

# IESP AT THE AMERICAN EDUCATION FINANCE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

The NYU Institute for Education and Social Policy had a strong presence at the 2007 American Education Finance Association Annual Meeting held in Baltimore, Maryland March 22-27. Presentations were given by doctoral students **Colin Chellman** and **Meryle Weinstein**, Institute director **Amy Ellen Schwartz** and associate director **Leanna Stiefel**, and affiliated faculty members and Wagner Doctoral Program alumni, **Patrice Iatarola (PhD '02)** and **Ross Rubenstein (PhD '97)**. Topics included state and district responses to education accountability systems, the geographic variation in out-of-school time programs in New York City, the evolving state role in education finance, and the costs of small schools in New York City. IESP conducts scientific research about U.S. education and related social policy issues to help inform educational institutions and policy makers about the effectiveness of instructional programs, the impact of school reform initiatives and the relationships between academic achievement, school finance, and socio-economic and demographic factors such as poverty, ethnicity and immigration status.

## STUDENT UPDATE

**Richard Cho** recently co-authored a forthcoming paper entitled, "Homelessness and Incarceration" for the US **Department of Housing and Urban Development** and **US Department of Health and Human Services' National Symposium on Homelessness Research**. The paper summarizes research on the intersection between homelessness and criminal justice involvement, surveys programmatic and policy interventions targeted at justice-involved homeless persons, and provides recommendations for future research and practice. This paper will be published in print and posted on the web by early 2008.

**Jennifer Dodge** will be attending the conference **Interpretation in Policy Analysis: Research & Practice** on 31 May - 2 June 2007 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. She been invited to participate in a master class called "Making Sense of Practice." The session will focus on the doctoral students' dissertations, which will be treated as case studies to generate and engage a set of methodological questions.

**Michael Lens** presented a session on "Approaches to Juvenile Justice Reform: Improving Systems for Status Offenders" at the **2006 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminologists**.

**Rachel Meltzer** was selected to receive a Dissertation Proposal Development Fellowship from the **SSRC** for this summer, to support her dissertation research and proposal. She also co-authored a paper with Professors **Ingrid Ellen** and **Amy Schwartz** for a conference proceedings issue of the **National Tax Journal**.

**Sanjiv Rao** presented "Assets-Based Leadership: Activating Capacity for Action" at the **35th Annual ARNOVA Conference** in Chicago, IL, which he co-authored with Meredith Herr and Professor **Sonia Ospina**.

**Diana Silver** defended her dissertation in October 2006 and is currently a visiting Assistant Professor of Public Health in the Public Health program at the **Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development at NYU**.

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## TEACHING IN CONTEXT: Alumni Profile

While many alumni of the Wagner Doctoral Program assume academic positions in professional schools such as those of public policy, public administration, or public health, **Michele Moser Deegan** (PhD '96) has taken the rare path of working in a disciplinary department at a liberal arts college. While she began her academic career as an Associate Professor at The George Washington University School of Public Affairs and Public Policy in Washington, D.C., Professor Deegan decided to switch settings.

In her current position as an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, Professor Deegan teaches courses in public policy, public administration, and research methods. "There is more emphasis on being a great teacher where I am now, with less emphasis on research," explained Professor Deegan. At Muhlenberg, she says, teaching is a priority at all levels of the administration and faculty. Support for teaching comes in the form of faculty teaching committees, grants for course development and teaching innovations, and encouragement to attend conferences to learn new teaching methods.

Professor Deegan has found teaching undergraduates different than teaching graduate students. She sees undergraduates as focused both on social activities around campus and academics, while graduate students are focused more on the relationship between school and work. "Many freshmen have not had to write a research paper before," described Professor Deegan, "so I find myself spending time on the basics." The basics include conversations about current public policies and events, or topics like time

management. Graduate students are more informed about current events, and are interested mainly in "acquiring the skills to advance their careers."

Even though the balance of research and teaching is different, Professor Deegan is still an active researcher, and she wants to connect her research to her teaching. Currently, her research is on state and local government policy making, with an emphasis on education policy. "Because I've taught in a professional degree program, I've had a lot of contact with practitioners and I feel I have a good understanding of the realities of how the classroom connects to what students may be asked to do by future employers." One of her main goals is to integrate her applied research experiences into the classroom. "Right now I'm traveling around Pennsylvania conducting focus groups for a statewide Education Costing-Out study. I bring my observations from these focus groups into the classroom when we discuss issues such as the role of public opinion in policy making, and civil rights and liberties."

The greatest shift in moving from a professional school to an undergraduate college has been in Professor Deegan's daily work. She advises current doctoral students to "ask yourself, what balance would you like in your work?" If you enjoy working with a few others who share a common interest, writing and editing, and applying for external funding, you should aim for a position at a research university. However, if you like to engage in the larger university community, work with many colleagues and students, and teach and serve as a mentor to students with diverse interests, a smaller college campus might be a good fit.

### SPOTLIGHT ON

## PROFESSOR SHANNA ROSE

The transition from doctoral student to professor is rife with challenges - job searches, new responsibilities as a faculty member, and balancing teaching and publishing pressures - all of which can be especially tricky in an interdisciplinary setting.

Shanna Rose, **Assistant Professor of Public Financial Management** at Wagner, is intimately familiar with these challenges. Having graduated from Harvard with a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government in 2005, Professor Rose has a background in public finance and American politics and experience teaching in Harvard's economics and government departments and the Kennedy School of Government.

Professor Rose notes that it can be difficult for prospective employers to categorize you when you come out of an interdisciplinary program. Being strategic is of the utmost importance, she counsels, as an interdisciplinary academic on the job market. Based on her experiences on the public policy and political science job markets, she has two particular pieces of advice for doctoral students.



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## INTRODUCING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HEALTH AND DOCTORAL PROGRAMS ALI SALAMEY

Over the past ten years, I have been deeply engaged in higher education administration, both as an area of theoretical and practical interest, and as a passageway to my career in student services.

After completing my M.A. at NYU, I started work on my PhD in Near Eastern Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Although I decided not to complete the PhD, this program introduced me to the arena of student services through my experience as a teaching assistant.

During this period I was very engaged in helping students find and make the most out of resources on campus that could help them in all facets of their intellectual growth and their physical and psychological well-being. I fell in love with academic advising and assumed a position as an advisor at the U of M.

After four years as an advisor at the University of Michigan, I found myself missing New York City for many reasons. Most important among them is the plethora of institutions with unrivaled academic and cultural resources that can be found in New York. I also missed the multiculturalism that you find in New York on a daily basis. I began work in the History Department at NYU almost three years ago as the Graduate Program Administrator.

My current position as the Assistant Director of Health and Doctoral programs at Wagner allows me to continue my growth as an administrator in higher education. During my time here, I have had the opportunity to work with a wide range of students, to meet faculty members who are passionate about their research and teaching, and to become part of an administrative staff that is equally passionate about its work. My recent move to Wagner was motivated by many of the same principles that drive the students in our programs: the desire to work in a team oriented environment, to work with a broad and diverse student and professional population, and to continue to grow professionally, intellectually, and personally in a setting dedicated to the advancement of public service and education.

Ali Salamey

## ADMISSIONS UPDATE

As the admissions cycle comes to a close, the Doctoral Program is excited to report that we received over 100 applications this year from highly qualified candidates from all over the world. The selection processes was difficult, but the Doctoral Board is proud to welcome five new students into the program. The entering class reflects the high academic standards, diverse skills and experience, and interdisciplinary interests that are hallmarks of the Wagner community. We look forward to introducing you to them in the fall!

### SPOTLIGHT - continued from Page 1

First, it is important to develop both a specific set of technical skills and thorough knowledge of a substantive area; this combination of skills makes you a stronger scholar and increases the number of courses you can teach, which is attractive to prospective employers. Second, choosing your dissertation advisors carefully is very important for the impact they will have on your work and also for the professional directions in which they push you, their contacts at other schools, and the signals their names send about who you are and the type of work you will do.

Wagner has been an exciting forum for Professor Rose to grow and expand as a scholar. After spending a year in a political science department, Professor Rose is now finding the freedom she was missing. "If you don't fit neatly into one discipline, a policy school allows you more flexibility to publish in different places and reach the audiences you want to reach," she explained.

Professor Rose is in the process of shifting gears in her research from political issues to more policy-outcome oriented research related to health and education finance. Her interdisciplinary interests are stoked through the intellectual community at the Wagner Research Colloquium and Work in Progress seminars, and workshops in other departments throughout NYU.

On a personal level, Professor Rose feels lucky to have a small cohort of new colleagues at NYU whom she knew in graduate school: **Rema Hanna**, Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Economics at Wagner, and **Jenny Schuetz**, Research Fellow at the **Furman Center for Real Estate and Social Policy**, which is a joint center between the Law School and Wagner. The three have formed a support system that has eased the transition to professional life. As an Assistant Professor, Rose finds that she has more support for and control over her work than she did as a graduate student, but she also has a new set of obligations. Like all new professors, she is learning how to balance the pressures of publishing, teaching, advising doctoral students, and school service. Advising doctoral students is a new challenge that she enjoys, and she feels that while she lacks the experience of her more senior colleagues, she "brings something different to the table, being closer to the graduate student experience."

## NYU Wagner

Doctoral Program  
<http://wagner.nyu.edu/doctoral/>

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### Doctoral Board

#### Faculty Members:

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Ingrid Ellen  
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Jonathan Morduch  
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#### ABD Representatives:

Martha Galvez  
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Do you want your information to be included in the next issue of the newsletter? If so, please submit career updates, publications or presentation information to Johanna Lacoe, Doctoral Graduate Assistant, at [johanna.lacoe@nyu.edu](mailto:johanna.lacoe@nyu.edu).

### STUDENT REFLECTION

## RACHEL MELTZER'S THOUGHTS ON STARTING A DISSERTATION

Doctoral students anxiously await the moment when coursework is finished and comprehensive exams have been passed. Yet the act of starting the dissertation process - coming up with a research idea and forming a committee - can be overwhelming.

Rachel Meltzer recently reached this stage and has some thoughtful suggestions for how to navigate these sometimes difficult waters. Rachel came to the Wagner school to pursue her masters and doctoral degrees after working for the **NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development** for two years. Her areas of interest are urban housing, economic development and neighborhood change. She is currently a teaching colleague for Microeconomics and will begin teaching Statistics this summer. Rachel also works as a research assistant at the **Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy**, a joint center of the NYU Law School and Wagner. Here's what Rachel had to say:

"After enjoying the post-comprehensive exam glow, the reality of the dissertation sets in with a mix of excitement and utter fear. Here are some things that have helped me focus and make progress.

First, talk to people. I am the queen of asking questions: I have picked the brains of professors (especially my advisor), other doctoral students, and post-docs. Not only will you get brilliant advice, but you'll also find out that you are not the only one struggling (or striving - lucky you!). Much of what I'm writing about here has come from these conversations.

Second, start the program with direction. This does not mean have a dissertation topic in hand, but if you have a specific area of interest and methodology in mind, then you can choose your classes and research experience accordingly. This makes your comprehensive exam preparation easier and flows into the literature review for your dissertation.

Third, do research. Any kind of technical research experience is valuable for skill and subject area development and data access. Having unique data is not only valuable in itself, but it allows you to work with a familiar dataset for your dissertation.

Last, but certainly not least, make internal deadlines. I find that the hardest part about the dissertation is not having structure imposed on you. I have pushed myself by applying for fellowships with applications that require dissertation outlines or conference submissions that require abstracts - these have hard deadlines and often inspire you to think about your topic in a new light. However, even smaller scale deadlines can make a difference. My advisor told me to write down a new question each day: having daily or weekly goals like this makes a huge difference."

## ALUMNI UPDATE

**Melissa Botrell** (PhD '02), health services researcher at the **National Center for Ethics in Health Care of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs**, co-authored, "The ethics of using QI methods to improve health care quality and safety," in the July-August 2006 edition of the *Hastings Center Report*.

**Dylan Conger** (PhD, '04) Assistant Professor, **George Washington University's School of Public Policy and Public Administration**, was selected for a Young Scholars Award from the **Foundation for Child Development**. The award will support her study of English language learners in New York City. Dylan also presented her recent work at the Wagner Research Colloquium in March 2007.

**Marilyn DeLuca** (PhD '00), Executive Director of the **Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence**, spoke at the International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO) meeting on Patient-Centered Healthcare at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on March 30, 2007. Marilyn's talk, Promoting Nursing Capacity Responsive to Patients Needs highlighted the global and national issues challenging professional nursing.

**Jessica Greene** (PhD '03), Director of the Master of Public Administration Program and Assistant Professor in the **Department of Planning, Public Policy, and Management** at the **University of Oregon**, published her co-authored paper "The impact of implementing a chronic care residency training initiative on asthma outcomes," in the February 2007 edition of *Academic Medicine*. Jessica also represented the University of Oregon at the **2007 APPAM Spring Conference**.

**Karla Hanson** (PhD '95), Research Associate in the **College of Human Ecology at Cornell University**, received funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for an examination of the social context of

obesity. The project includes cross-sectional analysis of marital status and body weight, an examination of marital trajectories and duration of marriage and body weight, and longitudinal analysis which examine changes in marital status and body weight over time.

**Joann Petrini** (PhD '02), of the **Perinatal Data Center at March of Dimes**, published "Trends in folic acid awareness and behavior in the United States: The Gallup Organization for the March of Dimes Foundation Surveys, 1995-2005," in the September 2006 edition of the *Maternal and Child Health Journal*.

**David Sandman** has become Managing Director of **Manatt Health Solutions** (MHS), an interdisciplinary policy and business advisory division of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, one of the nation's premier law and consulting firms. At MHS he will advise clients on the development of new healthcare programs and services, restructuring plans, and how to influence and capitalize on emerging public policy trends.

**Alfred Vernis** (PhD '99), Associate Professor of Business Policy at **ESADE**, co-authored a book, *Nonprofit Organizations: Challenges and Collaboration* (Palgrave Macmillan: 2006). The book focuses on the challenges facing nonprofit organizations, particularly with regard to collaboration, trust and innovation.

**Mahmoud Watad** (PhD '93), Associate Professor in the **Christos M. Cosakos College of Business at William Patterson College**, co-authored "Managers' Perceptions of the Role of IT in Organizational Change," which is forthcoming in the *Academy of Information and Management Sciences Journal*.