Advancing SPEA

SPEA is No. 1 in the new U.S. News & World Report’s Best Graduate Schools rankings

U.S. News last reviewed public affairs programs in 2012, when SPEA moved to No. 2, ahead of similar schools at Harvard, Princeton and other major universities. It now is at the top of the rankings tied with the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.

“This is a momentous day for Indiana University and for SPEA. To be ranked as the top program in the nation, ahead of legendary programs such as Harvard and Princeton, is a crowning achievement for our faculty and staff,” said John D. Graham, dean of the school. “It is testament to the remarkable foundation built by our SPEA family going back to the school’s launch in 1972.

“The improvement in our overall ranking is certainly reason enough to celebrate but there is more good news. Our programs in nonprofit management, environmental policy and management, and public finance and budgeting are also considered the best in the nation, and our program in public management and administration is in the top three,” Graham added.

“This reputation for excellence comes with an obligation,” Graham said. “We re-dedicate ourselves to advancing knowledge that improves our world.”

SPEA was also ranked No. 1 in three specialties – environmental policy and management, nonprofit management and public finance and budgeting – and third in public management and administration. Its specialty in public policy analysis ranked seventh after previously being ranked ninth, and SPEA ranked within the top 15 for health policy and management, social policy and city management and urban policy.

“The rankings are a reflection of all that we do at SPEA – the research by our faculty, the accomplishments of our students, and the remarkable impact our alumni are having through careers that started here,” added Michael McGuire, the school’s executive associate dean. “To be considered the best in the nation is an honor and it motivates us to continue to excel.”

Deans, directors, and department chairs representing the 272 master’s programs in public administration and public affairs were surveyed. Respondents were asked to rate the academic quality of master’s programs on a scale of 1 (marginal) to 5 (outstanding).

“The rankings are based on reputation and our reputation is hard earned and deserved,” said Kirsten Grønbjerg, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs. “The scholarship, community service, and teaching effectiveness of our faculty is unparalleled. I’m pleased and not at all surprised that word of that is getting around.”

The rankings are more than a badge of accomplishment. They’re a powerful magnet for prospective students comparing SPEA to other institutions.

Robert Kravchuk is the director of the Master of Public Affairs Program and director of the SPEA Connect online MPA program that shares the ranking: “When prospective students see this ranking they will know IU offers the ideal value combination – the best public affairs graduate programs in the country offered with public university tuition.”
Study: Black students more likely to be identified as gifted if teachers are black

African-American children are three times as likely to be placed in gifted-education programs if they have a black teacher rather than a white teacher, according to research conducted by faculty members at SPEA and Vanderbilt University.

The research also finds that black students are 54 percent less likely than white students to be identified as eligible for gifted-education services after adjusting for the students’ previous scores on standardized tests, demographic factors, and school and teacher characteristics.

The results suggest the key factor is that black teachers are more likely than white teachers to see black students as gifted – and not that the students or their parents are doing anything differently to gain one of the limited seats in programs for gifted students.

The article, “Disentangling the Causal Mechanisms of Representative Bureaucracy: Evidence from Assignment of Students to Gifted Programs,” appears in the Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory. Authors are Sean Nicholson-Crotty and Jill Nicholson-Crotty, SPEA associate professors, and Jason Grissom and Christopher Redding of Vanderbilt University.

“We find that African-American students are under-represented in gifted programs,” Sean Nicholson-Crotty said. “And we find that having a black teacher dramatically increases the likelihood that a black student will be placed in a gifted program, relative to having a white teacher.”

Previous studies had shown that African-American students are underrepresented in gifted programs, but the studies were based on organizational-level data and could not determine what caused the underrepresentation. The current study makes use of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten cohort, a federal program that tracks information about students from kindergarten through eighth grade.

These data make it possible to measure the odds that black and white students will be placed in gifted programs, with adjustments made for student, teacher and school characteristics, test scores and other factors. These data also allow the
researchers to draw conclusions about a causal mechanism that can explain the observation that black students are more likely to be identified as gifted with black classroom teachers. Specifically, the study shows that black teachers’ perceptions of black students are more positive than are white teachers’ perceptions, and these perceptions drive assignment differences. Black teachers more positively assess black students’ approaches to learning, self-control, and other behaviors that may be important in identifying giftedness.

“It’s that teacher-student match, independent of your test score,” Jill Nicholson-Crotty said. “It’s the relationship between the teacher and the student.”

These findings accord with those from another recently published study, by researchers at American University and Johns Hopkins University, which found that black teachers had higher expectations than white teachers that black students would succeed in school.

The authors did not find support for another possible outcome suggested in the academic literature: that, in a racially diverse teaching force, both black and white teachers would be more likely to recommend black students for gifted programs. They also found no evidence of two other potential explanations for the results. One is that black students perform better on standardized tests and other objective measures of giftedness if they have black teachers. Another is that parents of black students are more likely to engage with teachers and lobby have their children evaluated for giftedness if their teachers are black.

Gifted education programs have long been subject to criticism that their selection criteria, which often rely on IQ testing and other measures of cognitive ability, are biased against students of color and poor children. But the current study suggests African-American students can also be left behind in the referral process, when teachers recommend students to be evaluated for gifted programs.

The researchers say the findings point to the value for schools of recruiting and hiring more teachers of color. While teachers and students should not be matched by race, they say, having a more diverse teacher force would raise the odds that black students would have a black teacher in the early grades when students are typically identified for gifted programs. Another policy response, they said, would be to screen all students for giftedness, not just those who are referred by teachers or parents, and to provide outreach to parents so they have the information and skills to help schools identify their children as gifted.

Research: Human hair and nails can tell toxic secrets

Chemicals used as flame retardants that are potentially harmful to humans are found in hair, toenails and fingernails, according to new SPEA research. The discovery of an easily available biomarker should ease the way for further research to determine the human impact of chemicals commonly found in the environment, including in indoor dust, water and air.

Exposure to flame retardants in various forms has been linked to obesity, learning disabilities, neuro and reproductive toxicity, and endocrine disruption. Flame retardants are frequently added to plastic, foam, wood and textiles. They are used in both commercial and consumer products worldwide to delay ignition and to slow the spread of fire. Flame retardants persist in the environment and bioaccumulate in ecosystems and in human tissues.

“Little is known about the human exposure to flame retardants, especially new classes of the retardants,” said SPEA researcher Amina Salamova. “The first step is to establish a relatively easy and reliable way of measuring chemical levels in people, especially children, and we’ve determined that hair and nails can provide exactly that.”

Until now, researchers depended on samples of human milk, blood and urine, and those samples are more difficult to obtain than hair and nails.

Salamova is the co-author of the study, “Hair and Nails as Noninvasive Biomarkers of Research: Human hair and nails can tell toxic secrets” by Ron Hites and Amina Salamova.
Human Exposure to Brominated and Organophosphate Flame Retardants,” with Liang-Ying Liu of SPEA, Ka He of the IU School of Public Health-Bloomington and Ronald A. Hites, Distinguished Professor in SPEA. Their study was published in the journal Environmental Science and Technology. It was funded by an Indiana University Collaborative Research Grant.

The researchers collected hair, fingernails and toenails from 50 students in Bloomington and compared the levels of chemicals found in those samples with what was found in blood from the same people.

Salamova and colleagues found that there was a strong relationship between the levels of a large group of flame retardants, the polybrominated diphenyl ethers or PBDEs, in hair and nails, on the one hand, and those in serum, on the other. In some cases, women had higher concentrations of common flame retardants, and the researchers speculate that was a result of nail polishes that contain these chemicals.

Previous research by an IU team, which included Salamova and Hites, found that chemicals used as flame retardants were present as environmental pollutants in tree bark harvested from locations around the globe, including remote sites in Indonesia, Nepal and Tasmania.

### Study: How U.S. cities prepare for plug-in electric vehicles

Portland, Ore., is ranked at the top of a list of major U.S. cities that are the most ready to accommodate plug-in electric vehicles, known as PEVs, such as the Chevy Volt, Nissan Leaf and Tesla Model S.

SPEA researchers developed a ranking of municipal “PEV readiness” to contrast the variation in readiness among different cities. The evaluation ranked the nation’s 25 largest cities by population along with five other large cities that have been included in other major PEV studies. The rankings also included the largest cities in states that have joined California in offering a package of incentives to reach an ambitious zero-emissions vehicle goal.

The Obama administration and policymakers in several states have provided financial and other incentives to encourage consumers to buy PEVs, but sales have fallen short of goals. PEV advocates say getting more of the cars on the road will enhance U.S. energy security by reducing dependence on imported oil and cutting greenhouse gas and other emissions.

“With gas prices dropping, consumers have less of a financial incentive to buy a PEV,” researcher Kyle Clark-Sutton said. “It is crucial for cities to create receptive policy environments for purchasing and operating an electric car. If they don’t, we won’t see the technology’s promise as a means of climate change mitigation fully realized.”

Under a scoring system devised by the research team, Portland, Washington, D.C., New York City, Baltimore, Los Angeles and Denver comprise the top six cities. All six offer purchase incentives for PEVs and charging equipment. Four of the six offer time-of-use electricity rates, which makes overnight charging more affordable. The top-ranking cities also score well in categories such as public charging station density, special parking privileges and high-occupancy-vehicle lane access.

“Some cities are doing more to encourage PEV ownership than others by installing new public charging infrastructure and offering various sorts of incentives,” researcher Saba Siddiki said. “PEV owners enjoy free parking in downtown Nashville and are exempt from all parking fees in Honolulu. Portland, Oregon, has streamlined the often complicated permitting process for home-based chargers. In Austin, PEV drivers can subscribe to unlimited use of 250 public charging stations located around the city for less than $5 per month.”

Those services and incentives are largely absent from the bottom six cities: Charlotte, N.C.; El Paso, Texas; Detroit; Portland, Maine; Providence, R.I.; and Columbus, Ohio.

“If a city and state are not offering policies to make PEV ownership more attractive, it may be difficult for car dealers in those states to move
vehicles off the showroom floors,” researcher Sanya Carley said.

The researchers note that the fall in gas prices is just one aspect of a fast-changing economic and political environment affecting PEV sales and regulations. Connecticut, for example, just added monetary incentives for purchasers, and Georgia removed them. Some states are enacting higher fees on PEV registration, claiming drivers don’t pay fuel taxes to support road construction and repair.

The researchers conclude that purchasing a PEV is more expensive than a conventional vehicle, even though operating it can be less expensive. Therefore if policies that reduce the purchase price and incentivize the operation of a PEV are not implemented, nor are cities prepared to offer the institutional support for PEVs, consumers will continue to favor conventional cars and trucks.

The article “Plug-in electric vehicle readiness: Rating cities in the United States” was published in Electricity Journal with a goal of informing policymakers and consumers while providing a helpful tool to other researchers studying PEV policy. The research team includes two recent SPEA graduates – Kyle Clark-Sutton, an economist with the Center for Environmental, Technology and Energy Economics at RTI International, and Celeste Wanner, a research analyst at the American Wind Energy Association – and SPEA faculty members Saba Siddiki, Sanya Carley, John Rupp, and John D. Graham.

Research summary: The impact of the Affordable Care Act

Kosali Simon

This research summary is excerpted with permission from the National Bureau of Economic Research Reporter. SPEA’s Kosali Simon is a research associate in the NBER programs on healthcare, health economics and children. You may find the full summary with citations here: http://www.nber.org/reporter/2016number1/simon.html

My recent research has focused on measuring the ways that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) affects the delivery of health services, labor market outcomes, and population health and well-being. Most of my work relies on quasi-experimental research designs that exploit differences in the ways states have implemented parts of the ACA, or ways that the law affects different sub-populations.

The ACA is a massive law that overhauls many parts of the U.S. health economy. The insurance expansions at the heart of the legislation only occurred in 2014, and studies of the early effects of these changes are only now starting to emerge. However, other aspects of the law came into play much earlier, and I have focused on those changes. In particular, my coauthors and I have examined the 2010 young-adult provision that requires private insurers to allow dependents to remain on their parents’ policies until the age of 26 and have several interesting findings.

First, the effect of the law on young adults’ insurance coverage was quite dramatic. Almost immediately, this provision increased parental employer coverage of young adults by more than 40 percent—slightly more than 2 million young adults. This expansion also altered health care utilization, increasing young adults’ use of inpatient health care and slightly reducing emergency room use. So far, the young-adult expansion does not appear to have substantially affected labor market outcomes.

My work on the young-adult expansion exploits a quasi-experimental research design. The key idea is that even though this provision was implemented nationally, it only affected 19- to 25-year-olds. To help control for time trends and other sources of bias, my
Take Up and Crowd Out

In a series of papers with Yaa Akosa Antwi, Aaron Carroll, Bradley Heim, Ithai Lurie, Jie Ma, Asako S. Moriya, and Benjamin D. Sommers, I examine the impacts of the young-adult mandate using both survey and administrative data. In our first paper, we use household survey data to show that the provision proved popular, with parental employer-sponsored insurance among young adults rising quite dramatically from March 2010 to November 2011, leading to large reductions in the number of uninsured. Our estimates suggest that the ACA reduced by about one third the number of uninsured among targeted individuals with parental offers of employer coverage. The high take-up rate of the newly available coverage may be surprising, given that young adults are a relatively healthy population with other spending priorities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the protective role of parents may have proved key to accounting for the impact of this particular provision.

Aside from take up, a pressing question in health insurance expansion has been the extent to which pre-existing forms of insurance are crowded out. We find that the increase in parental coverage drew almost equally from among the uninsured and the otherwise-insured populations. Prior research shows that substitution between different forms of coverage was present during the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) expansion. In the CHIP case, however, concern focused on whether public coverage displaced private coverage, whereas in the case of the young-adults reform associated with ACA, private parental coverage mostly displaced other sources of private coverage.

Health Care Utilization

Even though young adults are not frequent users of health care generally, they are at greater risk than the general population of needing certain types of care, such as mental health care. We examine the effects of the young-adult expansion on use of care, using administrative hospital claims data, and find that use of inpatient hospital care increased 3.5 percent among young adults, with care for mental health-related illnesses rising 9.0 percent and emergency room (ER) use falling slightly. The reduction in ER use occurred mainly for weekday admissions, suggesting that use of ambulatory care increased; unfortunately, while researchers have access to a great deal of all-payer data on hospital care, there are no rich sources of data available to directly study ambulatory or preventive care.

Maternity Care Coverage

Following the insights that young adults are highly represented in certain patient populations, and that some degree of substitution among types of health insurance occurs in response to expansion, we examine impacts of the young-adult provision on use of maternity care. More than a third of all babies in the U.S. are born to women age 19 to 26. Although non-disabled young adults are generally ineligible for Medicaid coverage, pregnancy-related health insurance through Medicaid is an exception. Using birth certificate records that document source of payment for childbirth, we find evidence consistent with a reverse crowd-out effect, by which, following implementation of the young-adult provision, private insurance replaced Medicaid to a certain extent. These patterns are evident for the affected age group (19- to 25-year-olds), while no such clear pattern emerges for older mothers unaffected by the policy (27- to 29-year-olds).

Labor Market Effects

One of the unintended consequences of U.S. reliance on health insurance provided through employers is its potential to reduce workers’ job mobility. The young-adult law provides an opportunity to test the job-lock hypothesis, using availability of health insurance through another family member. This method echoes an identification approach used in the previous literature that found substantial evidence of job lock in the early 1990s. We used rich administrative tax data to test the implications of the young-adult provision on labor market outcomes and related aspects of young-adult lives. These data have several advantages over survey data, as they contain information on non-resident parents’ access to employer benefits which is not typically available in survey data.

We detect no substantial changes in a large set of outcomes, including measures of employment status, job characteristics, and post-secondary education, even when restricting attention to young adults whose parents have access to employer benefits. These findings may be unsurprising given the relatively good health of this age group, implying a lack of salience of health insurance in their employment choices. In ongoing work with the same data, we examine the demographic consequences of the
law, following prior work in which my coauthors and I investigated the relationships between health insurance and marriage and fertility. These administrative data present exciting opportunities for future research on the 2014 ACA expansions, particularly because the ACA mandates the collection of additional information on insurance coverage in tax data.

My most recent research explores early effects of the 2014 Medicaid expansion. Using the quasi-natural experiment created by a 2012 Supreme Court decision, following which about half the states opted out of the Medicaid expansion that would cover adults earning less than 138 percent of the federal poverty level, my co-authors and I find no statistically detectable effects on labor market outcomes. While this is important early evidence, sharper study designs are needed to focus exclusively on those who are treated.

Future Directions in ACA Impact Studies

When the ACA passed in 2010, there was a great deal of ambiguity regarding how U.S. health policy would be redefined by the law. The years since have witnessed much uncertainty about the law’s implementation. However, aside from the 2012 Supreme Court decision weakening the Medicaid expansion, the main ACA provisions took effect largely as planned. Taken as a package, the ACA has made vast changes to the regulation and financing of the health care sector, providing researchers with openings to explore many questions in health economics. In light of the prominent position of health reform in current public affairs, these opportunities for research will also produce evidence that informs the ongoing and deeply salient debates about the appropriate design of U.S. health care policy.

Novick receives NSF CAREER Award

In a recognition regarded as one of the most prestigious given in support of junior faculty, the National Science Foundation has awarded SPEA’s Kimberly A. Novick and seven other researchers at Indiana University a total of $6.27 million to advance research with applications to areas such as affordable drug development, global climate change, and resilience to terrorist attacks and natural disasters.

The NSF Faculty Early Career Development Awards, known as the NSF CAREER Awards, recognize faculty who “exemplify the role of teacher-scholars through outstanding research, excellent education, and the integration of education and research.” As an award that supports both research and education, each grant supports cutting-edge research as well as educational activities that benefit students from grade school to the Ph.D. level. All grants are for five years.

“This award is a great recognition of the scholarship and commitment to education of IU’s young faculty -- as well as the breadth and depth of the university’s research enterprise -- with eight faculty honored who

Kimberly A. Novick
span six departments in three schools across two campuses,” said IU Vice President for Research Fred H. Cate.

“Moreover, each project reflects our faculty’s deep commitment to the education of the next generation of scientists, with many grant recipients engaging in innovative educational programs designed to reach Indiana’s young people where they learn through partnership with local schools, museums, and other state and regional organizations.”

Novick will receive about $750,000 to study how the return of forests in the Eastern United States may cool the Earth’s surface, counteracting warming driven by climate change. The evaporation and winds caused by forests move heat away from the surface of the Earth in the same way that sweat or a fan cools the human body.

To conduct the study, Novick will observe evaporation and surface temperature across a wide range of grasslands and forests in eastern North America and compare the data against overall global trends. Temperatures in the region under observation are unique because they have lowered or remained unchanged over the past 100 years. Novick’s project will test the hypothesis that the absence of warming is caused by a century of reforestation driven by people abandoning poor farmland in the region.

The award also will support a new workshop series and IU’s participation in Project Budburst, a citizen science program that teaches young people to contribute to data-driven climate research through observing their environment.

It’s the buzz: Students win funds for beekeeping business

In February, SPEA students won $100,000 from IU’s 2015-16 Building Entrepreneurs in Software and Technology (BEST) Competition to invest in their company, The Bee Corp., which monitors the health of bees in the hive.

The founders of The Bee Corp. are SPEA students Lucas Moehle, Ellie Symes, and Simon Kuntz and Wyatt Wells of the IU Kelley School of Business. Their business idea grew out of the Beekeeping Club they started on campus, and it addresses a market they say is both important and underrepresented.

“We presented to the IU Foundation about the Beekeeping Club, and some board members pulled me aside and said that there were some possibilities in the pollination market and that we should dream big and think beyond a club,” Symes said. “I went back to my team and said I thought it was something we could do. We started figuring out little niches where we could fit in.”

They found few solid technical solutions for preventing the death of bees, despite the fact that U.S. beekeepers lost more than 40 percent of their colonies in 2014-15. Total colony loss in Indiana reached 49 percent over the same time period. The students plan to use their investment from the BEST Competition to acquire hives and start developing a much-needed product: equipment that monitors internal conditions in hives to keep bees healthy.

Healthy bees are important because they pollinate flowering plants that either directly or indirectly produce one-third of our food. Without healthy bees, there could be a major disruption in food production.

Winning the BEST Competition will jumpstart The Bee Corp., said Symes, who encourages future contestants to use all the resources, advice, and learning opportunities that the competition provides.

The BEST Competition, hosted by IU’s School of Informatics and Computing and Kelley School of Business, and has invested $1 million in student-led projects over the past five years. The prize is the largest award in the world offered by a university solely to its students in a business plan competition. Investors – a group of business leaders who are IU alumni – also received a stake in the company.
Brass is named one of IU’s Outstanding Junior Faculty

SPEA’s Jennifer Brass has been honored as one of Indiana University Bloomington’s Outstanding Junior Faculty for the 2015-16 academic year.

The award, presented by the Office of the Vice Provost for Research and the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs, celebrates tenure-track faculty working on nationally recognized research or creative programs. Brass is one of five honorees, all assistant professors.

Brass joined Indiana University in 2010. She received her Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, in political science in 2010. Her research focuses on service provision and governance in developing countries, particularly sub-Saharan Africa.

Her special interest lies in understanding the role of nongovernmental organizations in the provision of public services and in state development in countries with low administrative capacity. One subset of her research focuses specifically on the provision of electricity in Africa, examining the prospects for collaboration among governments, NGOs, businesses, donors and communities to increase electricity access.

Brass’ first book, “Allies or Adversaries? NGOs and the State in Africa” will be available from Cambridge University Press later this year. Her most recent honor was an award for Best Comparative Paper presented at the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management in November 2014. She also received an IU SPEA Teaching Award for Excellence in graduate instruction in 2014.

“I am thrilled that the campus is able to recognize and provide support for the excellent research and scholarship that these award recipients are conducting,” said Eliza Pavalko, vice provost for faculty and academic affairs. “Selecting just five Outstanding Junior Faculty from among the many extraordinary nominees was a challenge for the committee, but our awardees stand out for the excellence, originality and impact of their research while also being recognized for excellent teaching and other activities.”

“The diversity and scope of research being carried out by these five faculty is truly outstanding,” said Rick Van Kooten, vice provost for research. “Each holds great promise for notable contributions to the research enterprise at IU Bloomington. I’m pleased that they are being recognized for their early achievements and look forward to what they will accomplish going forward.”

Faculty in all schools and departments on the Bloomington campus who are working toward earning tenure were eligible for nomination. The award provides a $15,000 grant for future research.

Woronkowicz finds platform for cultural policy research after years on stage

For SPEA’s Joanna Woronkowicz, a background in fine arts set the stage for both her work in the classroom and her research.

She’s performed on stage professionally, studied fine arts and pursued a Ph.D. after discovering a love of research. Understanding the dynamics of the arts sector was, at one point, central to her work on stage. That understanding is still critical now from a research perspective.

“My parents arrived with two children and one on the way, two suitcases and $500,” she said, reflecting on her parents’ immigration to Canada. Originally from Poland, they lived in Italy before transplanting to North America.

Born and raised in Canada, Woronkowicz grew up with a passion for musical theater. She was awarded her first professional role, the title role in “Oliver! The Musical,” at the age of 7 after walking several blocks, unaccompanied, to the audition.

She attended high school in the United States after her father’s engineering career moved the family.
When she graduated from high school a year early — at the age of 16 — she enrolled as a pre-med and neurobiology major at the University of Maryland College Park.

After attending orientation, housing assignment in hand, Woronkowicz had last-minute doubts and began researching other options while her parents were out of the country. Upon their return, she presented an entirely new plan that would have her attending university in Canada — one she hoped they would approve of, as her dual citizenship made it more economical.

“I told them all they had to do was drop me off,” she said. “And it worked.”

She graduated from the University of Windsor in Ontario, Canada, with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 2004 and began pursuing a performance career in the Washington, D.C., area. After two years of performing professionally, Woronkowicz enrolled in the arts management program at American University.

“I took a lot of policy, stats, and econ courses,” she said, “I don’t know why, but it was something I was really interested in at that point. I kind of merged these two areas together that I was interested in and ultimately began to study cultural policy.”

After a few internships and a research assistantship at the Urban Institute, she discovered she enjoyed working with data in a scholarly environment. Her mentor, Norman Bradburn, encouraged her to apply and pursue her Ph.D.

Woronkowicz began her doctoral studies in public policy at the University of Chicago in 2007 and relished the chance to participate in a project centered on building cultural facilities. That ultimately became the topic of her dissertation.

After graduation, she pursued work in the government sector, which led to her appointment as senior research officer at the National Endowment for the Arts.

There, she continued her passion for conducting her own research by writing a book on cultural facility building in her off-hours. She traveled nationwide on weekends to conduct interviews and visit cultural facilities.

She described that schedule as demanding, especially in the context of a new marriage, and decided to look for a position that would allow her to holistically pursue her passions for research and writing. That led Woronkowicz to IU.

When she accepted the tenure-track position at SPEA, she knew it would enable her to continue writing — her latest book, Building Better Arts Facilities, was published last year — as well as conduct her own research and work with students in an arts-rich community. She said it was exactly what she wanted to do.

“Honestly, I love it here. It’s the perfect job and the ideal place for what I do,” she said. “The support I get from SPEA and IU and the collaborative opportunities make it a pretty stellar environment. I couldn’t ask for anything better.”

Just ahead of Obama, SPEA students visit Havana

Sixteen SPEA undergraduates passed over popular spring break destinations in favor of a weeklong public policy exploration of Havana, Cuba.

“The course is interactive, intensive, and hands-on,” said SPEA professor Dan Preston. “This involves guest lectures from academics, professionals, and government officials related to health care, education, and economic development, to name a few. It also allows students to see Cuban policy and systems in practice.”

Preston designed the comparative policy course in 2014 and took the first group of students to Cuba in 2015.

“The course provides students the opportunity to see how a different socioeconomic model functions as a contrast to the system of the U.S.,” Preston said. “It also helps students to appreciate and have a better understanding of Cuban culture and history.”

The students spent time at a primary school, cooperative farm, health clinic, women’s rights
organization, and retirement home. However, other planned visits — a briefing at the U.S. Embassy and a professional baseball game — were canceled while the country hurried to prepare for President Barack Obama’s visit just days later.

Paint fumes lingered throughout the entirety of Havana as rushed refurbishments took place, said SPEA sophomore Michelle Long. Other developments, like an increased police presence on the streets and new pavement wherever Obama’s motorcade would pass, signaled the upcoming visit and newly normalized relations.

One of Long’s favorite memories from the trip grew out of these inconveniences. Long and classmate Rob Duffy jogged through Havana. On their return route, they realized that the only way to reach the hotel was to run through recently poured tar. Duffy lost a shoe and came out with asphalt on his bare feet.

“I just remember laughing, looking around, and thinking that Old Havana will never be the same,” Long said.

Beyond these tangible repairs, Preston noted a renewed excitement and optimism among both the Cuban officials and citizens.

The spring break trip to Cuba was the first trip outside the U.S. for Olivia Malone, a sophomore in SPEA.

“It all happened so fast and was so new that my mind was always racing to catch up with everything I was experiencing,” Malone said. “Walking around Old Havana was almost too much to take in, with all of the music and colors. It was beautiful and interesting, despite the sensory overload.”

For Long, the Cuban culture and people generally matched up to her expectations.

“Their true devotion to the Castros and Che Guevara was quite astonishing,” Long said. “I can’t begin to accurately portray the adoration and devotion among the Cuban people. Similarly, the respect citizens had for one another was what one might suspect from a communist society.”

But Long was not expecting the gaps between the American and Cuban policy lexicon.

“Understanding what Cuban officials and ministers are explaining becomes a game of comprehension,” Long said. “Key issues of assembly, protest, and democracy are deeply embedded within the Cuban government and its people, but not in the same way that those from the U.S. might understand. Without an analytical understanding of these constructed definitions, you might think that the U.S. and Cuba are far more similar than they are.”

Unlike Long, Malone embarked without any expectations of what Cuba would offer.

“I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Possibly the only thing I was expecting was the warm weather,” Malone said. “The reality of Cuba is colorful and fascinating but damaged and poor. It was a sobering contrast to see such a beautiful place in such disarray.”

**SPEA professors, students collaborate on sustainable brewing research**

Whether you’re partial to pale ale from a local microbrewery or lager from a large national brewer, it’s worthwhile to consider the process required to produce your beer of choice.

Over the course of the academic year, a team of IU researchers has been conducting a study to determine how breweries could adopt practices that reduce their emissions and energy use and to find out how feasible it is to adopt these sustainable brewing alternatives.

The diverse research team consists of SPEA professors Sanya Carley and John Rupp, Lilian Yahng from IU’s Center for Survey Research, Nathan Schuster – a SPEA graduate student with a background in engineering, and freshman Kate Adams.

Adams is one of 15 undergraduates chosen to take part in the 2020 Sustainability Scholars program through the IU Office of Sustainability and the Integrated
Program in the Environment. The program, which launched in the fall of 2015, pairs undergraduates with faculty mentors to conduct high-quality research in the area of sustainability.

As part of their study, the team is looking at sustainable solutions for the brewing industry in hopes that the results will encourage the adoption of more environmentally friendly processes.

First came an analysis of the current brewing process, Carley said. They broke down the steps involved, analyzing the technologies and methods used from start to finish. From there, they identified best practices to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and save energy at each step. Examples include using renewable sources of electricity, such as solar panels, and implementing technologies that reduce heat loss in parts of the brewing process and the brewery buildings.

Once they identified the various emission and energy reducing practices for each step in the process, they were able to determine the cost to brewers. Currently, the researchers are creating curves to show the relations of cost -- or savings -- associated with implementing these practices.

Adams is developing a survey that will be used to determine whether beer consumers are willing to pay the higher prices for more sustainably brewed beer.

“Beer brewing is one of the biggest industries in the United States, and there are a lot of emissions that come out of that process,” Adams said. “A big factor for many breweries is their cost to brew.”

The survey, which will be administered via Amazon Mechanical Turk, seeks to collect data from individuals in the United States, including those who drink beer from national breweries and those who prefer smaller, craft breweries.

The compiled survey data will enable researchers to get a sense of how much consumers may be willing to pay for beer. This amount will be displayed as a dashed line on the abatement curve. Any process that hits this level or falls below is essentially cost-effective, Carley said.

Using this information, breweries can see which brewing practices they could adopt to make their efforts more sustainable.

“It seems really practical to me,” Adams said. “If we can show breweries how they can reduce emissions and their use of energy in a cost-effective way, it would make a huge impact industry-wide.”

As Adams’ mentor, Carley works closely with the freshman, helping her learn the different aspects of a research project. Then Adams goes out on her own to apply the skills she’s learning from Carley.

“There are many different analytics combined into this one project,” Carley said. “She’s learning how to conduct research, combined with the social science aspect of a survey and the technology elements that come with a research project like this.”

“It really enriches my IU experience and puts me ahead of the curve,” she said. “It’s a great opportunity to help me see what else there is at IU.”
Les Lenkowsky published an article in America in the World, 1776 to the Present: A Supplement to the Dictionary of American History. The article, “The Gates Foundation,” details the history and impact of the largest grant-making foundation in the world. The article is part of a dictionary set that provides a transnational view of U.S. history, focusing on the role of Americans and the U.S. while analyzing how the world has influenced the U.S. and Americans.

Sergio Fernandez and his co-authors received the William E. Mosher and Frederick C. Mosher Award, presented to the authors of the best Public Administration Review article by an academic. Fernandez, former SPEA faculty member William G. Resh (University of Southern California), SPEA alumnus Tima Moldogaziev (University of Georgia), and Zachary W. Oberfield (Haverford College) authored “Assessing the Past and Promise of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey for Public Management Research: A Research Synthesis.

Sameeksha Desai co-authored an article in the journal Small Business Economics: “Taxes, Corruption, and Entry.” Desai and co-authors Farzana Chowdhury, a SPEA doctoral student, and Maksim Belitski of the University of Reading, analyzed the interplay of tax policy, corruption, and market entry in 72 nations, using a series of panel estimations and robustness checks. Their main findings are, first, that higher tax rates and corruption each independently deter entry; and, second, that corruption can offset the discouraging effect of high tax rates. They recommend policymakers prioritize anti-corruption policies when targeting business environment reforms.

Matthew Baggetta published an article in Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly: “Representative Bridging: Voluntary Associations’ Potential for Creating Bridging Ties in Demographically Diverse Urban Areas.” Baggetta examined whether and how voluntary associations create connections between people across lines of demographic difference.

Justin Ross published an article in Public Budgeting and Finance. “Indiana’s Property Tax Caps: Old Idea, New Approach, and Surprising Incentives” examines the implications of property tax limits for overlapping local governments in Indiana. The article by Ross and SPEA students Madeline Farrell and Lang Kate Yang compares Indiana’s system and its unusual incentives with the systems used by other states. The authors argue that Indiana’s approach creates structural deficits in local government finances that cannot be easily resolved with simple cuts in spending, and that local governments might benefit from developing a more coordinated budget process across the overlapping units as well as a formal “rebudgeting” process that occurs after the deficits are known.

Todd Royer led an Indiana water quality demonstration project highlighted as part of the White House Water Summit. The Obama administration, in conjunction with the United Nations World Water Day, hosted the summit to raise awareness of water issues and potential solutions. Royer and Professor Jennifer Tank of the University of Notre Dame are leading a team of academic, nonprofit, and government agency collaborators in the Indiana Watershed Initiative. The demonstration project pairs two promising conservation practices, winter cover crops and floodplain restoration of waterways, to quantify how watershed-scale conservation can improve water quality, and successfully meet national goals for reducing farm nutrient runoff by 40%.

Sarah Mincey co-authored “Is Planting Equitable? An Examination of the Spatial Distribution of Nonprofit Urban Tree-Planting Programs by Canopy Cover, Income, Race, and Ethnicity.” The article was published in Environment and Behavior. It examined the spatial distribution of tree-planting projects undertaken by four urban greening nonprofit organizations using a unique data set of tree-planting locations, land use data, and socioeconomic information. Among their findings: tree-planting projects were significantly less likely to have occurred where there are greater percentages of African American or Hispanic residents.

Lisa Amsler was selected as a 2015 LERA Fellow by the Labor and Employment Relations Association. The honor recognizes scholars and practitioners who have made contributions of unusual distinction to the field and have been in the profession for longer than 10 years. The awards committee said of Amsler: “We were impressed with your outstanding, lifetime contribution to research that benefits the dispute resolution practitioner.” The committee cited Amsler for publishing the first empirical research into the “repeat player effect” in non-union employment arbitration, for which she won LERA refereed paper competitions in 1997 and 1998, almost 20 years before the recent New York Times series on forced arbitration.

Brian DeLong, coach of the IU Debate Team, guided four IU debaters as they qualified for participation in the prestigious National Debate Tournament. It is the first time IU has qualified teams for the tournament in 23 years.
Joseph Shaw describes the project he leads, “Transforming Environmental Protection and Health for Indiana and Beyond,” that is a finalist in IU’s Grand Challenges research program.

Meet Eloise Wing, newborn daughter of Prof. Coady Wing and his wife Bianca.

Meet James Woodring, son of R.J. Woodring, director of undergraduate programs, and his wife Lera.

Meet Silas Boone Mincey-Chaplin and big sister Sylvia, children of Prof. Sarah Mincey and her husband, Steve Chaplin.

Todd Royer leads another project that is one of five Grand Challenges finalists: “Shaping Our Future: Knowledge, Science, and Governance for Sustainable Water Resources.”

SPEA students participate in Global Youth Service Day by helping the garden grow at a Bloomington Head Start center.

Executive Associate Dean Michael McGuire (right) and IU President Michael McRobbie travel to Thailand to strengthen academic exchanges between SPEA and Thailand.
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