DeVos Honored for Public Service

Graduating Senior Caitlin DeVos is among the most committed advocates in the fight against cancer, not only at UW–Madison, but across the country. For her work with the American Cancer Society and other service, Caitlin was honored by the Morgridge Center for Public Service for Excellence in Civic Engagement at the undergraduate level. The award is given annually to one student at UW–Madison who has made community and civic engagement integral to their experience.

Caitlin served two years as president of Colleges Against Cancer at UW, planning and executing Relay for Life. She helped increase participation in Relay for Life on campus by over 20 percent, making UW–Madison’s Relay a Top-15 Collegiate Event in 2013. She also serves on the American Cancer Society (ACS) Midwest Youth Advisory Team and the ACS National Collegiate Advisory Team. Caitlin participated in legislative “ask” meetings with U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin and U.S. Representative Mark Pocan.

Caitlin credits her sociology major with providing her the “skills in critical thinking and a broader perspective that encouraged me to find ways to make a difference in my community.”

After graduation, Caitlin began working as an administrative manager for Project SUCCESS, a nonprofit that does youth development work in the Minneapolis school district. We wish the best of luck to Caitlin!

Caitlin celebrates her achievements with a hug from Bucky.
Message from the Chair

It’s an exciting time to be in the UW–Madison sociology department. We have an international reputation as a top sociology program that hinges on our world-class cutting-edge research and our graduate training program. As always, UW–Madison sociology alumni, students, and faculty fill a substantial fraction of the top sociology journal space and provide leadership to the profession. As you will read about in this newsletter, we continue to do top research across many different types of sociology. Most of you know about the challenges in higher education these days, especially for public institutions. We need to be focused and strategic in everything we do.

Our undergraduate majors have always benefited from their contact with top sociology researchers, and student evaluations of our teaching consistently show very high student satisfaction with their classroom experiences. But we are gearing up to better assist our undergraduates to be more competitive in today’s difficult job market.

We also know that in the current economic climate, even our Ph.D. students need to have more overt career planning built into their programs. One initiative being led by some of our current students and recent alumni involves improving our communication infrastructure among alumni so you can all connect with each other. I hope that you will respond positively when a member of this task force reaches out to you.

We welcome Robert Vargas to our faculty this fall as an assistant professor, as well as 23 new graduate students. Professors Joe Elder, Adam Gamoran, and Gary Sandefur retired. Joe is actually retiring; Adam and Gary have taken new jobs as president of the WT Grant Foundation and provost at Oklahoma State, respectively.

We look forward to hearing from our wonderful alumni!

Best wishes, Pam Oliver

Board of Visitors: Three Years and Counting

This year marks the third anniversary since the sociology department established a board of visitors. The board’s objectives are to provide advice to the department when requested, to work to develop outreach programs for sociology alumni, and identify programs that generate alumni support for the department.

Establishing a board of visitors permits the department and board to integrate our initiatives with those of the College of Letters & Science, which will enable us to speak with a single voice. Some accomplishments of the board since its inception include:

- The Enterprise Fund: donations from board members disbursed at the chair’s discretion to support faculty and student activities such as conference expenses and related needs;
- Milwaukee event: faculty presentation to sociology alumni;
- Internship program: this program, under development, will provide undergraduates with an opportunity to apply sociological skills and knowledge in a work environment.

These initiatives are just the beginning. Board discussions have exhibited enthusiasm and passion tinged with a sense of urgency for the board to identify a visible program that would generate alumni interest and support. This sense of urgency is a response to the flat, if not declining, support by the state and increased competition for federal and private research funds.

The board also recognizes that an effective communications program is necessary before implementing a development program. With our university partners, we are working together to develop an accurate alumni database as the foundation for an effective and varied alumni communications program. This means a program using multiple avenues of communication, a connection that begins before graduation and is maintained throughout a career.

For alumni like me, who graduated a few decades ago, it’s important to develop a meaningful connection. On a personal note, I ask myself why I feel an affinity for the department and the university. I did not attend UW as an undergraduate.

I graduated from the University of Akron and applied to UW–Madison for graduate school. Little did I know I would attend the top department in the country and a world-class university. I was fortunate to receive financial assistance. My experience here with fellow graduate students and faculty accelerated my intellectual curiosity. It is an experience I would not trade. For this I am grateful. It is a priceless gift that keeps on giving.

Though I earned a graduate degree, my career took a different path than a traditional academic one. What I learned is that the knowledge and skills gained in courses that I thought had no practical application had, in fact, plenty of them. As I end my term as chair of the board of visitors, an opportunity I was honored to take, I ask each of you reading this message to reflect on your experiences in the department and the university. Whether you are an undergraduate or graduate student, you may have had an experience similar to mine.

Private support is critical for helping sociology remain a top-ranked program and carrying out its teaching and research mission. Please consider making a gift to the UW Foundation with the department as the designee.

Every gift makes a difference.

Tom Weirath
Departing Chair, Board of Visitors
MA ’67 PhD ’75
GoRed75@aol.com

If you have questions about making a donation to the university and/or department, please see the “Your Gift Matters” section in this newsletter, or contact Ann Dingman at 608-265-9954 or ann.dingman@supportuw.org. Contact Pam Oliver, chair of sociology, with recommendations for alumni engagement.
2014 Faculty News

Marcy Carlson was elected to the Population Association of America Board of Directors, 2014–16. She recently co-edited (with Dan Meyer) a volume of the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science on “Family Complexity, Poverty and Public Policy.”


Felix Elwert won the first Causality in Statistics Education Award from the American Statistical Association, a national teaching award given to a person or team that does the most to enhance the teaching and learning of causal inference in statistics. The prize recognized his development of an innovative two-day course on causal inference that uses graphical causal models to introduce applied researchers in the social and biomedical sciences to advanced topics in causal inference. Elwert has given this course to academic and corporate audiences in the U.S. and abroad.

Ivan Ermakoff delivered the Lewis Coser award lecture (“Exceptional Cases”) at the Annual Conference of the American Sociological Association in New York.

Joan Fujimora received a fellowship from the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford for 2014–15.

Adam Gamoran received the Spencer Foundation Award for Research on Education Policy from the Association for Public Policy and Management and the Distinguished Contributions to Research in Education Award from the American Educational Research Association. He was also elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Chad Goldberg will spend the spring 2015 semester as a senior fellow at the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg (HWK) in Delmenhorst, Germany, thanks to a fellowship from the European Institutes for Advanced Study. An article he wrote opposing academic boycotts was published in Inside Higher Ed, and he presented a public lecture on “The Marginal Man Revisited: Jews and Modernity in the Chicago School of Sociology, 1910s to 1930s” at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Sara Goldrick-Rab received the Early Career Award from the American Educational Research Association and was also named the top female sociologist in the 2014 Edu-Scholar Public Presence Rankings, Education Week. She received several grants, including $2.5 million from the Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation for her project “Wisconsin Harvesting Opportunities for Postsecondary Education (HOPE) Lab”; $5.5 million from the National Science Foundation and Great Lakes Education Guaranty Corporation for “The Price of STEM Success: Explaining the Impact of Need-Based Financial Aid on STEM Student Behavior”; and $700,000 from the William T. Grant Foundation and the Lumina Foundation for “Constructing Affordability: How Institutional and Relational Contexts Affect Retention of Undergraduates from Low-Income Families.”

Monica Grant was awarded a 2014–15 National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship for early career research in education. She also received the department’s 2014 faculty teaching award.

Eric Grodsky was named as a deputy editor of the journal Sociology of Education. He is also the principal investigator of an $879,868 grant from the National Science Foundation for his project “Collaborative Research: Building on STEP to Understand Variation in STEM Entry and Persistence.”

Chaeyoon Lim was promoted to associate professor of sociology with tenure.

Michael Massoglia was selected as a Vilas Associate Professor, a university award which recognizes research of the highest quality and significance.

James Montgomery was appointed associate dean for fiscal initiatives for the College of Letters & Science at UW–Madison. He will help lead the College’s efforts with budget status reports, grapple with the evolving campus budget model, and help build analytic information to aid college-level decision-making.

Jenna Nobles was promoted to associate professor of sociology with tenure.

Alberto Palloni was elected to the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

New Faculty

Robert Vargas joined the department as an assistant professor this fall. He comes directly from his appointment as a Robert Wood Johnson Scholar in the Health Policy Research Program at Harvard University, where he studied how the implementation of the Affordable Care Act has affected health care access and health outcomes among the urban poor. He received his Ph.D. in sociology from Northwestern University (2012) where he was a Fellow of the Multi-Disciplinary Program in Educational Sciences. He is completing a book manuscript based on his dissertation which examines how politics and urban governance undermine community-based efforts to prevent gang violence. In addition to this project, Robert has written on the impact of neighborhood violence on Latino youth, as well as the effects of place-based scholarship programs on neighborhood and school segregation.
Retirements

Gary Sandefur
After 30 years in various roles at UW-Madison, sociologist Gary Sandefur and his wife, Kathy, are going home. Sandefur, who grew up in rural Oklahoma as a member of the Chickasaw Nation, will be returning to Oklahoma this summer as the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater. The school is but a couple of hours from his hometown of Madill, where his mother and many friends still live.

Sandefur has been a sociology professor since his days at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, specializing in social and racial stratification, social policy, and social demography. Arriving at UW-Madison in 1984 as an associate professor, Sandefur went on to serve in various UW leadership positions while also becoming a recognized expert in his field, particularly on the mechanics behind the distribution of funding. This professional research experience informed his decisions as an administrator in times of strict budget choices.

Sandefur’s administrative service ranges from American Indian Studies program director, associate vice chancellor for academic affairs, Department of Sociology chair, and interim provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs. In 2004, Sandefur accepted the position of dean of the College of Letters & Science, a position that he held for nine years. Even during turbulent times, he was able to address and promote his primary areas of targeted improvement: climate, diversity, advancement, research, and undergraduate education. Sandefur is recognized and respected as a leader who is able to evaluate and consider all aspects of an issue or situation, while also encouraging others to voice their opinions.

While Gary will be missed by longtime friends and colleagues here in the sociology department as well as across campus, his experience, mindset, and easygoing nature are sure to be appreciated by his new colleagues at Oklahoma State. We wish Gary all the best as the trip that is his esteemed career circles back to home.

Joe Elder
Having spent 53 years as a member of the Department of Sociology, Joe Elder, arguably one of the most beloved and well-known figures on campus, has retired.

In 1961, Elder became a member of the departments of Sociology and Indian Studies, following a Ph.D. at Harvard University and two years teaching at Oberlin College. During his time at UW-Madison, Joe taught more than 20 different courses that have been listed or cross-listed in 12 different departments. Joe has taught thousands of students, sometimes even multiple generations within families.

Sociology major Rory Menzer (x15) says, “At orientation my first semester, I decided to enroll in a class about India since I had traveled there with my family. My peer advisor urged me to think about an easier class and warned me about the amount of writing a 4-credit course like that one had. I took it anyway, and little did I know that I would be taught by one of the greatest professors our university had to offer. Joe’s class was a lot of work, especially for a freshman who had no idea what to expect, but his class was more than a few credits toward a graduation requirement; it was an experience to challenge myself and learn from a world-class professor who dedicated his life to education and his field of study. Joe’s class was one that I looked forward to every Monday/Wednesday/Friday during that semester. From that

In Memoriam: Taissa S. “Tess” Hauser
Tess Hauser was ‘heart and soul’ of Wisconsin Longitudinal Study
Taissa S. “Tess” Hauser, a key scientific figure in one of the longest and most respected sociological studies ever undertaken, passed away in Washington, D.C., last month. Hauser, 71, who retired in 2009, was a senior scientist in the University of Wisconsin–Madison’s Wisconsin Longitudinal Study.

The famed study has followed more than 10,000 graduates from the state’s high school class of 1957, profiling their life course, including education, career, family, aging, and retirement.

Her husband, Robert Hauser, an emeritus UW-Madison sociology professor, was the principal investigator of the study for many years, where he worked side-by-side with his wife.

“Tess was, for 40 years, the heart and soul of the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study,” says Robert Hauser, now executive director of the Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education at the National Research Council.

The Hausers were married for almost 50 years and have two sons.

“She was also my professional and scientific research collaborator, best friend, chief critic, and steady and faithful guide in all things both personal and professional,” Robert adds.
first ‘magic moment’ for me to my last day in his class, I knew that Joe truly is one of a kind!’

Elder’s warm and knowledgeable teaching style made him a student favorite, leading to his recognition with a University Distinguished Teaching Award in 1976 and departmental teaching awards in 1979 and 2003. In addition to academic publications, Joe was involved in the production of 15 educational films about South Asia. At the end of his final class this spring, Joe was surprised by a procession of colleagues and students who filed silently into his lecture hall and presented him with dozens of roses as a tribute to the countless lives he has touched.

Outside of the classroom, Joe has been actively involved in the College Year in India program, which has sent more than one thousand students to India to spend a year doing field research and learning Indian languages and culture. He was also instrumental in establishing both the Center for South Asia and the certificate program in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual Studies. In addition to all this, he was active in the peace movement during the Vietnam War, and has worked for the Quakers mediating in several conflict zones around the world.

While Joe officially is retiring, we expect to see him around campus and in the Social Sciences building. Joe has made an indelible impression on everyone who has been fortunate to work with and learn from him. The department—and the UW—won’t be the same without his immersion in countless areas of campus.

Adam Gamoran

Adam Gamoran spent his entire academic career at UW–Madison, joining the department in 1984 directly from his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago. In a research career spanning three decades, Adam conducted a wide range of studies focusing on inequality in education and school reform. He is the lead author of Transforming Teaching in Math and Science: How Schools and Districts Can Support Change (Teachers College Press, 2003) and editor of Standards-Based Reform and the Poverty Gap: Lessons for No Child Left Behind (Brookings Institution Press, 2007). He also co-edited Methodological Advances in Cross-National Surveys of Educational Achievement (National Academy Press, 2002) and Stratification in Higher Education: A Comparative Study (Stanford University Press, 2007), in addition to authoring over 90 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters.

At UW–Madison, Adam served as the chair of the sociology department from 2001-2004 and then as director of the Wisconsin Center for Education Research from 2001-2004 and then as director of the Wisconsin Center for Education Research from 2001-2004 and then as director of the Wisconsin Center for Education Research from 2001-2004 and then as director of the Wisconsin Center for Education Research from 2001-2004 and then as director of the Wisconsin Center for Education Research from 2001-2004. Adam is regarded as an extremely effective administrator. As Undergrad Advisor Ellen Jacobson recalls, “Adam’s nearly photographic memory was tremendously helpful. Further, his involvement in the undergraduate program was beneficial not only to me as the advisor, but also to the program itself. I really appreciated the moral dimension to his chairmanship, which is a defining part of his overall character.”

Outside the university, Adam served on the National Research Council’s Board on Science Education, chaired the Independent Advisory Board of the National Assessment of Career and Technical Education for the U.S. Department of Education, and was twice appointed by President Obama to serve on the National Board for Education Sciences. He joined the William T. Grant Foundation as president in September 2013 and will continue in this role following his retirement from the University of Wisconsin.

The department wishes the very best to Adam as he formally ends his career with UW–Madison.

Kay Vanderbilt

“Taxes,” says Kay Vanderbilt. “I love doing taxes, and I’m taking courses to update my skills.”

While this post-retirement plan probably puts Kay in a minority of those with an encore career in place, Kay definitely is passionate about her future and about taxes. Having spent many years as a tax preparer in addition to her full-time career, Kay knows where her interests lie.

A key figure on our administrative team for the past decade as our Payroll and Benefits Specialist, Kay knowledgeably guided countless employees through the complex payroll and benefits system with efficiency and timeliness. Prior to joining our department, she spent four years in UW–Madison’s School of Education dean’s office working in payroll and benefits. Before she became a member of our campus community, Kay worked in various private industries as well as working in income tax preparation. She brought a much-valued and rich breadth of experience to her years on campus.

What will Kay miss most about sociology? “The people,” she says without hesitation. “In every job I’ve had, it’s always the people I work with who make it worthwhile.”

The people here agree: we miss Kay, and we are grateful that she chose to spend the past decade contributing her considerable talents to help our department run smoothly. We wish Kay all the best in retirement, and we are glad that she will be able to indulge her passion for taxes!
Gender Gap in Education and the Risk of Divorce

A new article in the American Sociological Review by UW–Madison Associate Professor Christine Schwartz and former sociology graduate student Hongyun Han provides important insights into the impact of women’s growing educational advantage over men on marital dissolution. Beginning in the mid-1980s, women’s college completion rates began to exceed men’s in the United States. Women’s education continues to rise faster than men’s, and women’s growing advantage shows no signs of slowing. The reversal of the gender gap in education is also reflected in marriage patterns. Rather than holding out for men with more education than themselves, women are increasingly likely to marry men with less education than themselves, so much so that it is now more common for wives to have more education than their husbands than the reverse pattern. Past research shows, however, that couples in which wives have the educational advantage are more likely to divorce. Should we be concerned that the reversal of the gender gap in education is putting increasing numbers of couples at heightened risk of divorce? According to Schwartz and Han’s research, such concern is not consistent with the evidence. While it was once the case that marriages in which wives have the educational advantage were more likely than other couples to divorce, this is no longer true. Couples marrying in the early 1990s were among the first for whom wives’ educational advantage was no longer associated with an increased risk of divorce. Thus, wives with more education than their husbands are now no more likely to divorce than wives with less education than their husbands. In addition, Schwartz and Han report that the couple type that now has the lowest risk of divorce are those who share equal broad levels of education.

The Hidden Cost of the War on Drugs

Alice Goffman, one of our assistant professors, is a brave woman. Rather than spend her college and graduate school years on campus with fellow students, she lived in a struggling Black neighborhood in Philadelphia, where she befriended a group of young men getting arrested, jailed, and living with low-level warrants. This deeply immersive fieldwork has resulted in a ground-breaking work in urban ethnography, On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City.

While Michelle Alexander’s 2012 work analyzed the consequences of rising imprisonment rates and race in the United States from a powerful yet impersonal perspective, Goffman’s work takes an intensely personal view from the ground, told through the stories of young men coming of age, dipping and dodging the authorities. We see the police bang down doors during late night raids and turn girlfriends and mothers into informants. We meet a passport-photo stand owner selling clean urine to men trying to pass their parole requirements and a hospital janitor who fixes broken bones on the kitchen table for young men too scared to go to the ER.

Asked what she missed about Philadelphia and the relationships in the community that she left behind, Alice said, “Leaving was wrenchingly painful. We’ve known each other since we were teenagers, we grew up together. I miss being with people who go back such a long time, who know each other, and me, so well. And of course I miss the food in Philly. Cheesesteaks and cannoli and the Jamaican restaurant down the street.”

The book was reviewed in the New York Times on April 29, 2014 (www.nytimes.com/2014/04/30/books/alice-goffman-researches-poor-black-men-in-on-the-run.html). In this review and others, her work is regarded as ground-breaking beyond academic circles.
Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee Report

Last year the MRRC spearheaded several activities to foster community and support students of color. We held monthly Solidarity dinners, hosted talks by visiting scholars, coordinated a mentor program, provided tutors, awarded research and travel grants, coordinated an intercultural dialogues evening, and organized a graduation luncheon for students completing the Ph.D.

The committee also worked on recruiting underrepresented students of color. MRRC representatives participated in UW’s Summer Graduate Fair as well as the National McNair Research Conference and Graduate Fair. At both events, we provided information to undergrads about the program, campus climate, and resources for underrepresented students. For prospective students admitted to the program, MRRC funded travel to Madison for Visit Day and provided outreach, housing, and a brunch.

Because UW–Madison is committed to increasing faculty as well as student diversity, the MRRC has expanded efforts to assist the department in recruiting faculty of color. These efforts include developing a database of potential applicants, identifying students of color on the market, and inviting advanced students to visit and discuss their work. The committee’s proposal to enhance recruitment of faculty of color was unanimously endorsed by the department.

All our projects were facilitated by financial assistance from a generous friend of the MRRC. Last year this anonymous donor made a substantial gift, enabling us to fund the activities described above. We’re grateful to have received another extraordinary gift this year and plan to use the funds to continue our work on behalf of underrepresented students, create a new website (www.ssc.wisc.edu/soc/grad/mrrc/), and travel to conferences where we can engage students of color.

We’re heartened by the kindness of the donor, whose gift affirms our mission—to recruit and retain historically disadvantaged and underrepresented students and faculty of color, to monitor and improve the department’s racial climate, and to locate resources for underrepresented students.
Undergraduate Awards

Reschke Scholarship Winners

Luvella K. and Alfred Reschke Social Sciences Fund

The Reschke Scholarship honors the late Alfred Reschke, a former student and assistant in the sociology department at UW–Madison. It was endowed by a generous bequest from his wife, Luvella K. Reschke. The scholarship supports outstanding undergraduate students in the Department of Sociology. Up to four scholarships of $2,000 each are awarded annually to students majoring in sociology who have one or two semesters of coursework remaining before graduation. To be considered for a Reschke Scholarship, students must demonstrate outstanding academic performance and financial need. According to the terms of the bequest, preference is given to students whose future plans include teaching or working in the social sciences, social services or the ministry.

2013–14 Reschke Scholarship Awardees

Benjamin Gluck is a sociology major with a passion for meeting new people and exploring new cultures. He works for the University within Campus and Visitor Relations and is an active member of his fraternity, Zeta Beta Tau. Next semester, Benjamin will study sociology and economics at Hong Kong University. He will graduate abroad with hopes to then travel the world, working as a journalist.

Callahan Miller is a double major in sociology and legal studies and is also pursuing certificates in criminal justice and Celtic studies. She is interning at the Wisconsin State Public Defenders Office in the jail intake department and has previously interned at the Madison-area Urban Ministry in the Circles of Support program as well as the Freedom From Religion Foundation in their legal department, where she won a Catherine Fahringer Memorial Student Activist Award for her work. After graduation, she plans to attend law school and then graduate school in order to link legal scholarship and sociology into fruitful research regarding policy, crime, and poverty.

Joe Orner is a sociology major who is also pursuing certificates in global cultures and religious studies. His areas of interest include social demography and the study of different religious populations. He serves the Madison community as a volunteer for the Madison Senior Center and as a peer advisor through the Cross-College Advising Services. For the past three summers, Joe has been on the programming staff at Spirit in the Pines church camp in northern Minnesota, where he developed a passion for service and ministry. He plans to attend seminary with the goal of becoming a pastor after graduating in May 2015.

Bianca Schroeder is majoring in sociology and communication sciences and disorders. After she graduates next spring, she plans to go to graduate school to become a speech language pathologist. She’s interested in the social aspects of language and how background and socioeconomic status can affect language development. She currently works in Jan Edward’s Learning to Talk research lab, and she will be working on a senior thesis next year comparing socio-phonetic and lexical-phonetic language development. She hopes to use her sociology background as a speech language pathologist to work with children of lower socioeconomic status and cultural minorities.

Sperka Scholarship Winner

The Andrea Michelle Sperka Fund was established by Carol and Michael Sperka in memory of their beloved daughter. Andrea was a senior when she tragically lost her life in an automobile accident in Botswana after completing her studies abroad.

Throughout her undergraduate years, Andrea carried a demanding academic schedule while working to help meet her educational expenses. In addition, Andrea often served as a volunteer, including work with homeless children in Madison and in South Africa. It is in Andrea’s spirit of helping others that Carol and Michael Sperka created this fitting tribute. Recipients of the Andrea Michelle Sperka Fund exemplify the outstanding qualities that Andrea possessed and serve to keep the memory of this bright and talented young woman alive.

The 2014 recipient of the Sperka Scholarship is Joe Evica, a senior honors student majoring in sociology. His research interests include the study of race and ethnicity, social movements, political sociology, and the environment. His senior thesis research is meant to supplement the work of police accountability groups nationally by connecting groups and identifying some of the different strengths and weaknesses each group has. In the fall Joe will be going abroad to the University of Cape Town in South Africa to take sociology courses and learn more about the anti-apartheid movement. Joe is an AmeriCorps alumnus and enjoys tutoring elementary students in various subjects in his free time. On campus, he is involved as an activist in an environmental group that focuses on stopping climate change.
Undergraduate Spotlight

When sociology major Adam Voskuil graduated in May, he wasn’t gone from Madison long. As a member of the incoming class at UW Law School’s, Adam will focus on conservation law.

Adam’s first sociology course was with Joe Elder. Captivated by the field, he called our course the “most interesting [he’s] taken.” Key to Adam’s progress has been advising from Ellen Jacobson. Adam says, “Ellen is amazing, and the best advisor I’ve ever had!”

Two internships that Adam credits with enriching his education were based on his passion for conservation. He’s worked with EnAct Steps to Greener Living through the Madison Environmental Group, and in communications with the UW–Madison Office of Sustainability.

Earning top grades and holding internships wasn’t enough to keep Adam occupied. He also was a member of the rigorous UW Marching Band. Encouraged by David Rush, who served as a Marching Band Field Assistant, Adam spent two years as rank leader, and graduated as co-section leader.

Enthusiastic about his next step into law school, Adam is interested in eventually lobbying for or working with groups to further the development of sustainable living methods.

We congratulate Adam on his many successes as a sociology major and a Badger, and we look forward to the great things he will do in the future. We are proud to count him among the ranks of our alumni!

Adam with UW Band Director Michael Leckrone after the Varsity Band Concert.

Graduate students on the intramural soccer team, the Banana Peels. Standing: Christopher Cwynar (Communication Arts), Taylan Acar, Martina Kunovic, Alex Hanna (Sociology), Nancy Rydberg (EPS and Development Studies), Kathryn Anderson, Kerem Morgül, Jayme Pyne (Sociology), Tim Ahn. Kneeling: Kevin Gibbons (Geography), Katie Fallon (Sociology).
Undergraduate Alumni News

Dorcas Akinniyi (B.S. 2013) is completing a year of service for the Schools of Hope AmeriCorps Project. In the fall, she will be returning to UW–Madison to continue her education in Counseling Psychology.

John Barnhardt (B.A. 2008) recently got engaged to Erica Beal. This summer he is founding a new public charter middle school in Washington, D.C., the KIPP DC Northeast Academy.

Michael Davis (B.S. 2000, M.S. 2001) is now the director of the Baylor Scott & White Cancer Institute, which is part of the largest health care system in Texas. Michael has also been named to the executive board of the Cancer Alliance of Texas.

Dan DeMark (B.A. 1975) recently retired after 30 years with the State of Arizona as a contract manager and social service administrator for the Department of Economic Security in Phoenix.

Kelly A. Devlin (B.A. 1997) currently works for Northwestern Mutual in Milwaukee, WI, and lives in Wauwatosa, WI.

Roxanne Friedenfels (B.A. 1977) finished her fourteenth (non-consecutive) year as chair of the sociology department at Drew University in Madison, NJ. During her tenure as chair, the department increased from four to seven faculty members. Dr. Friedenfels received her Ph.D. from the University of Michigan.

Kathryn E. Gebert (B.A. 1999) was selected as a New York Rising Star, 2013 by New York Super Lawyers in the area of White Collar Criminal Defense. Ms. Gebert is a criminal defense attorney at Bryan Cave’s New York City offices.

Al Gedicks (B.S. 1972, M.A. 1974, Ph.D. 1979), emeritus professor of sociology at UW–La Crosse, received the Life-time Achievement Award for his environmental and Indigenous rights advocacy from the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice in October 2014. UW–Madison sociology professor Joe Elder made introductory remarks on Al’s scholarship and activism at the awards ceremony in La Crosse.

Alyssa Hager (B.A. 2012) got married in March and lives in St. Paul, MN, with her husband. She was recently promoted to office manager at a rapidly-growing outpatient mental health clinic in Woodbury, MN.

Tim Janssen (B.S. 1986) and his wife Kaaren (Bryce) Janssen (B.A. 1988) started their company, Innovative Funding Services, LLC, in 2007. IFS does automotive financing in all 50 states, specializing in financing driver and employee sales with fleet management companies like GE Fleet, LeasePlan, PHH, and Off-Lease Financing. They were selected by Chrysler Financial in 2009 to finance all Chrysler Financial Off-Lease customers when Chrysler filed for bankruptcy. They live in Austin, TX, have over 60 employees, and will lend over $150,000,000 in 2014.


The eighth edition of Social Psychology, the undergraduate text by John DeLamater and others, will be published by Westview Press in August. This text has been a Wisconsin sociology project since Day 1. The first edition was written because there was no satisfactory text for use in our Sociology 530, Introductory Social Psychology course. It was co-authored by H. Andrew Michener, DeLamater, and Shalom Schwartz, all members of the UW Sociology Department at the time, and published in 1986. Shalom Schwartz left UW and the writing team a few years later. In anticipation of Andy Michener’s retirement in 2002, Dan Myers (Ph.D. 1997) was added as a co-author for the 5th edition, published in 2004. Dan has risen to the position of vice-president and associate provost for faculty affairs and professor of sociology at the University of Notre Dame, and so is leaving the team after this edition. Jessica Collett, associate professor and director of graduate studies in the Department of Sociology at the University of Notre Dame, is joining the team; she was introduced to the study of social psychology as an undergrad by the book and she is a welcome addition.

For 28 years, this book has been read by tens of thousands of undergrads, and it introduced them to one of the major areas on sociology, Wisconsin-style. Three other texts directed at the market have come and gone, none lasting beyond four editions. The longevity of the text reflects its quality and the fact that it meets the needs of faculty all over the US, and beyond. Work on the book has supported several UW graduate students over the years, and John DeLamater has donated thousands of dollars from the royalties earned to the Sewell fund and the DeLamater fund.

Publication by Westview marks the first time the book will be available in paperback and resulted in a reduction of more than $100.00 in the cost of the printed book. Information about the eighth edition is online at http://www.westviewpress.com/book.php?isbn=9780813349503.
Amanda Lee Johnson (B.S. 2009) graduated in May from The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health with a master’s of health science in epidemiology and risk assessment.

Laura Knitt (B.A. 1989, J.D. 92), the assistant general counsel for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, has been elected to the board of directors of the Chicago Council on Planned Giving (CCPG), as of July 1, 2014. The CCPG is a professional association for development officers and allied professionals.

Laura (Berkan) Mael (B.A. 1991) has worked in finance for 21 years. During her tenure at Johnson Bank, she was recognized for her community service and was awarded Johnson Bank’s Community Service Award, which came with a donation of $3,000 made in her name to the charity of her choice. Two and a half years ago she was laid off from the banking world and began a new position as the career services director at a local media school. At the Madison Media Institute, she has been recognized with a Telly Award for her role as executive director of a DVD series in partnership with the Madison Police Department and their Cyber Safety curriculum, which recently went international in recognition of its curriculum. She is currently on the board for Opera for the Young and is serving as junior chair on the program committee for The Business Forum.

Shannon (O’Leary) Mara (B.A. 2000) became the new executive director of the Senate Employees’ Child Care Center in February 2014, serving students from ten weeks through five years of age. The SECCC was the first Center in Washington, DC to receive accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children and has remained an accredited institution throughout its years of service.

Joyce Narveson (B.S. 1964) returned to school at Northern Illinois University and received an M.B.A. in 1976 after working as a Girl Scout executive staff member in Illinois and Indiana for 10 years. She returned to Madison and worked for the State of Wisconsin for 26 years, retiring in 2004. She currently serves on the WAA 50-year reunion committee for the class of 1964.

Jim O’Rourke (B.A., 1971) is retiring after 35 years with King County Metro (Seattle area’s transit system). As operations manager for the past ten years, Jim has been responsible for 3,000 employees and an annual budget of $250 million. Jim is also a chief labor negotiator for Metro as well as being a certified mediator.

Jeff Scott Olson (B.A. 1968) received the 2013 “Warrior of the Year” award from the Dane County Criminal Defense Lawyers Association.


Caitlin Suemnicht (B.A. 2005) is a managing partner with the Food Fight Restaurant Group and a certified sommelier. She was named as one of the 2014 Women to Watch in Brava magazine and in the Top 40 Under 40 nationally by FSR magazine.

Peter Zook (B.A. 2010) recently finished his first year of graduate school at Temple University, where he is pursuing a degree in clinical social work. He was recently awarded a research assistant position with the TU Collaborative on Community Inclusion, where he is studying the impact of recreation and leisure on negative symptoms for those living with schizophrenia. He will graduate in May 2015 with the intention of becoming an outpatient psychotherapist.

The Graduate and Undergraduate editions of the newsletter are available on the department webpage: www.ssc.wisc.edu/soc/
Sociology Faculty Books


