

# THE 28TH ANNUAL MURAP CONFERENCE



## **RECLAIMING VOICES:** *CREATIVITY, COMMUNITY, AND CHANGE*

**JULY 21 - 22, 2022**

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL**  
Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Research in Black  
Cultures and Histories, *Hitchcock Multipurpose Room*



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Booklet designed by Saskia Staimpel

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

MURAP HISTORY	4
SUMMARY STATISTICS	5
SCHEDULE	6
KEYNOTE SPEAKER	10
FEATURED SPEAKERS	11
PANELISTS	13
MURAP ALUMNI	17
MURAP FACULTY MENTORS	19
MURAP STAFF	25
MURAP STUDENT COHORT	30
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	57

# MURAP HISTORY

This year marks the 28th anniversary of the MURAP Academic Conference. Housed in the Institute of African American Research (IAAR), the mission of the Moore Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program (MURAP) is to contribute in a significant way to achieving diversity in academia by increasing the number of students in the US who pursue doctoral degrees in the social sciences, humanities, and fine arts.

MURAP is named after our first doctoral recipient, Dr. Mignon Moore, now Associate Professor of Sociology at Barnard College and past director of Columbia University's Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) program. Professor Moore's educational and professional pursuits are a model of the academic excellence and dedication to diversity that MURAP strives to uphold for all of its student fellows. In order to foster the entrance of talented students from diverse backgrounds into graduate school and faculty positions within our targeted areas, we provide a 10-week intensive residential summer program.

The 20 students in each year's class, all rising juniors and seniors in colleges and universities from across the nation, work one-on-one with UNC-Chapel Hill faculty mentors to design and execute high-caliber research projects of their own. In addition, they attend four workshops geared toward preparing them for the challenges ahead (GRE Review, Communication Skills, Writing Lab, and Graduate Professional Development) and participate in social and educational activities organized by the program's graduate assistants or chosen by the members of the cohort.

With the generous support of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Chancellor, Kevin Guskiewicz, and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, Chris Clemens, MURAP aims to achieve its mission by identifying and training students of great promise and helping them to become scholars of the highest distinction. Please see our list of summary statistics to gauge our program's results as of our last graduating class.

4 For more information about MURAP, please visit our website at <http://murap.unc.edu>.



# SUMMARY STATISTICS

## AS OF JUNE 2019

	Number	Percent of Total
Total number of alumni (1989-2018)	529	100%
Enrolled in graduate & professional school	304	57.5%
Pursued or are pursuing a Ph.D. (total)	180	34.0%
Completed	95	18.0%
In progress	85	16.0%
Pursued or are pursuing an MA	123	23.3%
Completed	101	19.1%
In progress	22	4.2%
Alumni in Academia of those who completed Ph.D. (95 alumni)	73	76.8%
Alumni with tenure of those who completed Ph.D. (95 alumni)	21	22.1%

# SCHEDULE

## DAY 1: THURSDAY, JULY 21, 2022

**8:30 - 9:00 AM**      **Breakfast**

**9:00 - 9:15 AM**      **Welcome**

Isaac Unah, MURAP Faculty Director

**Opening remarks**

Joseph Jordan, Vice Provost for Academic and  
Community Engagement, UNC-Chapel Hill

**9:15 - 10:45 AM**

**A Sampling of MURAP Fellows' Research I**

**Mackenzie Jackson**, Wake Forest University

Mentor: Prof. Geovani Ramírez

"Literary and Artistic Communities as Care Webs for  
Black Queer People: What We Learn from Black Queer  
Literary and Artistic Community Responses to HIV/  
AIDS"

**Roberta Gonzalez**, Stanford University

Mentor: Prof. Allison De Marco

"American Vergüenza: The Spanish Language's Impact  
on Shame-Proneness and Self-Stigmatization in Bilingual  
Latinas"

**Maya Phelps**, Washington University in St. Louis

Mentor: Prof. Michael Palm

"Children v. the State: The Vulnerabilities at the Intersection  
of Black Girlhood, Child Welfare, and Policing"

<b>10:45 - 11:00 AM</b>	<b>Break and Poster Session I</b>
<b>11:00 - 11:45 PM</b>	<b>Featured Presentation I</b> <b>Kaneesha R. Johnson</b> , Ph.D. Candidate, Government, Harvard University
<b>11:45 - 1:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch and MURAP Scholar Research Exhibit</b>
<b>1:00 - 2:15 PM</b>	<b>Reconstructing Narratives</b> <b>Nadia Yaqub</b> , Associate Professor of Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, UNC-Chapel Hill <b>Seth Kotch</b> , Associate Professor of American Studies, UNC-Chapel Hill <b>Jen Boehm</b> , Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics, UNC-Chapel Hill
<b>2:15 - 3:15 PM</b>	<b>Keynote Address</b> <b>Carlos Alamo-Pastrana</b> , Dean of the College, Vassar College
<b>3:15 - 3:30 PM</b>	<b>Break and Poster Session II</b>
<b>3:30 - 4:45 PM</b>	<b>Artivism (Art as Activism)</b> <b>Noel Quiñones</b> , Writer <b>AunRika Tucker-Shabazz</b> , Ph.D. Candidate, Sociology, University of Michigan <b>Maya J. Berry</b> , Assistant Professor of African, African American and Diaspora Studies, UNC-Chapel Hill
<b>4:45 PM</b>	<b>Closing remarks</b>

# DAY 2: FRIDAY, JULY 22, 2022

**8:30 – 9:00 AM    Breakfast**

**9:00 – 9:15 AM    Welcome**  
Isaac Unah, MURAP Faculty Director

**9:15 – 10:45 AM    A Sampling of MURAP Fellows' Research II**  
**Nathan Unah**, University of Chicago  
Mentor: Prof. Fenaba Addo  
"The Effects of COVID-19 and Economic Insecurity on Mental Health Across Black and White Americans"  
**X Ramos-Lara**, UNC-Chapel Hill  
Mentor: Prof. Seth Kotch  
"I am Paying to See Pussy, Mug, Body, and Full Performance': Ballroom Culture as the Radical Subversion of Hegemonic Gender and Racial Performativity"  
**Selena Garcia Rodriguez**, Smith College  
Mentor: Prof. Priscilla Layne  
"Race, Sex, and Medicine: The Body as Laboratory"

**10:45 – 11:00 AM    Break**

**11:00 – 12:15 PM    Research and Community Engagement**  
**Jorge Matos**, Assistant Professor and Reference Librarian, Hostos Community College  
**Ariana Vigil**, Professor and Department Chair of Women's and Gender Studies, UNC-Chapel Hill  
**Loral Mossaver-Rahmani**, Ph.D. student, Ethnomusicology, University of California, Los Angeles  
**Sarajaneé Davis**, Teaching Assistant Professor of Public Policy, UNC-Chapel Hill

**12:15 - 1:15 PM**

**Lunch**

**1:15 - 2:00 PM**

**Featured Presentation II**

**Candis Watts Smith**, Associate Professor of Political Science, Duke University & **Joaquín Alfredo-Angel Rubalcaba**, Assistant Professor of Public Policy, UNC-Chapel Hill

**2:00 - 2:45 PM**

**National Science Foundation Graduate Funding Presentation**

**Christopher Hill**, Program Director, NSF

**2:45 - 4:00 PM**

**MURAP Alumni Panel**

**Bright Gyamfi**, Ph.D. Candidate, History, Northwestern University

**Chelsea Osademe**, Ph.D. Candidate, American Studies, University of Minnesota

**Mimi Gordor**, Ph.D. Candidate, English, Duke University

**4:00 PM**

**Closing remarks**



Please scan for  
additional materials  
for Noel Quiñones'  
presentation

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER



## **Carlos Alamo-Pastrana**

(he/him)

Carlos Alamo-Pastrana is Dean of the College and Associate Professor of Sociology at Vassar College. Before his appointment as Dean of the College, he was the Associate Dean of the Faculty & Academic Affairs since July 2017, and the Associate

Dean of Strategic Planning and Academic Resources since the summer of 2016. Carlos received his B.A. from the University of Colorado and his M.A. & Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara. His scholarly work and teaching focus on comparative racial formations, Latinx Studies, Afro-Latinx intellectual history, popular culture, and prison studies. His book *The Seams of Empire: Connective Histories of Race and Radicalism in Puerto Rico and the United States* was published in 2016.

# FEATURED SPEAKERS



**Candis Watts Smith**  
(she/her)

Candis Watts Smith is Associate Professor of Political Science at Duke University, where she also received her B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. Professor Smith's expertise highlights the role race, racism, and structural inequality play in shaping the

American political landscape. She is the author of *Black Mosaic: The Politics of Black Pan-Ethnic Identity* (NYU Press, 2014), and the co-author of *Stay Woke: A People's Guide to Making Black Lives Matter* (NYU Press, 2019) as well as *Racial Stasis: The Millennial Generation and the Stagnation of Racial Attitudes in American Politics* (University of Chicago Press, 2020). She is the co-editor of *Black Politics in Transition: Immigration, Suburbanization, and Gentrification* (Routledge, 2019).

**Joaquín Alfredo-Angel  
Rubalcaba**  
(he/him)

Joaquín Alfredo-Angel Rubalcaba is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Policy and is a faculty fellow with the Carolina Population Center. He earned his Ph.D. in economics at the University of New Mexico, where he also maintained a fellowship in the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy.



## Kaneesha R. Johnson

(she/her)



Kaneesha is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Government at Harvard University, a visiting scholar in the Department of Political Science at UNC-Chapel Hill, and a Wilson Library Dissertation Fellow for the 2022-23 academic year.

Kaneesha's main area of research focuses on the inequalities in the criminal legal system and how the state uses punitive policies across various systems to control race- and class-subjugated communities. She also examines the political responses of communities that experience state punishment, and the ways those forced out of political engagement attempt to regain power. She is also interested in alternative methods of knowledge production from marginalized groups.



# PANELISTS



**Nadia Yaqub**  
(she/her)

Professor Nadia Yaqub (Ph.D. Near Eastern Studies, University of California at Berkeley) specializes in the study of Arab culture and teaches courses on Arabic literature, film, and photography. She has written many articles and book chapters as well as two books: *Pens,*

*Swords and the Springs of Art: the Oral Poetry Dueling of Weddings in the Galilee* (Brill 2006) and *Palestinian Cinema in the Days of Revolution* (University of Texas Press, 2018). She also co-edited *Bad Girls of the Arab World* (University of Texas Press, 2017) with Dr. Rula Quawas. She edited another volume, *Gaza on Screen*, about film and media from and about the Gaza strip which is forthcoming in 2023 from Duke University Press. Her current research focuses on Arab cinema of the 1970s and 1980s and African country.

**Noel Quiñones**  
(he/him)

Noel Quiñones is a Puerto Rican writer, educator, and community organizer from the Bronx. He has received fellowships from Poets House, the Poetry Foundation, Tin House, and SAFTA (Sundress Academy for the Arts). His work has been published in *POETRY*, the *Latin American Review*,

*Kweli Journal*, and is forthcoming from *Gulf Coast*, *The Offing*, and *Tupelo Quarterly*. He is the founder of Project X, a Bronx-based arts organization, a poetry book reviewer for *Muzzle Magazine*, and a member of the 2019 Intercultural Leadership Institute cohort. He is a recent graduate of the University of Mississippi M.F.A. program, where he was the 2019 John and Renée Grisham Poetry Fellow, winning the D.C. Berry Prize in Creative Writing and the Bondurant Poetry Prize. Follow him online at [www.noelpquinones.com](http://www.noelpquinones.com).





## AunRika Tucker-Shabazz

(she/her)

AunRika Tucker-Shabazz is a sociologist of religion and race from Minneapolis, Minnesota. She uses critical theories of power, knowledge and violence to promote community well-being and empower youth. She is an alumni of MURAP

and will use her time today to present the ways Black women's subjective experience of incestuous violence have been marginalized in Western social science. By reconstructing silence as an artistic, cultural practice, the aesthetics of violence against racialized victims of sexual assault can be better understood as not just physical, but metaphysical harm.

## Maya J. Berry

(she/her)

Maya J. Berry is a dancer and anthropologist by training whose research on Black popular performance and politics in Havana, Cuba has been supported by grants and fellowships from the Ford Foundation, the Institute for Citizens & Scholars (formerly the Woodrow Wilson Foundation), the Institute for the Arts & Humanities, and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, among others. Prior to joining the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as assistant professor of African diaspora studies, she was a postdoctoral fellow at the Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University. Her scholarship appears in *Afro-Hispanic Review*, *American Anthropologist*, *Black Diaspora Review*, *Cultural Anthropology*, *Cuban Studies*, and the *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*.





## Jorge Matos

(he/him)

Jorge Matos Valldejuli is an Assistant Professor & Reference Librarian at Hostos Community College, City University of New York. In addition to his library and teaching duties, his research examines the intersections between disability history and race specifically at the once

notorious institution for the developmentally disabled in New York State, the Willowbrook State School. He's published in the *Activist History Review* and has a forthcoming article in the journal *Latino Studies* titled "Together We Arrived and Together We Shall Leave": The Gouverneur Parents Association and the Politics of Race and Disability in Postwar New York.

## Ariana Vigil

(she/her)

Ariana Vigil is Professor and Chair of the Department of Women's and Gender Studies at UNC-CH. Her teaching and research focus on U.S. Latinx literature and culture. She is the author of three books: *War Echoes: Gender and Militarization in U.S. Latina/o Cultural Production*, (Rutgers University Press, 2014), *Understanding Francisco Goldman*, (University of South Carolina Press, 2018) and *Public Negotiations: Gender and Journalism in Contemporary US Latina/o Literature* (Ohio State University Press, 2019).



# Lorali Mossaver-Rahmani

(she/her)



Lorali is a graduate student in Ethnomusicology at UCLA. She completed her B.S. in Anthropology with a minor in music from the University of La Verne in 2019. During her time at La Verne she studied abroad at the University of Chile where her research focused on issues of

Indigenous education and equity in Chile's Indigenous Mapuche community. Her current research interests include music as political resistance within Chicanx and Latinx ska, dirty ska, and punk scenes in Southern California, and her theoretical approach is grounded in critical intersectional, feminist, queer, decolonized works, and multimedia ethnographic methods. After working as a youth development practitioner at Markham Middle School in Watts, CA with City Year Los Angeles, her goals are to develop community art centers/collectives and culturally sustaining music education programs inspired by alternative education models and liberation politics. Lorali organizes community art-focused events, performs original music in the folkie duo, Your Companions, and sings Persian vocal music at UCLA.

# Christopher Hill

(he/him)

Christopher Hill is a Program Director at the National Science Foundation and Professor Emeritus at Boise State University. Dr. Hill applies geologic and biologic methods to explore past and present ecological and evolutionary responses to climate and environmental change. He is a specialist in stratigraphy, sedimentology, geochemistry, geochronology, and geomorphology. His research and teaching focus on the evolution of ecosystems in North America, Eurasia, and Africa. Among Dr. Hill's 5 books are two editions of "Geoarchaeology" published by Yale University Press and "Mesozoic and Cenozoic Vertebrate Paleontology in the Western Plains and Rocky Mountains" produced for the Society of Ver-





# SARAJANEÉ DAVIS

(she/her)

Dr. Sarajanée Davis was born and Sarájanée Davis is the Educator Programs Coordinator at we are, a Durham-based non-profit organization, and a Teaching Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Policy at UNC-Chapel Hill. She began her career as an educator teaching at the high school and elementary levels in Florida and North Carolina. Before joining the we are and UNC teams, Sarájanée consulted on digital humanities projects for the State Library of North Carolina as well as the National Civil Rights Museum. Her research explores the activism and impact of the first critical masses of Black students to enroll at historically white institutions in the Upper South. As the Educator Programs Coordinator, Sarájanée supports educators and schools aiming to foster anti-racism in their pedagogy and practices. In both positions, she uses historical narratives to explore the choices that created and perpetuate the status quo. The unifying goal in her work is to amplify Black historical perspectives in order to create an equitable future.

Sarájanée was an American Association of University Women Dissertation Fellow and earned her Ph.D. in History with a Graduate Minor in African American and African Studies from Ohio State University. She holds a B.A. in African and African American Studies and Political and Social Thought from the University of Virginia.



# MURAP ALUMNI



**Bright Gyamfi**  
(he/him)

Bright Gyamfi is a history Ph.D. candidate and a Presidential fellow at Northwestern University and an incoming assistant professor of history at the University of California San Diego. Prior to attending Northwestern, Gyamfi received a BA from the University of Notre Dame with honors where he majored in history

and political science. After his undergraduate studies, he was awarded the Thomas J. McMahon IV Endowment for Excellence for the Pursuit of Scholarship at the University of Oxford where he earned an MSc in African Studies. His research examines Ghanaian intellectuals who transformed and radicalized the study of Africa in academic and intellectual centers around the Atlantic. His research has been supported by the Social Science Research Council, the Fulbright-IIE, etc. His work has appeared in the *African Studies Review*, the *Journal of African American History*, *The Conversation*, and *Africasacountry*.

**Chelsea Osademe**  
(she/her)

Chelsea Osademe is a Nigerian American creative writer and scholar who was raised in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. She is a 2016 alum of the Moore Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program, and holds a bachelor's and master's degree in English from Spelman College and Kansas State University. She is currently a

third-year doctoral student in American Studies at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities where she researches the relationship between the gothic genre, notions of citizenship and anti-Blackness during the 19th and 21st centuries, and African American literature and culture.





## Mimi Gordor

(she/her)

Mimi Gordor is a Ph.D. candidate in English at Duke University. She graduated cum laude with a BA in English from Bryn Mawr College. Mimi is interested in African women's diasporic fiction and how African characters navigate the diaspora vis-a-vis transnational notions of race, class, and gender. She is also interested in Afropolitanism and its increasing use in Africa-centered literature. She is a proud MURAP 2016 alumnae and former MURAP program coordinator.

# FACULTY MENTORS



*Pictured at the top: Dr. Lamar Graham, Dr. Michael Figueroa. Second Row: Dr. Geovani Ramirez. Dr. Fenaba Addo, Dr. Allison De Marco. Bottom row: Dr. Charlene Regester, Dr. Priscilla Layne, Dr. Isaac Unah. Not pictured: Prof. Seth Kotch, Prof. Michael Palm, Prof. Kumi Silva.*





## Fenaba Addo

(she/her)

Fenaba Addo is an Associate Professor of Public Policy at the UNC- Chapel Hill, where she is also a faculty affiliate of the Carolina Population Center and adjunct associate professor of sociology. Her research program examines the causes and consequences of debt and wealth inequality with a focus on high-

er education and family and relationships. Widely published in academic journals and policy outlets, her work on racial disparities in student debt, older Black women and wealth, the Black Middle Class, and the Millennial wealth gap, sheds light on the ways that societal inequalities stem from historical legacies of racial exclusion and discrimination, and how they get reproduced over time. It also highlights the systemic barriers Black women and men face in attaining economic security for their families.

## Allison De Marco

(she/her)

Allison De Marco, PhD, MSW, is an advanced research scientist at Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, equity lead for the Jordan Institute of Families, and adjunct faculty at the School of Social Work. Her research focuses on racial equity interventions, poverty, and housing and homelessness. Currently, she is building a research agenda examining racial equity interventions both in educational and governmental settings, the role of state and county-level structural racism in economic well-being, and the implementation of antiracist research methods. For her collaborative racial equity work, in 2018 and 2021, she and her colleagues won the University Diversity Award for Inter-group Collaboration.





## Michael Figueroa

(he/him)

Michael A. Figueroa is Associate Professor of Music at UNC-Chapel Hill. He researches music and politics in the SWANA region (South West Asia and North Africa) and its diasporas. The first phase of his career has focused on music in the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, culminating in his first book, *City of*

*Song: Music and the Making of Modern Jerusalem* (Oxford University Press, 2022). He recently has embarked on a second major project, “Music and Racial Awakening in Arab America,” a study of post-9/11 Arab American race consciousness through an expansive study of musical life across genres and geographical boundaries. Prof. Figueroa just completed his term as Coordinator for UNC’s Faculty of Color and Indigenous Faculty group.

## Lamar Graham

(he/him)

Dr. Lamar A. Graham is Assistant Professor of Hispanic Linguistics in the Department of Romance Studies. His primary line of research is historical and comparative Romance linguistics, especially the contrasting evolutions of Spanish and Portuguese phonology, morphology, and syntax. Dr. Graham also conducts research on sociopragmatic variation in Latin American Spanish, in particular the use of discourse markers as indexes of speakers’ social identities.





## Seth Kotch

(he/him)

Seth Kotch is associate professor in the Department of American Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Director of the Southern Oral History Program in UNC's Center for the Study of the American South. His work has been funded by the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, and most recently, the NAACP Legal Defense and

Education Fund. His first book, *Lethal State*, published by UNC Press, is a history of the death penalty in North Carolina.

## Priscilla Layne

(she/her)

Priscilla Layne is Associate Professor of German and Adjunct Associate Professor of African Diaspora Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her book, *White Rebels in Black: German Appropriation of Black Popular Culture*, was published in 2018 by the University of Michigan Press. She has also published essays on Turkish German culture, translation, punk and film. She recently translated Olivia Wenzel's debut novel, *1000 Coils of Fear*, from German into English. And she is currently finishing a manuscript on Afro German Afrofuturism and a critical guide to Fassbinder's *The Marriage of Maria Braun*.





## Michael Palm

(he/him)

Michael Palm is an Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Communication at UNC-Chapel Hill. He is also affiliated faculty in the Department of American Studies, and he serves as President of UNC's chapter of the American Association of University Professors. His research and teaching focus on the history of everyday

technology and the political economy of popular culture. His book, *Technologies of Consumer Labor: A History of Self-Service*, was published by Routledge in 2017. He has published solo and co-authored articles in journals such as *Media, Culture & Society*, *The European Journal of Cultural Studies*, and *The Journal of Popular Music Studies*. He is currently writing a book about the contemporary economy of vinyl records and the people making and selling records today.

## Geovani Ramírez

(he/him)

Geovani Ramírez is a teaching assistant professor in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at UNC-Chapel Hill where he specializes in Latinx Studies and Literature. His current book project, *The Burning Question of Labor*, explores the ways Mexican-heritage women writers use the topic of labor in their works to

interrogate and re-shape notions of class, race, gender, culture, (trans)national identities, and citizenship. Geovani's work has appeared in such venues as *Ethnic Studies Review*, *Latinx Talk*, and *Intersectionality: Understanding Women's Lives and Resistance in the Past and Present*. Geovani's public-facing, transdisciplinary approach toward the study of Latinx populations is manifested in his latest publication, "Chicken Doctors and the Trials of Transcendence: Unveiling Gallinera/o Illness Narratives." "Chicken Doctors" is a multi-genre, autoethnographic piece that engages with medical anthropological scholarship to explore the intersections between Latina/o labor, legislation, and health.







## Charlene Regester

(she/her)

Charlene Regester is an Associate Professor in the Department of African, African American, and Diaspora Studies at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. She is the author of *African American Actresses: The Struggle for Visibility, 1900-1960* (Indiana University Press — nominated for an NAACP Image Award). In 2017 she co-edited *The Josephine Baker Critical Reader* with Dr. Mae Henderson. Currently, she is co-editing *Intersecting Aesthetics: Literary Adaptations and Cinematic Representations of Blackness* which is scheduled to be published in 2022 with University of Press of Mississippi. Regester is working on a book manuscript *The Color Line Onscreen: African American Performers Reflect the Cinema Industry's Racial Anxiety with the Color Line, 1919-1966*.

## Kumi Silva

(she/her)

Dr. Silva's research is at the intersection of identity, politics, post-colonial studies, cultural studies, and popular culture. She is the author of *Brown Threat: Identification in the Security State* (University of Minnesota Press, 2016) and co-editor of *Feminist Erasures: Challenging Backlash Culture* (Palgrave UK, 2015) and of *Migration, Identity, and Belonging: Defining Borders and Boundaries of the Homeland* (Routledge 2020). Her current research extends the exploration of identification in *Brown Threat* to understanding how affective relationships, especially calls to and of love, animate regulatory practices that are deeply cruel and alienating.



# MURAP STAFF



*Pictured at the top: Jen Boehm, Isaac Unah, Saskia Staimpel. Pictured at the bottom: S Rekeibe, Kiara Childs. Not pictured: Amanda Aziz, Meleena Gil, Janelle Ashley Viera.*



## Isaac Unah

(he/him)

Director

Isaac Unah is an Associate Professor of political science and director of MURAP. His teaching interests focus on judicial institutions and their collective influence on public policy and bureaucratic behavior. His first book, *The Courts of International Trade: Judicial Specialization, Expertise, and Bureaucratic Policymaking*

(University of Michigan Press, 1998), examines the role of specialized courts in U.S. trade policy implementation. His second book, *The Supreme Court in American Politics* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2009) uses an evolutionary perspective to give readers a firm understanding of the U.S. Supreme Court. Among his ongoing projects, Unah is researching punishment politics, especially the political motivations underlying the use of capital punishment in the United States. His research (with Jack Boger) was the principal basis of the North Carolina Racial Justice Act (enacted in 2009). Finally, from 2005–2007 Unah served as visiting scientist and program director for the Law and Social Sciences Program in the Division of Social and Economic Sciences at the National Science Foundation in Arlington, Virginia.

## Kiara Childs

(she/her)

Graduate Professional Development  
Workshop Coordinator

Kiara Childs serves as a graduate assistant for MURAP and coordinates the graduate professional development workshops for fellows. She is a PhD Candidate and AAUW Dissertation Fellow in the Department of Communication. Her research explores the intersection of Black women's digital and beauty culture across Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and YouTube.





## Jen Boehm

(she/her)

Senior Writing Coordinator

Jen Boehm is a PhD candidate in the Linguistics Department at UNC-Chapel Hill. Her dissertation research analyzes the acoustic properties of regional dialects of S'gaw Karen, an understudied language spoken in Burma and Thailand. Her work also analyzes how these

dialects are changing in the diaspora. As a founding member of the Karen Research Group and the UNC Refugee Committee, Jen works closely with the local Karen community to document their language and record their stories. At UNC, she has taught courses in introductory linguistics, sociolinguistics, and first-year writing.

## Amanda Aziz

(she/her)

Communication Skills  
Workshop Coordinator



Amanda Aziz is a rising sixth year doctoral student in the political science department at UNC -Chapel Hill where she studies American citizenship norms and their implications for political behavior. Throughout her graduate program she discovered her passion is teaching, and after she graduates in May 2023 she will return to her hometown of Methuen, MA to become a high school teacher. As the Communication Skills Workshop Coordinator for MURAP this summer, Amanda has enjoyed seeing the students' ideas advance rapidly and keeping track of all their progress in each presentation practice.





## Meleena Gil

(they/she)

Writing Coordinator

Meleena Gil is a first-generation US-American and college graduate now working towards a doctoral degree in English and Comparative Literature at UNC-Chapel Hill. Drawing from queer theoretical and environmental hu-

manities frameworks, Meleena specializes in the portrayals of children's narratives in contemporary Latinx literature. Meleena hopes to unite their service work and their research by partnering with various organizations on and off campus to invigorate their pedagogy and foster more formidable local ties. They aim to create a space for meaningful experiences and mutual acknowledgment.

## S Rekeibe

(they/them)

Community Building Coordinator

S Rekeibe is an MA student at UNC-Chapel Hill in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. They graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill in May 2021 with a BA in Music and Sociology with a minor in Latinx Studies. Their research focuses on imperialism and colonization in the Levant and how it affects the West's perception of gender, sexuality, and class in the region. They are a proud MURAP 2020 alumni.





## Saskia Staimpel

(she/her)

Program Coordinator

Saskia Staimpel coordinates MURAP's 10-week summer program. She earned her B.A. in African, African American Diaspora Studies and Global Studies from UNC-Chapel Hill. Her research interests are grassroots organizing and Black

student activism. She has published research on the radical, grassroots organizing of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and presented on the drive behind Afro-Brazilian Women's Grassroots Organizing.

## Janelle Ashley Viera

(she/her)

Conference Coordinator

Janelle Ashley Viera is a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at UNC Chapel Hill. Her research interests include race and ethnicity, migration, and social mobility. Her dissertation employs qualitative methods to investigate racial formation among New York and Orlando-based Puerto Ricans and the ways in which this process unfolds differently by generation and place. She has also published research on intergenerational mobility among Mexican return migrants and their children. Janelle's research has been funded by the Social Science Research Council, CUNY's Center for Puerto Rican Studies, and UNC's Institute of African American Research, Institute for the Study of the Americas, and Center for the Study of the American South. She has been active in diversity and inclusion efforts at UNC through her work with the Moore Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program (MURAP), of which she is an alumna, and the Initiative for Minority Excellence program.



# MURAP FELLOWS



*Pictured at the top: Luke Odo, Olu(dayo) Adebwao, Arielle Wiggins, Dory King. Second row: Selena Garcia Rodriguez, Jessica Halsey, Madison Booker-Smith Third row: Nathan Unah, Arielle Wiggins, Austin Kim, X Ramos-Lara. Fourth row: Taiylor Wade, Gabriel Morales, Mackenzie Jackson, Lillian Lopez. Fifth row: Roberta Gonzalez, Andrea Sy, Maia Halle, Maya Phelps, Yesenia Camacho*

# Oludayo Adebwao

(she/her)



Olu(dayo) Adebawo is a rising senior in the International Studies department at Spelman College. Dayo's major is International Studies with a concentration in International Development and a minor in Portuguese.

Her research interests include West Africa, Afro-Brazil, and also Eastern Asia with a focus on Japan. This summer under the guidance of Dr. Priscilla Layne, her work examines the intersection of identity, luxury and capitalism, by examining how young Africans dismantle colonial narratives through the lens of fashion. In her free time, Dayo enjoys sewing and crafting; she is currently the Vice President of the AUC Japan Club at Spelman College and an ambassador for her school. Upon completing MURAP, Dayo Adebawo intends to finish her senior year with honors, and continue her studies in African Visual Culture.

## **"Dress to Contest: Dismantling the Colonial Lens Through Contemporary African Fashion"**

**Mentor: Prof. Priscilla Layne**

In 2022, Netflix premiered *Young, Famous, and African*, which is a reality show that showcases wealthy Africans living in South Africa. In the show, extravagant wealth is displayed through the cars they drive, the homes where they reside, and most importantly the clothes and fashion they choose to wear. It is through this display, that the power of the cloth and fashion can be seen. Since the postcolonial struggles of the 1960s, African artists have been invested in telling their own stories that depart from colonial ideas about African visual media. This visual media can include anything from film and television to textiles. But modern African visual aesthetics is not necessarily absent of Western influence, as Afropolitans, like the people on this show, are always mixing and blending different cultures. In this paper, I argue that contemporary African fashion is one articulation of how African modernity dismantles colonial, Afropessimist views of Africa. I demonstrate this by examining the fashion in *Young, Famous and African*, African Designers seen at Paris Fashion Week, as well as looking at the second-hand clothing industry seen in Zambia.

# Madison Booker-Smith

(she/her)



Madison Booker-Smith is a rising senior attending Johnson C. Smith University (JCSU) with a major in Psychology and a minor in Africana studies. She is currently a JCSU Ronald E. McNair Scholars researcher with a current focus on the formation of African American domesticity and generational trauma in the African American community. This summer in MURAP, under the guidance of Dr. Allison De Marco, her work will analyze the intersectionality of colorism and self-acceptance in African American women. Upon completing the program, Madison will complete her senior year at Johnson C. Smith University and hopes to complete more research projects. Following her undergraduate graduation, she plans to obtain her PhD in Clinical or Counseling Psychology and Africana studies. Additionally, she has goals of ultimately developing her own private practice that is both affordable and inclusive. The private practice will specialize in treating African Americans and other people of color seeking mental restitution.

## **"An Examination of Colorism: The Relationship Between Colorism and Self-Acceptance in African American Women"**

**Mentor: Prof. Allison De Marco**

African American women have numerous burdens that affect their mental health. One of these burdens is related to darker skin complexions being seen as unattractive, unprofessional, "ghetto," undesirable, and even unintelligent. This is a direct result of the conditions enslaved people were in, as skin color dictated how harshly you were treated and ultimately the type of work you were required to do. This detrimentally affects the mental health of African American children at an early age making it significantly more complicated for them to accept themselves. Many scholars who have previously explored this relationship have determined that colorism has extreme ramifications on self-image. The current study aims to examine the relationship between colorism and self-acceptance in African American women. The project will use a mixed-methods approach to assessing this relationship by distributing a questionnaire and retrieving qualitative data through the commonly used app, Twitter. The goal of this research project is to shed light on the experiences



and feelings of African American women. The researcher will also examine the ways in which perception has changed over generations using specific items on the survey to correlate age groups with various beliefs about skin complexions within the African American community. This research project contributes to knowledge regarding the formation of African American domesticity and the ways in which slavery has had long-lasting effects on the African American community.

## YESENIA CAMACHO

(she/her)



Yesenia Camacho is a first-generation rising senior at Beloit College, majoring in Psychology and Sociology. Sociology of Education, with an emphasis on educational equity, identity, and belonging in relation to immigration, are some of her research interests. Her prior work as a McNair Scholar included studies on the effects of race, segregation, and socioeconomic status on educational attainment. This summer, she is working under the guidance of Dr. Kumarini Silva of the Department of Communication. Her work explores borders to belonging as a Mexican American, focusing on four primary themes: food, culture, language, and identity. After completing the MURAP program, Yesenia will graduate from Beloit College in May 2023 with intentions to pursue a master degree in counseling psychology, then work towards a Ph.D. in social work.

**“Borders to Belonging: Food, Language, Culture, and Identity among Second Generation Mexican Americans”**

**Mentor: Prof. Kumi Silva**

What is a home? Especially for those who straddle two different countries/geographies? For second-generation Americans the borders between ‘homes’ is a challenging one to navigate. To have a sense of belonging and to be recognized as a resident of the places they choose to call home. A physical and emotional sense of belonging to a place is crucial for one’s Mexican learning and development and for fostering a sense of security. The idea of belonging is fundamental to our comprehension of how we give and receive

meaning to our lives, how we engage with others, how we engage with our beliefs, values, and practices, among many other things. Framed by Anzaldúa's work in 'Borderlands' and combining it with archival interviews and personal experience, in this essay, I look into the questions: What's it like to be a first-generation Mexican American, and what barriers do one encounter? Is it feasible for both cultures to have a feeling of belonging? Exploring the following four topics of culture, identity, food, and language as I look into these questions. Focusing on four distinct areas—culture, identity, food, and language—this essay discusses contemporary Mexican-American experiences.

## **Selena Garcia Rodriguez** (she/her)



Selena Garcia Rodriguez is a junior at Smith College majoring in Africana Studies and Women and Gender Studies. Her research interests include Black women's studies with special attention to Black feminist and queer theory, Black Atlantic cultural studies, and science and historical fiction literatures. As a first-generation scholar attending an institution ten miles from home, Selena has maintained close ties with her high school's Ethnic Studies program by participating as an alum in academic panels, teach-ins, community research, and student political action. She continually values community work and problematizing the status quo, which she considers the pillar of her education and research interests. This summer under the guidance of Dr. Priscilla Layne, Selena's work examines the historical pseudoscience, politics, and fears that inform ongoing myths of Black inferiority and the demand to control Black people's reproductive autonomy. After graduation, Selena plans to take time off before applying to graduate programs in African American Studies, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and/or Comparative Literature.

**"Race, Sex, and Medicine: The Body as Laboratory"**

**Mentor: Prof. Priscilla Layne**

When the Supreme Court began arguing for the repeal of *Roe v. Wade*, pro-choice activists responded to the blatant attack on the livelihoods of those who seek abortions with dismay. They were alarmed about the attempts to criminalize those who seek essential reproductive healthcare. But if we connect the historical dots, we see that the racialized “female” body – referring to those who can get pregnant – has been rendered an object through an abundance of pseudoscientific propaganda in academic scholarship and legislation; and the repeal of *Roe v. Wade* is just a further link in this chain. Through a literary analysis of Natalie Y. Moore’s *The Billboard: A Play About Abortion* and Bettina Judd’s *Patient: poems*, I argue that detrimental decisions about the “female” body must be informed by the history of birth control, sterilization, and gynecology in the contiguous United States and Puerto Rico. This research makes a sustained effort to examine and understand the interconnectedness of scientific racism, anti-Black dehumanization, and xenophobia by using the frameworks of Black feminist theory and postcolonial studies. I tie the historical realities of medical treatment and violence enacted against vulnerable Black and Puerto Rican women to the (contemporary) racist intentions of white supremacists in science, government, and medicine.

## ABIGAIL GILLESPIE

(she/her)

Abigail Gillespie is a rising junior at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, double majoring in Biology and English and Comparative Literature with a minor in African, African American, and Diaspora Studies. Gillespie serves as the Vice President of

Programming for the Carolina Union Activities Board, the Director of the Case Committee for UNC’s Bioethics Club, and Co-Social Chair for Out in STEM, which helps LGBTQ+ students to succeed. Her research interests include how narrative art informs disease patterns and how art movements can control disease spread. Gillespie presented her work on the artwork of Guadalupe Maravilla at the 2022 Richard Macksey National Undergraduate Humanities Research Symposium, which focused on using narrative art to understand cancer prevalence within American Hispanic/Latino/a/x communities. Under the mentorship of Dr. Seth Kotch, her work this summer examines a street





and graffiti art movement in Nairobi, Kenya, and its use in controlling the spread of coronavirus. After receiving undergraduate education, Gillespie plans to pursue a Ph.D. in English and Comparative Literature, focusing on contemporary literature, narrative art, and visual art movements, before attending medical school. While practicing as a physician, she would like to teach Medical Humanities courses to future doctors and contribute to the American medical education process.

## **“The Art of a Pandemic: Combatting Coronavirus Disease Transmission in Nairobi, Kenya”**

**Mentor: Prof. Seth Kotch**

This project examines Nairobi-based public health art movements, primarily that of the Mathare Roots Youth Initiative in Mathare, with particular emphasis on Brian Musasia Wanyande or Msale, who creates street and graffiti art to emphasize the need to combat disease together. New visual art movements, such as that in Mathare, positively encourage preventative public health practices to reduce coronavirus transmission, including catchy slogans and colorful images of wearing masks, washing hands, and maintaining social distance. This movement uses education, hope, and community, all Kenyan values that go back to the nation's founding as independent in 1963. It relates to community activism, connecting people, encouraging them to question existing politics, disrupting daily life, and reminding them of current social and political affairs. With a focus on this movement, this paper explores Western and Kenyan medical practices, with biomedical practitioners often not considering Kenyan traditions or practices, along with the role of art, visual or not, in historical and contemporary public health crises in Kenya. This paper uses visual analysis to analyze the art itself and discusses the need for people to work together within communities for the success of any preventative health care service. It centers on the success of positive reinforcement in visual public health campaigns, and as artists make art worldwide, it examines what makes Kenyan visual art unique.

# ROBERTA GONZALEZ

(she/her)



Roberta Gonzalez is a proud Mexican-American immigrant. At Stanford University, she is a rising senior majoring in psychology with honors and minoring in creative writing. With a keen interest in clinical psychology and a deep love for immigrant mental health, Roberta works at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs researching the dissociative symptoms of trauma and volunteers at the Freedom for Immigrants abolitionist hotline. This summer, under the guidance of Dr. Allison De Marco, her research examines the Spanish language's impact on shame and stigma in bilingual Latines. Upon completing her bachelor's degree, Roberta will pursue a master's degree in counseling psychology with the aim of becoming a licensed professional clinical counselor. Above all, she hopes to nurture and support members of the Latine community through psychotherapy.

**"American Vergüenza: The Spanish Language's Impact on Shame-Proneness and Self-Stigmatization in Bilingual Latines"**

**Mentor: Prof. Allison De Marco**

For Latines, living in the United States is a risk factor for mental illness. Given historical hostility and present-day racialization, Latin Americans are more prone to shame and, consequently, depressive symptoms. Additionally, Latin Americans experience self-stigmatization with regards to mental illness diagnoses and thus underutilize mental health care. Research shows using bilinguals' native language has positive psychotherapeutic effects. However, no research exists on the impact of using Spanish on shame-proneness and self-stigmatization in bilingual Latines. Given past research, this paper hypothesized the use of Spanish would reduce shame-proneness in English-Spanish bilingual Latines, increase shame-proneness in Spanish-English bilingual Latines, and increase self-stigmatization in all bilingual Latines. Using convenience sampling ( $N = 155$ ), participants completed self-report responses to a guilt and shame proneness scale and the self-stigmatization subscale of patient responses to diagnoses of mental disorders scale, in both English and Spanish. Results found the use of Spanish elicited more shame-proneness than English for Spanish-English bilinguals ( $p = 0.05$ ) and all Latines ( $p = 0.02$ ).

Instead, the use of English as opposed to Spanish elicited more self-stigmatization in all Latines ( $p = 0.00$ ). These findings recommend the use of English in psychotherapy to discuss shame with Latine bilinguals, but the use of Spanish to refer bilingual Latines to mental health care.

## MAIA HALLE

(she/her)

Maia Halle is a rising junior at Bryn Mawr College studying political science, with a minor in Japanese at Haverford College. Within the political science major, she is pursuing international relations and comparative politics. Maia's academic and personal interests which include citizenship laws and material and normative manifestations of borders was greatly influenced by her experiences as a dual citizen in Japan, a country that bans carrying multiple passports. Outside of the classroom, Maia has researched with the U.S. Department of Justice, the University of Pennsylvania, and New York University.



This summer, under the guidance of Dr. Kumi Silva, Maia's work examines how the Law of Return perpetuates settler colonialism and how citizenship laws in occupied Palestine affect the viability of a two-state solution. After completing MURAP, she will study abroad at the London School of Economics and return her senior year to Bryn Mawr to apply to political science graduate programs and write her senior thesis which will be an expansion of her MURAP research paper.

**"The Fall of the Two State Solution: An Examination of Israeli Citizenship Laws"**

**Mentor: Prof. Kumi Silva**

This research looks at the 'Law of Return' that has long governed the citizenship and immigration policies of Israel, considering its impact on the two-state solution that has long been touted as the best resolution for the ongoing Israel-Palestine territorial dispute. Specifically, I ask the following questions: 1. Is a two-state solution even viable? And 2. What are the effects of the Law of Return on this partition paradigm? Guided by these questions, I argue that the Law of Return perpetuates settler colonialism, further exasperating the collapse of the

partition paradigm which occurred after the failure of the Oslo peace process in the 1990s. In my research, I use Patrick Wolfe's definition of settler colonialism which he argues is a way to erase and replace indigenous populations. Focusing on historical anecdotes, laws, and statistics, I argue that the partition paradigm has collapsed because of Israel's perpetual increase in settlements, illustrating the harm Israeli citizenship laws have caused Palestinians.

## Jessica Halsey

(she/her)



Jessica Halsey is a rising senior pursuing a degree in English Literature with a minor in Philosophy at Tuskegee University. Specifically, her concentration is in Modern and Postmodern African American Literature and she examines the ways in which 20th and 21st century issues - such as rapid industrialization, oppressive systems, and capitalism - impact the literature. Western responses to these issues and transformations are highly regarded while authors existing outside of the western ideals, specifically authors of color, are not taken into consideration. As a result, Jessica wants to combat this narrative to ensure that African American voices are included in Modern and Postmodern conversations. This summer, under the guidance of Dr. Geovani Ramírez, she is exploring the thematic significance of jazz motifs in Modern African American literature and its influences in Modern Japanese literature. She is examining works written by James Baldwin and Yasunari Kawabata while also utilizing Black Aesthetic theory to analyze their literature. At Tuskegee University, Jessica is a Golden Student Ambassador and a Journalist for the TU Campus Digest. After completing her undergraduate studies, her goal is to earn a PhD in Comparative Literature and become a professor at a research-focused institution.

**"Black Aesthetics Beyond Borders: An Exploration of Jazz Motifs in Modern African American and Japanese Literature"**

**Mentor: Prof. Geovani Ramírez**

The Black Aesthetic refers to the general manner in which African Americans have expressed their creativity and identity without the restraints of White Western ideals. Specifically during and after the Harlem Renaissance, African American authors began infusing their literature with various aspects of the black aesthetics, such as jazz and blues. In this project, I will focus on an African American author, James Baldwin, whose "Sonny's Blues" (1975) narrates a Black protagonist's journey to self actualization through playing jazz. Baldwin's story depicts the connection many Black individuals have to jazz and blues as they incorporate the story and struggle of their community. Along with Baldwin's work, however, I also aim to explore the depiction of jazz in works by non-Black authors in order to examine how the Black Aesthetic manifests outside of the African American community. Due to the assimilation of Black culture in modern Japan (1900-1930s), Japanese literature in particular offers insight into how the Black Aesthetic may be internalized by other cultures. World War I devastated Japanese cities and civilians, resulting in the consumption of jazz entertainment in Japan. Specifically, Yasanuri Kawabata's novel *The Scarlet Gang of Asakusa* (1929), which stages jazz motifs within a disoriented urban environment, explores how jazz was incorporated into modern Japanese culture as a means of coping with the loss of traditional Japan. In this comparative literary analysis of "Sonny's Blues" and *The Scarlet Gang of Asakusa*, I will employ Black Aesthetic theory to critically examine the role and use of jazz and blues in the Black community. Given the socio-political processes that gave rise to the production of literary works with jazz motifs, I will also utilize new historicism methods to analyze Baldwin and Kawabata's works. My research will illuminate how black aesthetics manifest outside of African American literature and with what effects.

# Mackenzie Jackson

(they/them)



Mackenzie Jackson is from Charlotte, NC and is a junior at Wake Forest University (WFU) committed to the preservation of Black Queer history. Jackson is majoring in English, with minors in Black Studies and Educational Studies. Their past research experiences include work toward a reparations project for the African American community of Winston-Salem, NC; oral history and archival documentation on the history of the WFU LGBTQ+ Center, and literary archival projects that surround underrepresented Black women writers of the 20th century. This summer, under the guidance of Dr. Geovani Ramirez, their research examines the vitality of the Black queer body, and the lasting impacts of the AIDS epidemic on the current lived experiences of Black queer people and their representations in media and literature. As a President's Aide and the secretary of the WFU Black Student Alliance, Jackson has attained proficiency in advocating for marginalized identity groups which they hope to continue throughout their academic and professional career. Upon graduation, Jackson intends to pursue a doctoral degree in English.

## **"Literary and Artistic Communities as Care Webs for Black Queer People: What We Learn from Black Queer Literary and Artistic Community Responses to HIV/AIDS"**

**Mentor: Prof. Geovani Ramírez**

The height of the AIDS crisis, the 1980s-1990s, are a violent illustration of the disregard for Black queer life. I employ "queer of color critique", "double cremation," and "secondary marginalization" frameworks to expose how Black queer people are excluded from dominant spaces due to the heterosexism in Black communities and anti-Blackness in white communities. In response to these challenges, Black queer people during the height of the AIDS crisis felt an urgency to produce literature and art as evidence of their being precisely because they knew U.S. society intentionally would not acknowledge or preserve their personhood. The literature and art produced was supported by care webs, networks of people who share love and solidarity without expecting requital and who celebrate the entirety of being both Black and queer. I argue that the care webs created among 1980's Black queer communities,



in response to Black death, are a radical reimagination of Black queer joy and survival. Despite HIV having a higher survival rate today, there are still many forces that complicate the lives of Black queer people. Thus, the need for care webs is still present and Black queer artistic communities have continued the legacy of their 1980's predecessors. In order to demonstrate the vitality of the tradition of community care, my research methods include an exploration of diverse forms of artistic and cultural productions that appear in various spaces and manifest in different mediums. I am working with archival materials of the UNC Chapel-Hill Southern Historical Collection Archives, which include reports, photographs, media and oral histories. I am also analyzing the intertextuality of Essex Hemphill's *Ceremonies* (1992) and Jericho Brown's *The Tradition* (2019), two poetry collections on the intersections of Blackness, queerness, and HIV. I additionally examine *Pose*, a television series about the New York City underground ballroom scene during the late 1980s to 1990s. I also participate in existing artistic and literary communities for Black queer people, through attending concerts, pride festivals, poetry open mics, bookstores, and social media interaction. This direct involvement informs and contextualizes my work. I am able to intentionally integrate myself into literary and artistic spaces that support Black queer people and reflect on those experiences. These avenues enable me to center the underrepresented historical narrative that is Black queer survival through community care. I posit that when we understand these artistic communities as a way that Black queer people are thriving then we can be intentional about investing in and creating more of them.

# Austin Kim

(he/him)

Austin is a rising senior at Pomona College studying linguistics where he concentrates in semiotics and theory of mind. In his creative and scholarly practice, he primarily engages with questions of ecology, the anthropocene, and cybernetics as it relates to human cognition. This summer, under the guidance of Dr. Michael Figueroa, Austin is creating a multi-media sound + art instillation on post-war memory where he investigates understandings of division, sanctuary, and belonging as experienced by the Korean diaspora. Upon graduation, he plans to pursue either a MFA in new media or a masters in pure mathematics and a PhD in multimedia composition. During the summer, Austin is looking forward to creating beautiful memories and feeling like a Disney princess in this luscious greenery (minus the sweating).



**Installation Title - “Gohyang / 고향 / 故郷”**

**Paper Title - “Fermentation and the Ecologies of Myth-Making: Memory, Belonging, and Diasporic Return”**

**Mentor: Prof. Michael Figueroa**

The DMZ is a thriving ecological sanctuary and shelter to over five thousand species, but it is also home to over one million landmines and 32,000 tons of napalm. This dialectic of environmental refuge and military violence is the kind of metaphor that extends throughout this research, holding capacity for seeming contradictory existence. To identify “place” as a literal and figurative imaginary, this installation situates itself across the DMZ, the 2.7-mile wide division contained between North and South Korea. Positioned in a place of impossible arrival, I center the “possibility of return” to a landscape contained between warring countries yet outside the geographies of either nation-state. Through the construction of fermentation, a representational logic to understand the simultaneous containment and proliferation of memory, this work aims to consider what it means to inhabit a space where one is not permitted to exist. This installation brings the audience to experience a somatosensory embodiment of ecology, envisioning new ways of being that wrestle with the history of war, decay, and militarism while centering rebirth, resilience, and life to imagining possibilities of reunification and futures of the Korean diaspora.

# Dory King

(he/him)



Dory King is a rising senior, McNair fellow and a member of the University Honors Program who is pursuing a dual degree in Political Science with a double concentration in Global Politics/ Public Policy and Behavioral/ Social Sciences at North Carolina Central University.

His research interests include Human Security, Political Economy, and Race, Gender, and Inequality. His work is influenced by transformative courses such as Transnational Human Security and the Politics of Race and Crime. This summer, under the guidance of Dr. Fenaba Rena Addo, he will investigate the impact of Black marriage on Black wealth creation, a nod Nikki Giovanni's line "Black Love is Black Wealth". Dory is a proud AmeriCorps Alum who continued the Corp's philosophy of "getting things done" after completing service by creating green spaces, building playgrounds, mentoring youth in underserved communities, and managing a county SNAP-food distribution center. After completing MURAP, Dory will return to NCCU to write his honors undergraduate thesis and enjoy his senior year. After graduation, Dory plans to pursue a combination JD/ PhD program in Political Economy.

**“Just a Baby Daddy?– Challenging the Perception of Personal Responsibility of Black Fathers in America in the Social/Big Data Age.”**

**Mentor: Prof. Fenaba Addo**

Black fathers in the United States have long been considered a pariah on society. This perception stems from a long history of societal practices, supported by policies and, laws that have sought to emasculate, castrate, and even eradicate them from not only being stakeholders in their own families, and communities, but also to devalue and deny them of equality in their humanity and participation in the American dream.

Over the last half century, as politicians and media characterized single black mothers as “Welfare Queens,” these tropes also contributed to the villainization of black fathers, most notably his role as absentee and as an

My research combines the use of primary and secondary sources to provide a comprehensive accounting of black custodial parenting change, specifically single black fathers from the 1990s to 2020 using US census data. My primary goal is to challenge beliefs of black men, and their roles as a parent, by exploring the impact of changes in social policy and laws, judicial custody stances and evolving societal norms. Using a mixed methods approach, my analysis seeks to challenge outdated perceptions of Black male parenthood participation. In addition, I aim to elevate a more accurate and nuanced social dialogue -that is more inclusive in researching family dynamics, especially those that have a significant impact on policy creation, social programs, equitable representation in the media and in academia.

## Lillian Lopez

(she/her)

Lilian is a rising senior at Beloit College, majoring in Psychology, with a double minor in Music and Dance, and a concentration in Sociology. Her research interests include performing arts therapy and social work practices, which are derived from her experiences as a dancer, choreographer, and composer, and her passion for helping young adults' mental health. As a McNair scholar, her previous work includes research on the perceptions of creative arts therapists and how their work has changed during the pandemic. Now, under the guidance of Dr. Michael Figueroa, her current work examines how current and previously enrolled college students used music as a self-soothing tool to regulate stress related to the COVID-19 pandemic. After graduation, she would like to pursue a Masters in Counseling Psychology and a Ph.D. in Social Work.



**"Music Matching Mood: Music Helps Mental Health During the Pandemic"**

**Mentor: Prof. Michael Figueroa**

What song would save you from Vecna? On the Netflix series Stranger Things, the main characters reflect on this question to save their friend, Max, from a monster preying on her deepest psychological terrors. While my project

does not discuss monsters attacking kids, it does investigate how youths turn to music listening to manage their psychological wellbeing. Specifically, the research topic is how current and previously enrolled college students used music as a self-soothing tool to regulate stress related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Bringing together the concepts of centredness (Moore, 2002), music-centered thinking (Aigen, 2014), and symbolic identification (International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis, 2022), I ask: How do college students symbolically identify with artists during the pandemic? With a prediction that students will interact with music receptively and identify with artists based on their priorities and moods, individual interviews will be conducted and will center around interviewees' listening habits, along with any other ways they may interact with music and understand how it helps them. Following Lena and Peterson, two researchers who have conducted studies between music and symbolic identification, the data will be analyzed by categorizing their music preferences to their moods. This study will help music therapists adopt a new perspective on approaching young adults interested in music therapy and understand other ways they may be compelled by music to cope. This research will serve as a foundation for future studies on the connection between receptive music therapy and adult mental attachment.

## **Gabriel Morales** (he/him)



Gabriel is a rising junior in the Social Behavioral Sciences with a concentration in Anthropology at California State University Monterey Bay. He is affiliated with the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Center (UROC) and is enrolled in the UROC Scholars program which is a two year program that helps students become acquainted with research and also assists students as they apply to graduate schools. His research interests include Multicultural workforce and work life, anthropology of organizations, labor and migratio, and how identity is felt and contested. This summer under the guidance of Dr. Charlene Regester, his work examines how faculty were impacted by the pandemic and how their institution UNC-Chapel Hill helped with their experience regarding



assimilation. More than that, his research also accounts for how instructors have continued to thrive with the ongoing changes of the pandemic and how their work has changed and impacted them up until the Spring 2022 semester. Upon completing the MURAP program, Gabriel will begin his senior year and graduate with his BA in Social Behavioral Sciences in the Spring. After graduation, during the Fall 2023 term, he will apply to graduate schools with the assistance of the UROC Scholars program.

### **“Remaining Resilient In the Face of Adverse Consequences of the Covid-19 Pandemic: General Pandemic Related Issues and the Strain Felt by Instructors”**

**Mentor: Prof. Charlene Regester**

This paper aims to understand the impact of Covid-19 on a wide range of Americans. The primary analysis utilizes statistical data retrieved from the CDC website regarding statistics about Coronavirus. Using Stata statistical software, Covid deaths are the dependent variable, with the independent variables being sex, age range, educational attainment, and racial/ethnic categories. Using linear regression method, the data reveals the populations that are most likely and least likely to die from COVID. When analyzing the racial/ethnic categories, it is essential to note that Hispanics are being used as the base category to compare the likelihood of Covid deaths in other populations. Hispanics are the focal point of analysis as they are more likely to contract COVID and are the second largest population in the United States. My analysis shows that Hispanics are the most likely to die from Covid-19 and that older Americans are significantly more likely to die from Covid-19. The data regarding Covid deaths will provide insights into which faculty members may be more vulnerable to the effects of Covid based on age range and racial group membership. As such, I supplement my statistical analysis by examining interview data of UNC faculty on the effects of Covid on them.

# Luke Odo

(he/him)

Luke Odo is a first-generation rising senior at the University of Missouri, Columbia, double majoring in Anthropology and International Studies—East Asia with minors in Political Science, Japanese, and Philosophy. His research interests include modern Japanese literature, national identity formation, especially with respect to multiethnic individuals and the Japanese diaspora, and the sociological importance of myth. In 2021, Luke contributed a research paper entitled “Contemporary Conditions for Domestic Terrorism in the United States: The Risk of Radicalization in a Post-Coronavirus World” to the edited fourth volume of *Security and Society in the Information Age* published by the Krzysztof Liedel Terrorism Research Center, which analyzed the potential effects of Covid-19 on domestic terrorism in the United States. This summer Luke is working under Dr. Lamar Graham to research native language retention among the Japanese diaspora in the U.S. between the initial period of immigration in 1870 to WW2. After the summer, Luke will serve as a McNair fellow and conduct research on Japanese national identity under Dr. Dominic Meng-Hsuan Yang, and go on to complete his undergraduate degree. Upon graduation, Luke will pursue a Ph.D. in East Asian Languages and Cultures and hopes to achieve a professorship in the field of Japanese studies.



**“Systemic Acculturation: Explaining the Loss of Japanese Language Ability Within the Japanese Diaspora 1890-1950”**

**Mentor: Prof. Lamar Graham**

This paper analyzes the historical context of the Japanese American experience from the beginning of the 20th century to WW2, and in so doing offers an explanatory mechanism for the loss of Japanese language ability within the Japanese diaspora stateside. Contrary to what is commonly accepted in academia, the author posits that the relative ease with which Japanese immigrants assimilated to “American” culture was not a product of similar value orientations, but rather of conformist pressures and nativist sentiments. Finally, the paper presents the sociolinguistic and historical mechanisms of racism and language that explain why the Japanese diaspora lost its heritage language so quickly when compared to other ethnic groups in the United States.

# Maya Phelps

(she/her)



Maya Phelps is a rising junior at Washington University in St. Louis where she is pursuing majors in African and African American Studies and Educational Studies and a minor in Sociology. Phelps was recently accepted to Mellon Mays Undergraduate Research Fellowship, and her MURAP project contributes to this ongoing work. Her experiences as a Black girl navigating adoption and struggles with integrating into an adoptive home inspire her research on foster care and adoptive youth in the United States. Her MURAP project is rooted in a Black girlhood and feminist praxis that aims to center the humanity and lived experiences of Black girls marginalized by race, gender, and age in their interactions with carceral systems. Under the guidance of Dr. Michael Palm, Phelps will analyze the interconnection of mass incarceration, the war on drugs, and the militarization of child welfare as a layered attack on Black familial structures to further systemic oppression. She centers abolition in her project to imagine a future where Black girls no longer need to resist the systems they are forcefully embedded in. After MURAP, Phelps will continue her research for her senior honors thesis and plans to pursue a doctoral program in Africana studies.

**“Children v. the State: The Vulnerabilities at the Intersection of Black Girlhood, Child Welfare, and Policing”**

**Mentor: Prof. Michael Palm**

My project examines foundational Clinton-era child welfare policy and its direct impact on Black girls in the foster care system. I conduct a textual analysis of the 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act and contextualize it as a culmination of the “War on Drugs,” mass incarceration, welfare cuts, and militarized police that manifested into the modern family-policing system. I uplift the story of MaKhia Bryant, a Black girl in foster care who was murdered by Columbus, OH police, to demonstrate how the adultification of Black girls in foster care creates unique vulnerabilities to emotional and physical systemic violence, incarceration, and death. I use Black feminist and girlhood frameworks to examine not only how Black girls’ intersecting identities impact their access to childhood in the foster care system, but

also to understand girls' experiences when interacting with intersecting institutions. The state's intentional investment in maintaining police surveillance, mass incarceration, and the child welfare system is a mechanism to control Black girls' lives and livelihoods. My project examines this impact as a dehumanizing strategy to systemically erase Black girls. Girls like MaKhia are erased twice: once when they enter the foster care system and again when that system legally steals their childhood and their lives. Alongside a growing body of literature, I argue that the current child welfare system must be abolished to preserve the humanity of Black girls in foster care using similar frameworks to prison and police abolitionist movements. I ask, how does the construction of child welfare, policing, and mass incarceration in the United States contribute to surveilling and adultifying Black girls? How do ideas, strategies, and dreams of abolition change when child welfare is centered as a carceral system?

## X. Ramos Lara

(they/she)

X. Ramos-Lara is a rising senior at UNC-Chapel Hill double majoring in Women's and Gender Studies and English and Comparative Literature and minoring in Latina/o Studies. Their research interests include queer and trans epistemologies as they



relate to the performance of non-white identities. In the spring of 2021, X. presented at the UNC Latina/o Studies Program's first undergraduate symposium on a talk titled: "Religion and Revolution in Julia Alvarez's 1994 Novel *In the Time of the Butterflies*; Making the Case for Recognizing and Validating Religion in (Dominican) Politics." Being inspired by the art and activism of queer and trans non-white persons, X. wanted to learn more about the place of queerness in anti-capitalist efforts, which led her to teaching a class in the spring semester of 2022. The class, titled "Queer Anti-Capitalism in Literature and Visual Media," gave her the time and space to teach on revolutionary productions of identity. Under the supervision of Dr. Seth Kotch, X.'s MURAP summer project will examine how vogue and ballroom culture build community as they relate to participants' defiance against American racial capitalism. After MURAP, X. is going to work on their English senior honors thesis and spend time writing chapbooks of poetry for publication.

In the (near) future, X. will pursue a PhD in either English, Feminist Studies, Latin American Studies, or American Studies, and possibly an MFA in Creative Writing some time down the line.

## **“‘I am Paying to See Pussy, Mug, Body, and Full Performance’: Ballroom Culture as the Radical Subversion of Hegemonic Gender and Racial Performativity”**

**Mentor: Prof. Seth Kotch**

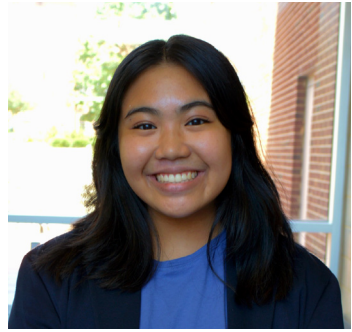
In the late 1900s with the emergence of the documentary *Paris Is Burning* (1990) and song “Vogue” by Madonna, the New York ballroom scene, populated by marginalized Black and Latinx queer and trans people, was thrust into the spotlight. While performances in ballroom can be entertaining to watch for those outside of the system, there is important reasoning behind these creative and necessary methods for survival, some examples being: the lack of acceptance and violence against Black transgender women, a rejection of queer and transgender children in their biological families, and the homelessness of queer and transgender youth. This paper looks at the ways in which queer, transgender non-white participants of the ballroom system rely on gender and racial performativity to subvert hegemonic constructions of gender, ethnicity, race, and sexuality. In order to do this, I must be in conversation with the key works of gender and race performance theorists Judith Butler, José Esteban Muñoz, Leticia Alvarado, and Juana María Rodríguez, as well as ethnographer Marlon M. Bailey. Grounding myself in the ballroom-inspired television show *Legendary* (2020), I will argue that the variety of queer, campy performances in ballroom are not only extensions of the body but also physical and cultural reactions to Black and Brown suffering, joy, and love.



# Andrea Sy

(she/her)

Andrea Sy is a senior at the University of Illinois at Chicago majoring in English with a concentration in World Anglophone Literature as well as a minor in Global Asian Studies. Her research interests include Philippine Anglophone literature and the Philippine identity. Her research is drawn by her experience as a Filipino-Chinese American and her own lack of knowledge regarding the history of the Filipino people. This summer, under the guidance of Dr. Lamar Graham, her work focuses on the works of American and Filipino writers who have researched the Philippine-American War and the ways they illustrate the experience. Outside of academia, she tutors elementary and middle school children in Bridgeport, Chicago as well as co-runs a literary magazine for her university. Upon completing her degree, she plans to pursue a Ph.D. in English and Comparative Literature and continue to advocate for the stories of Filipino people.



## **"The United States' Delusion: The Consequences of American Colonialism Depicted in *Insurrecto* by Gina Apostol"**

**Mentor: Prof. Lamar Graham**

This project examines the legacy of American colonialism and the impression left on the Philippines through Gina Apostol's, *Insurrecto*. Apostol illustrates the consequences of the colonial education that was implemented by the United States in an alleged collaborative effort to civilize the Filipino people. In *Insurrecto*, Apostol takes advantage of differing perspectives of historical events as she has the two main characters navigate their own interpretations of the Battle of Balangiga through competing scripts with different protagonists. For many Filipinos, and even Filipino-Americans, their own cultural values and their definition of freedom is sacrificed because of an education that rarely accounted for the voices of anyone but those who created it. Following the United States' presence was essentially a cultural genocide creating generations of Filipinos to be the colonials their education demanded of them. The product of this colonial education not only leaves generations of Filipinos with unanswered questions about their own history,

The legacy of American colonialism is depicted in *Insurrecto* as Magsalin, one of the main characters, navigates being one of the many Filipinos who are the product of a colonial education and reconciles with the reality of a history that is seldom expressed and heard.

## Nathan Unah

(he/him)

Nathaniel (Nathan) Unah is a rising fourth-year student at the University of Chicago, pursuing a BA in Economics with a minor in Inequality, Social Problems and Change. He is a recipient of the University Scholar Award and a member of the Trott Business Program, a selective program focused on building business acumen via workshops and coursework at the Chicago Booth School of Business. His research interests include economic inequality, especially the racial wealth gap, and this summer he has explored these interests under the guidance of Dr. Feneba Addo; his work examines how economic insecurity influenced mental health outcomes in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. After completing MURAP, Nathan will return to Chicago to write an undergraduate honors thesis and continue working as a research assistant at the Booth School of Business. After graduation, Nathan hopes to return to the University of Chicago for graduate school to pursue a Masters in Computational Social Science with an Economics concentration.



### **"The Effects of COVID-19 and Economic Insecurity on Mental Health Across Black and White Americans"**

**Mentor: Prof. Feneba Addo**

The COVID-19 pandemic presented Americans with an unprecedented public health emergency, and led to financial turmoil after the economy shut down. This study will investigate the effect of pre-existing economic inequality on mental health. Did mental health outcomes during COVID vary by income status, and how did this variation differ across racial lines? I hypothesize that the short term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health will be lower for high-income individuals than for low-income individuals. Furthermore, I expect these consequences to be lower for White individuals than for Black individuals.

Furthermore, I expect these consequences to be lower for White individuals than for Black individuals. I use data from the 1997 National Longitudinal Study of Youth and a difference-in-differences design to isolate the treatment effect of being low income on the health outcomes of the individuals after COVID-19. Furthermore, I use regression decomposition to explore black-white mental health gaps/disparities. These models will be used to isolate differences in cross-racial effects of several independent variables on mental health outcomes.

By linking economic inequality to adverse health outcomes, and potentially showing that mental health outcomes are influenced by long-term economic inequality just as they were by this public health emergency, this study can motivate action towards addressing the issue of economic inequality and its cascading effects for the social mobility of future generations.

## Taiylor Wade

(they/she)

Taiylor Wade is a rising senior and first-generation student at North Carolina State University majoring in History with a minor in Dance. Their academic interest lies in destigmatizing cultural dance forms through the breaking down of elite and concert dance performance in western dance spheres. Under the mentorship of Dr. Charlene Register, this summer Wade's research looks at how white choreographers in the United States appropriate African aesthetics. Their interest in dance history derives from their love for dance performance and choreography. In 2021, Wade was awarded the Creative Artist Award for dance choreography by Arts NC State for the work titled *Flowers Pressed Between Pages*. They continue to choreograph for the university's fall dance concerts in addition to the university's ballet company. After graduation this upcoming spring, Wade intends to pursue a doctorate in Dance Studies to continue their research in international dance forms.



**"Modified and Codified: The Appropriation of African Aesthetics in American Modern Dance Techniques and Choreography"**

## Mentor: Prof. Charlene Regester

This research paper approaches the problem of “elite” white modern dance choreographers and educators utilizing black aesthetics for commercial success on concert stages while simultaneously excluding black dancers from these respective spaces. The preliminary research focuses on the elements of African dance aesthetics in Ghana and the presence of such in American dance performance as reviewed in Bredna Dixon Gottschild’s *Digging the Africanist Presence in American Performance: Dance and Other Contexts*, in order to contextualize the appropriation and integration of black aesthetics in American modern concert dance. This research paper uses live performances in addition to writings on the choreographic process, written reviews and interviews as primary sources for analysis of post-modern white choreographers. The goal of the paper is to deconstruct the idea that modern dance evolved out of ballet as a form of protest against the restraint of European elitism. White women are often the face of this movement and

## Arielle Wiggins

(she/her)

Arielle Wiggins is a rising senior at Claflin University, the OLDEST and BOLDEST HBCU in South Carolina, majoring in History with a minor in Mass Communication. Wiggins is a scholar in the UNCF Mellon Mays Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program.



Her research interests include Black Women’s History, Cultural History, and Media Studies. This summer, under the guidance of Dr. Michael Palm, her work examines Contemporary Black women television series creators and their evolving engagement with spectators over the past twenty years. Upon completing this program, she will graduate from Claflin and plans to attend graduate school to earn her Ph.D. and begin her journey toward creating more positive and diverse representations of Black womanhood in the academy. Arielle’s dream is to return to teach at an HBCU like her beloved Claflin University. She hopes that her work and mentorship can create a space with more equitable distributions of knowledge, where young Black minds are affirmed and celebrated in their Blackness.

## **“More Than Pretty Faces: Black Women Creators and Digital TV Discourse”**

**Mentor: Prof. Michael Palm**

In this research project I ask how Black women television creators are simultaneously negotiating and changing the politics of representation that have historically burdened Black artists and performers. Using Issa Rae and her hit show, *Insecure*, as a case example, I analyze Rae’s communication with audiences on *Essence* magazine’s website and on social media, and I argue that Black Women’s communication styles online are helping them to overcome long-established burdens of representation on the television screen. The following questions guide my work: In what ways are representations of Black women changing now that creators like Rae are exercising control over their narratives and representations? In what ways is digital media not so “new” to Black women and their communication styles and how does that impact the way Black women engage with or gravitate to their content? Black women’s misrepresentation has long been scrutinized by Black cultural historians and within Media Studies, with a focus on stereotypes and struggles



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**MURAP expresses its gratitude to the following staff members and individuals for their assistance with the 2022 conference and for their continued support of the program:**

Amanda Aziz, Communication Skills Workshop Coordinator  
Jen Boehm, Senior Writing Coordinator  
Kiara Childs, Graduate Professional Development Workshop Coordinator  
Wendy Clayborne, Human Resource Specialist  
Sharon Dement, Business Liaison  
Sheriff Drammeh, Senior Program Manager, Sonja Haynes Stone Center  
Angela Hicks, Grants Coordinator, Sonja Haynes Stone Center  
Javier Jaimes-Ayala, Facilities Manager, Sonja Haynes Stone Center  
Dr. Joseph Jordan, Director, Sonja Haynes Stone Center  
Gregg Moore, Librarian, Stone Center Library  
Alexandra Odom, Stone Center Library Graduate Assistant  
Dr. Rosa Perelmuter, Former MURAP Director  
Barbara Pipkin, Elizabeth Michels Gift Account  
The Harry and Roberta Salter Foundation  
S Rekeibe, Community Building Coordinator  
Jacqueline Solis, Director of Research and Instructional Services  
Saskia Staimpel, Program Coordinator  
Dr. Isaac Unah, MURAP Director  
Janelle Viera, Conference Coordinator  
Kathy Wood, Director of Summer Undergraduate Pipeline (SUP)

**MURAP expresses gratitude to its financial supporters:**

Dr. Kevin Guskiewicz, Chancellor  
Dr. Chris Clemens, Executive Vice Provost  
Dr. Nathan Blouin, Director, Office of Research Development  
Dr. Claude Clegg, Chair, Dept. of African, African American and Diaspora Studies  
Dr. Elizabeth Engelhardt, Senior Associate Dean for Fine Arts and Humanities  
Dr. Arne Kalleberg, Interim Chair of Sociology  
58 Dr. Karla Slocum, Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

## **Catering** by Panera Bread

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# NOTES

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