed so dramatically,” Simon said. “What did we understand as the role of masks on then as opposed to now, and why even in April–June did we not fully realize their importance? Think also of how age enters the equation. On March 10, 2020, we all thought we were at the same risk of contracting and being affected by the virus. But it turns out, age is an extremely important risk factor, and as society learned this, it likely changed individual behaviors.”

While our understanding of the virus evolved quickly, science, although not devoid of controversy, formed consensus around facts about transmission and health risks. But U.S. state and local policies formed in reaction to the evolving science were extremely varied. Some areas were quick to embrace stay-at-home orders and mandatory face coverings, while others lagged behind. The evidence base for policy making was needed before the pandemic happened, not months later.

“We know in policy analysis that it takes a long time before the typical federal survey or administrative data become available for creating an evidence base.
Research then also takes a long time to go through the peer-review process and finalize,” Simon said. “But we need to know what we can now.”

The ubiquity of “big data” has helped make that possible.

Cellular device tracking, electronic health records, purchasing, payroll processing and scraped data, along with rapidly deployed surveys all combined to give researchers fast access to information that has, to a degree, informed decision and policy making at various levels.

Simon and colleagues have harnessed that data to look at voluntary quarantine rates, disparities in job losses, non-COVID-19 health care disruptions, college reopenings and more. Next they’ll examine K–12 reopenings and the mitigation strategies surrounding them. What worked? What didn’t? Who was hit hardest? Those kinds of questions are front of mind as researchers try to identify ways to allow for a return to normalcy where possible while simultaneously protecting the health of our nation.

The challenge, Simon said, is not in the data collection or the process of drafting recommendations or policy. Rather, it’s cutting through the noise that finds our nation at such a great divide.

“Why is it that we saw such differences across the country in our responses to this virus?” she asked. “Even places that had the same positivity rates took drastically different actions. We know the science will evolve, but the science that applies now is universal—it does not differ by state. Science tells us what it can show us now, knowing full well there may be some things we don’t discover for another five years.”

Ultimately, the varying responses to COVID-19 proved to be another example of polarization that divides us well beyond politics.

“These issues we’re facing in response to the virus come down to whether we are making the right cost-benefit-weighed decisions,” Simon said. “Given the best evidence we have, what are the actions that maximize benefit after taking costs into account? We shouldn’t go into any of these reopenings thinking that there aren’t costs AND benefits. People weigh things differently. The variety of state and local responses we see suggests that in the U.S., even when COVID-19 numbers are similar, people weight things VERY differently based on where you live. At a certain level, it’s hard to understand how we can have such different decisions being made with the same information.”

Regardless of the approach taken, everyone is aiming for policy that improves what they value the most, and policy informed by evidence is the best route there.
The O’Neill School’s Master of Science in Healthcare Management program entered its second year in the summer of 2020, as a global pandemic put the international spotlight on health care and policy.
That the program—a joint effort with the Kelley School of Business—more than doubled in size should come as no surprise: the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 32% growth for careers in medical and health care management during the next decade. MSHM graduates from the first class saw that demand first hand, earning job offers with salaries ranging from $73,000 to $110,000.

“There has been so much interest in the MSHM program that we’re now offering spring, summer, and fall starting dates, an entirely online option, and an executive track,” Faculty Program Director April Grudi said. “Our students are earning high-paying, in-demand jobs after spending a year with us, and they’re developing skills that few others entering the market have.”

Grudi is referring to the 14 national certification opportunities that prepare future health care leaders with training in areas like lean, project management, productivity, and unconscious bias recognition. MSHM graduates also come out of the MSHM program with nine months of leadership experience through our MSHM Healthcare Leadership Fellowship program, which pairs students with leadership opportunities and mentors from multiple health care sectors and organizations across the nation. Students graduate with a strong understanding of health care, policy, and business with two semesters of leadership experience under their belts. Employers recognize that MSHM graduates are ready to lead from day one, Grudi said.

Students are also learning from more diverse sources: the program led an innovative overhaul of its curriculum last year, ensuring at least half of materials, cases, and speakers came from an author or participant who is part of an underrepresented demographic.

“This targeted effort increased diversity in the classroom—our 2021 class identifies as 54% female and 54% Black, indigenous, or person of color—and resulted in students being exposed to a diverse set of perspectives through course materials and resources,” Grudi said.

Post-survey results showed that the program’s diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts resulted in increased cultural competency for both faculty and staff.

With even more flexibility to start and complete the program, and a job market that is actively seeking students with these unique skillsets, don’t be surprised to see the MSHM program become one of the O’Neill School’s signature programs in the coming years.

For more information on the MSHM program, visit the O’Neill School’s master’s program website. If you or your organization would like to learn more about hosting/mentoring a MSHM student, please reach out to Director April Grudi at agrudi@iu.edu.
COMBATTING COVID-19 — REMOTELY
Finding a rewarding summer internship is not always easy. Finding an internship while navigating stay-at-home orders caused by a pandemic that shuttered organizations nationwide? Now that’s a challenge.

We’re proud of all our students who had to adapt their summer 2020 plans, and we’re grateful to our alumni who stepped up to host internships and create meaningful professional opportunities for O’Neill students as the effects of coronavirus changed the working world around us.
We’re especially proud to spotlight MPA students Aubrei Hayes and Andrew Hennessey, who applied their skills toward COVID-19 policy and planning efforts at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, where they were supervised by O’Neill alumna Chris Jackson, MPA’18.

On interning with the COVID response team at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services:

Hennessey: “I initially worked on setting up isolation hotels for essential workers who were living with people who were at-risk. I also did some work on population health, where I looked at racial and socioeconomic health disparities among Michigan residents and explored how people who utilize Medicare and Medicaid were affected by the pandemic—directly putting my classroom learning into practice.

Hayes: “One of my projects was to help maintain a database of the governor’s executive orders related to COVID-19, tracking what was published and what had changed. This was especially useful when putting together reopening communications for the state. When were haircuts allowed? When could restaurants return to operating at 50% capacity?”

Hayes: “As part of the racial diversity task force, I helped identify various racial identities across the state of Michigan, research underlying health disparities, and explore different ways these groups were affected by COVID-19. I was then able to add a special lens to the way we connected these people to care and resources. For example, when we created a coronavirus resource pamphlet, we made sure it was translated into languages like Spanish or Arabic that were commonly spoken in the places where the pamphlets would be handed out.”
“My favorite project was working on a website that served as a hub for all things COVID-19, where people were able to do things like review symptoms and find out what to do when someone they love tests positive. I paid special attention to whether our site was inclusive—making sure it was ADA compliant, avoiding gender-based wording, and having appropriate language translation options.”

On gaining perspective:

Hennessey: “There was a lot of societal tension in Michigan between people who wanted to reopen and those who did not. In my position, I was able to observe ramifications of coronavirus that went beyond sickness. Working on isolation hotels, for example, I saw the economic impact on the hospitality industry. I also saw that coping with COVID-19 wasn’t simply a matter of getting sick and going to the doctor. For some, it meant having to navigate Medicare or dealing with nursing homes. Many people lacked access to health insurance, or to a COVID test, or to preventative care.

“I went into this internship knowing that I wanted to work in health care, but I didn’t realize quite how broadly public policy affects every piece of the health care industry. Whether you’re a nurse, or an administrator, or a patient, or someone with a private practice, policy trickles down.”

On completing an internship remotely:

Hennessey: “It was challenging to try to understand the organizational culture without being immersed in that environment. We were all home using Zoom. However, the administrative team was accessible and approachable. I did weekly check-ins with my supervisor, Chris Jackson (MPA’18). It was helpful that he had already been through the same MPA program because he was uniquely able to understand how my coursework and experiences could be applied to different projects.

“At the end of our internship, we had a department-wide send-off for all the interns. We brought brown bag lunches and were able connect about our next steps and offer feedback. I very much felt like a member of the team.”

On promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace:

Hayes: “With the national spotlight on racial injustice last summer, I talked to our task force about creating a ‘courageous conversation’ for people across the department to share their experiences. We set up a Zoom call where we were able to lay out microaggressions, encourage the use of not ‘you’ but ‘I’ statements, and promote listening to understand—not just listening to respond. There were more than 50 people on the call. I’m proud that we were able to create a safe space for people to be brave and vulnerable and to encourage healthy relationships, even remotely. People often want to know how they can be allies, but they don’t know how to truly give back. This was an opportunity for them to see how they could support their peers.”

If you’re interested in setting up an internship for O’Neill students at your organization, contact career services at careerhb@indiana.edu or oneillics@iupui.edu.
Dr. Shahzeen Z. Attari and MPA-MSES student Anagha Gore are studying the similarities and differences between people’s perceptions, attitudes, and motivations with regard to coronavirus and climate change in their project, “Understanding the psychological relationship between COVID-19 pandemic and the climate change crisis.”

Dr. Sanya Carley and Dr. David Konisky surveyed low-income households to study the effects of COVID-19 on energy insecurity. Their results revealed that 22% of respondents had to reduce or forgo basic household needs, like medicine or food, to pay an energy bill. Follow-up results showed that 1 in 5 Black households and nearly one-third of Hispanic households could not pay an energy bill during what was the second-hottest summer on record, yet only 12% of white households reported the same.

Dr. Aaron Deslatte argued that the use of block grants could help local governments address inequities caused by the pandemic. He also studied government officials’ messaging about social distancing and found that public health framing encouraged citizens to stay home and avoid unnecessary travel, while economic framing had the opposite effect.

Dr. Kirsten Grønbjerg and the Indiana Nonprofits Project she directs released a survey showing that in Indiana, more than half of the state’s nonprofit organizations have curtailed or suspended programs and 70% operate other ongoing programs with limited or reduced capacity. Nearly three-quarters are down in revenue. She is also analyzing survey data from
Indiana local government officials on their institutions’ preparedness for dealing with serious disasters.

**Dr. Monika Herzig** has been looking at how jazz musicians are coping with the loss of work infrastructure in the entertainment industry. To stay in touch with audiences, she started a livestreaming and driveway concert series, as well as a YouTube series called “Talking Jazz.” She also did a collaborative streamed concert with Indianapolis’ sister city, Cologne, Germany.

**Dr. Craig Johnson**, Ph.D. student **Ruth Winecoff**, and others co-authored a study on how the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act authorized the Federal Reserve to create the Municipal Liquidity Facility (MLF). They propose suggestions for the continued evolution of the MLF to enhance liquidity for state and local governments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Dr. Joe Shaw** and the Solve Pollution Network he leads have been studying the association between COVID-19 and exposure to extreme air pollution. They’re currently working in rural Madagascar—where pollution kills 1 in 3 individuals—to implement science, education, and policy solutions to reduce the burden of pollution.

**Dr. Coady Wing**, **Dr. Kosali Simon**, **Dr. Thuy Nguyen** (former postdoctoral fellow and MPA’12), **Dr. Felipe Lozano-Rojas** (Ph.D.’18), and others used cell phone data to track mobility early in the pandemic. They combined this data with state and local distancing and reopening guidelines to try to understand the public’s response to policy. They also studied the effects of the pandemic on the labor market and the health care industry.

**Dr. Coady Wing, Dr. Daniel Simon**, and Ph.D. student **Patrick Carlin** studied the super-spreader effect by focusing on cities that hosted large sporting events in January and February 2020. They found that hosting one additional NHL or NBA game led to an additional 783 COVID-19 cases from March through mid-May and an additional 52 deaths. They also found that hosting an additional NCAA Division 1 men’s basketball game resulted in an additional 31 cases and an additional 2.4 deaths.

**Dr. Amina Salamova** co-authored a study that found an uptick in the use of common household cleaners during the pandemic, including chemicals known to have adverse effects on reproductive and respiratory systems. The article, “Increased Indoor Exposure to Commonly Used Disinfectants during the COVID-19 Pandemic,” was published in *Environmental Science and Technology Letters*.

**Dr. Denvil Duncan, Dr. Justin Ross**, and **Dr. Coady Wing** hosted a COVID-19 series on their podcast, Lunchtime Social Science, that covered topics like the role of the federal government in stemming economic fallout, Germany’s approach to the virus, and the relationship between conspiracy theories and public policy.
As Mohammad Khan sat as his computer last summer, he worked on a white paper for Boston-based urban planning group The Collaborative. Khan was an O’Neill Policy Studies major at the time, interning for the group and tasked with examining alternate care facilities that could be set up within 48 hours of an outbreak.

“The team wanted to know how and where they could quickly create makeshift hospitals,” he says. “We looked at what could be viable options—including schools, convention centers, hotels, even dorm rooms. Most city and state officials will have questions, so we will have answers to guide them.”

Kahn’s research found that a centralized, well-connected location near public transportation was ideal in most large cities—a city within a city, he explained.

“For Indianapolis, the Convention Center is the best option,” he suggests. “It’s a large facility connected to a few hotels that could house patients and medical staff to help reduce cross-contamination with people outside.”

But for smaller communities, Khan said schools would be the optimal solution. They could house large numbers of patients if hospitals couldn’t accommodate them all.

“Usually, the government would take charge through an Incident Command System,” Khan says. “During this pandemic, however, the federal government has created lots of leeway for the public to get involved.”

Khan was a unique fit for this type of project. He was coming off another internship with the Indiana...
Department of Homeland Security just as COVID-19 hit. In the weeks prior, he had been updating IDHS’ plans on logistics staging areas and points of distribution.

Those same plans would allow Aaron Farrer to execute his mission with the Indiana National Guard.

Farrer, an O’Neill Public Safety major in his seventh year with the National Guard, hadn’t served on a mission yet. Then an email hit his inbox about a COVID-19 response mission beginning in April 2020—a mission that could also serve as an internship. The conditions were unknown and there was no end date. All Farrer was told was to bring his hazmat gear and prepare for an indefinite deployment.

He was later assigned to help with food bank distribution at Hoosier Hills Food Bank in Bloomington, Indiana. Due to fears of COVID-19 and the chaos of quarantine, volunteer rates were down and the need for help was up. That’s where the National Guard stepped in.

“Being in the military, we’ve already made the decision that when no one else wants to do something, we’ll be there to do it,” Farrer says. “We were just helping the food bank accomplish its mission.”

His team’s mission was to do what they do best: follow orders. The soldiers worked with volunteers and employees to assemble boxes of food for those in need and for nearby food banks.

They then helped load those boxes into cars as people drove through the line at food distributions. The event that was supposed to end their mission in June 2020 drew about 400 people in six hours—fewer than anticipated. But word soon got around and the National Guard extended the team’s mission. By the middle of August, one of their drive-thru events served 1,000 families in just five hours.

Farrer says the people he met in those lines were grateful and humble. Many said it was their first time using a food bank and they didn’t know what to do.

“We would help them understand what was going on and how to do it,” Farrer recalls. “There’s absolutely no shame involved in anyone using a food bank.”

Farrer says those people and the ones dedicated to serving them left an impression that will last beyond his deployment.

“This was my first opportunity to work with volunteers and I spent a lot of time trying to figure out what they got out of volunteering,” he says. “I learned it’s their passion project. They absolutely have a sense of service in the same way anyone who joins the military does. They feel a duty to serve the people in their community—no matter the circumstances.”

Both Farrer and Khan are taking O’Neill’s commitment to making a difference out of the classroom and into the community. Their work has helped others not only address current issues caused by COVID-19 but will also allow leaders to plan for the next crisis so they can be prepared to better serve our cities, our neighbors, and the world.
**Dr. Jeremy Carter** studied the impact of social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic on crime in Los Angeles and Indianapolis. In Indianapolis, they found an increase in calls to police for domestic violence and vandalism incidents, a decrease in traffic stops, and a slight drop in burglaries. Robbery, assault/battery, and vehicle theft calls remained the same. Read the full report through the O’Neill IUPUI blog.

**Dr. Eric Grommon, Dr. Breanca Merritt, Dr. Kevin Martyn**, and O’Neill graduate students analyzed the effect of COVID-19 on jail populations nationwide and found a 17% decrease overall. The team recently released the second phase of the project focusing specifically on Indiana jail populations, thanks to an Indiana University COVID-19 Rapid Response Grant.

**Dr. Peter Federman** is researching executive orders from all 50 states aimed at mitigating the spread of COVID-19. He and his team created a public dashboard to gain a better understanding of which orders worked, how the policy and legal landscapes are changing because of COVID-19, and what approaches states took during their initial quarantines.

**Dr. William Foley** and his graduate students worked with the Indiana University Police Department and other police departments in Indiana to examine the impact of COVID-19 on law enforcement.

**Dr. Jamie Levine Daniel** is working to understand donation behaviors and motivations in this age of COVID-19. When looking at how donors perceive overhead information they learn about an organization, the study found that providing specific information about how donations will be used can mitigate aversion donors may have to overhead costs.
Dr. Kevin Martyn is examining trends in calls for service to the Indy EMS during the COVID-19 pandemic and what that data says about the disparate impacts among poor and minority populations in Indianapolis.

Dr. Breanca Merritt and researchers at the Center for Research on Inclusion and Social Policy at the IU Public Policy Institute examined institutional causes behind COVID-19 death disparities in Indiana. They found that Black Hoosiers may be at greater risk of exposure to COVID-19 than white Hoosiers due to higher employment in essential services; higher rates of homelessness and housing instability; lower rates of health insurance and primary care providers; higher rates of asthma, obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure; and more.

Dr. Cullen Merritt published a study on how public administration can lead in crafting equitable responses to COVID-19 to uplift African Americans, who are disproportionately affected by the pandemic. The research examined the systemic oppression that has led to those outcomes and offers up preliminary strategies for public administration professionals.

Dr. Doug Noonan is studying the impact COVID-19 is having on crowdfunding for the arts community. This ongoing work finds that on-site projects—such as dance and theater—are the hardest hit. Noonan’s research also shows a change in who is receiving the most money through online platforms like Kickstarter. Even though more money is flowing in, smaller projects are now being crowded out of online crowdfunding as larger and more established efforts lay claim to more of the financial support on online platforms amid the pandemic.

Dr. Laurie Paarlberg and Dr. Marlene Walk are researching the role community philanthropic organizations that serve specific geographic communities play in local responses to the pandemic, such as establishing COVID-19 relief funds to help organizations address COVID-related needs. The first phase of the project investigates the community and organizational factors that lead to the establishment of a COVID-19 fund. This paper will appear in an upcoming edition of Nonprofit Voluntary Sector Quarterly.

Dr. Laurie Paarlberg, Dr. Marlene Walk, and Dr. Cullen Merritt are studying diversity, equity, and inclusion in community philanthropic organizations that are responding locally to COVID-19. The team is analyzing organizations’ staff and board diversity, the use of inclusive practices, and equity in grant-making in light of earlier findings that COVID-19 relief funds are more likely to be launched in white, higher income communities, rather than addressing disparities of funneling COVID-19 relief funding into communities of color.

Dr. Marlene Walk is also working on research to understand the impact of COVID-19 on nonprofit workers and their commitment to their work, given how the pandemic has changed the workplace and people’s lives. This study launched in October 2020 and will track the long-term impact of an altered work environment by linking workplace changes following COVID-19 and the subsequent organizational changes to employees’ commitment to the nonprofit sector.

Nearly a dozen faculty members at O’Neill IUPUI pooled their research and resources to develop a summer course that provided a wide-ranging perspective on the effects of COVID-19 from the viewpoint of their respective research fields.
ways to give
The O’Neill Future Fund

Since fall 2018, more than 150 alumni have turned $24,000 into more than $200,000. Will you be a part of turning $50,000 into $1 million?

The O’Neill Alumni Association Board of Directors has challenged graduates to raise $50,000 leading up to our 50th anniversary in 2022. We will set these compounding funds aside until our 100th anniversary in 2072, when the dean will spend the entirety on high-impact projects.

A donation of $50 compounding over 50 years will be $1,000—even adjusted for inflation, your contribution will be worth four times more in the future! Make a gift in celebration of O’Neill’s 50 years of impact today.

O’Neill Alumni Association Scholarship Fund

From aspiring environmental scientists to advocates for marginalized groups, the O’Neill School is the place to be for the next generation of dreamers, doers, and leaders. Through classes, internships, and research, our students graduate equipped to lead across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

An O’Neill education is life-changing for students, but it requires a significant investment. Whether students plan to shape public policy, protect the planet, or support fellow citizens, you can help make their dreams a reality with a gift to the O’Neill Alumni Association Scholarship Fund.

“I always had an interest in a career that focused on helping others. The O’Neill School is an incredible school that has allowed me to explore my interests and helped point me in the right direction. I am lucky to have been granted this opportunity and could not have succeeded without you.”

— Ana Carmona, BSCJ’21

Visit www.myiu.org/give-now and enter the fund to which you feel most connected!
how to get involved
As the O’Neill School innovates with the introduction of new degree programs, student-centered initiatives, research centers, and more, we ask that alumni be a part of it.

There are many ways for alumni to get involved. Here are our top suggestions:

**Mentor Collective**

Today’s students crave advice from people who have been in their shoes. The O’Neill Mentor Collective is an online mentorship community that matches trained upperclassmen and alumni with undergraduate and graduate students on the Bloomington and Indianapolis campuses, based on common interests, background, academics, and professional aspirations. The O’Neill School is excited to provide targeted mentorship for first-generation students and students of color.

As a mentor, you may converse with your mentee on their major selection, balancing school with other obligations, setting yourself up for academic and career success, and more. For more information and to sign up, visit the O’Neill School websites for either Bloomington or Indianapolis, and search for mentor collective.

**Speakers Bureau**

Alumni have practical expertise that students want. The O’Neill Alumni Speakers Bureau is available to full-time and adjunct faculty on both campuses who would like to bring in outside voices to their classrooms. Faculty have access to the Speakers Bureau year-round—if you are selected, we will reach out to see if you are able to appear in person or remotely. Email oneillar@iu.edu to participate.
class notes
**1970s**

Jim White, AS’75, BS’79, was called in March 2020 by the city of Indianapolis to serve as an advisor for Indianapolis Emergency Management in response to COVID-19. He was asked to provide experiential insight along with crisis operations plan development and implementation. White did not hesitate to step out of retirement and into action. “My community was facing an unimaginable crisis. I live in Indianapolis and felt it was the right thing to do to answer their request for assistance.” White has designed tabletop exercises for Indianapolis Public Safety and community partners, including Lucas Oil Stadium. White has provided planning and operational guidance to the Indianapolis Public Safety logistics team, who are responsible for the alternative care and testing sites. White says, “In Indiana and Indianapolis, we never exceeded emergency room or intensive care unit capacity. Nor did we ever come close to exceeding ventilator availability. I believe part of this is attributed to the fact, at least in Indianapolis, there is an excellent working relationship between public safety and the medical community.”

**1980s**

“I graduated from IU in 1983 with a BS in criminal justice in the SPEA program,” writes Michael T. Conway, BS’83, adding, “I served as a captain in the U.S. Marine Corps infantry on active and reserve duty until 1995 and volunteered for combat in Operation Desert Storm.” Conway continues, “I obtained a juris doctor degree and became a lawyer in 1991 and am a member of the bar of Ohio, the U.S. Supreme Court, three U.S. federal Circuit Courts of Appeal (4th, 5th, and 6th Circuits) and four U.S. District Courts, and practice law in Ohio and Texas. I am a member of the exclusive Million Dollar Advocate’s Forum and have been rated as lead counsel by Thompson Reuters. I was recently elected to the Democrat Party Central Committee in Medina County, Ohio (in the greater Cleveland area) and won the 2020 Democrat primary for County Commissioner in Medina County, Ohio. I am married and have a daughter in college.”
Kathy Fluke, BSC’87, has been promoted to optimization services and IT operations director. Fluke is based in the Crowe Indianapolis office and has been with the firm for more than 15 years.

In January 2020, Gregory J. Rutzen, BS’84, JD’87, of Madison, Wisconsin, was promoted to vice chancellor for university advancement and president of the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater Foundation.

As the director of global security at Eli Lilly, Mike Russo, BS’84, has had to adapt throughout the pandemic, responding to changing circumstances and overcome new challenges. “In my role, personal interaction is important. Talking to people, being present, showing interest is integral. This isn’t something we are able to do now. We have had to learn to adjust our security processes.” Shifting to performing all security reviews virtually is only one of the ways that Russo and his team are ensuring safe and secure environments for Lilly employees and the COVID-19 research and testing they conduct. Lilly, headquartered in Indianapolis, responded to the pandemic early on by providing drive through testing for active health care employees and frontline workers at their Indianapolis headquarters. Because of the business continuity planning that Russo and his team have implemented, Lilly was able to keep facilities up and running around the world to serve the needs of so many.

Beverly (Lamb) Swann, BS’85, recently completed a doctor of philosophy degree in mind-body medicine with a specialization in integrative mental health from Saybrook University in Pasadena, California. Swann, a resident of Concord, California, practices psychotherapy, specializing in post-traumatic stress injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, mild traumatic brain injury, and body/weight issues. According to her website, Swann’s “holistic psychotherapy services are based on principles of wholeness, positive psychology, and evidence-based practices." For more information, visit beverlyswann.com.

“Thirty years after leaving IU, I was back in Bloomington in early May 2019,” writes Eric R. Lillyblad, MPA/MS’89, of Forest Lake, Minnesota “[I returned] to celebrate the naming of Srikant K. Sastry, MPA’88, a friend and
classmate, as a 2019 SPEA Distinguished Alumni Award recipient. Many of us, seven in fact—Michael J. Beringer, MPA/MS’89; Richard J. Brenner, MPA’89; Paul E. Folkers, MPA’89; Michael J. Hudelson, BS’86, MPA’88; the distinguished Mr. Sastry, and myself, as well as Brian D. Moore, BS’88, a graduate of the Kelley School of Business—matriculated together and are still closely connected. It was good to share time with those of us able to get back to IU to recognize our friend’s accomplishments in person. It was also good to be back in Bloomington to see the changes to SPEA with the building expansion—and the architecture now tying in better to other campus buildings—thanks to the generosity of alumnus Paul H. O’Neill, MPA’66, LHD’14, and the change in name of SPEA to the O’Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. On a personal note, last year I reached the 25-year mark in my employment as Graco’s environmental specialist, but I still lag behind Mike Beringer, MPA/MS’89, chief toxicologist for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region VII, and his 30 years of work for the EPA.”

1990s

Bill Abston, ASCJ’79 and BSCJ’96, of Indianapolis, was awarded the IUPUI Chancellor’s Medallion for his decades of service as the deputy chief of police. His 43-year-long career in law enforcement with IU began as a student cadet in 1977.

Darren Collier, BA’90 represents many recognizable public and private companies in their interactions with state government. Specializing in lobbying the Illinois General Assembly, he helps his clients navigate a wide variety of public policy issues. He has quickly pivoted to help clients navigate state and city regulations during the pandemic. Darren is also a lawyer and combines his legal acumen with decades of experience in Illinois state government and in the private sector, previously working for the Illinois Housing Authority, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and three Am Law 200 law firms. Darren still finds time to give back to his Indiana University fraternity that gave so much to him as a advisor to the undergraduate chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi.
In June, Kappa Delta Pi appointed Tonja Eagan, MPA’94, CFRE, of Indianapolis, as the chief executive officer. Eagan previously served as the chief executive officer at LifeSmart Youth.

Allen Guon, BS’92, JD/MSES’97 joined Cozen O’Connor in October of 2020. Guon advises debtors, creditors, purchasers, lenders, and other parties in interest in Chapter 11 reorganizations, Chapter 7 liquidations, and out-of-court settlements. He focuses his practice on the representation of court-appointed fiduciaries and federal and state court receivers, as well as assignees in out-of-court liquidations. Guon is the former chair of the Chicago Bar Association’s Bankruptcy and Reorganization Committee and a former member of the Bankruptcy Court Liaison Committee for the Northern District of Illinois. He is currently the treasurer of the Executive Committee of the Board Directors of Credit Abuse Resistance Education (CARE), a national nonprofit community service organization dedicated to inspiring smart financial decision-making by students and young adults.

Melina M. Kennedy, BA’91, JD/MS’95, of Indianapolis, was named vice president of product compliance and regulatory affairs at Cummins Inc., in Columbus, Indiana. Kennedy manages engine emission certification, product compliance, and regulation of Cummins products. She previously led various Cummins business markets, most recently in general manager and executive director roles for the pickup truck business. A former Indianapolis mayoral candidate, Kennedy also serves on the Indianapolis Capital Improvement Board.

An ecologist with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources in Indianapolis, Ronald P. Hellmich, JD/MPA’93, has been promoted to director of nature preserves. Hellmich has worked for the DNR Division of Nature Preserves for more than 32 years. He previously served as data manager and then coordinator of the Indiana Natural Heritage Data Center. Hellmich lives in Indianapolis.

Rachel (Tumidolsky) Hardwick, BS’94, JD’98, became president of the Women’s Bar Association of the District of Columbia Foundation in June. She
is senior counsel and compliance officer at America's Health Insurance Plans in Washington, D.C. Hardwick and her husband, Matthew J. Hardwick, BS'94, are very excited that their daughter Olivia began her studies at IU Bloomington in the fall of 2020.

**James Ison**, AS'99, was appointed chief of police by the City of Greenwood, Indiana. Ison served with the Greenwood Police Department for two decades. He is now leading a department of 79 patrol officers, assistant chiefs, sergeants, and lieutenants.

**Kristen Moreland**, BS'96, MPA'99, has been promoted as the senior vice president and chief strategy officer at Ivy Tech Community College. Moreland has served Ivy Tech Community College over the past 11 years in many roles, including the associate vice president for process improvement and college-wide initiatives.

**Robin Shackleford**, BS'93, MPA'99, was elected president of Pathway Resource Center Inc. board of directors. Shackleford previously served as the vice president for several years.

### 2000s

**Amandula Anderson**, BS'02, was appointed to the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission, where she serves as director of real estate solutions for the Illinois Facilities Fund.

**Natalie Clayton**, BS'09, co-launched one of the only all woman-owned brokerages in Indiana, Maywright Property Co., based in Indianapolis.

**Ryan B. Cunningham**, MA/MPA'04, of San Diego, ran as an independent candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives, representing California's 52nd Congressional District, where he was born and raised. He lost in the primary election on March 3, 2020. Cunningham has served as a financial adviser and underwriter to municipalities throughout Texas and California, including many economically disadvantaged communities.
Ryan Exline, BS'05, and Exline Border Racing’s horse Storm the Court, placed sixth in the 2020 Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs.

Jodi Dickey, MP’02, has been appointed the director of development services for the town of Brownsburg. Dickey was previously serving as the planning and building director for Avon.

Dr. Angie Lewis, Cert’05, was named the new technical director for Naval Surface Warfare Center, Crane Division, making her the first female to hold the position. Lewis has been with Crane for 13 years, most recently serving as the business director and corporate operations department manager.

Nichole Like, MPA'04, was appointed to the Knox County Development Corporation board of directors. Like is currently the president and chief executive officer of The Pantheon, a new coworking space and business incubator.

James Melonas, MPA'05, was named as the new forest supervisor for the National Forests in North Carolina. He previously served as deputy forest supervisor in North Carolina until 2017, when he departed for a position as forest supervisor for the Santa Fe National Forest. James has worked for the U.S. Forest Service since graduating in 2005, when he got his start as a presidential management fellow.

In June, Megan Miller, MPA'06, of Indianapolis, was named the deputy director for contact tracing of the IU COVID-19 Medical Response Team. Miller oversees contact tracing operations on all IU campuses, working with a team of 30 active contact tracers and five staff members from IU’s general contact line. To create a more efficient system and shorten the duration of each phone interview with positive individuals, IU has launched a new online form for the interviewees to self-report their personal. “We are doing things as quickly as we can so that we can create a safe environment for all our students, faculty and staff,” Miller said.

David A. Northern, Sr., Grad. Cert.’02, MPA'03 was selected as president and CEO of the Housing Authority of the Alabama-Birmingham District.
Melanie Priest, MPA’00, was promoted to director of grant services at Indianapolis-based Hedges & Associates, where she has served the past six years as senior consultant.

Mary Smith, BS’04, successfully ran for re-election Brown County (Indiana) recorder. Smith has worked at the Brown County treasurer’s office since 2002.

Samantha C. Weiss-Hills, BA/Cert’09, MA’10, of Brooklyn, New York, is home and design editor at HearstMade, the content studio at Hearst Magazines. She works with titles like House Beautiful, Good Housekeeping, Elle Decor, Popular Mechanics, and more. She formerly worked as a media and public relations associate for the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City, and has also worked as an assistant development officer for events at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

2010s

The Arts Council of Indianapolis has announced the promotion of Rishard D. Allen, BS’17, to manager of grant services and education partnerships. Allen joined the Arts Council in 2018 as grant services and education partnerships coordinator. His expanded responsibilities include leading the day-to-day administration of the Annual Grants Program for the city of Indianapolis, three artist fellowship programs, and the Any Given Child Indy partnership with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and Indianapolis Public Schools. Allen is a native of Indianapolis, and following his graduation from IU in 2017, he held positions at The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis and Arts for Learning. He is a current participant in IndyHub’s 1828 program and serves on the IndyHub Foundation Board of Directors.

Paul Babcock, MPA’10, was appointed the interim president and chief executive officer of the Health & Hospital Corporation of Marion County’s Board of Trustees. Before joining Health & Hospital Corp., Babcock served as the director of the Office of Public Health and Safety for Indianapolis.
Josh Bain, BS’16, JD’15, was elected as the representative for District 20 on the Indianapolis City-County Council. Bain works as a legislative assistant for the Republican caucus of the state’s House of Representatives.

Megan Baker, MPA’12, was promoted to her new role as president of the Fayette County Development Authority in Fayette County, Georgia, where she is responsible for FCDA operations, implementing the annual program of work, and outreach to state and community partners.

Jonathan W. Barnes, BS’12, has accepted a position with BMW Motorrad Japan, a division of BMW’s motorcycle brand. He writes, “[I] just want to thank IU Bloomington for my education and the experience that I needed to be successful in this world.”

Justin Brady, MPA’10, was selected as the new CEO for IndyFringe, the Mass Ave. theater festival. Brady previously served as the annual fund and events manager for New 42nd Street.

The Can Manufacturers Institute has announced the appointment of Scott R. Breen, Cert/JD/MPA’15 to lead the association’s sustainability and recycling efforts. Breen, who joined CMI from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, will represent the can manufacturing industry’s sustainability policy, infrastructure, and communications efforts as its vice president of sustainability.

Indianapolis Business Journal named Elyssa Campodonico-Barr, MPA/ JD’15, as one of their 2020 Women of Influence. The program recognizes those who have risen to the highest levels of business, the arts, and community and public service in central Indiana. Elyssa previously served as president and chief executive officer of Girls Inc. of Greater Indianapolis and was recently named program director at Lilly Endowment Inc.

Neal Capapas, MPA’16, recently began a new role as a fiscal and policy analyst with the city of Seattle. Previously, he worked as a grants analyst overseeing Coronavirus Relief Fund grant-making for King County, Washington. “Helping grantees manage federal requirements, on top of
King County requirements, to provide immediate economic relief helped me fully understand the scale of both the damage and need the pandemic has created on local businesses.” In Neal’s new role, he manages two departments: Seattle Information Technology and Community Safety and Communications Center. His primary responsibility is to help departments develop their operating and capital budgets, which requires working with department budget and finance managers, understanding their needs, and evaluating their proposals to meet city interests.

Brandon Dennison, MPA/Grad Cert.’11, has been chosen as an entrepreneur in residence by the Marshall University Center for Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation, part of the Lewis College of Business. Brandon is the founder and chief executive officer of Coalfield Development, an Appalachian-based nonprofit focused on developing the potential of Appalachia through the triple bottom line: people, planet, and profit. Coalfield Development has assisted the community of southern West Virginia by creating more than 250 jobs, by training over 1,200 people facing barriers to employment and by leveraging more than $20 million in new investment to the area in its 10 years since founding. As an entrepreneur in residence, Brandon will provide expertise in social entrepreneurship and technology, and will support the development of student-founded entrepreneurial ventures and pathways for high school career and technical students.

In November, the Fort Wayne law firm Barrett McNagny announced that Sadie L. Dillon-Baatz, BS’16, JD’19, has joined the firm as an associate attorney. She concentrates her practice in domestic and family law. An Ossian (Indiana) native, Dillon-Baatz received her JD degree from the IU Maurer School of Law in Bloomington where she was the executive production editor of the Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies.

In January 2020, Willem “Will” Drews, MS’16, was presented with the 2019 Citizen of the Year award by the Vincennes (Indiana) Civitan Club for his efforts to combat the growing threat of invasive plant species. An adjunct instructor of horticulture at Vincennes University, Drews works as a natural
resource specialist for the Knox County (Indiana) Soil and Water Conservation District. In this position, he assists landowners with forestry and invasive species management. Drews is also an active volunteer in his community, planting hundreds of native trees in local areas and organizing a Vincennes Arbor Day Celebration for elementary school students.

Morgan Farnworth, BS’16, MPA/Grad Cert.’18, is a Ph.D. student at the University of Kansas and has been selected as a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Research Scholar. This leadership program supports scholars from diverse disciplines and backgrounds to apply research to build healthier and more equitable communities.

Sara Hindi, BS’16, was named to the board of the ACLU of Indiana. Hindi currently serves as the Exodus Refugee’s community engagement coordinator, where she oversees the recruiting, training, and coordinating all volunteers.

Faren Jones, MPA’14, was named the director of operations for ProAct Indy. Jones most recently served as development director at Art with a Heart in Indianapolis.

Foster Success announced the appointment of Danial Kibble, Cert’09, MPA’12, of Indianapolis, to its board of directors. Kibble currently serves as the executive director of alumni relations, engagement, and parent giving at Butler University.

The law firm Taft Stettinius & Hollister has added Erica M. Kneal, BS’14, JD’17 to its growing Indianapolis office. Joining Taft’s labor and employment practice group, Kneal advises employers on compliance issues, including job descriptions and applications, employment contracts, noncompetition agreements, release and separation agreements, and personnel issue.

Chelsea Marburger, BS’13, has been named the first program manager for university initiatives for Indianapolis-based Elevate Ventures. Marburger is tasked with expanding the Elevate Nexus, a program that supports entrepreneurs and higher education institutions throughout the state.
Clare L. McGuire, MPA'12, volunteers her time at Ladder Up, a Chicago nonprofit that helps low-income residents with free financial education and assistance. Through her work at Ladder Up’s Tax Assistance program, she helps hardworking Chicagoans secure the critical tax refunds they need and deserve. For more information, visit goladderup.volunteerhub.com. McGuire, a budget manager with Chicago Public Schools, is a runner, an avid traveler, taco eater, and fan of bad movies. She also serves on Ladder Up's Associates Board.

Timothy Parthun, MPA'19, has been added to Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch’s Business Office as a program manager. Parthun most recently worked at the Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority on Indiana’s Blight Elimination Program.

In November, Fady Qaddoura, MPA’11, became the first Muslim elected to the Indiana Statehouse and won the only Democrat seat in the election. Qaddoura said his priorities will focus most on education, health care and the COVID-19 economic recovery. Qaddoura will be serving Indiana Senate District 30.

Jackie Randazzo, BSPA'11, MPA'12, works as a public relations officer with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC). Randazzo works to promote the agency’s two clean power programs, Hetch Hetchy Power and CleanPowerSF. These programs serve over 70% of the electricity demand in San Francisco. During the pandemic, Randazzo led a campaign targeted to SFPUC’s low-income and Limited English Proficient (LEP) customers this past month, encouraging them to sign up for electricity discounts. “We want to communicate to customers that we recognize it is a challenging time and that we are here to help.”

Natalia Rodriguez-Hilt, MPA’19, works as the assistant program officer, economic mobility at Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) in Indianapolis. “When COVID-19 hit ... my work pivoted to focus on the small businesses that were being impacted by the shelter-in-place order and limitations of COVID-19. Part of this shift involved connecting small
businesses to Kiva microloans, creating and launching a small business recovery grant, and reaching out to minority-owned businesses in our neighborhoods to inform them of the existing resources in the community. COVID-19 highlighted to a greater degree the inequity in our community. Traditional ways of communication needed to adapt to better reach residents and business owners who aren’t connected to city-wide organizations/networks or who don’t have access to computers and internet. In response, we intentionally partnered with grassroots organizations and neighborhoods, made information/resources more accessible (available in other languages, paper/digital format, etc.) and as easy to understand (and apply for) as possible."

Erin Rowe, BS‘11, serves as the response and recovery division director for Indiana Homeland Security. Rowe and her team partnered with the Indiana State Department of Health in efforts to follow the comprehensive emergency plan and begin the response and rapid deployment of the measures required to minimize loss of life, property, and economy. “I am so proud of not only my team but the agency and the other agencies which have and continue to support the response to the pandemic. IDHS has supported requests from public safety and to date have distributed over 3.5 million pieces of PPE.” When asked how her team has been assisting local emergency response during this time, Rowe responded, “The State EOC has received 1,000 mission requests for support during the response to the pandemic. The state continues to procure critical PPE in advance of a second wave.” Rowe continues to do amazing work with the FEMA Public Assistance Program. This program reimburses 75% of the actual costs for eligible expenses incurred by state, local, and tribal entities, government organizations as well as public and private nonprofit schools. IDHS is hard at work guiding hundreds of entities through the process. Due to the nature of this disaster, guidance has changed throughout the response on eligible expenses. Rowe and her team have made publicly available online resources that can answer many initial questions about the process.
**Sarah Sankovitch**, BA’15, was recently promoted to director of membership and annual giving at the Indiana Historical Society in Indianapolis. A private, nonprofit membership organization, IHS maintains the nation’s premier research library and archives on the history of Indiana and the Old Northwest and presents unique exhibits. IHS also provides support and assistance to local museums and historical groups, publishes books and periodicals, and provides youth, adult, and family programming. IHS is a Smithsonian Affiliate and a member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience.

**Joel Thacker**’s, MS’19, first day as the Indiana State Fire Marshall was March 23, 2020, the day Gov. Eric Holcomb enacted the stay-at-home order for all Hoosiers. Thacker collaborated with others in the development of an online resource hub that provides educational resources and support for both private businesses and the public. The resource hub also provides high-quality training and educational material in emergency management, emergency medical, fire services, and hazardous materials. The Indiana Division of Fire and Building Safety has delivered a new PPE guidebook for the state, as well as code enforcement guidance and support during Indiana’s phased reopening in response to the pandemic. Working with local health departments to educate citizens about the Back On Track Indiana guidelines and to assist with the administration of vaccinations are just a few of the ways Thacker is building new relationships within the community.

**Yecenia Tostado**, MPA’16, was appointed on the board for Leadership Indianapolis. Tostado currently serves as the executive director at Project Azul, where she is responsible for providing strategic and operational leadership of the organization, identifying pipeline and employer partnerships, and identifying opportunities for growth.

In May 2019, **Keeley R. Stingel**, MPA’14, of Salem, Indiana, executive director of the Homeless Coalition of Southern Indiana, was named by the Mitch Daniels Leadership Foundation as one its 2019-20 Fellows class of 20 outstanding Hoosiers. The Fellows represent 13 United States colleges and universities and a wide variety of professions, residing in Indianapolis,
Evansville, Salem, and West Lafayette. The fellows will participate in a year-long program designed to help educate, mentor, and encourage them to drive change. The curriculum and events will center around core topics of the economy, education, health and culture.

**Jordan Wiseman**, BSCJ’12, was inducted to the Kokomo Police Department. Officer Wiseman has spent the last five years as a sheriff’s deputy with the Tipton County Sheriff’s Office and the last three years working part-time on the IU Kokomo campus as a police officer.

**Marah (Harbison) Yankey**, BAJ/Cert’16, is a senior news and media specialist for Indiana University, where she coordinates media relations and communications strategies for the Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies, Maurer School of Law, The Media School, the Vice President for International Affairs, and students and campus life at the university level. She married her high school (and college) sweetheart, Harper Yankey, BS’16, in March 2019.

**André Zhang Sonera**, BS’16, was promoted to project manager for economic and community development for the city of Indianapolis, where he previously served as the special assistant to the mayor. Zhang Sonera was named one of the 50 Faces of IUPUI during the 50th Anniversary of IUPUI.

**2020s**

**Devon Davis**, MPA’20, serves as the public policy specialist with Bose Public Affairs Group, where he is tasked with conducting in-depth reviews of state legislation and works with firm clients to develop comprehensive public policy strategies.

**Weston Nicholson**, MPA’20, has joined Church Church Hittle + Antrim as an associate attorney in litigation. Nicholson first joined CCHA when he participated in the firm’s summer clerkship program in 2019.

If you have an update you would like to appear in Class Notes, email us at oneillar@iu.edu.
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