

THE MAGAZINE OF LEARNING, LEADERSHIP, AND POLICY

SESP

FALL 2018



The Fifth Lee

Like her four siblings,
Joanne Lee joins the SESP family

plus:

TUNEPAD: TEACHING COMPUTER SCIENCE THROUGH MUSIC

WHY GOOD POLICIES GO BAD

A CHICAGO ORIGINAL

ALUMNI UPDATES AND MORE

Northwestern

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
AND SOCIAL POLICY

Northwestern

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL POLICY

SESP

FALL 2018, VOL 19, NO 2

Dean

David Figlio

Associate Deans

Coleen T. Coleman (C88, MS91)

Assistant Deans

Jeanne M. Hughes, Research

Susan Olson, Student Affairs

Amy Pratt, Community Education Partnerships

Managing Editor

Julie Deardorff

Cover and Message from the Dean Design

Global Marketing and Communications,
Northwestern University

Publication Design

Grillo Group

Photography

Steve Drey

©2018 Northwestern University.

All rights reserved.

Produced by the

School of Education and Social Policy

Annenberg Hall, 2120 Campus Drive

Evanston, IL 60208-2610

847.467.3147

www.sesp.northwestern.edu

sespalums@northwestern.edu

@sesp_nu

ON THE COVER

Joanne Lee is the fifth member of her close-knit family to join ours. The Lees have explored everything from social policy to learning and organizational change. Joanne will pursue learning sciences.

COVER PHOTO BY SHANE COLLINS

2

Message from the Dean

3

News



6

Meet the Lees
Five Siblings. Five Different Paths. One School.



8

TunePad: Teaching Computer Science Through Music



12

Why Good Policies Go Bad



14

A Chicago Original

17

As Told To: Julissa Muñiz

18

Alumni News

21

Alumni Profile: Faisal Mohyuddin

New research, new stories, new magazine



PHOTO BY SHANE COLLINS

DEAR FRIENDS,

Although I spent nearly a decade on the SESP faculty before assuming the deanship last September, my first year turned out to be quite the eye-opener. Of course, I knew about the extraordinary research and teaching of our faculty. And I had already seen countless examples of our students, faculty, and staff striving to make life better by focusing on individuals, families, organizations, and systems.

But once I began hearing the stories of hundreds of SESP alumni, I realized the depth and breadth of SESP's reach. Just as we here in the SESP "mothership" focus on teaching, research, creative work, and service to make the world a better version of itself, so do our tens of thousands of alumni in their everyday lives and work—from the classroom to the boardroom and everywhere in between.

As you can see, we're embracing both our unique mission and our beloved acronym in this freshly redesigned magazine, now simply called "SESP." SESP has a real place in the world and is the one word that connects us all. Everyone in the SESP family of students, alumni, faculty, and staff are partners in change, a force for good. This magazine is dedicated to our collective effort to improve lives.

SESP magazine will still highlight the path-breaking research of my talented colleagues. In this issue, you'll learn how **Mike Horn** created TunePad, a tool that allows people to make music through code. Mike believes that computational thinking can be integrated into artistic fields to help hook kids who might not ordinarily be interested in computer science. And you'll see how **Simone Ispa-Landa** unpacks the surprising ways policies aimed at reducing disparities can actually exacerbate the very inequalities that they seek to solve.

We're also intentionally focusing more on the exceptional work of our alumni—people who are taking #SESPLove into the world. **Neal Sâles-Griffin** (BS09), for example, uses his SESP lessons in his work as a non-profit leader, teacher, and political candidate. And, in the

spirit of a magazine celebrating the entire SESP family, we couldn't resist highlighting **the five Lee siblings**. This fall Joanne (BS23), who is pictured on this issue's cover, joined her siblings Curie (BS12), Josephine (BS14), Sarah (BS17), and Moses (BS20) as part of our family of leaders and change agents.

I began my deanship by asking a simple question: "Where do you find someone whose life has been changed by SESP?" Now I know a better question may be, "Where don't you?"



Dean Figlio with former middle school teacher Chris Leatherwood, who is now pursuing a doctorate in learning sciences.

We here at SESP would love to hear how you're making lives better. Please email us at sespalums@northwestern.edu or use the #SESPLove hashtag on Twitter. And I hope you'll drop by sesp.northwestern.edu to watch an inspiring new video that tells the story of our school of learning, leadership, and policy and our collective impact in the world far and wide.

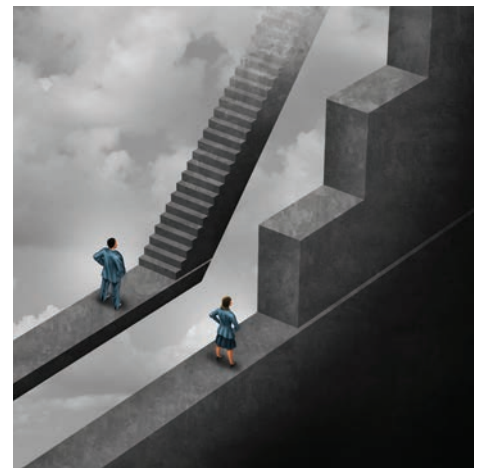
David Figlio
Orrington Lunt Professor and Dean



RACE DAY

Using radar guns, students clocked their basswood CO2 dragsters—some at more than 30 miles per hour—during the final session of the Center for Talent Development class Designing Machines That Work.

PHOTO BY STEVE DREY



Sexism: Location Matters

New economic research co-authored by professor Jonathan Guryan indicates that white women born in parts of the United States where sexist attitudes are more prevalent grow up to earn less and to work less than women born elsewhere, relative to men born in those same states, the *New York Times* reported.

One of the study's most striking findings was that "a woman's lifelong earnings and how much she works are influenced by the levels of sexism in the state where she was born," wrote Jim Tankersley. "A woman born in the Deep South is likely to face a much wider economic gender gap than a woman born on the Pacific Coast, even if both women move to New York as adults."

A state-by-state map of sexist attitudes in the U.S. can be found at bit.ly/sexiststates.



New Program for Senior Leaders

SESP's new Executive Learning & Organizational Change (ELOC) program, which targets senior leaders with approximately 15 or more years of work experience, is recruiting its first cohort of students for classes beginning in January 2019.

The non-degree ELOC program is an extension of Northwestern's pioneering Master's in Learning and Organizational Change (MSLOC) curriculum, which helps leaders create transformational change in multiple sectors, including business, education, design, non-profit, and more.

"ELOC is designed to help make people better leaders and coaches in the face of complex, continuous organizational change," said Kimberly Scott, assistant professor and director of the MSLOC and ELOC programs.

All classes will be taught by Northwestern faculty, coaches, and human capital thought leaders who bridge scholarship and practice—a hallmark of the program. More info can be found on the MSLOC website at eloc.northwestern.edu.

Baxter Center Expands

The Baxter Center for Science Education, which provides students with real-world science experiences and teachers with professional development, equipment and classroom support, opened a new Northern Illinois hub at Round Lake High School.

The expansion was made possible by a generous grant from the Baxter International Foundation Inc. and will help support STEM education and career pathways for students in Round Lake and surrounding communities.

The Baxter Center for Science Education, a program of Northwestern's Office of Community Education Partnerships, also is partnering with Chicago Public Schools to design a new Science Teacher Leadership program to reach the entire network of high school science teachers and students.

Teachers who have been trained in a workshop can borrow a Baxter Box, a free kit of portable lab equipment that can be checked out online. Last year the Baxter Box program saved schools an estimated \$150,000 in materials and equipment costs.



1,119

BAXTER BOX LAB KITS DISTRIBUTED



300

TOTAL SCHOOLS REACHED



100,000

ESTIMATED STUDENTS REACHED EVERY YEAR



800

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS' TEACHERS TRAINED



400

SUBURBAN TEACHERS REACHED



1,200

TOTAL TEACHERS TRAINED



Larry Hedges



Miriam Sherin



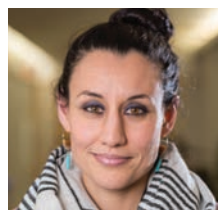
Mesmin Destin



Eleanor O'Rourke



Kirabo Jackson



Shirin Vossoughi

In Brief

The student affairs office was renamed the "Penelope Peterson Office of Student Affairs" for longtime SESP Dean **Penelope Peterson** who retired in 2017.

Michael Horn was awarded the junior/midcareer Edith Ackermann award from the Interaction Design and Children Conference 2018.

Kirabo Jackson was 17th recipient of the Martin E. and Gertrude G. Walder Award for Research Excellence.

Mesmin Destin was awarded the American Psychological Association's Committee on Socioeconomic Status Emerging Leadership Award and received a William T. Grant mentoring award.

Larry Hedges won the \$3.9 million Yidan Prize, the world's largest prize in education research.

Eleanor O'Rourke received National Science Foundation funding to study how to promote a growth mindset in computer science.

Miriam Sherin was appointed associate provost for undergraduate education and named the Alice Gabrielle Twight Professor of Learning Sciences.

Saiying Steenbergen-Hu and **Paula Olszewski-Kubilius** received 2017–18 Mensa Education and Research Foundation Awards for Excellence in Research.

Sepehr Vakil, assistant professor of learning sciences and alumna **Christina Krist** (PhD16) received prestigious National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral fellowships.

Shirin Vossoughi will be a Scholar in Residence at the Spencer Foundation for the 2018–2019 academic year.

Marcelo Worsley received two National Science Foundation grants to study multimodal learning.



PHOTOS BY GENIE LEMIEUX,
EVANSTON PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIOS

Should Black Women Date White Men?

Cheryl Judice knew her book on interracial relationships between black women and white men would raise some hackles. “She wrote it anyway,” columnist Heidi Stevens observed in the *Chicago Tribune*.

Interracial Relationships Between Black Women and White Men tells the stories of black women who are dating, married to, or divorced from white men. Judice, a sociologist and SESP practicum instructor who wrote her dissertation on the same topic, interviewed more than 120 people over three years to learn more about the experiences of black women or white men who date or marry interracially.

“Black women are the only group of women in America who can’t take for granted that if they want to marry within their race there will be an ample supply to choose from,” Judice said.

Statistics underscore the sobering reality:

- Black females begin to outnumber black males by age 16. (For whites, this doesn’t happen until approximately age 32.)
- Black men are more than twice as likely as black women to marry outside their race. (Meanwhile black women are the least likely group to marry outside their race.)
- For every 100 college-educated black females, there are approximately 35 to 40 comparably educated black males.

The book is not intended to dismiss black men as loving, suitable partners, Judice said. “There simply are not enough of them,” she said.

“If we don’t talk about it, it’s always going to be the elephant in the room,” Judice told the *Chicago Tribune*’s Stevens. “I’m looking at a core issue of how people really think. I’m not blaming anybody for anything. I’m just saying, ‘Let’s look at a life where people are free from some of the things that have shackled us for so long.’”

SESP ADDS FIVE NEW FACULTY

Five new faculty members—standouts in their ability to work across disciplines—joined SESP in the fall, including alumna **Megan Bang** (PhD09) of the University of Washington; **Jennifer Munson** and **Yang Qu** of Stanford University; **Hannes Schwandt** of the University of Zurich; and **Sepehr Vakil** of the University of Texas at Austin.



Megan Bang, professor of learning sciences and psychology, focuses on designing and building science learning environments from Indigenous philosophies. She also will serve as senior vice president of the Spencer Foundation.



Jen Munson, assistant professor of learning sciences, explores the improvisational nature of elementary school mathematics instruction and researches how both children and teachers can avoid the pitfalls of simply trying to find the right answer. Training teachers how to respond in the moment can dramatically impact their relationships with students, Munson says.



Yang Qu, assistant professor of human development and social policy, is a cultural neuroscientist and statistician who explores how culture and parental influence shapes the ways teens in the U.S. and China think, act, and behave.



Hannes Schwandt, assistant professor of human development and social policy, is a health economist and economic demographer who studies whether unemployment and other types of economic shocks affect physical health, mortality, and fertility.



Sepehr Vakil, assistant professor of learning sciences, is a National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral fellowship winner. He investigates the cultural and political dimensions of STEM education, focusing on computer science and engineering.



MEET THE LEES

FIVE SIBLINGS. FIVE DIFFERENT PATHS. ONE SCHOOL.

When Curie Lee (BS12) arrived at the School of Education and Social Policy (SESP) in 2008, she thought she'd found a great opportunity in a place that combines education, technology, public service, and policy.

Two years later, her sister Josephine (BS14) reached the same conclusion. Then came Sarah (BS17). Then Moses (BS20). This fall, Joanne (BS22) became the fifth and final Lee family member—until their own children enter the picture—to find a home in SESP.

Perhaps even more surprising than five of six Lees landing on Annenberg Hall's doorstep—sister Mary took the road less traveled, to the University of Illinois—is the divergent career paths they've forged. Now with some living as far away as San Francisco and Germany, the close-knit Lees have spread their wings, all while staying connected through a common purple thread.

"I think SESP has some kind of magic," says their father, Young Lee. "None of my children have the same interests, yet SESP met each one's diverse needs. I wonder if there's any other school that can do such a thing."

The Lee children grew up in a tidy bungalow on Chicago's North Side, where they all graduated from Lincoln Park High School. Young and their mother, Curie, emigrated from South Korea in 1990 to serve as missionaries, and they now work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Their story is an immigrant tale of parlaying education, faith, sacrifice, and work ethic to find a better life.

"Our parents really instilled this love of learning along with the idea of looking out for one another," Moses says.

"When we get together, there is so much to share, celebrate, and debate," Sarah adds. "The Wildcat way has hugely shaped our family life."

Here's how one family found five different identities within SESP:

“I THINK SESP HAS SOME KIND OF MAGIC.”

YOUNG LEE, FATHER



Curie Lee, 28, Cologne, Germany

SOCIAL POLICY

Curie, the SESP pioneer, is finishing her PhD in disability studies at the University of Cologne. At Northwestern, she also majored in political science and minored in German. She credits SESP with sparking her interest in education policy, which she continues to study through an international lens. Advice to her youngest sib: “Begin with the end in sight.”



Josephine Lee, 26, San Francisco

LEARNING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE CERTIFICATES IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

On a mission to make the internet a safer place, Josephine is part of the sales team at HackerOne, a cybersecurity startup in Silicon Valley. “I attribute my passion for technology and startups to my learning and organizational change studies—especially how technology mobilizes communities and organizations,” she says.



Sarah Lee, 23, Chicago

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Sarah, with one Northwestern degree under her belt, is applying to the SESP learning sciences doctoral program and working in the Technological Innovations for Inclusive Learning and Teaching (TILT) lab, which brings Chicago and Evanston educators together to improve STEM access and equity. Her Holocaust Museums and Memorials course, taught by Instructor Danny Cohen (PhD11), “was instrumental in triggering my interest in how people remember, commemorate, and importantly include voices that are often marginalized or silenced,” she says.



Moses Lee, 20, Chicago

LEARNING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Moses hopes to find his niche either in the nonprofit or government sector, perhaps in the foreign service. He sharpened his Arabic and learned the Moroccan dialect Darija in Tangier last summer through a Critical Language Scholarship, an intense overseas language and cultural immersion program. “The stories I heard over the dinner table ignited my excitement to come to Northwestern,” says Moses, who was the kid in high school wearing his older sister’s Northwestern lanyard. “From early on, I thought Northwestern was very cool.”



Joanne Lee, 19, Chicago

LEARNING SCIENCES

Joanne, who loves both science and the humanities, researched schools throughout the country. She chose SESP to pursue her interests in education and technology. She isn’t yet sure of her career path, viewing her undergraduate years as a formative time to explore SESP’s offerings. “I’ve learned from my siblings and my own gap year that you can only plan to a point,” she says.

BY BONNIE MILLER RUBIN

**“When we get together,
there is so much to
share, celebrate, and
debate. The Wildcat
way has hugely shaped
our family life.”**

SARAH LEE

TunePad:

TEACHING COMPUTER SCIENCE THROUGH MUSIC

SESP's Mike Horn finds novel ways to make coding fun and accessible to diversify the pool of computer scientists

When Sandra Nissim's parents signed her up for a summer coding camp, she didn't want to go. She had never coded before, and in her high school it was viewed as a boys' club. She was afraid of being ostracized by her classmates simply for being smart.

Nevertheless, she showed up on the first day of camp, and her life changed.

"Within a week I was hooked. It totally changed what I wanted to do with my life," she says.

▼ Bass

^ Drum Kit


- DRUMS
- NY House Drums
- Tip Tap
- Quick Clap
- DRE BEATS
- SFX RISER
- Breakbeat
- DREAMS BEAT
- Metronome

+ New Sample

^ Synth

- SYNTH
- DRE SYNTH
- DREAMS SYNTH

+ New Sample



Now the 19-year-old Nissim is a Northwestern sophomore computer science major who wants to pursue cybersecurity after graduation. Her adviser is Michael Horn, director of the Tangible Interaction Design and Learning (TIDAL) Lab, whose groundbreaking work aims to make computer science—a field with historic inequities—younger and more diverse.

TIDAL finds unique ways to introduce coding—from old-fashioned puzzles and stickerbooks to mobile apps and touchscreen exhibits—and other technology-based learning experiences that children can easily use to solve challenges and create content in sophisticated ways.

The lab's most expansive project yet is TunePad, a website and free app that allows users to create musical compositions via the computer programming language Python. The work, part of a collaborative project with George Tech, is funded by the National Science Foundation.

It's easy to see how kids growing up with streaming media would find TunePad appealing: It lets them create an original piece of music by choosing from a library of bass, keyboard and drum sounds, instrumental riffs, and hip-hop samples, or by uploading samples of their own. In no time they're dragging musical elements in and out and controlling tempo, volume, and arrangement with the finesse of a studio producer. The platform encourages endless playing in the best sense of the word.

With TunePad, the final product is never really final. Instead, Horn, 43, says the platform is designed to promote content sharing—for getting and giving feedback, encouragement, and supporting collaboration. “We’re trying to build youth-driven communities where coding is a tool of ‘look what I can do,’” he says. “Seeing your peers get involved and then having the ability to go deep with them—that’s a powerful way to connect with each other.”

Defying Stereotypes

Making coding both fun and accessible is critical for generating interest in computer science in children, especially those who get little exposure to it in the classroom, and for diversifying the

next generation of coders. A 2016 survey by the Computing Research Association, a nonprofit advocacy group in Washington, D.C., shows that undergraduate computer science majors are overwhelmingly male (82 percent); and half are white, while only 3 percent are black, about 8 percent are Hispanic, and 23 percent are Asian.

Horn, associate professor of learning sciences and computer science and one of four School of Education and Social Policy faculty members with a joint appointment, says the diversity gap is wide in part because of “the cultural perception that coding is something that boys do.”

Horn also blames a continuing lack of resources. For example, while Chicago Public Schools mandate computer science as a graduation requirement, schools in some areas of the city are unable to hire teachers with the relevant qualifications; instead computer science classes are often assigned to math teachers with little to no coding experience. “It’s less than ideal,” Horn says.

Taking up some of the slack are nonprofit groups like Girls Who Code, a nationwide organization that aims to increase the number of women in computer science. It was a Girls Who Code summer camp that turned Nissim on to programming. The next year, she became co-president of a new Girls Who Code chapter at her high school. She says the organization fills a void for girls her age because the focus of attention in computer science is typically on boys.

“There are not as many opportunities [for girls], and if one does present itself, it’s hard to stick with it because you’re outnumbered and you don’t fit in,” she says.

Joshua Kim, a Northwestern senior who has worked on TunePad’s music samples for TIDAL, says he had little coding experience before meeting Horn, who became his mentor. Kim grew up in Los Angeles’s Korea Town neighborhood and went to a struggling high school where “even the math books were in tatters,” he says. He’s now pursuing a master’s in educational technology at Harvard University because, like Horn, he wants kids to get the exposure to coding that was missing from his own K–12 education.

“Working with Michael on this project has opened my eyes—not only to try to build an all-inclusive app for coding, but also to go out to the city and expose really young kids to code through music,” Kim says.

In addition to Kim, Horn’s 12-person lab includes undergraduate and graduate programmers, researchers, and others who together are in their second year of refining TunePad. Others, like Jamie Gorson, who is pursuing a joint PhD in learning sciences and computer science, are studying how students react to challenge when learning to program in TunePad. Horn says he expects the app’s development to continue for at least three more years. At the same time, he wants to build an online community where kids can share music for others to appreciate or even remix.

Here Comes TunePad

A TunePad prototype launched publicly this summer, and TIDAL is working with different organizations to roll it out. In DuPage County, west of Chicago, Horn’s team is partnering with the NAACP to run a coding summer camp; in Chicago, the James R. Jordan Foundation is helping the lab conduct Saturday workshops. The TunePad team also recently received a new grant from the National Science Foundation to work with Evanston/Skokie School District 65 schools to create innovative music and coding curricula.

During the roll-out, Horn’s team will collect data to identify users’ motivations and interests in order to refine TunePad further. Even if creating music isn’t their thing, he hopes the coding experience will inspire students to consider other tangible benefits of gaining technical know-how, such as a high-paying job and a stable career.

“There can be deep bias in programming from homogenous groupthink,” Horn says. “When it comes to important societal issues, we should have more voices at the table working for technology companies.”

BY MARK GUARINO



“WE’RE TRYING TO BUILD
YOUTH-DRIVEN COMMUNITIES
WHERE CODING IS A TOOL
OF ‘LOOK WHAT I CAN DO.’”

MICHAEL HORN
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF LEARNING SCIENCES AND COMPUTER SCIENCE



WHY GOOD POLICIES GO BAD

**Simone Ispa-Landa probes
disparities in school discipline
and subtle inequalities of
restorative justice**



PHOTO BY STEVE DREY

“THE BEST INTERVENTIONS RESPOND TO PEOPLE’S REAL EXPERIENCES.”

SIMONE ISPA-LANDA

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY

Schools are increasingly turning to peace circles, peer juries, and other restorative justice measures to help change the traditionally punitive nature of school discipline.

Yet mounting evidence suggests that alternative approaches haven’t slowed a troubling trend: Educators still disproportionately suspend, expel, and criminalize students of color, reinforcing what critics call the “school-to-prison pipeline.”

As part of an ambitious effort to reduce racial disparities in school disciplinary practices, Northwestern University education sociologist Simone Ispa-Landa will be embedded in a large urban high school over the next five years to study the outcomes of its restorative justice program.

Her deep dive, funded by the William T. Grant Foundation, will offer a fresh perspective on the heated national debates over school discipline by examining how restorative practices coexist with punitive measures, school-based police officers, and proactive parents. An expert on subtle inequities of policy, Ispa-Landa argues that problems can flare when old and new policies overlap—and administrators don’t consider the larger picture.

“When schools use restorative justice but also retain the option to suspend or expel students, administrators have the leeway to discriminate,” says Ispa-Landa, assistant professor of human development and social policy at the School of Education and Social Policy (SESP). “Educators may be channeling students from different racial backgrounds into different punishments.”

Racial bias in school discipline has been well documented. A 2018 report by the Government Accountability Office found that black students in K–12 schools are far more likely to be disciplined—whether through suspension or referral to law enforcement—than their peers of other races.

Another study found that 28 percent of black middle school boys had been suspended at least once, compared with 10 percent of white middle school boys, according to a policy briefing by the National Education Policy Center. Black girls, meanwhile, are six times as likely to be suspended as white girls, according to a report by Columbia Law School’s Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies.

The School-To-Prison Pipeline

“Tough on crime” law enforcement policies emerged in the 1970s and began trickling down to schools a decade later, Ispa-Landa says. Many schools hired police officers as school resource officers, expanded their security systems, and implemented zero-tolerance policies to deter misbehavior.

“The logic that creates and supports mass incarceration shapes schools, too,” says Aaron Kupchik, professor of sociology and criminal justice at the University of Delaware and Ispa-Landa’s project mentor.

Kupchik, the author of *The Real School Safety Problem*, argues that schools are increasingly willing to police and punish students—often for minor misbehavior that, a generation ago, would have led to detention or a trip to the principal’s office. As a result, more students are suspended, expelled, and arrested at schools for relatively small infractions, he says.

“We know suspended kids drop out of school, and they’re more likely to be delinquent and more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system,” says Marcus Campbell, principal of Evanston Township High School and adjunct SESP faculty member. “Race is a predictive factor in who will be expelled and suspended.”

Race and class are factors when parents try to intervene on their child’s behalf. Middle-class parents may have more success helping their children avoid harsh and stigmatizing punishments, Ispa-Landa says. At the same time, studies have shown that black middle-class parents who express concerns about their children’s educational experiences face uphill battles.

“Many school officials seem to hope to appease middle-class parents but appear indifferent or even hostile when parents from a nondominant group raise concerns,” she says.

Keeping Schools Safe

Ispa-Landa, Kupchik, and others who research restorative justice say it makes sense for schools to have a combination of strategies since suspensions are sometimes necessary for safety’s sake. But an ideological shift may also be in order.

Most schools that use restorative justice programs don’t try to create an overarching restorative school culture or adopt it as a guiding philosophy, Ispa-Landa says. “Instead, the model is to create a formal program designed for students who have broken particular school rules.”

Ultimately, Ispa-Landa hopes her research project will help educators and policy makers design more equitable disciplinary environments and ensure that programs like restorative justice meet the special needs of teenagers, whose brains are still developing.

“I’m fascinated by the subtle things that can happen to increase or decrease a person’s sense of power,” Ispa-Landa says. “The best interventions are the ones that respond to people’s real experiences and the ways they really live their lives, instead of how we imagine them.”

BY LISA APPELEGATE

A black and white portrait of a man with a beard and short hair, smiling. He is wearing a dark jacket over a button-down shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing vertical lines.

A Chicago Original

Whether he's running a company or campaigning for social change, alumnus Neal Sales-Griffin is drawing on his learning and organizational change skills to "help people be great."

**“HE HAS THE
ABILITY TO
BRING PEOPLE
TOGETHER
WITHIN
THE FIRST
30 SECONDS
OF MEETING
HIM.”**

CLAIRE LEW (BS11)

When tech entrepreneur Neal Sáles-Griffin (BS09) began his surprising bid to become Chicago's next mayor, he never questioned that Northwestern University would play a key role.

After all, fundamental classes in the School of Education and Social Policy (SESP)—and the connections he made during his action-packed college days—have become part of Sáles-Griffin's core. So when the 30-year-old nonprofit leader and teacher began his unconventional campaign to lead the country's third-largest city, he immediately leveraged his Northwestern network and knowledge.

Northwestern students—including those taking Sáles-Griffin's Engineering and Entrepreneurship class and mentees in Northwestern accelerator programs—provided the spark to turn his concerns about the city's direction into concrete action and run for office.

“Younger people, they dream,” he says. “They care about things like honesty and transparency. They believe things are possible that a lot of folks don't. I have been soaking up all of that energy and hopefulness for the past few years.”

In pure grassroots fashion, students from SESP and the McCormick School of Engineering are conducting research for the campaign, managing volunteers, and planning outreach and marketing. The chance to work with and learn from the gregarious Sáles-Griffin reflects a major area of emphasis at SESP: practical experience outside the classroom.

“You can tell he has the ability to bring people together within the first 30 seconds of meeting him,” says Claire Lew (BS11), who co-teaches the Engineering and Entrepreneurship class with Sáles-Griffin and has helped the campaign with messaging. “His integrity is consistent, through and through.”

Senior Lucas Philips almost immediately joined the campaign and began recruiting more than two dozen volunteers through Facebook. Philips, CEO of BrewBike, a student-run coffee venture he started in his first year, credits Sáles-Griffin with giving him the idea to start a business with a physical presence. BrewBike is now located in Annenberg Hall and plans to expand to Main Library in the fall.



PHOTOS BY JIM PRISCHING

“Northwestern students are always looking for real-world experiences,” says Philips, who has lectured in Sales-Griffin’s entrepreneurship class and leaned on him for advice. “Getting in on the ground level of a mayoral campaign gives a perspective you can’t find in class.”

Philips, who canvassed for former president Barack Obama in 2012, is the chief contact between Northwestern students and the campaign; he and McCormick’s Izzy de la Guardia organized and streamlined the process for on-boarding student volunteers.

By late October, Northwestern students and alumni made up about 20 of the campaign’s 120 volunteers. Two McCormick students lead the committees for volunteer management and research.

Driven From Day One

As a mixed-race, low-income kid growing up on the South Side of Chicago—his father is African-American and his mother is Filipina, Mexican and Honduran—Sáles-Griffin attended a mix of public and private schools and said he “struggled to find his place in society.”

But at Northwestern, he discovered his passion for solving problems and began exploring leadership roles and pursuing business opportunities.

As Northwestern’s student body president, the charismatic Sáles-Griffin used learning and organizational change principles to make student government more accessible and efficient.

He co-founded a healthcare business, opened a chain of barbershops on the South Side, worked in private equity and as a venture

capitalist, and held side jobs—including one as a campus SafeRide driver—to help pay off student loans.

After becoming the first in his family to earn a degree from a four-year college, he taught himself coding and started one of the first coding boot camps in the country, the Starter League, which he sold in 2016.

“At the time, no one believed you could learn to code in less than three months,” he says. “And no one believed that almost anyone could do it.”

Currently CEO of CodeNow, a nonprofit that teaches coding to schoolchildren across the country, Sáles-Griffin said he began thinking about running for mayor after giving a speech introducing J. B. Pritzker, who was launching his campaign for Illinois governor. Afterward, several people approached Sáles-Griffin about running for mayor, an idea he couldn’t shake.

“My story, from my background, shouldn’t be the exception to the rule,” he says.

Still, Sáles-Griffin knows he is a long shot in a crowded field of challengers. His inexperience showed during a rambling campaign kick-off speech that, by his own admission, he “bombed.”

He has no political experience, save for his stint as student body president and lacks name recognition. His campaign must build coalitions with different groups and collect enough signatures to get on the February ballot—not an easy feat in Chicago, which requires 12,500 of them.

“I’m figuring out everything as I go,” Sáles-Griffin says. “But we’re doing this together. I’m surrounding myself with people who know a lot more than me in other areas, and I’m going to take everyone along with me.”

“MY STORY, FROM MY BACKGROUND, SHOULDN’T BE THE EXCEPTION TO THE RULE.”

NEAL SÁLES-GRIFFIN

Regardless of the outcome, students who work for Sáles-Griffin will learn the ins and outs of an unconventional campaign. The “Neal for Mayor” website prominently features Sáles-Griffin’s personal phone number, and when he invites people to call, he means it. He plans to make his campaign-building experience transparent and collaborative, which he says is similar to how he ran his software coding company.

“Campaigns come and go,” Sáles-Griffin says. “I want every student who gets involved to be gaining experiences that reflect their goals and their dreams.”

BY KATHRYN MASTERSON



Julissa Muñiz

PHD CANDIDATE

Supporting, Educating Incarcerated Children

I study learning systems in carceral settings, specifically in juvenile detention centers.

In my work, I want to recreate this schema of what it means to be a student and what it means to learn. In no way am I arguing that we should be investing in or expanding prisons. I don't believe any child should be incarcerated.

I think when children are incarcerated, it is a failure of our mental health services, our education systems and our child protective services.

But, if we are going to have juveniles in prison, I want to know how can we better support these children? How can we provide healing and love, and how we can show kids they are more than this status?

I was drawn to this work because I empathize with these kids. I see a lot of myself in their lives and their stories. I was raised by a single mother, who was an immigrant from Mexico, and I got pregnant and had a baby when I was 16 years old.

Most girls from my community who got pregnant dropped out. But I was a top student and that pushed administrators to see me differently.

The principal and most of the teachers rallied around me. My mom was unwavering in her support. That helped me continue to excel in school.

When a recruiter from University of California Berkeley visited my high school in my junior year, I approached him after his presentation and told him about my daughter—who was then one—and he said: 'I'm so glad you came to talk to me.'

It turned out Berkeley has a program for teen parents. That spring, I got into Berkeley and became the first teen mom to graduate from my high school.

But it wouldn't have happened if it weren't for my drama teacher and a group of students who paid my application fee to Berkeley.

There were many people who stepped into my life at just the right moment to give me what I needed. I was more than a teen mother, but if no one recognized that and no one ever told me that, who knows where I would have ended up.

I'm keenly aware of the fact that some people try to use my story against others. They will say, 'If she did it, why can't you?'

Instead of shaming kids, I think we need to ask: What worked about that situation and how can we build more systems to help teen mothers and other young people?

At Berkeley, I majored in ethnic studies and, after graduation, I went to Harvard University where I earned a master's in education. From there, I came to Northwestern to get my PhD.

I was deeply honored in April to win the Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans, a fellowship for immigrants and their children. I'm using it to help children from communities like the one where I grew up.

My daughter turned 11 over the summer. She and I have come so far. As she gets older, I want her to pursue her passions with her whole heart, and I want her to live in a society that is more just than the one we have now.

All kids deserve that.

AS TOLD TO
COLLEEN MASTONY

ALUMNI NEWS



Dan Miller



Jerry Schulz



M. DeHuszar Allen



Eric Brown



Kimberly Ann Johnson



Susanna Calkins



Christine Leung Good



Kathy Zebracki Jefson



L. Mimms-Bockmier



Renata Figueiredo



Stanley Fong



Scott Gerson



Rohan Prakash



Aireale Joi Rodgers

50s

Dale Berman (BS55) of North Aurora, Ill, is serving his fourth and final term through 2021 as mayor of North Aurora. He celebrated his 60th wedding anniversary in August.

Patricia Matussek Kenning (BS51), longtime resident of Littleton, Colo., was invited to record an interview for the archives of the Littleton Historical and Cultural Museum.

60s

Patrick Bresnan (MSEd62) of Los Gatos, Calif., is the author of the college-level textbook *Awakening: An Introduction to the History of Eastern Thought*. Bresnan also created a companion website for the text.

Roberta Lee Brenner Gold (BS68) of Encino, Calif., is a patient advocate for the Council on Patient Safety in Women's Health Care. Previously she worked with the California Maternal Quality Care Collaborative as a task force member developing educational materials for the 2016 California Toolkit: Improving the Health Care Response to Venous Thromboembolism in Pregnancy.

Sally Becker (BS67) of Chicago, a former educator and broadcast journalist, retired as president of the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation in Evansville, Indiana and moved to Chicago to be close to her daughter and to renew her connection with the broad Northwestern community.

Nancy Moran (BS60) of Des Plaines, a retired elementary school teacher, volunteers with The Saints, a performing arts organization that helps more than 100 non-profit theaters, including Northwestern.

70s

Stephen J. Gill (MS74, PhD76) of Ann Arbor, Mich., is co-owner of LearningToBeGreat.com and has co-authored a new book, *Minds at Work: Managing for Success in the Knowledge Economy*.

Dan Miller (BS70) of Roselle, Ill., runs the website Education-Related Quotes for students, parents, and educators.

Jerry Schulz (MSEd74) of Milwaukee, who retired from the Milwaukee Public Schools, is an adjunct instructor at several colleges and the author of *Managing the New Tools in K-12 Teaching and Learning: How Technology Can Enable School Improvement*.



Jane (left), Anne, and Helen Wong

SESPLove: A Wong Family Tradition

Helen Wong (BS05) of Chicago is director and senior counsel of Fintech and Payments at Discover Financial Services where she provides strategic advice on payments and financial technology issues, including mobile payments, emerging payment and commerce platforms, and cryptocurrencies. Helen is the oldest of three sisters; all are SESP alums living in Chicago: **Jane Wong** (BS10) is a senior manager at Walgreens. **Anne Wong** (BS12) is a project manager at the Illinois chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, leading their childhood vaccination program.

90s

Marguerite DeHuszar Allen (MSEd90) of Evanston, is a visiting scholar at the Buffet Institute of Global Studies who is teaching a course on Law and Literature. A Fulbright Research Scholar to Hungary in 2008, she has since published articles concerning French-Hungarian diplomatic relationships prior to World War I, her father's World War II Military Intelligence Diary and the Holocaust in Hungary.

Eric Brown (MSEd99) of Chicago, a biology teacher at Evanston Township High School, won a second term on the executive committee of the National Education Association, the nation's largest union. He will serve on the governing body that oversees and establishes policy for the union's three million members.

Wendy Vergoz (BS90) of Indianapolis received a Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship from the Arts Council of Indianapolis and an Individual Artist Grant from the Indiana Arts Commission. She teaches writing at Marian University in Indianapolis and a writing workshop at the Unleavened Bread Cafe for women survivors of incarceration, domestic violence, and drug addiction.

Kimberly Ann Johnson (BS97) of Solana Beach, Calif., a birth doula and somatic sex educator wrote *The Fourth Trimester: A Postpartum Guide to Healing Your Body, Balancing Your Emotions and Restoring Your Vitality* (Shambhala, 2017). She is the founder of women's health hub, Magamama.com.

00s

Susanna Calkins (MSHE05) of Highland Park, Ill., directs the faculty initiatives at the Searle Center for Advancing Learning and Teaching at Northwestern and writes the award-winning Lucy Campion historical mysteries series. The first in her new series, *Murder Knocks Twice*, set in 1929 Chicago, will launch in Spring 2019.

Brooke Dierkhising (MSEd04) of Minneapolis is the author of *Many Ways to See the Sun: Nature Meditation for Children and the Adults Who Love Them*, which includes activities for strengthening connections with nature and practicing mindfulness.

Amy (Carr) MacCrindle (MSEd08) of Crystal Lake, Ill., is director of literacy for a K-12 district in the suburbs of Chicago.

Nancy George Dunham (MSEd05) of Fairfax Station, Va., is an academic program analyst at George Mason University and an MBA admissions auxiliary application reader with the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

Katie Eimers (MSEd08) of Durham, N.C., was named associate dean for administration at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine where she oversees all administrative practices, the offices of human resources, information technology and space planning.

Christine Leung Good (MSLOC09) relocated from San Francisco to Chicago to become chief of strategy and portfolio at Chicago International Charter School.

Kathy Zebracki Jefson (BS00) of Chicago was elected to the board of directors of the American Spinal Injury Association. Zebracki, chief of psychology at Shriners Hospitals for Children Chicago and adjunct associate professor at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, also serves on the board of the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine.

Janet Olivo (MSLOC09) of Chicago is global inclusion and diversity partner at Groupon.

10s

Lorato Anderson (MSHE16) of Santa Cruz, Calif., is graduate coordinator for the Politics and Latin American and Latino Students program at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Lauren Mimms-Bockmier (MSHE15) of Chicago is manager of corporate and foundation relations at Action for Healthy Kids.

Renata Figueiredo (MSLOC13) of São Paulo, Brazil, is a manager at Integration Consulting.

Stanley Fong (MSLOC15) of Singapore, launched his own business, Learn, Grow, and Lead.

Scott Gerson (BS18) of Kensington, Maryland is planning youth summits and workshops, as well as organizing USA and World Games, for Special Olympics International.

Michael Kosko (MSEd15) of Chicago is STEM Initiatives Manager for Chicago Public Schools and a doctoral student in urban education leadership at the University of Illinois, Chicago.

Kathy McGroarty-Torres (MSEd17) of Evanston is teaching in a dual-language kindergarten class at the Dr. Bessie Rhodes School of Global Studies in Evanston/Skokie District 65. Bessie Rhodes is transitioning its entire curriculum to bilingual learning.

Kristine McKinney (MSLOC13) of St. Paul, Minn. leads professional development activities across 11 U.S. offices and in Munich, Germany as the chief professional development officer for the law firm Fish & Robertson.

Ann Merrell (MSHE16) of Park Ridge is assistant director of the Collegiate Scholars Program at the University of Chicago, a program that prepares Chicago Public Schools' students to enter and succeed at top colleges and universities.

Rohan Prakash (BS17) of Cupertino, Calif., received a five-year fellowship from the Knowles Science Teaching Foundation.

Aireale Joi Rodgers (BS14) of Los Angeles joined the Urban Education Policy doctoral program at the Rossier School of Education at the University of Southern California. Her research focuses on affecting pedagogical and institutional change at white-serving institutions of higher education as it relates to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Sadia Sindhu (MSHE12) of Evanston was promoted to director of the Civic Leadership Academy at the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy.

Lindsey Pflieger Taylor (MSHE14) of Park Ridge, Ill. is academic program manager for the undergraduate business and science programs at Northwestern's School of Professional Studies.



Please send all news updates and address changes to sespalums@northwestern.edu. You can also reach us on Facebook (facebook.com/sespnu/) and Twitter (@sesp_nu).



For more class notes, visit sesp.northwestern.edu.

‘Only a Life of Service is a Life Worthwhile’



PHOTO BY CHARLES OSGOOD

A new documentary captures the storied life of SESP alumna Lorraine Hairston Morton (MS42), Evanston’s first African-American mayor and longtime public school educator.

Morton, who spoke at the premiere of *Lorraine H. Morton: A Life Worthwhile* at Northwestern University’s Segal Visitor’s Center, passed away on Sept. 8, 2018, three months shy of her 100th birthday.

“I only did what my mother and father told me,” Morton told Dino Robinson, founder of the Shorefront Legacy Center, which commissioned the project. “As he was dying my father said, ‘Only a life of service is a life worthwhile.’”

Using recent interviews and archival images, the documentary by Shorefront Films traces Morton’s journey from Winston Salem, N.C. to Evanston. Morton, the youngest of 10 children, gracefully navigated the societal constructs of Jim Crow, desegregation, and governmental relationships.

An irrepressible optimist, Morton often said that things simply “happened” to her, and points out the accomplishments of others—

black and white—who, with her, fought for open housing, desegregation, and a better Evanston.

In 2014, Morton donated her papers to Northwestern, a trove of letters, newspaper clippings, speech texts and campaign materials documenting her years of service in Evanston.

She fondly recalled living with five black female students in a boarding house on Lake Street, during a time when African-American students could not live on campus.

Evanston, Northwestern, and the world have changed, insisted Morton, who said she chose “not to wallow in the injustices and negatives of the past” but to stay focused on improving the present. She added that she came to Evanston for an education and that Northwestern provided her with a good one.

“I never had a bad experience at the University,” Morton said in 2014. “I always remembered why I was here. A university is more than just courses. It widens your mind. Northwestern opened another horizon for me. It opened doors.”

Watch the film at bit.ly/Mortondoc

Fulbright Winners Embrace Teaching Abroad

Globe-trotting scholars **Tiffany Wong** (BS18), **Fannie Koltun** (BS18), and **Tsu-Ann (Suzanne) Chen** (BS17) received Fulbright U.S. Student Program Fellowships to teach English in Macau, Spain, and South Korea, respectively.

Northwestern consistently ranks among the top Fulbright-producing research institutions in the country. At least one SESP student or alum has received a Fulbright every year since 2000.

Wong, who majored in learning and organizational change, helped peers—often English language learners—at Northwestern University’s Writing Place and mentored low-income and/or first-generation Northwestern first-years through the Compass program.

Koltun was a founding member of Allow Good Northwestern, a student-run education and philanthropy program. She also was a Jumpstart Corps member, where she helped implement a supplemental literacy program at a local preschool that served children from low-income families with learning and behavioral challenges.

Chen studied learning sciences and collaborated with Shirin Vossoughi, assistant professor of learning sciences, on research involving after school tinkering settings just prior to leaving for South Korea.



Tiffany Wong, Fannie Koltun, Tsu-Ann (Suzanne) Chen

“Intentionality is vital. Community is essential. Reciprocity is key.”

**SENIOR SAMANTHA BURESCH,
REFLECTING ON HER EXPERIENCE AS AN ACCELERATE
FELLOW WITH TEACH FOR AMERICA.**

A portrait of Faisal Mohyuddin, a man with a beard and glasses, smiling. He is wearing a dark blazer over a white shirt. The background is a blurred red carpet event.

Faisal Mohyuddin

Award-winning Writer, Educator, Artist

“WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE DISPLACED
CHILDREN OF DISPLACED CHILDREN,
TETHERED BY DISTANT RIVERS TO ABANDONED
LANDS, OUR BLOOD’S HISTORY LOST.”
—GHAZAL FOR THE DIASPORA

PHOTO BY GENIE LEMIEUX, EVANSTON PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIOS

Faisal Mohyuddin (MSEd03) was wrestling with how to craft his reflective essay for Instructor Peg Kritzler’s practicum class. Finally, he sat down and penned a three-part poem for his final paper called “On the First Day of Student Teaching.”

The “essay,” which later appeared in *English Journal*, became Mohyuddin’s first published poem and set the stage for his blossoming career which blends two related passions: poetry and teaching. His debut full-length collection of poems, *The Displaced Children of Displaced Children*, won the 2017 Sexton Prize for Poetry and earned a recommendation by the Poetry Book Society, England’s most prestigious poetry institution.

In her final citation, renowned poet and Sexton Prize judge Kimiko Hahn lauded both the subject matter and the variety of tones and concerns in Mohyuddin’s work, which explores grief, separation, Islamophobia, and what it means to be displaced. The child of immigrants from Pakistan, Mohyuddin imagines his parents’ lives during the upheaval, war, and violence surrounding the 1947 independence of Pakistan, and the murder of his grandfather a decade later.

“To be sure, the title refers to diaspora and the poems refer to families in and immigrants from Pakistan,” Hahn writes. “There are literal landscapes and clear memories to be enjoyed.

“And yet, because these poems are so well crafted and the emotion so well expressed, the subject matter is overtaken by such themes as boundary, legacy, loss, claim. Whether a long narrative poem, or shorter lyric poems, these are the works of a poet, mature in his concerns and thinking.”

Mohyuddin, an English teacher at Highland Park High School in the Chicago suburbs and a visual artist, first realized he could combine two professions he loves after taking the class Foundations of Writing Processes with SESP instructor Dagny Boland.

“I learned that anyone teaching writing has to be a writer himself,” says Mohyuddin, who dedicated his first published poem to Boland, Kritzler, and the students of Whitney Young High School in Chicago, where he completed his student teaching. “We had to write every week in the class. I thought, this is perfect—I can work with young people and write. I can do both.”

In fact, teaching is what often fuels his inner drive to write. “Teaching keeps me engaged in the world of writing and literature,” he says. “When it’s coupled with the vibrancy of young people’s voices and own stories, it keeps me inspired.”

In the classroom, Mohyuddin strives to be as creative as he is on the page, using tools like social media to prompt analytical thinking and writing. As part of his Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms fellowship from the U.S.

Department of State, which involved preparing students to recognize different points of view, he asked his class to create Twitter handles and tweets for characters in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*.

The teens also researched and dreamed up ways the play could be produced in other cultures and time periods, including Germany in the 1940s and present-day South Korea.

Once, on a dare from a teaching colleague, he penned a poem about an epically lonely banana that had been “left behind / in the gathering darkness / of the school copy room.”

“The Forgotten Banana,” told from the melancholy perspective of the fruit, became an instant classic at school. Mohyuddin even included it in *The Displaced Children of Displaced Children*, and critics have praised his range of expression, calling his body of work “lush, urgent and at times funny.”

Most recently, Mohyuddin’s work was honored as a “highly commended” book of the year by the Forward Arts Foundation in the U.K. He credits his parents—and his experiences learning how to teach writing—for helping him see the world through a variety of perspectives.

“And at Northwestern I learned that you have to be who you are as a teacher,” he says. “If you dance, be the teacher who dances. If you are a writer, be the teacher who writes.”

BY JULIE DEARDORFF

Northwestern

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
AND SOCIAL POLICY

2120 Campus Drive, Evanston, IL 60208-2610

847.491.8193

sespalums@northwestern.edu

www.sesp.northwestern.edu

@sesp_nu

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Northwestern University

WE WILL.

The Campaign for Northwestern

MAKE A GIFT



www.sesp.northwestern.edu/giving



SEND US YOUR NEWS!

e-mail your news to sespalums@northwestern.edu

- name
- mailing address and telephone
- degree and year
- position/title
- institution/location
- and your news!

We hope to hear from you!