



**WAYNE STATE**  
College of Liberal Arts  
and Sciences

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# The Political Current

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SUMMER 2018

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## Professor Ariel Helfer awarded NEH fellowship



Ariel Helfer

Ariel Helfer, Ph.D., assistant professor of political science, has been awarded a prestigious National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship. The award carries a stipend of \$50,400 and will commence for one year beginning in winter 2019.

Helfer joined the Department of Political Science in the fall of 2017, and teaches and conducts research in the field of political theory. He received his Ph.D. in government from the University of Texas at Austin in 2015. His research focuses on political ambition and statesmanship, especially as a theme in classical political thought and Greek history. Helfer is also trained in quantitative political methodology.

Helfer's recent book, *Socrates and Alcibiades: Plato's Drama of Political Ambition and Philosophy*, was published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 2017. His major current project, supported by the NEH fellowship, is a new book on Plato's *Letters*. Plato is famous for advocating the political rule of philosophers as a utopian ideal. In his *Letters* — a collection of 13 epistles addressed from Plato to various Greek politicians — he reveals that he was often called upon to implement the political counsel he was known to espouse in books such as *The Republic* and *Laws*. But it appears from *Letters* that Plato showed much less zeal and much greater circumspection than his devoted followers when it came to bringing political philosophy to bear on practical affairs. Even then, his greatest endeavor — an attempt to reform the powerful but decadent Sicilian city of Syracuse — was an utter failure. The conclusion

cont. on page 7

## Professor Kristin O'Donovan receives grant from the National Science Foundation

Communities attempt to learn from experiencing disasters such as Hurricane Harvey, but often those lessons do not lead to policy changes that could reduce future risks.

With the help of a \$55,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, Kristin O'Donovan, Ph.D., assistant professor of political science, will explore the limits on policy learning about mitigation following a disaster. O'Donovan will also seek to understand why one community may be more vulnerable to a disaster than its neighbor. According to O'Donovan, local governments often attempt to engage in learning about how to reduce future disaster risks but find it difficult to see change enacted. Her project will aim to identify the constraints on and proponents of policy-learning after disasters.



Kristin O'Donovan

Hurricane Harvey, which hit Texas in August 2017, presents a unique case for understanding the limits on policy learning because of the range of communities it affected in southeast Texas. O'Donovan and her team will collect data through interviews with local government officials — mayors, emergency managers and city

cont. on page 7

## Alumni news and information for future newsletters

We're interested in what you're doing now. Please take a moment to complete the following information and return it to us via fax, email or U.S. mail:

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## Professor Brad Roth named to the Wayne State University Academy of Scholars



Brad Roth

Brad Roth, Ph.D., professor of political science and law, received a signal honor from Wayne State University in 2018 in his selection for The Academy of Scholars. The Academy of Scholars was founded in 1979 and recognizes distinguished research and creative achievement by selecting for membership the most productive and widely recognized individuals among the university's faculty. Membership is the highest recognition that may be bestowed upon faculty members by their colleagues.

Roth is one of a small number of academics whose training and research span disciplines located in distinctly different colleges. Roth received his B.A. in political science from Swarthmore, his J.D. from Harvard Law, his LL.N. in international and foreign law from Columbia, and his Ph.D. in jurisprudence and social policy from the University of California, Berkeley. In addition to his positions at Wayne State University, Roth taught at the U.C. Berkeley School of Law; is a licensed member of the Bar in New Jersey and Washington, D.C.; and holds ancillary licenses for the U.S. District Court of New Jersey, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Roth has amassed a superlative record of research since joining Wayne State in 1997. He has published two sole-authored books, *Sovereign Equality and Moral Disagreement: Premises of a Pluralist International Legal Order* (Oxford University Press, 2011) and *Governmental Illegitimacy in International Law* (Oxford University Press, 1999), and two co-edited volumes, *Democratic Governance and International Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2000) and *Supreme Law of the Land?: Debating the Contemporary Effects of Treaties within the United States Legal System* (Cambridge University Press, 2017). He has also published over 40 articles and chapters in some of the most prestigious university presses and law journals in the profession. Since 2009, Roth has delivered dozens of invited lectures for universities and organizations

around the world, including the University of Goettingen, the London School of Economics, the University of Amsterdam, Oxford University, McGill University and Goethe University. The exceptional quality of his scholarship was recognized by Wayne State University when he was awarded a full professorship in 2011 and a Board of Governors Faculty Recognition Award in 2012.

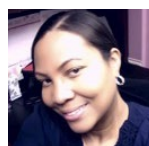
Roth's work applies legal and political theory to problems in international and comparative public law. His scholarship has focused largely on the intersection of international and domestic legal authority, addressing such topics as the right to self-determination of "peoples" residing within the territory of existing states, the purported international right to democratic governance, the transnational criminal liabilities and immunities of government officials who commit acts of state in violation of international legal obligations, and the implementation of international human rights standards in domestic courts. Drawing on relevant traditions in political philosophy, his writings have articulated a unifying account of the relationship between international and domestic legal orders that asserts the moral obligations of international legal commitments without denying the continuing moral significance of state sovereignty. Acknowledged as a leading expert on the international law of recognition of states and governments, Roth serves as one of three American Branch representatives to the International Law Association's Committee on Recognition/Non-Recognition of States and Governments, and his work in the areas of sovereignty, moral standards and international action has been lauded by scholars throughout the world who specialize in international law. Roth has attained an international reputation that places him at the pinnacle of his field.

The last member of our department to be selected for the academy was Philip Abbott. Congratulations to Professor Roth on his recognition as an exceptional scholar at Wayne State University!

student comprehensive and qualifying examinations, organizing doctoral dissertation defenses, and handling the innumerable issues and procedures surrounding our academic programs. The Department of Political Science is pleased to have Clark join our staff.

Welcome, Detonya!

## Detonya Clark Joins the Department of Political Science



Detonya Clark

Detonya Clark joined the Department of Political Science as an academic services officer in January. Clark previously worked for Wayne State University's Mike Ilitch School of Business and will take on the responsibilities of managing part-time faculty, scheduling courses, arranging graduate

## 2018 Lent Upson Lecture and Reception



Karen Mossberger

The Annual Lent Upson Lecture and Reception was held in May. The subject of the evening event was "Building Smart and Inclusive Communities: Detroit and Beyond" and the featured speaker was Karen Mossberger, Ph.D., professor at the Arizona State University School of Public Affairs. Mossberger is a graduate of the Ph.D. program in political science at Wayne State and has achieved great success in her academic career. At the reception and

awards ceremony, Mossberger received the Distinguished Alumnus Award. Other speakers included Garlin Gilchrist II, founding director of Social Media Responsibility at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Marc Hudson, co-founder and CEO of Rocket Fiber; and Katy Locker, Detroit program director for the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

Professor Kyu-Nahm Jun, director of the graduate program in public administration, organized this year's Lent Upson lecture and reception. It was, as always, a great success!

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### Helfer story cont.

toward which *Letters* points, therefore, is that Plato was much less committed to the idea of philosophic utopia than is often supposed on the basis of his most famous political dialogues. In fact, a handful of scholars over the course of the last century have seen in *Letters* not the collection of scraps from Plato's literary estate as they are usually presumed to be, but a coherent, unitary and authentic literary-philosophic whole. By contending that *Letters* is in fact a brilliant, innovative, artfully composed and only semiautobiographical sort of epistolary novel, Helfer's book seeks to reopen the debate concerning the authenticity and status of *Letters* with a review of scholarly criticism, a new English translation and an extensive interpretive essay.

Our congratulations to Professor Helfer on this major award. We look forward to seeing his next book in print!

### O'Donovan story cont.

planners — in communities affected by Hurricane Harvey. "How local governments consider information and make decisions about future disaster risk is critical to understanding vulnerability," said O'Donovan. "This research is exciting because it will shed new light on why some communities may be more vulnerable to a disaster than others. What we learn has the potential to help communities bounce back more easily after disasters."

Research will focus on the types of sources a community looks to for information, whether the information received is credible and whether local government officials tend to be myopic in their approaches. The project, "Constraints on Policy Learning After Disaster," was funded by the NSF's Rapid Response Research grant program.

Congratulations to Professor O'Donovan!



## Political science alum's nonprofit brings legal services to the homeless

Jayesh Patel's favorite mantra is "life is better in flip-flops" — but as a lawyer, he sometimes has to compromise and put on shoes. While flip-flops may not be appropriate in the courtroom, when your court is on the streets, sporting sneakers is not only acceptable, but also a smart move.

Patel is the founder of Street Democracy, a legal services nonprofit organization that focuses on aiding the impoverished and homeless. On any given day, Patel, who is also a private practice attorney, can be found meeting clients at Detroit soup kitchens, at shelters or in court, helping them understand the legal system and earn a chance for rehabilitation.

Patel received a bachelor's in political science at Wayne State in 1996 before completing law school at Georgetown University. After working at a nonprofit in Washington, D.C. that aided prisoners returning to their communities, he came back to the streets of his hometown with one goal in mind: Make an impact in ending the criminalization of poverty.

"I've always been interested in social justice. In this day and age of the million-dollar defense, I began asking, 'What if everybody got the same level of service?' and that's how Street Democracy was born," Patel explains. "But we also realized that without addressing the underlying causes of poverty and homelessness we would only be performing legal triage."

Street Democracy's first initiative was modeled after a homeless court run by Judge Elizabeth Hines in Ann Arbor, Michigan. In lieu of money, defendants who were identified as homeless were offered alternative methods of restitution, including counseling, job training, education and volunteer service. In 2011, Patel and his team were observing the court and formulating a plan to bring the model to Detroit when they learned that Detroit Action Commonwealth, a nonprofit membership organization of homeless persons, was also watching and interested in the same goal.

Hines introduced the two groups to each other and to judges Cylenthia LaToye Miller and Katherine Hansen of Detroit's 36th District Court. The two judges welcomed Street Democracy, Detroit Action Commonwealth, and other public and private agency partners, including the



Wayne County Sheriff's Office, Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, Capuchin Soup Kitchen and Neighborhood Legal Services Michigan to establish Street Outreach Court Detroit (SOCD). With Street Democracy focusing on the legal framework, drafting court guidelines and creating a network of pro bono counsel, SOCD became the 23rd homeless court in the United States. According to the Street Democracy website, it may be the only court that combines criminal and civil pro bono counsel to address legal matters outside of the court's jurisdiction while also tracking the long-term success rate of its participants.

The results speak for themselves. Patel and his team literally take the court to the streets, meeting clients at soup

kitchens and shelters. They work with clients to reduce and resolve civil infractions and misdemeanors by demonstrating a personal effort to improve their own lives. With a team of legal and social service professionals, clients create an

individual action plan designed to end their homelessness. After 30 days of demonstrated progress, they may apply for SOCD relief to suspend any outstanding warrants and are granted time to complete their action plan. The final step is an SOCD hearing, where relief is determined by the court.

"Instead of using crime as a punishment, we use it as an inflection point to change the trajectory," says Patel. "When someone is identified as homeless, making them pay hundreds of dollars in fines does not aid in breaking the poverty cycle. That only begins to occur when you address the causes, the root of homelessness. When they sign up for counseling, enroll in job training and regularly volunteer in their community, they are creating new networks, bettering themselves and positively impacting the people around them."

Six months after graduating from the program, 97 percent of participants had stable housing, 91 percent had stable income and 100 percent had no new misdemeanor or felony charges. The court continues today, and Patel estimates it has saved taxpayers thousands of dollars and reduced crime rates over the course of its existence.

The Department of Political Science is proud to have Jayesh Paytel as one of its graduates!

By Annessa Morley (This story originally appeared in the fall 2017 issue of Wayne State Magazine.)

## Professor Nadejda Marinova receives tenure and promotion



Nadejda Marinova

Nadejda Marinova, Ph.D., has received tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor. She joined the Department of Political Science in 2012 after serving as a Dornsife College Postdoctoral Distinguished Teaching Fellow at the University of Southern California. She holds a Ph.D. in politics and international relations from the University of Southern California, which she received in 2011. Marinova's research interests include diaspora and migration, Middle East politics, ethnic lobbies in foreign policy, human trafficking, and the intersection of culture and gender. She has conducted field research in Syria and in Lebanon, where she was a research affiliate at the Lebanese Emigration Research Center at Notre Dame University-Louaizé.

Marinova's work has been published by such outlets as Oxford University Press, *Foreign Policy Analysis* (as part of George Mason University's Global Migration and Transnational Politics series) and in the *International Studies Association Compendium*. She is the past communications chair of the ethnicity, migration and nationalism section of the International Studies Association. She received the 2017 President's Award for Excellence in Teaching, Wayne State University's highest teaching honor.

Her book, *Ask What You Can Do for Your (New) Country: How Host States Use Diasporas*, was published by Oxford

University Press in the summer of 2017. Within the last few decades, a body of theory and empirical analysis has emerged within the field of international relations on the connections between transnationalism and foreign policy. One aspect of this literature has involved the strategic relationship between home states and their ethnic lobbies abroad. Marinova's book develops a theory about when, how and why states use diasporas and the ethnic lobbies they generate to advance foreign policy goals.

Marinova presents a theory explaining the conditions under which a host state will decide to promote and use an ethnic lobby, and she tests it comparatively with eight cases, including: the Bush administration's use of the American Lebanese Cultural Union and the World Council for the Cedars Revolution in developing policy towards Lebanon and Syria; the Iraqi National Congress in endorsing the U.S. invasion of Iraq; the Cuban-American Committee's cooperation with the Carter administration in attempting to normalize relations with Cuba; and the International Diaspora Engagement Alliance (IdEA) launched by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2011 to promote economic development in a number of countries. This work has already attracted widespread attention and acclaim.

The Department of Political Science congratulates Marinova on her tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor.

## In Memorium: Professor Richard Eling

Professor Richard Clement Eling died in December 2017. He held a professorial appointment in the Department of Political Science from 1978 to 2013, and was an expert in public administration.

Richard produced an exceptional record of research. He authored a book, *Public Management in the States: A Comparative Study of Administrative Performance and Politics* (published by Praeger [1992]), and co-authored *The Political and Institutional Effects of Term Limits* (published by Palgrave-MacMillan [2004]). He also authored or co-authored 17 articles and 17 chapters in some of the profession's most prestigious university presses and refereed journals. He was department chair and a driving force in the Graduate Program in Public Administration. Richard received the Wayne State University Board of Governors Faculty Recognition Award in 1994 and was selected for the Outstanding Educator/Advocate Award by the Detroit Metropolitan

Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration. He chaired nine doctoral dissertations, including some of the most successful graduates of our Ph.D. program.

Richard was a pillar in the department. Although I knew him for only 14 years, I quickly appreciated his devotion to the M.P.A. program and willingness to do whatever necessary to ensure its success. Richard helped me understand the structure and processes of the college, and I considered his guidance invaluable. After his retirement, whenever Richard returned to the department, he always stopped by my office to discuss who was in worse shape — the Tigers or the Yankees — and asked how things were going. He always asked if there was anything he could do to help. I enjoyed his company and friendship and he will be greatly missed.

We wish him peace.

Daniel Geller

## Professor Sharon Lean appointed associate dean of the Graduate School



Sharon Lean

This May, Sharon Lean, Ph.D., was selected to serve as associate dean for student services in the Graduate School. Lean is an associate professor in the Department of Political Science, where she held the position of director of graduate programs since 2014. She has a

B.A. in Latin American studies with honors from Brown University and a master's in social sciences from the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales in Mexico. She earned her Ph.D. at the University of California Irvine, where she was an NSF Democracy Fellow. Her area is comparative politics with a focus on Latin America and the politics of democratization in the developing world.

Lean is the author of *Civil Society and Electoral Accountability in Latin America* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) and more than 10 chapters, journal articles and short monographs. Her work is published in English and Spanish in journals such as *Democratization*, *Electoral Studies*, and *Sociedad Civil*. Her most recent piece, co-authored with graduate student Alanna Jackson, is a comprehensive review entitled, "Mexican Political Development" in *Oxford Bibliographies in Political Science*. She is also co-editor of *Promoting Democracy in the Americas* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007). As part of her research, Lean has monitored

numerous election in countries across Latin America including Nicaragua, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela, and also in Liberia, West Africa.

Lean is the recipient of multiple research awards, including as principal investigator for a 2016 U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) grant on "Strengthening Women's Civic and Political Participation," and a 2013 Fulbright Scholars Award to conduct research in Mexico. She has also participated in grants to support graduate and undergraduate training at Wayne State, including the 2016 NEH NextGen Humanities Ph.D. Training Grant and as co-PI for a 2017 MetLife Foundation Study Abroad Innovation Grant with the Office of International Programs.

A recipient of the CLAS Excellence in Teaching Award, the President's Excellence in Teaching Award and the Outstanding Graduate Director Award, Lean is passionate about student success. She regularly offers courses with a study abroad component to provide field research experience to undergraduate and graduate students, and has supervised dozens of student research projects through the McNair Scholars program and Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

We wish Lean well in her new position and remind her that she always has a home in the Department of Political Science.

## Visiting Fulbright Scholar focuses on politicians and their office strategies



Marek Rybar

The tumultuous political climate in the United States is a "breathtaking" backdrop to Fulbright Scholar Marek Rybar, Ph.D.'s, contemporary analysis of whether a politician's individual characteristics influence their performance in office.

From a country where democracy is in its infancy, Rybar, of the Slovak

Republic, was awarded a six-month scholarship that started in January to pore over volumes of books, journals and periodicals that don't exist in his homeland. His grant supports the theoretical framework he is developing for a study of Parliament officials since the fall of communism in 1989. Looking at variables like gender, upbringing, education, party affiliations and debate performances, he hopes to identify patterns in elected leaders. "I am analyzing what has been written about our political system over the last 29 years," he says. "The volumes of written information I find here, I would not find there."

Rybar chose Wayne State because of past work with associate professor Kevin Deegan-Krause, Ph.D., of the political science department, whose expertise is in the

study of Eastern European democracies. Deegan-Krause is a 2008 Fulbright alumnus who taught and studied at Masaryk University, where Rybar is on the faculty.

Rybar is among the more than 8,000 students, educators and professionals annually awarded short- and long-term Fulbright scholarships to teach and conduct research across the globe. Wayne State proudly welcomes Fulbright awardees from abroad and supports faculty and staff chosen to collaborate with colleagues around the world.

Rybar spends the majority of his days at local libraries. On Monday evenings, he teaches a course on European politics and says he finds students engaging because of their confidence to ask questions and express their political opinions. In fact, this freedom of expression is quite different from what he encountered in 2009 while in Michigan collaborating with Deegan-Krause in writing an academic paper. This time around, he has daily encounters with people who offer unsolicited opinions about the state of governmental affairs. "Now, even at the grocery store, people are much more forthcoming about their views on the nation's political situation," says Rybar.

He has also noticed that the politics of the two countries are no longer polar opposites but moving to a more common middle, which he finds unusual because of the nearly 200-year difference in the births of each government.

The Department of Political Science is pleased to offer a temporary home and assistance in Professor Rybar's research.

## Political science students succeed

**Yuliya Harris** was selected as 2018 American Society for Public Administration Founders' Fellow.

**Amanda Eisbrenner** competed and was selected as part of the winning team at the 2018 NASPAA-Batten Student Competition (Regional Site Winner - University of Illinois-Chicago).

**Allison Lowery** competed and was selected as part of the winning team at the 2018 NASPAA-Batten Student Competition (Regional Site Winner - University of Illinois-Chicago).

**Zienab Chawki Hage** was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa 2017-18.

**Grace Elizabeth Mendoza** was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa 2017-18.

**Mary Salah Rabban** was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa 2017-18.

**Noah Arbit** published a paper titled "The Limitations of International Law in Countering Impunity for State Sponsors of Terrorism: Barriers to Legal Remedy for the AMIA and Israeli Embassy Bombings in Buenos Aires" in *Pennsylvania Undergraduate Law Journal* (vol. 10, no. 1, Spring 2018).

**Jake Clor** presented a poster abstract titled "Linguistic Diversity and Democratic Outcomes" at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, University of Central Oklahoma, April 2018.

**Matthew Lacouture** received a Fulbright Award (Jordan).

**Kevin Lorentz** was named the first Leda McIntyre Hall Fellow.

**Matthew Lacouture** and **Connor Sutton** were named Sarasohn Fellows.

### NEW DOCTORATES RECEIVED

**Robert Mahu**, "Rationalization and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act: Exploring the Characteristics of Multi-level Monitoring and Improvement." Director: Dr. Lyke Thompson

**Abdullah Bataineh**, "The Impact of USAID on Modernization Efforts in Afghanistan, 2001-07." Director: Dr. Nadejda Marinova

**Ilker Kalin**, "Predicting the Probability of Negotiation in Civil Conflicts: An Empirical Investigation of Intrastate Conflicts between 1989 and 2008." Director: Dr. Frederic Pearson

**Nicole Gerring**, "Empowered to Stop War?: Testing the Women and Peace Hypothesis, 1930-2010." Director: Dr. Sharon Lean

**Connor Sutton**, "Place over Politics: Power, Strategy, Terrain and Regime Type in Interstate War Outcomes, 1816-2003." Director: Dr. Daniel Geller